

# Five Places to Fish Near Gettysburg



*by Ralph Scherder*

*photos by the author*

Some of my most memorable fishing trips have been where I've combined fishing with learning about our country's history, and there's no better place to do that than Gettysburg, Adams County. This quiet little town played a major role in our country's history, and the battle that occurred here is often referred to as the turning point in the American Civil War. Everywhere around town are placards and memorials that detail the events. Many people have spent lifetimes studying this battle alone. Although I visited Gettysburg on several occasions, it wasn't until I fished

the streams around the battlefield that I truly got a sense of the place itself.

The streams and lakes near Gettysburg aren't world-class waters by any stretch. They don't have the major hatches that limestone streams only an hour away experience. They don't have an abundance of native or wild trout. And, the lakes don't even offer spectacular warmwater fishing. But, they do provide an opportunity to connect with the land in a way that most tourists do not—to step into the same water and feel the same earth where many soldiers gave their lives for the cause they believed in. Most served as travel routes for each army as they made their way to and from Gettysburg before and after the battle. The five places mentioned here provide the best opportunities for anglers to experience good fishing.



*Sachs Covered Bridge is a historical destination that provides excellent access to Marsh Creek, Adams County. It's also a popular place for ghost hunters.*



*Adams County and the surrounding area has several streams that receive spring trout stockings.*

## Marsh Creek

Marsh Creek is relatively small. Like most streams in Adams County, it has a gentle gradient that makes it easy to wade. The stream is stocked multiple times throughout the spring with Rainbow Trout and Brown Trout from the bridge on Cashtown Road, Biglerville, down to the bridge on Route 30. Trout fishing generally stays good here until early June.

Once the water starts to warm, I focus my fishing efforts downstream near Sachs Covered Bridge, which is the bridge the Confederates used during their retreat from the battlefield. There's a long, deep pool created by a small dam downstream of the bridge, and the pool stretches several hundred yards upstream. Here you'll find a variety of bass and panfish.

Sachs Covered Bridge is also a prime location for ghost hunters, so if you fish late and notice an increase in human activity before dark, don't panic. It's the non-human activity you should worry about.

## Little Marsh Creek

Little Marsh Creek is located just a few minutes west of Gettysburg, where it meets Marsh Creek just downstream of Knoxlyn Road. Little Marsh Creek is about half the size of Marsh Creek and also has a steeper gradient. Several parts of this stream have some interesting geological formations, which make it a neat place to fish.

The stream is stocked with trout multiple times every spring. The main appeal, though, is that it takes a literal monsoon to flood this creek. It runs off fast, and when bigger streams in the area are too high, Little Marsh Creek is generally the first to be fishable. However, it also gets real small real quick during prolonged periods of dry weather. By late spring, you'll find few trout left. Like Marsh Creek and other area streams, the best time to fish it is early spring when water levels are still up a bit.

## Rock Creek

Rock Creek flows around the eastern edge of the battlefield, directly behind Culp's Hill, and joins Marsh Creek south of Gettysburg. Rock Creek is primarily a warmwater fishery for bass and panfish. Downstream, toward the Maryland border, Rock Creek is known as the Monocacy River but should not be

confused with the Monocacy Creek found in the Lehigh Valley. If you're planning to fish this stream, that's a key distinction to make when searching for more information.

## Conewago Creek

Conewago Creek originates in western Adams County and flows just north of Gettysburg, and it is one of the few area streams offering a chance to fly fish over rising trout. It has some good mayfly hatches including Blue Winged Olives, Blue Quills, Hendricksons, March Browns and Sulphurs to go along with a variety of caddis. There's a 1.1-mile Catch and Release Fly-Fishing Only section located 0.1 mile below Russell Tavern Road downstream to PA 34.

The stream is stocked heavily with trout multiple times every spring, and trout fishing stays good until late spring or early summer, depending on the weather and how much rain we receive to keep flows fishable. Later in the year, downstream of U.S. 15, Conewago Creek becomes a good warmwater fishery.

## Long Pine Run Reservoir

Perhaps, the best public access lake in the area is Long Pine Run Reservoir, the 151-acre lake located within the Michaux State Forest. The lake is restricted to unpowered and electric motorboats only, and no swimming or wading is permitted. However, the lake is home to a number of warmwater species including Largemouth Bass of substantial size. Long Pine Run Reservoir is a great place to paddle and fish.

Although the streams and lakes around Gettysburg aren't as well known as those in other parts of the state, they still provide an excellent opportunity to experience the area in a way that most tourists do not. More than anything, they allow you to slow down and not get caught up in jumping from one placard to the next. In the quiet moments spent fishing, we can reflect on the events that transpired here and how they have shaped our country. Make fishing a part of every Gettysburg visit with the waters mentioned here that provide plenty of time to appreciate history. ☐