

ELK RIVER

Distance	126 miles from Vanderbilt
Directions	Take I-24 east to Exit 111 in Manchester. At the top of the exit ramp, turn left onto Highway 55 west. Follow the “jog” of 55 to the right and back to the left in Tullahoma. Shortly after driving past Lynchburg, turn left on Highway 50. Follow this until you see the dam of Tim’s Ford Lake. Parking/access is across the river on the left. For an 8.5-mile float trip, take out at the Ferris Creek Bridge.
Description	This friendly float stream has good access points and a varied landscape. Although most sections are bordered by tilled bottomlands and occasional cow herds, the Elk is bordered by high, rocky cliffs in a few sections and wooded hillsides in others. Throughout the river, the canoeist can find gravel bars and islands that are perfect for lunch spots. This river is dam controlled so there is always enough water to paddle in if you go on a weekend. Expect the water to be pretty clear and cold.
Campsites	A larger island, known as Dickey Island, is a good camping area, but be aware of rising water levels that occur when the generators run at Tim’s Ford Dam.
Cautions	Other than the occasional strainer in the river, the canoeist should be aware of the rising water levels. The water can be a bit pushy as well when the generators are releasing. In order to avoid high waters, you can call the TVA Information Line for a water release schedule. The number is 1-800-238-2264. Press “4” for a water release schedule. Press “50” for Tim’s Ford Dam. Press “#” for a future release schedule.
For More Information	Refer to <u>Canoeing in Tennessee</u> by Holly Sherwin, pp. 58-59. You can reach an Elk River outfitter by calling Elk River Canoe Rental at (931) 937-6886.