

Fourche Creek is an amazing yet largely unknown recreational resource located right in the heart of Little Rock. A float down the 20+ miles of creek takes you across 3 of Arkansas' 6 major ecoregions, giving you a rare chance to explore multiple habitat types. Over a day-long float the scenery changes from a gravel bottom stream lined with river birch, box elder, and sycamore to a highly sinuous silt-bottomed creek lined with enormous cypress and silver maples. The creek is included in Tim Ernst's "Arkansas Nature Lover's Guidebook" and with put-ins at several city parks across town, most citizens of the state's capital are within a ten minute drive of the creek!

### Where to put in:

Audubon Arkansas is working to establish new canoe launches and improve existing launches along Fourche Creek. In order of popularity and accessibility, current launch sites are listed below (Click the links to view the locations in Google Maps):

1. [Interstate Park](#) – A concrete launch can be found at the SW corner of this park located off of Arch St. about 2.6 miles south of downtown Little Rock (34.708055° - 92.285018°).
2. [Benny Craig Park](#) – About four and a half miles upstream of Interstate Park, you can find another concrete launch just north of the parking lot near the tennis courts at Benny Craig Park. This park is located off Gum Springs Rd. about a mile and half south of UALR (34.702754° - 92.326813°).
3. [Hindman Park](#) – While there are no developed launches at Hindman, there are a couple places where it is easy to put-in. If you are heading upstream, park along the gravel shoulder of the road near the 65th St. entrance. About 100 feet west of you is a rock structure in the creek put there to slow bank erosion. It also makes for a decent launch site (34.691899° -92.361486°)! If you are going to float downstream, you might want to put in just past the bridge in the park (34.696425° -92.360898°).
4. [Rommel Park](#) – Though the creek isn't very scenic in this area, Rommel Park has a developed boat launch and offers a unique urban float near the airport and Arkansas River. I-440 is never far away when floating in this area (34.716572° -92.206649°).
5. [Arch St. Borrow Pond](#) – A road is currently being constructed off of Arch St. just south of Interstate Park that will lead to a parking area next to a large pond under the interstate interchange. This pond is an easy place to launch a canoe or kayak and has a cypress knee-lined connection to Fourche Creek near the southeast corner (34.707685° -92.275359°).
6. [Under I-430](#) - This is the trickiest and least developed location on this list. You can try to get permission from either the nursery on the north side of the creek or from the Highway Department on the south side to park near the creek. The banks are fairly steep along this stretch so you

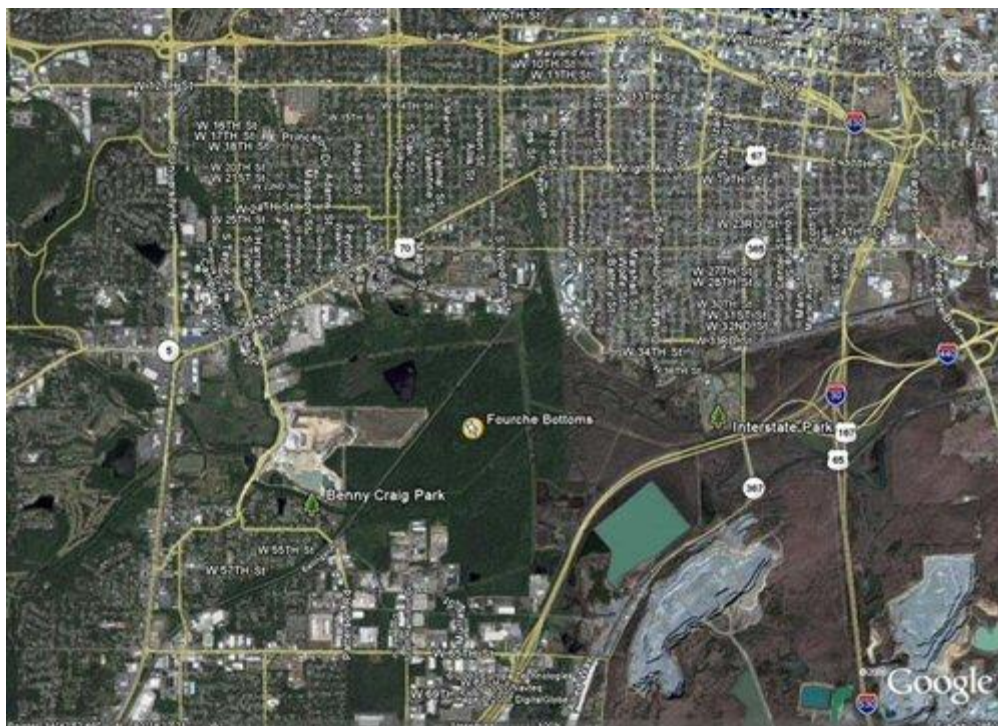


might have to explore a bit to find a suitable spot to put-in. This section of the creek is very scenic, so hopefully someone will develop a real launch here (34.675679° - 92.405479°)!

### **Float Information and Maps:**

The most popular starting point is at the southern end of Interstate Park, off of Arch Street, south of Roosevelt Road. Most people like to head upstream and into the Fourche Bottoms area for an hour or two and then head back. In this section you will see large cypress trees and probably some wood ducks or herons.

Downstream of Interstate Park is interesting in its own way, but obstacles such as concrete slabs under the interstates and the channelization of the creek near the airport combined with the presence of motorboats make the downstream section less popular. Just over a mile downstream from Interstate Park is the borrow pond that will soon be accessible from Arch St.

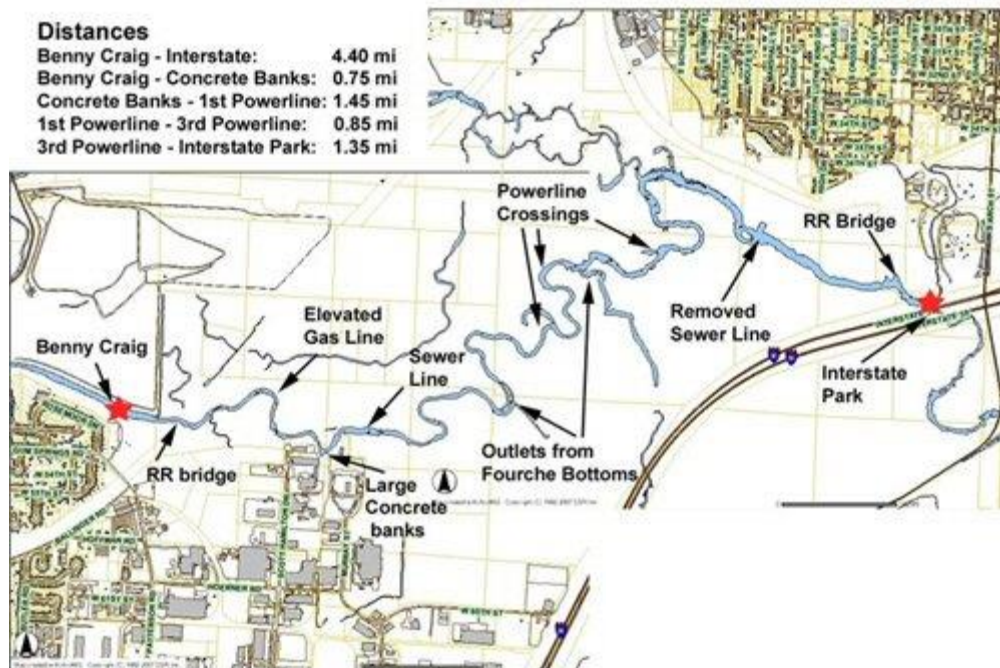


Another good place to put in is at Benny Craig Park off of Patterson Road north of 65th Street. Most people head downstream from this point into Fourche Bottoms. Interstate Park is a long five mile paddle downstream from here. People who don't mind lots of portaging and scooting can go a long distance upstream to Hindman Park and even pass under Interstate 430.





The map below shows landmarks and provides float distances for the trip from Benny Craig to Interstate Park. Feel free to print a copy and take it with you on your next float!



For people who like to float long distances and battle logs and shallow water, more than 20 miles of the creek can be considered "floatable".

The six mile stretch between I-430 and Benny Craig Park has a wide range of sights from undisturbed bottomland hardwood forest to golf courses and widened, channelized sections of creek.

After a good rain, several of Fourche Creek's tributaries, including Haw Branch, Coleman Creek, Brodie Creek, and Rock Creek can provide a unique and challenging float for skilled kayakers. Due to the wide variety of urban hazards, floaters on these tributaries should explore the route thoroughly beforehand.

**Fourche Creek Float Distances** (Distances are in miles and are approximate)

	Otter Creek Blvd.	Baseline Rd.	I-430 / Sibley Hole Rd.	Hindman Park	Benny Craig Park
Otter Creek Blvd	—	1.3	2.0	6.0	8.8
Baseline Rd.	1.3	—	0.7	4.7	7.5
I-430 / Sibley Hole Rd.	2.0	0.7	—	4.0	6.8
Hindman Park	6.0	4.7	4.0	—	2.8
Benny Craig Park	8.8	7.5	6.8	2.8	—
Interstate Park	13.2	11.9	11.2	7.2	4.4
I-30 Borrow Pond	14.5	13.2	12.5	8.5	5.8
Springer Blvd.	15.9	14.6	13.9	9.9	7.1
Rommel Park	19.2	17.9	17.2	13.2	10.4
Arkansas River	20.3	19	18.3	14.3	11.5

	Interstate Park	I-30 Borrow Pond	Springer Blvd.	Rommel Park	Arkansas River
Otter Creek Blvd	13.2	14.5	15.9	19.2	20.3
Baseline Rd.	11.9	13.2	14.6	17.9	19.0
I-430 / Sibley Hole Rd.	11.2	12.5	13.9	17.2	18.3
Hindman Park	7.2	8.5	9.9	13.2	14.3
Benny Craig Park	4.4	5.8	7.1	10.4	11.5
Interstate Park	—	1.4	2.7	6.0	7.1
I-30 Borrow Pond	1.4	—	1.4	4.7	5.8
Springer Blvd.	2.7	1.4	—	3.3	4.4
Rommel Park	6.0	4.7	3.3	—	1.1
Arkansas River	7.1	5.8	4.4	1.1	—

**Things to know before you go:**

Audubon Arkansas is working with local governments, companies, and organizations to clean-up Fourche Creek. The easily seen floating trash is not the only pollutant in Fourche Creek. Water quality testing performed over the past three years has occasionally shown high levels of metals such as zinc and lead. Another water quality concern is the presence of high levels of fecal coliforms in the water for a period of two to three days following large rain events. This issue is being addressed as the Little Rock Wastewater Utility will be conducting \$165 million dollars in infrastructure improvements over the next 10 years which should dramatically lower the quantity and frequency of sewer overflows. For these reasons we encourage people to not float on the creek for a few days following a heavy rain.



And, as always when floating, remember to wear a life-jacket!