

2026
South Eastern
Rendezvous
Fishing Guide



WELCOME to the 2026 TROUT UNLIMITED SE Rendezvous and Western North Carolina. We are excited to have you attend the Rendezvous AND spend some time fishing our beautiful streams! Our waters range from Delayed Harvest (DH) (stocked, catch and release) to Hatchery Supported (stocked, ability to keep but Closed in March) to Wild (special regulations apply). It is up to the angler to be aware and follow all regulations. (See link below) This guide will focus on DH opportunities. If you choose to venture on to some of our wild waters, many of the requirements and tactics will be the same.

Before you go:

- You will need a NC fishing license.

<https://license.gooutdoorsnorthcarolina.com/Licensing/CustomerLookup.aspx>

- Visit the NC Wildlife page for all fishing regulations

<https://www.ncwildlife.gov/fishing/trout-fishing-north-carolina>

- Average temps in March are mid 50's but the water may still be very cold. Waders and boots are recommended.
- Even with felt or studded boots, there can be slick spots. A wading staff is highly recommended.
- We highly recommend a trip to one of our local guide shops (See list at the end) for gear, flies and additional local intel.

Listed below is additional information on Delayed Harvest fishing and some recommended DH sections for local streams. If you have selected to have a "Fishing Buddy", there is a good chance you will be fishing at one of these sections. If you decide to venture out on your own, the DH sections listed below are a great place to spend your day!

DELAYED HARVEST

Stocking usually takes place the first week of March, but dates may be revised due to the closure of Setzer Hatchery. All DH sections during the month of March are catch and release only, artificial lures, single hook. All stream sections have good access points and are appropriate for all skill levels. Look for the white and black triangles denoting Delayed Harvest.

Recommended gear: 3, 4 or 5 wt rods will work with 3 or 4 wt preferred. Tenkara and Euro nymphing rods are also appropriate.

Recommended flies appropriate for all DH locations: Small caddis, stimulators, small streamers, stonefly nymphs, BWO nymphs, eggs, worms and hot spot jigs

Check the NC Hatch Chart for seasonal hatching insects. Local fly shops can also be a terrific resource. See all our local shops listed at the end of this guide.

<https://www.ncwildlife.gov/media/3078/download?attachment>

North Mills River (Near Asheville)

The North Mills River is located just a few miles west of the Asheville airport and its close proximity to town makes it a favorite among anglers, hikers, bikers, horseback riders, and campers alike. In spite of this, it is very possible to spend a weekday fishing there and have the stream to yourself.

The river can be broken into three sections. The lower section runs through the picnic area and campground and follows Forest Service Road 1206 (Co. Rd. 1345)—this area receives a lot of stocked fish and a lot of fishing pressure.

The adjacent middle section begins a little west of the campground area where the river takes a turn to the northwest and passes under the road. Access to this area is by a trail along the stream and it is stocked up to the third stream crossing.

The final section is accessed by driving up Forest Service Road 5000 several miles and taking the first left across the low water bridge across from the horse camp. Go to the end of the road and park at the kiosk. Walk down the lower gated road approximately ½ mile until you reach an access trail leading to the stream. This section extends upstream to the dam and is well stocked but also receives a lot of fishing pressure.

All three sections are managed under the Delayed Harvest catch and release program from October 1 until the first Saturday in June.

Leaders/Tippet: 7.5-9' leaders, 4-5x is perfectly adequate. 6x for low water.

Flies: Attractor patterns, flashy nymphs, eggs, San Juan style worms and small baitfish patterns work great up to two weeks after a stocking. Go to a more natural selection of flies after the fish become more acclimated to their new environment. During spring, look for hatches and rising fish, usually in the late afternoon.

East Fork French Broad (South of Rosman)

The East Fork has all the great characteristics of a classic mountain stream. Changes in elevation, an abundance of big rock bottom and some great long runs provide a great variety of fishing opportunities. The DH section runs along East Fork Road. Take US178 off of US 64 south of Rosman to East Fork Rd. The DH section starts in about 2.5 miles providing easy access from a number of roadside parking spots. The upper DH section is often overlooked and tends to see less fishing pressure. It can be challenging though as the stream is much narrower with lots of hungry fly-munching trees all around.

Be respectful of landowners along this stream. Access to the water through their property is a privilege. A little courtesy goes a long way to keeping this open for us all to enjoy.

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The standard DH assortment will suffice. Streamers like wooly buggers or attractor nymph & egg patterns are always good, as well as an assortment of dry fly patterns in size 12-16 range.

Curtis Creek (Near Old Fort)

Curtis Creek is just a few miles past Old Fort on US70. When heading East, turn left onto Curtis Creek Rd. As you drive up the road you will see several pull-offs for parking. Follow the trail for a short walk to reach the stream. Drive up the road a bit further and there is a public access & parking spot on the left. Further up on the left, the upper section has easy parking and is handicap accessible. Of all the DH water noted in the guide, this stream sustained the most damage from Helene. It is a great example of the damage that was done by Helene and how Mother Nature, the Forestry Service and other interested groups are working hard to recover this stream and the surrounding recreational area.

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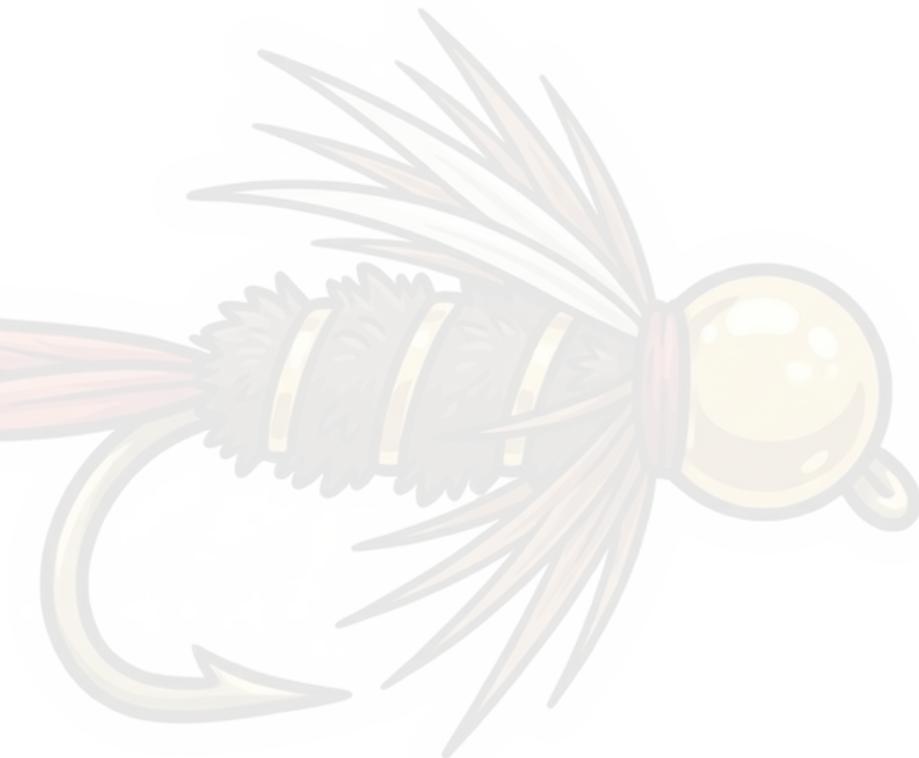
Catawba River (Catawba Greenway, Near Marion, NC)

This DH portion of the Catawba River is situated in the Joseph McDowell Historical Catawba Greenway on Sam Phillips Dr. in Marion. It runs a little over a mile along a paved greenway with easy fishing access. This area also had significant damage from Helene but is further along in its recovery. It is more open than most of our streams making it a dream to cast.

This river section is managed under the Delayed Harvest catch and release program from October 1 until the first Saturday in June.

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Flies: Attractor patterns, flashy nymphs, eggs, San Juan style worms and small baitfish patterns work great up to two weeks after a stocking. Go to a more natural selection of flies after the fish become more acclimated to their new environment. During spring, look for hatches and rising fish, usually in the late afternoon.



Shelton/Laurel Creek (Between Marshall and Hot Springs)

Take I-240 / I-26 west out of Asheville. Take exit 19A on US19N to 70/US25 toward Marshall. In about 10 miles at the bridge, turn onto Hwy 208 and the creek will be along the left. Look for pull-offs to park. Get there early for the best parking spots. There will be easy access to the creek once parked. The creek is relatively shallow and very clear.

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Flies: Attractor patterns, flashy nymphs, eggs, San Juan style worms and small baitfish patterns work great up to two weeks after a stocking. Go to a more natural selection of flies after the fish become more acclimated to their new environment. During spring, look for hatches and rising fish, usually in the late afternoon.

West Fork Pigeon River (Near Canton)

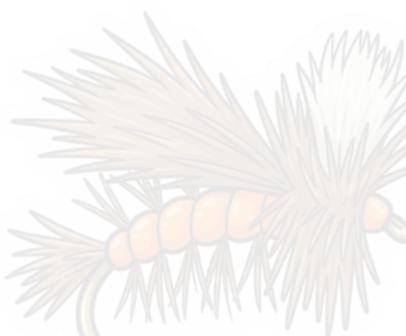
West of Asheville near Canton. Use Lake Logan Episcopal Center for your GPS. Drive past their entry point. The river will be along the roadside on your left. There are several parking locations. A good place to start is at the Steel Bridge (has a small parking area) and just upstream at the church lot.

Easy bank access and multiple options including well defined runs, rapid water and crystal clear pools gives you everything you need for a challenging day of fishing.

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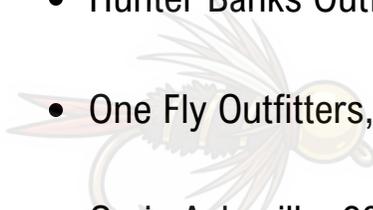
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FLY SHOPS



- Curtis Wright Outfitters, 24 N. Main St., Weaverville, Phone: 828-645-8700
 - Davidson River Outfitters, 49 Pisgah Highway, Pisgah Forest, Phone: 828-877-4181
 - Headwaters Outfitters, 25 Parkway Rd, Rosman, Phone: 828-877-3106
 - Hendersonville Outfitters, 144 3rd Ave. W, Hendersonville, 828-595-3550
 - Hunter Banks Outfitters, 29 Montford Ave. Asheville, Phone: 828-252-3005
 - One Fly Outfitters, 112 Cherry Street, Black Mountain, Phone: 828-669-6939
 - Orvis Asheville, 29 Schenck Pkwy, Phone: 828-687-0301
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