

= Fishing Creek (North Branch Susquehanna River) =

Fishing Creek is a 29 @. @ 98 @- @ mile (48 @. @ 25 km) long tributary of the Susquehanna River in Columbia County , Pennsylvania , in the United States . It joins the Susquehanna River near the census @- @ designated place of Rupert and the town of Bloomsburg . The watershed has an area of 385 square miles (1 @, @ 000 km²) .

Nomadic Native Americans arrived in the lower reaches of Fishing Creek around 8000 BCE , and some were spending winters in the upper reaches of the valley by 3000 to 2000 BCE . In the past few centuries , the Fishing Creek area has been home to many industries , mills , and dams . It drains parts of five Pennsylvania counties : Columbia , Montour , Sullivan , Luzerne , and Lycoming . The creek 's main tributaries include Hemlock Creek , Little Fishing Creek , Green Creek , Huntington Creek , West Branch Fishing Creek , and East Branch Fishing Creek .

Public recreation activities include canoeing , birdwatching , and fishing . The creek is known for its trout population , which includes brook , brown and rainbow trout ; it also contains many other species of fish . Northern hardwood trees and ruffed grouse live in the surrounding area .

Some stretches of Fishing Creek contain significant amounts of algae because of leaking septic systems in the watershed . The area around the tributary West Creek is the least habitable part of the Fishing Creek area , according to a 2011 study . The water quality of Fishing Creek can vary . Its pH ranges from 4 @. @ 9 to 8 @. @ 5 , while the concentration of dissolved oxygen ranges from 5 to 17 @. @ 5 mg per liter . The creek 's average discharge is 615 cubic feet per second (17 @. @ 4 m³ / s) ; its watershed contains gravel , shale and various loams ? in particular the Albrights soil series and the Leck Kill soil .

= = Course = =

Fishing Creek 's source is 920 feet (280 m) above sea level in Sugarloaf Township , south of State Game Lands Number 13 and Pennsylvania Route 118 , where East Branch and West Branch Fishing Creeks of southern Sullivan County meet in northern Columbia County . The creek heads approximately south with a few bends through Sugarloaf Township for about 2 miles (3 @. @ 2 km) . In the southern part of the township , it turns east for less than a mile and picks up Coles Creek ? its first named tributary after the confluence of the East and West Branches . It empties into Fishing Creek from the northeast , 26 @. @ 34 miles (42 @. @ 39 km) upstream of its mouth .

Around this point , Fishing Creek turns sharply south into Benton Township and starts flowing parallel to Pennsylvania Route 487 . Here it flows four or five miles , including about a mile in Benton , where West Creek parallels Fishing Creek and empties into it from the west just south of Benton and 21 @. @ 72 miles (34 @. @ 95 km) upstream of the mouth . Fishing Creek crosses under Pennsylvania Route 239 and continues approximately south , passing through the community of Maple Grove and flowing into Fishing Creek Township and Stillwater . In Stillwater , Raven Creek empties into the creek from the northeast , 18 @. @ 62 miles (29 @. @ 97 km) above the mouth . About 1 @. @ 5 to 2 miles (2 @. @ 4 ? 3 @. @ 2 km) south , the creek turns and picks up Huntington Creek , and then flows past the communities of Zaners , Forks , and Pealertown . The mouth of Huntington Creek is 15 @. @ 1 miles (24 @. @ 3 km) above the mouth of Fishing Creek .

Upon leaving Fishing Creek Township , about 1 mile (1 @. @ 6 km) after picking up Huntington Creek , Fishing Creek flows southwest past Knob Mountain and into Orange Township . It passes near the northern edge of Knob Mountain 2 miles (3 @. @ 2 km) downstream , then by Orangeville , and makes a 90 ° turn to the northwest . Shortly after this turn it picks up Green Creek 10 @. @ 84 miles (17 @. @ 45 km) above its mouth and turns west . After some distance , it turns south again , passing Bowman Bridge and a gauging station . From this point , the creek flows along the border between Orange and Mount Pleasant Townships for almost 2 miles (3 @. @ 2 km) . While on the border between these two townships , it flows past Kocher Park . The creek stays considerably nearer to the western edge of the river valley than the eastern edge at this point . Near Lightstreet , it turns west into Mount Pleasant Township , passing several lakes and the Turkey Hill Oxbow . Upon entering Mount Pleasant Township , the creek stops paralleling Pennsylvania Route 487 and

flows in the vicinity of Interstate 80 for 2 to 3 miles (3 @. @ 2 ? 4 @. @ 8 km) .

Along the border of Mount Pleasant Township and Bloomsburg , Fishing Creek picks up Little Fishing Creek at a distance of 3 @. @ 86 miles (6 @. @ 21 km) upstream of its mouth before turning south and paralleling the western border of Bloomsburg . As it flows between Bloomsburg and Fernville , it turns sharply westward , paralleling U.S. Route 11 , and picks up Hemlock Creek , which is 1 @. @ 52 miles (2 @. @ 45 km) above the mouth . Shortly after picking up Hemlock Creek , Fishing Creek turns southeast under U.S. Route 11 and flows parallel to Pennsylvania Route 42 for slightly over 1 mile (1 @. @ 6 km) , picking up Montour Run from the right , then empties 0 @. @ 72 miles (1 @. @ 16 km) later into the Susquehanna between Bloomsburg and Rupert . The Rupert Covered Bridge No. 56 crosses the main stem of the creek . Its mouth is 456 feet (139 m) above sea level ? 464 feet (141 m) lower than , and 29 @. @ 98 miles (48 @. @ 25 km) downstream of , the source .

= = = Tributaries = = =

Fishing Creek has several major tributaries and numerous minor ones . The major tributaries are Hemlock Creek , Little Fishing Creek , Green Creek , Huntington Creek , and the East and West Branch Fishing Creeks . West Branch Fishing Creek rises on North Mountain and flows east into Fishing Creek . East Branch Fishing Creek is a tributary that starts on North Mountain in Sullivan County and is approximately 4 @. @ 4 miles (7 @. @ 1 km) long . Huntington Creek starts in State Game Lands number 57 and heads southwest through Luzerne County until it reaches the north side of Knob Mountain , which it runs parallel to until it merges with Fishing Creek . Huntington Creek drains the eastern and northeastern parts of the Fishing Creek watershed . Four covered bridges cross Huntington Creek ; these are the Twin Bridges ? East Paden Covered Bridge No. 120 , the Twin Bridges ? West Paden Covered Bridge No. 121 , the Josiah Hess Covered Bridge No. 122 , and the Huntington Mills Bridge .

Green Creek rises near Waller and heads roughly south to Rohrsburg and on to Orangeville , where it joins Fishing Creek . It drains the central part of the Fishing Creek watershed . Little Fishing Creek starts just in Lycoming County near the Columbia County Line . It winds through rural areas before reaching Pennsylvania Route 42 , which it runs parallel to for the remainder of its length . It drains the western part of the Fishing Creek watershed . Four covered bridges cross Little Fishing Creek ; these are the Wanich Covered Bridge No. 69 , the Sam Eckman Covered Bridge No. 92 , the Jud Christie Covered Bridge No. 95 , and the Creasyville Covered Bridge .

Other tributaries of the main stem include Coles Creek and West Creek near Benton , Raven Creek in Fishing Creek Township , Hemlock Creek in Hemlock Township , Montour Run in Montour Township , and Deerlick Run and Stony Brook , both near Orange Township .

= = Watershed = =

Fishing Creek drains most of Columbia County north of the Susquehanna River except for an area in the eastern part of the county , which is drained by Briar Creek . It also drains southern Sullivan County and western Luzerne County . Minor tributaries drain small portions of Montour County and southeastern Lycoming County . The upper part of the watershed is 85 percent forest and 13 percent farmland . Near its source , the other two percent is residential ; closer to Benton , the remainder is urban . The creek 's drainage basin consists of a number of sub @-@ watersheds . The largest ones are the Huntington Creek watershed , with an area of 114 square miles ; the Little Fishing Creek watershed , with an area of 68 @. @ 1 square miles ; the Green Creek drainage basin , with an area of 36 @. @ 9 square miles ; and the West Branch Fishing Creek drainage basin , with an area of 32 @. @ 9 square miles .

= = = Oxbow lake = = =

Northern Bloomsburg and Scott Township include a small oxbow lake of Fishing Creek ; the area

around this lake is known as the Turkey Hill Oxbow . The lake is located between Interstate 80 and the forests on the side of Turkey Hill . The oxbow is on a flood plain and includes grasses , forested wetlands , and areas of open water . In wet periods of the year , the Turkey Hill Oxbow lake receives overflow from the waters of Fishing Creek while during dry periods it contains water in only a few places .

Most land around the oxbow is steep . It is covered by hemlock and hardwood forests , as well as skunk cabbage seeps . The forests around the lake also contain black birch , yellow birch , white oak , red oak , sugar maple , tulip poplar , and Norway maple , while the understory contains slippery elm , European privet , Japanese barberry , American elderberry , wild hydrangea , witch hazel , mountain laurel , ironwood , and the rare American yew . The American yew population was in significant decline by 2004 due to heavy grazing by deer .

There are numerous wildflower species in the uplands and rock outcroppings of the Turkey Hill Oxbow . These include white baneberry , northern maidenhair fern , spikenard , blue cohosh , foamflower , false Solomon 's seal , purple trillium , and wild columbine . Animals inhabiting the areas surrounding the pools include pickerel frogs , green frogs , wood ducks , and snapping turtles . Plants in this location include broadleaf arrowhead , northern blueflag , manna grasses , water starwort , and several varieties of sedges . Japanese knotweed has been seen near Interstate 80 on the northern edges of the Turkey Hill Oxbow .

= = History = =

= = = Native American settlement = = =

Having first inhabited Pennsylvania between 16 @,@ 000 and 10 @,@ 000 BCE , nomadic Native Americans reached the area near the mouth of Fishing Creek by 8000 BCE . By 3000 to 2000 BCE , some of them were going into the Fishing Creek valley during the winter to hunt deer and bears and returning to the Susquehanna River in the summer , creating trade routes . There was no permanent habitation until 1000 BCE when some Native American villages were built at the mouth of Fishing Creek . The Native Americans who settled in this area included the Shawnee and Susquehannock Indians . A Native American path ran along the creek from Bloomsburg to Orangeville before turning away in the direction of Tunkhannock Creek . Since at least 1769 , there has also been a path between the mouths of Huntington and Green Creeks .

= = = European settlement = = =

The first lots at the mouth of Fishing Creek were surveyed in 1769 when European settlers began moving into the area , and in the same year , the Penn family purchased 1060 acres (430 hectares) of land 2 miles (3 @.@ 2 km) upstream of Benton . In 1778 , Moses Van Campen built a fort of logs covered with earth with a small swivel cannon on Fishing Creek to protect settlers on the frontier . There were settlers on the creek in Orange Township in 1780 , and the Fishing Creek valley north of Orangeville , in what is now Stillwater , was first settled in 1783 by Daniel McHenry . The headwaters of the creek were settled in the late 1780s and early 1790s . Leonard Rupert established a ferry on the creek in 1786 . The first sawmill on the upper portion of Fishing Creek was built in the late 1790s ; it was destroyed in a flood in 1848 .

The first mill in Sugarloaf Township was built alongside Fishing Creek in 1802 , and another mill in the same township was noted for its buckwheat flour . A schoolhouse had been built by 1806 . In 1818 , John Barton built a flour and grist mill on Fishing Creek . It was destroyed by fire in 1855 and again in 1905 . Although rebuilt , it burned down again in 1932 . Another gristmill stood on the creek until 1830 when it was converted into a paper mill . Iron ore was discovered in the area of Fishing Creek in 1822 , and in 1844 , an anthracite @-@ burning furnace was built on the creek near Bloomsburg . In the 19th century , an aqueduct was built across the creek . From around 1840 to 1900 , the wagon @-@ making industry was important to the upper Fishing Creek area . Another

historic industry was the Susquehanna Slate Company , which operated in the late 19th century . The Fishing Creek Confederacy (August ? November 1864) during the American Civil War was a suspected uprising of a high number of deserters and draft evaders . A thousand soldiers occupied and searched the Fishing Creek valley and the mountains of its headwaters but were unable to find any deserters . Nevertheless , 100 residents of Columbia County were arrested and imprisoned for desertion and draft evasion although most were later released . Starting in 1877 , the Bloomsburg Water Company used Fishing Creek as its water supply . The Bloomsburg and Sullivan Railroad , which paralleled the creek , was built in 1888 .

There were limestone mines at the junction of Fishing Creek and Little Fishing Creek , but these have not been used since at least 1887 . During the Great Depression , a beach was constructed on the creek near Fernville by the Works Progress Administration . After the creek flooded in 1972 from Hurricane Agnes , a flash flood warning system was installed there . In 2002 , a tract of land from the Custer / Kocher homestead on Fishing Creek near Lightstreet was converted into a park called the Frank W. Kocher Memorial Park , which was later expanded to cover 7 acres (2 @. @ 8 ha) . In the 21st century , the only significant industry in the watershed is the Benton Foundry .

= = Hydrology = =

Approximately 1 mile (1 @. @ 6 km) downstream of Orangeville a gauging station was established on the creek in 1938 . Other monitoring of the creek has included detailed studies at a stream @-@ gauging station near Bloomsburg , which operated from 2002 to 2012 .

= = = Discharge = = =

Just downstream of Orangeville , Fishing Creek 's discharge averages 615 cubic feet per second (17 @. @ 4 m³ / s) , with a median of 361 cubic feet per second (10 @. @ 2 m³ / s) . The lowest recorded discharge was 90 cubic feet per second (2 @. @ 5 m³ / s) while the highest was 2 @, @ 580 cubic feet per second (73 m³ / s) . Further upstream in Benton , it is almost always less than 720 cubic feet per second (20 m³ / s) , and usually approaches zero during the summer . The typical discharge is around 540 cubic feet per second (15 m³ / s) . In years of drought , the streambeds of West Branch and East Branch Fishing Creeks typically run dry for 105 days over summer ; even in wet years they are dry for an average of 5 days . Near Bloomsburg , Fishing Creek 's discharge has ranged between 10 cubic feet per second (0 @. @ 28 m³ / s) and 5 @, @ 350 cubic feet per second (151 m³ / s) .

= = = pH = = =

Near Benton , Fishing Creek 's pH ranges from around 5 @. @ 6 to 7 @. @ 25 , while near Bloomsburg , a wider range has been recorded , from 5 @. @ 8 to 8 @. @ 5 . Near Camp Lavigne , it ranges from 5 @. @ 5 to 7 @. @ 1 . East Branch Fishing Creek is the only stream in the watershed whose pH drops below 5 @. @ 5 ; it can fall as low as 4 @. @ 9 . West Creek and Coles Creek are the least acidic streams in the watershed , with pH levels usually above 6 @. @ 3 and often above 7 . Typically , the creek and its tributaries are not at risk of becoming too acidic for the optimal health of fish , but in early spring during snowmelts , the levels approach the limit that brook trout can tolerate . Fishing Creek 's waters are acidic because of acid rain .

= = = Dissolved chemicals = = =

= = = = Nonmetals = = = =

The concentration of dissolved oxygen in Fishing Creek ranges from approximately 5 to 17 @. @ 5 mg / L at Benton . A site near Camp Lavigne had slightly less variability , ranging from 8 to 17 mg /

L. The concentration near Bloomsburg ranged between 4 @. @ 1 and 17 @. @ 1 mg / L , with an average of 10 @. @ 9 mg / L. The amount of carbon dioxide near Bloomsburg ranged from 0 @. @ 3 to 34 mg / L , with an average of 2 @. @ 04 mg / L.

The total concentration of nitrogen near Bloomsburg between 2002 and 2012 ranged from 0 @. @ 52 to 2 @. @ 8 mg / L. The average concentration was 1 @. @ 212 mg / L. The ammonia levels in the creek ranged from less than 0 @. @ 02 mg / L to 0 @. @ 06 mg / L , while the concentration of nitrates was always less than 0 @. @ 04 mg / L. The total concentration of phosphates ranged from less than 0 @. @ 031 mg / L to 0 @. @ 11 mg / L , while for phosphorus the figures ranged from less than 0 @. @ 01 mg / L to 0 @. @ 575 mg / L.

The total concentration of dissolved solids near Bloomsburg ranges from less than 2 to 166 mg / L.

== == Metals == ==

In most places on Fishing Creek , there is not enough dissolved aluminum to be toxic , although East Branch Fishing Creek has aluminum concentrations of over 100 ?g per liter , approaching a lethal level for fish . Fishing Creek itself and all its other tributaries have concentrations of less than 70 ?g per liter . The concentration is seasonal : aluminum trapped in frozen ground is released into the streams when the soil thaws . As a result , aluminum levels in the creek peak in March and April and drop to almost zero in the summer .

The concentration of calcium at the gauging station near Bloomsburg has ranged from 5 @. @ 5 mg / L to 26 mg / L , averaging 7 @. @ 532 mg / L. The concentration of magnesium has ranged from 1 @. @ 5 mg / L to 6 @. @ 7 mg / L , with an average of 1 @. @ 748 mg / L.

== == Dams == ==

There are five dams on Fishing Creek . The lowhead dam called Boone 's Dam is the furthest downstream , in Montour Township . It is 4 @. @ 5 feet (1 @. @ 4 m) high and 253 feet (77 m) long . Further upstream is the Diverting Dam , a 2 @- @ foot (0 @. @ 6 @- @ meter) high and 100 @- @ foot (31 @- @ meter) long dam in Bloomsburg . It was built to power the nearby Irondale furnaces . A 380 @- @ foot (120 m) wide and 5 @- @ foot (1 @. @ 5 m) high unnamed dam is on the creek further upstream , in Mount Pleasant Township . The uppermost dams are the 130 @- @ foot (40 m) wide and 11 @- @ foot (3 @. @ 4 m) high Benton Dam and the 150 @- @ foot (46 m) wide and 6 @- @ foot (1 @. @ 8 m) high Mill Dam , which are in Benton Township and Benton . Additionally , the Jonestown Dam is on the tributary Huntington Creek in Jonestown . This dam is 8 feet (2 @. @ 4 m) high and 120 feet (37 m) wide .

== == Water temperature == ==

The highest water temperature is at West Creek , which can reach 77 ° F (25 ° C) in the summer . In Benton , Fishing Creek can reach 75 ° F (24 ° C) in the summer while Coles Creek only reaches 66 to 68 ° F (19 to 20 ° C) . In the winter , the water in the main stem is around 32 ° F (0 ° C) , while in West Branch Fishing Creek it can drop to 28 ° F (? 2 ° C) in the winter , making it the coldest stream in the watershed . At the gauging station near Bloomsburg , the temperature has ranged from 32 to 78 ° F (0 to 26 ° C) ; it was at its lowest on January 10 , 2011 . The highest temperature occurred on August 3 , 2006 . The average temperature in August was 72 @. @ 81 ° F (22 @. @ 67 ° C) and the average water temperature in January was 35 @. @ 46 ° F (1 @. @ 92 ° C) . The temperature has averaged approximately 53 @. @ 65 ° F (12 @. @ 03 ° C) .

== Geology ==

The Fishing Creek watershed has been affected by glaciation , which has left a glacial till near the source and glacial outwash in the lower parts of the watershed . The watershed lies in two major geological regions : the Deep Valley section of the Allegheny Plateau and the Susquehanna

Lowlands Section . The Allegheny Plateau lies in the upper reaches of the watershed and is characterized by deep valleys and rounded mountains with elevations of around 2 @, @ 400 feet (730 m) . The Susquehanna Lowlands section is characterized by linear ridges of moderate elevation and valleys less steep than those of the Deep Valley region . There are also flood plains along the creek . Near its mouth , it cuts through Montour Ridge , and a basalt @-@ containing section of the Catskill Formation extends to the creek 's banks in Hemlock Township . Other rock formations along the banks include the Clinton Formation , the Selena Formation , the Lower Helderburg Formation , and the Hamilton Formation . There is a terminal moraine , which crosses the creek near Benton .

The bed of Fishing Creek contains red and brown shale in some places . Other parts of the watershed lie over gray sandstone or conglomerates . There are numerous deposits of iron ore , limestone and marble in the watershed of Fishing Creek . Most of the rock in the watershed , including the Trimmers Rock Formation and Catskill Formation , is from the Devonian Period , but some of the northernmost tributaries have watersheds on rock from the Mississippian Period , such as the Huntley Mountain Formation and Burgoon sandstone . The creek is a freestone stream although its water is colder than that of most eastern freestone streams .

Areas along Fishing Creek contain pools followed by riffles , which are further followed by more pools . This configuration of pools and riffles creates an ideal situation for fly @-@ fishing . The lower part of the creek forms one side of a triangle of low @-@ lying land in western Bloomsburg , which floods severely during heavy rains .

= = = Soil = = =

The main soil in the area of Fishing Creek belongs to the Albrights series , which contains a 7 @-@ inch (18 cm) layer of sticky , reddish @-@ brown , gravelly silt loam . Below this is a layer of yellowish @-@ red , gravelly , silty clay loam , which extends to approximately 30 inches (76 cm) below ground and lies over a layer of equal portions of gravel and silty clay loam . Bedrock occurs several feet below the surface . The top 8 inches (20 cm) of the Leck Kill @-@ Meckesville @-@ Calvin series in the watershed is dark brown silt loam with small pieces of sandstone and shale . A subsoil of reddish @-@ brown silt loam from 8 to 32 inches (20 to 81 cm) below ground is followed by a 6 @-@ inch (15 cm) layer of sticky clay loam , below which is a bedrock of red shale .

The Barbour series occurs near the source of the creek . It is topped with a crumbly , 10 @-@ inch (25 cm) layer of brownish @-@ red silt loam over a loose subsoil of reddish @-@ brown loam with some gravel . The top layer can easily be penetrated by roots and water . Further down is a layer of reddish @-@ brown gravel and sand , which extends to 10 feet (3 @. @ 0 m) or more underground . The Basher series also occurs along upper Fishing Creek . The top layer is a loose , crumbly , reddish @-@ brown sandy loam extending to 9 inches (23 cm) underground , and the subsoil is a loose , porous , reddish @-@ brown sandy loam with some gravel , extending to 20 inches (51 cm) underground . Lower down , there is a layer of red sandy loam with some gravel that extends from 15 to 30 inches (38 to 76 cm) underground .

The Pekin series is found along Fishing Creek and its tributary Huntington Creek . The uppermost layer , a dark brown silt loam that extends to 8 inches (20 cm) underground , lies over a layer of brown silt loam with 10 percent gravel extending 16 inches (41 cm) underground . The subsoil is mottled , brown , silty clay loam with cobbles and extends to 40 inches (100 cm) underground . Bedrock occurs at a depth of 6 to 40 feet (1 @. @ 8 to 12 @. @ 2 m) underground . The Pekin soils near the creek contain more cobbles than typical Pekin soils . Soils of the Chenango @-@ Pope @-@ Holly series have also been found along it .

In 1914 the soils of the Fishing Creek watershed were found to yield large quantities of farm crops . Potatoes yielded 100 to 200 bushels per acre , corn 70 to 90 bushels per acre , oats 40 bushels per acre , wheat 20 to 30 bushels per acre , and hay one to two tons per acre . J. H. Battle 's 1887 History of Columbia and Montour Counties , Pennsylvania stated that the Fishing Creek valley was fertile .

= = Biology = =

Benthic algae densely cover the bed of Fishing Creek , their preponderance attributed to leaking septic systems . At one location on the main stem downstream of Grassmere Park , coverage exceeds 60 percent . The dominant algal organism on West Branch Fishing Creek near the village of Elk Grove is *Cladophora* . The green algae *Tetraspora* dominates the stretch of Fishing Creek for 3 miles (4 @. @ 8 km) downstream of Grassmere Park , where it covers 80 percent of the riverbed . South of Pennsylvania Route 239 's crossing of the creek , the dominant algal organisms are *Microspora* , *Mougeotia* , and *Spirogyra* . In the fall , decomposing algae covers 50 percent of the riverbed .

Thirty @-@ six species of macroinvertebrates live in Fishing Creek . The highest level of macroinvertebrate biodiversity on upper Fishing Creek is near Grassmere Park while the lowest is in Benton . The number of these organisms per square meter on Fishing Creek ranges from under 200 in Benton to nearly 400 halfway between Coles Creek and Benton . The highest density of them in the watershed occurs at West Creek where there are between 600 and almost 900 per m² and the lowest density occurs at a site on East Branch Fishing Creek , where there are approximately 100 per m² .

Some of Fishing Creek is stocked by the Fishing Creek Sportsman 's Association and contains populations of brook trout , rainbow trout , and brown trout . Many of them are sizable ; the largest one caught in Fishing Creek weighed 8 pounds (3 @. @ 6 kg) and was 28 inches (71 cm) long . All streams in the watershed are suitable for trout habitation according to the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission . An 1887 book stated that Fishing Creek and its tributaries may have once been " alive with trout " . In the upper part of the watershed , wild brook trout are most common in West Branch Fishing Creek and fish in general are least common in East Branch Fishing Creek . West Creek has higher fish diversity than any other stream in the upper part of the watershed and is also the only place that is inhabited by wild brown trout . In addition , sculpin and cutlips minnow have been observed in large numbers in the creek and its tributaries . Less commonly observed fish in the upper part of the watershed include johnny darters , white suckers , and black @-@ nosed dace . It is difficult for fish to spawn in the creek because of poor water quality near Benton , a lack of food , and dry headwaters for part of the year . The fish diversity in East Branch Fishing Creek and West Branch Fishing Creek is also significantly affected by episodic acidification , which is caused by acid rain falling in areas with no limestone in the bedrock . The main stem experiences similar problems but to a lesser extent , and the tributaries Coles Creek and West Creek experience the problems even less .

Northern hardwood trees are common in the Fishing Creek watershed . Ruffed grouse are common along Little Fishing Creek and its tributaries north of Iola . There are populations of Japanese knotweed , an invasive plant , along the creek and its tributaries south of Pennsylvania Route 118 .

= = = Habitat quality = = =

In 2011 , the habitat quality of upper Fishing Creek and its tributaries were rated on a scale of 1 to 200 (with a higher rating indicating better habitability) by Point Park University and the Fishing Creek Sportsmans ' Association . Most of this part of the creek and its tributaries were rated 166 or higher , which was considered optimal . The waters near the mouths of West Branch and East Branch Fishing Creeks , and Fishing Creek near Benton , were rated 113 to 160 , considered suboptimal . A portion of West Creek was rated 60 ? 112 , considered marginal .

The highest Shannon Diversity Index of any stream in the Fishing Creek watershed is around 2 @. @ 75 , for West Branch Fishing Creek . This value is closely followed by that of West Creek , which has an index of 2 @. @ 5 to 2 @. @ 6 . The lowest value in the watershed is that of East Branch Fishing Creek , which is around 1 @. @ 2 . The main stem has a Shannon Diversity Index of 2 @. @ 1 to 2 @. @ 4 , depending on the site .

The Fishing Creek Sportsmans ' Association has proposed a number of methods to conserve Fishing Creek and its tributaries . These include planting riparian buffers , eliminating leaky septic

systems , and protecting the area from hydraulic fracturing .

= = Recreation = =

The Fishing Creek Watershed Association plans to open a public section of the creek that stretches for 6500 feet (1980 meters) , with a park of 92 acres (37 @. @ 2 ha) . There are other tracts of public property along the creek , one of which , called the Power Dam , is 2 miles (3 @. @ 2 km) upstream of Benton . It covers 19 acres (7 @. @ 7 ha) and stretches for 2900 feet (880 meters) of Fishing Creek , and contains the remains of a concrete dam . Another public area is the Benton Overlook 1 mile (1 @. @ 6 km) into Benton , which covers 42 acres (17 @. @ 0 ha) and stretches for 2600 feet (790 meters) near the creek . A public site at the Zanners Bridge in Zaner 2 @. @ 5 miles (4 @. @ 0 km) downstream from Stillwater covers 31 acres (12 @. @ 5 ha) along about 1000 feet (300 meters) of the creek and contains an abandoned railroad grade .

The Grassmere Park Campground was established in the early 1900s on Fishing Creek . Further downstream , near Lightstreet , is Kocher Park , which occupies more than 7 acres (2 @. @ 8 ha) . Typical activities there include canoeing , dog walking , birdwatching and fishing .

The western part of Pennsylvania State Game Lands Number 13 is in a gorge cut by West Branch Fishing Creek . These state game lands have an area of 50 @. @ 000 acres and feature many forest roads and old grades . The hiking trail Waterfall Wonderland , which affords views of Big , Twin , Lewis , and Sullivan Falls , is described as " a place of almost mystical beauty " by Jeff Mitchell in his book Hiking the Endless Mountains : Exploring the Wilderness of Northeastern Pennsylvania . The state game lands are less crowded than the nearby Ricketts Glen State Park .

The Jakey Hollow Natural Area is on a small tributary of Little Fishing Creek . It is near Mordansville and features old @-@ growth forests . The natural area is one of the smallest in Pennsylvania .