

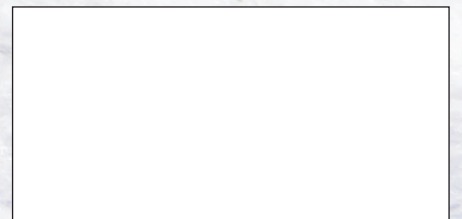
Trout

Talk

**Fishing access for
everyone**

Page 3

AUGUST 2020



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Bennett is accessible to all anglers

Special access areas open fishing opportunities up for anglers with mobility issues

CHRIS RODEN • FOR TROUT TALK

Bennett Spring State Park offers anglers a trout fishing experience that keeps bringing them back.

However, it offers more than fishing. Friendships get strengthened by enjoying the pleasures the park has to offer.

Fishing buddies Dave Mosley and Phillip Barnes have a very high opinion of Bennett Spring State Park.

"This park is probably better than any I've been to so far," Mosley said.

More than any other park they have visited, Bennett Spring accommodates their disabilities.

One benefit of the American Disabilities Act was to make Missouri's state parks more accessible to anglers whose disabilities would otherwise make fishing in the trout park more of a pain than a pleasure.

Thanks to its jetties and fishing platforms, Bennett Spring State Park tries to accommodate its disabled anglers throughout the park.

"This park is pretty dog gone good. We've went to Montauk before, shortly after I lost my leg, and tried to get around there. Montauk wasn't anywhere close to this park. They had two handicap access areas. It just wasn't accommodating whatsoever," Mosley said.

For him, it is Bennett Spring State Park that takes top honors.

Mosley, 63, from St. Peters, Mo., in St. Charles County, makes good use of the park's disability accessible fishing areas in all three zones. However, the whistle bridge might be his favorite.

Bennett Spring State Park calls to him and his best friend often.

"We spend a lot of time here," Mosley said.

For the winter trout season, he and Barnes, fish at Busch Memorial Conservation Area in their home town.

However, for the regular season, the park and their fellow visitors are their focus.

Mosley said he was even impressed by the people who give them easy access to the handicap fishing access points regardless of a handicap priority sign being posted or not.

"We've never had a problem," he said.

Were it not for the park's disability access points, he and Barnes might fish elsewhere.

Seven years ago, Mosley lost his right leg.

He was in the hospital getting a vein bypass on his left leg and also had an angioplasty to make sure his heart was working fine.

Given the options of spending the night in the hospital after the procedure or going home, Mosley chose going home.

When he woke up, he discovered that while he slept the insertion point in his right leg for the angioplasty's thin tube had reopened overnight.

"They said I lost about half of my blood. When I got to the hospital, I had four nice nurses and a 10-pound bag of sand waiting for me. They put that on there, and it was going to stop



Trout Talk photo/Chris Roden

Dave Mosley and Phillip Barnes from St. Peters, Mo. enjoy Bennett Spring's accommodations for disabled anglers.

the blood in my leg or to my body," Mosley said.

Consequently, he had to choose between losing a leg or dying.

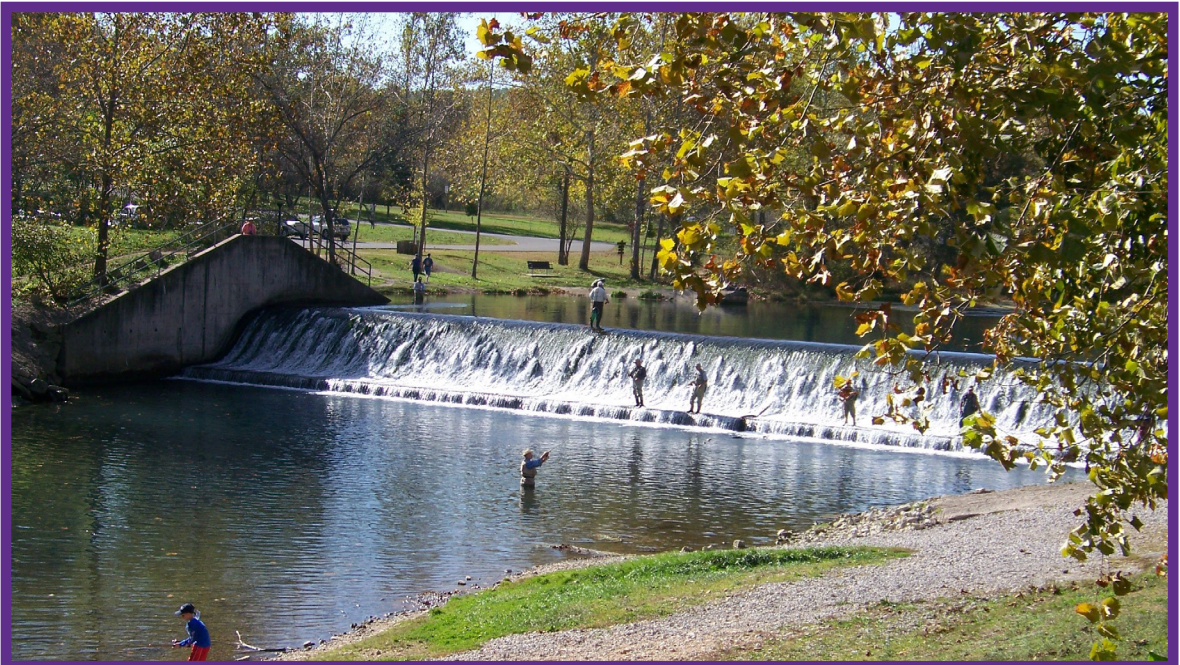
"The choice wasn't that hard ... It was unfortunate that it happened, but those things happen," Mosley said.

He used a standard wheelchair fol-

lowing the amputation. Rehabilitation in order to do everyday activities took three months.

His outdoor mobility saw a spike when his wife purchased his new ride, a Go-Go Elite scooter, about three years ago.

See 'ACCESSIBLE' on page 5



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Accessible

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"When I got the scooter, it was a lifesaver. I'll be honest," Mosley said.

Barnes appreciated the purchase almost as much as Mosley did.

"A lot of times, I was having to push him around and load his wheelchair up in the truck. That Go-Go Elite helps a lot. Plus, he can run up to the truck and get us drinks pretty easy," Barnes said.

Mosley joked about his duties.

"I end up being the runner with no leg. How does that figure? It works out," Mosley said.

Barnes, 56, has his disabilities, too.

He was a concrete finisher for 30 years and also plowed snow in the winter off-season before an accident broke his back.

He has also had both knees replaced, one that required a revision surgery, two carpal tunnel surgeries and a foot and ankle surgery.

Consequently, pushing Mosley's chair was no easy task.

"Sometimes we joke around about that like he can get around sometimes easier than I can," Barnes said.

Mosley is very appreciative of the help Barnes gives him.

"My buddy here, he takes me everywhere. He's the best friend in the world," Mosley said.

The process of going from fully mobile to a wheelchair and then a scooter has not disabled his positive spirit and joking attitude.

"It's been a transition. I could sit at home and whine," he said.

Instead, he was having good luck fishing below the whistle bridge.

Mosley retired from 30 years of office work at Hussmann Manufacturing, maker of commercial refrigeration units.

Mosley said that although the whistle bridge is a favorite spot of his, it is also a favorite of others. When he and Phillip arrived at 5:30 a.m., anglers already had the bridge staked out.

Instead, they used the wheelchair access further down the river in

Zone Three.

Mosley primarily uses Berkley Power Bait in Zone Three, usually salmon egg peach or fluorescent orange, but will use anything the fish are biting.

Mosley and Barnes trek to Bennett at least once a month.

Barnes said the only thing that had prevented their monthly outings was the coronavirus period when the stream was not being stocked.

"The weekend they opened it, we came the following Sunday. They had just started stocking it. We did good. It was definitely slow ... but we did catch fish and it was definitely great to get out again," Barnes said.

Fishing at Bennett Spring State Park is not Mosley's only water sport.

Before he lost his leg, Mosley was a certified diver. He has a trip planned to scuba dive with his brother-in-law who lives in Tampa, Fla.

"Down there, they've got scuba diving places that work with vets, so it's not unusual for them to have handicapped divers. It's a pretty good deal for me," he said.

Scuba diving only adds to his mobility.

"I'm pretty comfortable. As a matter of fact, when you get in the water when you've lost a limb, it's easier getting around in the water than it is on land. It really is. It gives you a sense of freedom," Mosley said.

The majority of his time near the water is on the bank with his best buddy, Barnes even though he admitted that Barnes usually catches the bigger fish.

"It's been a real good relationship. I've been blessed in a lot of ways. A lot of people say 'How can you say you've been blessed? You've only got one leg.' You wouldn't believe how much more I've gained by losing something," Mosley said.



Trout Talk photo/Chris Roden

The concrete fishing area several yards below the whistle bridge is one of several places in the park that make negotiating a scooter or wheelchair possible.

Bennett-Spring.com

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Get in the zone

Take a look at Bennett Spring State Park's rules and regulations

FISHING REGULATIONS

The spring branch is stocked daily during the regular fishing season, which is March 1 through Oct. 31. Daily permits are required to fish on the spring branch and zones are set aside for different kinds of lures.

For more information, call (417) 532-4307.

ZONE 1: From the hatchery dam upstream to the end of the area. Only flies are permitted.

ZONE 2: From the hatchery dam to the whistle bridge. Only flies and artificial lures are permitted.

ZONE 3: From the whistle bridge to the Niangua River. Only soft plastic bait (unscented), natural and scented bait are permitted. All flies

and artificial lures are prohibited, even if natural bait or scent has been added.

Zone areas are marked in the park and maps are also available in the Park Store.

Trout Fishing Hours

July: 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

August: 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

September: 7:30 a.m. to 7:15 p.m.

October: 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

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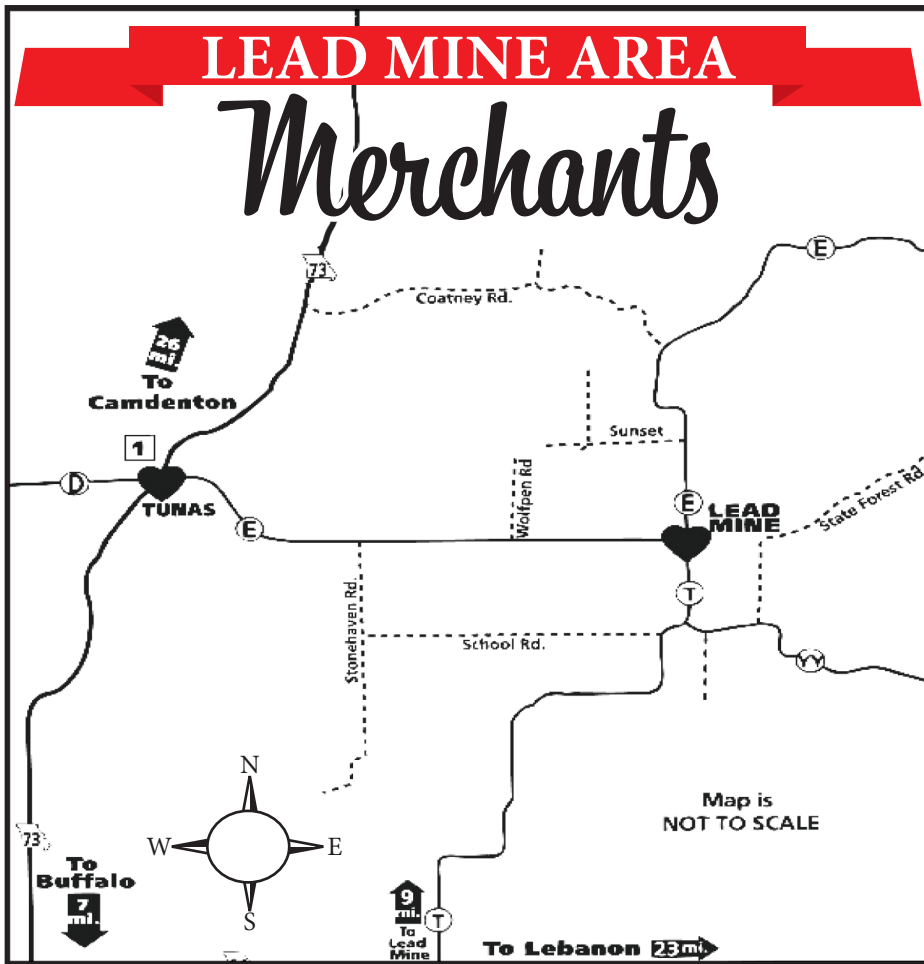
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Anglers aren't the only ones to visit Bennett Spring State Park



Trout Talk photo/Chris Roden

A doe takes a morning stroll at Bennett Spring State Park near the hatchery.

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BENNETT SPRING STATE PARK AND SURROUNDING AREA



Anglers show off their lunkers

These fishermen have stories and the pictures to prove them!



Photos courtesy of the Bennett Spring State Park Store

Left, Layton shows off his stringer of trout that he caught in Zone 2. Middle left, Dayne, 12, caught his first trout in Zone 1 using a white fuzzy lure. Middle right, Tom Rogers III of St. Charles, Mo., caught this 4 pound 8 ounces trout in Zone 2.. Right, Bill L. of Hardin, Mo., caught this 4-pound trout in Zone 3 using Powerbait.

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