

Free State Fly Fishers Western Maryland Outing

When: Thursday-Sunday, April 18-21, 2024

Where: Western Maryland, Garrett County

Outing Coordinators: Andy Grosko, agrosko@gmail.com; (667) 280-0422 cell.
Tom Barnes, hottom.com@usa.net; (410) 279-0807 cell.

Overnight accommodations: several options exist from hotels, to cabin to camping.

Two local **hotels** we are familiar with are the Casselman Inn and the Comfort Inn.

Cabin at New Germany State Park; One cabin currently reserved for 4/18 – 4/21/2024 that has 3 beds, a bathroom with shower and a full kitchen. Contact Andy if interested.

Camping (Big Run State Park) and (New Germany State Park).

- **Hotel:** The Casselman Inn is located in Grantsville, MD very close to the Casselman River. Web address: www.thecasselman.com. Phone: 301.895.5055. Please make your own reservations if you are staying at the Casselman.
- **Hotel:** The Comfort Inn is located in Grantsville, MD very close to the Casselman River. Web address www.choicehotels.com Phone: 301.895.5993. Please make your own reservations if you are staying at the Comfort Inn, Grantsville.
- **Cabin:** New Germany St Park: The Cabin #8 is located in New Germany State Park, about 8 miles from the Casselman River, about 35 miles from the North Branch of the Potomac, and somewhere maybe a dozen miles from the Salvage River. It has a full kitchen and can accommodate 3 people. Andy reserved cabin # 8, let him know asap if you are interested sharing this accommodation. Web address: <https://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/pages/western/newgermany.aspx>
- **Camping:** Big Run State Park, <https://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/western/BigRun/Camping.aspx>. The Big Run State Park is located approximately 30 minutes from Grantsville, in the Savage River State Forest, and next to Savage River Reservoir. Big Run State Park is a relatively primitive campsite. It has composting toilets, but the well pump is out of service. Water can be picked up at New Germany park on the way in (Big Run Park is a sister park of New Germany State Park, so camping in Big Run gets you access to New Germany including water and hot showers). There are no hook-ups in the campsites. Some cell phone providers do not have coverage at Big Run State Park. Camping in the wooded lot section of Big Run State Park (approximately campsite 74), not the open field area next to the reservoir is what some of us chose on the April, 2023 trip.

Meeting Time/Location and Directions: This will be discussed and decided upon before the trip by the attendees. It is approximately a 3.5 hour drive from Annapolis to New Germany State Park / Casselman River / Grantsville.

- Note: This is a trip where you may want to consider having your own vehicle (instead of carpooling) because there are multiple fishing locations (Casselman, North Branch Barnum, North Branch Kitzmiller, Lower Savage fly fishing area, upper Savage River, and the Youghiogheny River) and different people may want to go to different places. Without multiple vehicles, you may not get to go where you want to go.
- If you plan to go, but are going on a different timetable, please let Andy or Tom know.
- Reservations:
 - Big Run State Park: New a couple years ago, you now can make reservations for campsites at Big Run State Park (you never could before). If you are camping there, I recommend you select a campsite near campsite 74.
 - Casselman Motel: You can google Casselman Motel in Grantsville and make reservations directly with them. Same with the Comfort Inn hotel.
 - Cabin at New Germany State Park, Andy has reserved a cabin there, so if you would like share that, please call him directly at 667 280-0422.

Communication:

- Cell phones do not work in many of the areas we will be fishing in, for example, some don't work at Big Run State Park, so it will be important to agree to a meeting schedule (such as is described in "Meals" section below) ahead of time. This means, for example, if you're at the Casselman Inn in Grantsville you can't count on calling someone at Big Run campground. A meeting schedule will be worked out by the travelers shortly before the trip.

Fishing Locations: As mentioned above, there are many places to fish. New Germany and Big Run State parks is more or less centrally located between the Casselman, the North Branch at Barnum, and the lower Savage fly fishing area. More information on fishing locations will be provided at a later time. I will be fishing in Barnum, mid-afternoon-dark at least one of the days, and traveling to and from New Germany State Park Cabin #8. Anyone is free to ride with me or follow me if unfamiliar with the area. The Casselman river and the lower Savage River are easy to find. Most fishing in this area is wading fishing. I use a wading staff in the streams. Many years ago, I booked a guided trip on the North Branch via a raft starting at Georges Creek / Westernport. Not certain if that service still exists. Google will know more if that is of interest.

Trip Logistics and Fishing Information:

- **Meals:** If the group is split, ie, some are staying at the cabin, Casselman Inn, Comfort Inn and /or camping, a good possible plan would be to have one meal on Friday at the Casselman Inn (an early dinner would be good, say 4:30 PM, thus allowing time for fishing the evening hatches) and one meal at the campsites on Saturday or Sunday (a picnic lunch would be good at Noon) or a buffet at the Penn Apls Buffet on Saturday evening. These details will be finalized by the travelers before the trip. Campers please bring your own food. Note that the camping area is relatively remote, so you will want to have all your supplies with you before you leave Grantsville. Cabin has fridge and full kitchen stove/oven, so there is possibility of eating there for those in the park. There used to be a little country store, BJ's, on the Upper Savage River near the campground, but I think it has gone out of business.
- **Weather:** Likely some will only go if there is very good weather; if we commit to a cabin, Andy is very likely to go no matter what the weather *. Many of these rivers/creeks wash out and get too muddy to fish with over 1" of rainfall. We will need good weather for two days before the trip (arriving on a sunny day to a high muddy river is no fun) and good weather during the trip (keep water conditions fishable plus camping in the rain is not much fun!). It is possible that New Germany Lake, the dam-controlled tailrace section of the North Branch and the Savage River can be fishable even if rain spikes water levels elsewhere. And Deep Creek Lake St Park is nearby (bass / walleye / pike / state record bluegill).

Species of Interest: Trout

Equipment Needed: Fly Rods, 4wt/5wt.

Recommended Flies: Woolly Buggers, Muddler Minnows, Caddis, Griffin gnat, hare's ear nymph, pheasant tail nymph, and any other classical trout flies and nymphs. Last year trout in Casselman were taking tandem drifted nymphs, and tandem dry fly and nymph combos. A good strike indicator or "humpy type" dry fly helped to detect hits.

License Required: Maryland State Fishing License with a Trout Stamp

Sign-up: The trip will be discussed in general at the April 3 meeting. Immediately following the April 3 FSFF meeting, there will be a detailed informational meeting open to those interested in going to answer any questions about the trip. Please email or call Andy Grosko or Tom Barnes before April 10, 2024 if you want to go.

Directions to Big Run from the Casselman Inn (you can do this on Google Maps); note, New Germany St Park is on the left 5 miles south from turn onto New Germany Rd.:

The Casselman Inn, 113 Main St, Grantsville, MD 21536

- Head east on US-40 ALT E/Main St/National Pike toward 1st St
- Continue to follow US-40 ALT E/National Pike, go 1.8 mi
- Turn right onto New Germany Rd, go 8.2 mi
- Turn left onto Big Run Rd, go 5.0 mi
- Arrive at "Tee" intersection of Big Run Rd and Savage River Rd, right at the reservoir. This is the center of the park. We will not be camping in this area of the park (open field), but we will utilize the message board located in this area, next to the composting toilet, to communicate with visitors (as cell phones are not dependable in this area).
- 10368 Savage River Rd, Swanton, MD 21561

Directions from Big Run State Park to Barnum, WV (North Branch, Potomac River). This is on Google Maps. Directions:

Big Run State Park, 10368 Savage River Rd, Swanton, MD 21561

- Head west on Savage River Rd toward Big Run Rd, go 2.2 mi
- Turn left to stay on Savage River Rd, go 2.5 mi
- Turn left to stay on Savage River Rd, go 6.1 mi
- Turn left onto MD-135 E, Enter West Virginia, go 0.3 mi
- Turn right onto WV-46 W, go 5.4 mi
- Turn right onto Barnum Rd, go 0.2 mi
- Turn left to stay on Barnum Rd, go 1.2 mi
- Arrive in Barnum, WV Drive down to the big parking lot at the river.

LIABILITY WAIVER: It is mandatory that any trip attendees of this trip sign the FSFF Liability Waiver. If you haven't signed one, you CANNOT be a part of this trip.

WADING SAFETY: The only way to fish most of the rivers we will be visiting is by wading. Slippery rocks and fast water will be encountered virtually everywhere. To attend this trip, you must be able to negotiate slippery rocks and fast water. It is the attendees responsibility to access his/her own capabilities to safely negotiate these conditions.

SAFETY: Safety is a paramount concern on all FSFF sponsored outings. On all FSFF sponsored outings, please be safe out there as it is your responsibility to stay within your capabilities and practice water safety at all time. Check with the above listed outing coordinator for more information on the fishing conditions if you have any concerns or questions. **If boating, always wear your PFD and if water temperatures are below 60 degrees F, have a plan to protect yourself from cold water immersion hazards should you fall in.**

Most importantly, enjoy the fellowship of your fellow members through fly fishing and tight lines!