

Sample Chapter

The Trout Fishing Map Book for the North Branch of the Potomac

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Exclusive of USGS Topographical Maps

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Feedback: feedback@catchguide.com

Liability Disclaimer and Warning: It goes without saying that *fishing in streams and rivers is dangerous* and that is particularly true of the North Branch of the Potomac as a result of the fast water and slick rocks. You need to exercise caution, particularly in the spring when the water is high, before you fish anywhere. You absolutely need a wading staff on the North Branch and, depending on your condition, you may consider wearing a life vest -- one of those that automatically inflate is a good idea.

Even when you take all the precautions, you can still slip and fall on the rocks and sustain severe injury. You could drown. You can get hooks caught in your skin, face, eyes or other sensitive places. There are a number of bad things that can happen to you when you go into the woods to visit the places I describe here. There are active train tracks, deep potholes in the water, slick hills covered with scree, cliffs, dirt roads with deep potholes, wild animals and all sorts of other challenges. The bottom line is that you must make your own judgment in terms of acceptable behavior and risk and not rely on my opinion. What is good for me may be wrong for you.

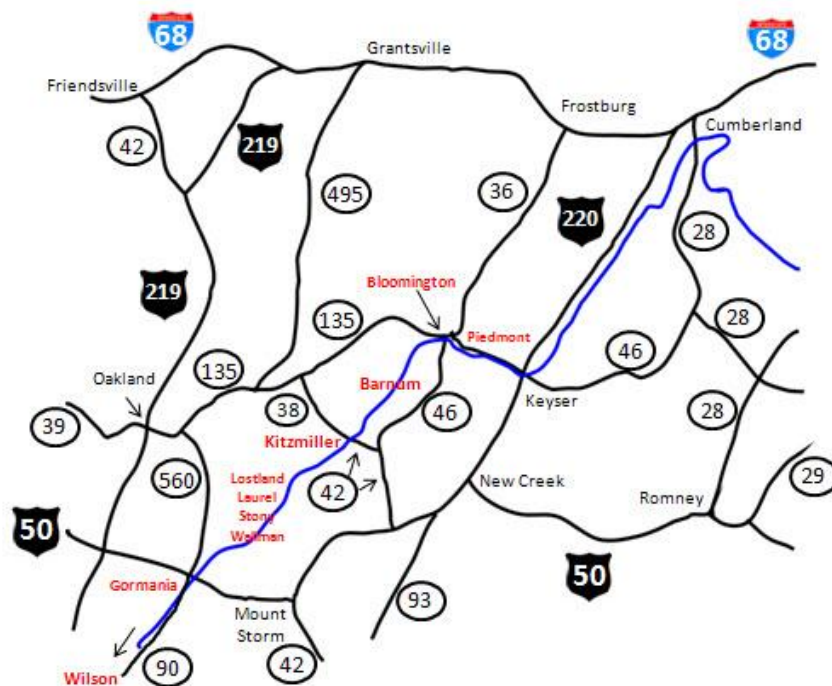
Accordingly, ***we disclaim all liability and responsibility for any actions you take*** as a result of reading this CatchGuide. If you do not agree with this, you should not read this guide and definitely should not take any of the advice offered here. ***Use of this material is at your risk.***

General Directions

Before I get into the specifics of how to get to each location, let's put the region into broad focus. If you do not use your onboard GPS or the Internet to generate turn by turn directions, use this map to locate and navigate to the key towns of [Bloomington](#) (MD), [Piedmont](#) (MD), [Kitzmilller](#) (MD), [Barnum](#) (WV) and [Gormaniam](#) (WV).

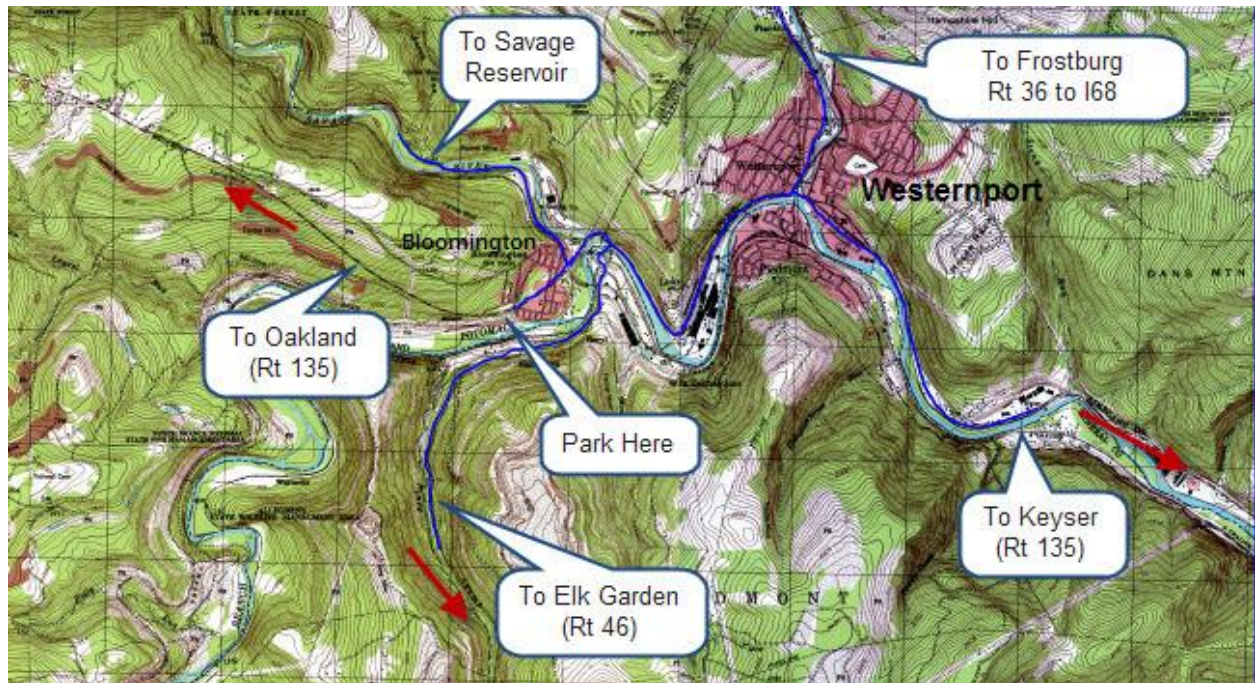
I68 is the fast way to get out to Western Maryland. The towns that form the key landmarks marking the turns to the river are [Cumberland](#) in the east and [Friendsville](#) in the west. No matter where you go on the North Branch, you will head to [Bloomington](#), [Kitzmilller](#) or [Gormaniam](#). If you are traveling to the area from farther south, Rt 50 will get you into the thick of things and allow you to branch out to any of the locations I discuss.

[Barnum](#) is located between [Kitzmilller](#) and [Bloomington](#) and the [Potomac State Forest](#) is south of [Kitzmilller](#). Your best option is to use Mapquest™ or Google™ Local to get specific directions from your home to the region. If you have an on-board GPS navigation system, [Kitzmilller](#), [Bloomington](#) and [Gormaniam](#) are all significant enough to be listed in your GPS's database. Here is a generic roadmap that establishes the big picture and places the fishing locations on the map:



Visit www.SwitchFisher.com for more information on places to fish in MD, VA, WV, and PA

Bloomington



Getting to the Stream

Mapquest™ or Google™ Local yourself to Bloomington, MD.

As you drive south on MD 135 from the bridge, turn left onto Seldom Seen Road and park at the iron bar gate in the wide spot to the left of the gate. There is only room for one or two trucks here. The “parking area” is directly behind an apartment building and only a short distance from the turn off of MD 135.

Walk on the road until you decide to cut over to the stream. The road moves away from the river, so make your move before it starts to follow the hill that looms high above the river unless you want to walk to the bend and begin fishing there.

If you want to fish the “Put and Take” area below [Piney Swamp Run](#), you should go to the kayak takeout just upstream of the bridge ([GPS 39.476949,-79.068003](#)) and start fishing there. It’s about a mile from that point to [Piney Swamp Run](#). Another alternative is that you can walk to the intersection of Seldom Seen Road and the railroad. Turn left and follow the tracks back down to the river. That will be a ½ mile walk, but you will move faster than wading up the river.

But the real reason to come to this spot is to fish the catch and release section. You have two options.

Option 1: Be prepared to deal with the underbrush. As you walk past the intersection of Seldom Seen Road with the rail bed, start looking for a good place to cut to the river – there is no beaten trail. The easiest place is after passing a fenced area (GPS: [39.473546,-79.08652](#)) that you can see in this picture.



Follow the ravine on the west side of the fence through some heavy undergrowth to emerge at the river bank opposite of [Piney Swamp Run](#).

Option 2: Instead of cutting immediately to the river, follow the rail bed to the west. Do not follow the road! The road dips down in the valley and eventually climbs back up the hill to intersect with the track. Unless you want the exercise, stay on the tracks and walk west for another ½ mile. Hop back onto the road when it rejoins the tracks and follow it down the long steep hill. After a 0.4 mile, it bottoms out in the valley near a sharp bend in the river. From this point ([GPS 39.477239,-79.101895](#)), it's an easy walk through the underbrush to the water.

Special Regulations

Be careful here. The “Put and Take” section begins at the entrance of [Piney Swamp Run](#) and extends down to [Westernport](#). That section allows a daily / possession creel limit of 5 trout. The section covered in this discussion is UPSTREAM from [Piney Swamp Run](#) and ***falls into the Catch and Return portion*** of the river that begins 4 miles farther south just below the spot known as the “[Blue Hole](#)”.

The regulations restrict you to artificial lures and flies at this spot. Those artificial lures must be unscented and you cannot apply scent to unscented lures. Bait is expressly prohibited in this area. See the back of the CatchGuide for [Maryland's definition of artificial lures](#) as of 2009.

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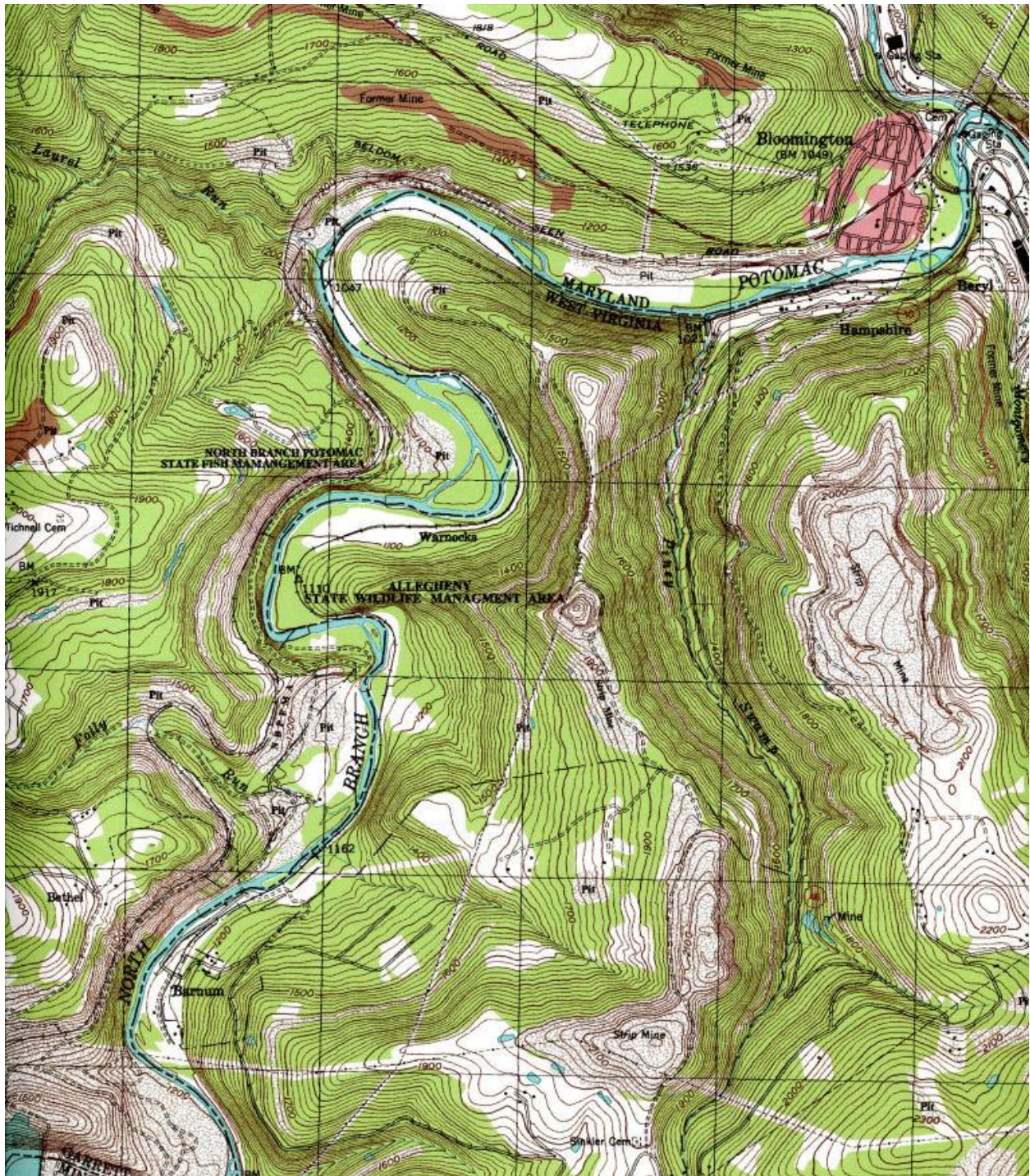
Map Sheets

Working from North to South, the next pages have the following map sheets:

- Piedmont
- **Barnum (shown in this sample)**
- Jennings-Randolph Lake
- Kitzmiller
- Lostland Run – Laurel Run
- Wallman
- Steyer – Gormanania

Feel free to print these out and take them with you to stay oriented on the stream... and mark the good spots you find!

Barnum



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