Points of Interest:

A: Mill Creek Road yellow trestle bridge over the Mill Creek
B: Confluence of West Fork with the Mill Creek
C: Access point for canoes at south side of Mill Creek Road bridge, along west bank
D: Abandoned grain silos that can be seen from a distance along the Mill Creek
E: Hopple Street Viaduct, followed by a rocky riffle that is hard to paddle or walk
F: Lowest reach of the Mill Creek that was channelized for flood damage reduction
G: Confluence of Lick Run, which is a major source of combined sewer overflows
H: Western Hills Viaduct, scenic gateway to tree-lined stream reach with more wildlife
I: Small bay, probably marks the confluence of a long-forgotten tributary
J: Mill Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant (prevents development on west bank)
K: Queensgate Rail Yard (prevents more development on east bank)
L: Gest Street bridge over the Mill Creek
M: Eighth Street Viaduct over the Mill Creek
N: Gateway of the Mill Creek Barrier Dam
O: Railroad bridge and streambank that is the final Mill Creek take-out spot
P: Sixth Street Viaduct over the Mill Creek
Q: 19th-century stone arch bridge that was widened in 1918 and 1920 for trains
R: Mill Creek confluence with the Ohio River

Put-In: Mill Creek Road bridge, along the west bank, parallel to Cincinnati’s Division of Sanitation, 3320 Millcreek Road, Cincinnati, 45223
Take-Out: Mill Creek Barrier Dam, south of Eighth Street Viaduct, 45204 (from Gest Street, turn south on Evans Street and east on Police Academy Drive)
Distance: about 3¾ miles
Time: about 3¼ hours
Challenges:
- jagged and sharp objects in stream substrate
- slow currents and shallow waters in dry spells
- strainers – branches and fallen trees amid the stream current
- combined sewer overflows

This segment of the Mill Creek has a rugged rocked slopeway that should be portaged or paddled with care.

River Mile (from the Ohio River) marked 26
FOOT ENTRAPMENTS: If your boat capsize, do not try to stand or walk if you are in swift-moving water. You may slip and pin a foot between submerged rocks. Once pinned, the force of the current can push the boater's body under the water and hold it there. Always keep your feet up, pointed downstream, and swim to calm water before standing.

Other Tips

Be courteous
- Display courtesy and respect to landowners, other paddlers, and fishermen.
- The access points highlighted in this guide are located on public property, but most of the routes – red and creek bottom – are privately owned.
- Many landowners enjoy the stream's peace and solitude. Be courteous.

Don't litter
- Dispose of waste properly. Always pack out your trash.
- Plastics are dangerous to wildlife. They float on the water. Always pack out plastics!
- Leave the creek cleaner than you found it!

Avoid introducing non-native species, including live bait, by cleaning equipment between trips.

Report Spells
- Report spills, abandoned drums, and other environmental emergencies 24 hours a day to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency at 1-800-424-9378, to the Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati at 513-352-4000, and to the Mill Creek Alliance at 513-563-8800.

More Information on Flash Floods, Stormwater Issues, and CSOs

The Mill Creek flows 28 miles south from its headwaters in Butler County to its mouth at the Ohio River. Draining a watershed of 106 square miles, it flows through the geographic heart of Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati. The watershed includes all or part of 37 political jurisdictions. When it rains, some rainfall percolates slowly through the ground, gradually reaching the Mill Creek and its tributaries. In flood events, rainfall that falls on impervious surfaces like roads, driveways, roofs, and parking lots pours directly into our sewer system. Storm sewers send new portions of the region, and funnel stormwater quickly into local creeks. This causes creek levels to rise rapidly.

Sewers built in the older portions of our community carry both sewage and storm water in the same pipe. Known as combined sewers, they comprise about 40% of our local sewer system. During rainstorms, combined sewers are often filled beyond their capacity. In some parts of Hamilton County, just a quarter inch of rainfall can fill combined sewers. To relieve pressure on the sewer line and prevent widespread flooding and sewage backups into buildings, combined sewers were designed to overflow to a receiving waterway. This overflow route takes污染物 into local streams and rivers through outfall structures known as combined sewer overflows (CSOs). When CSOs overflow, they dump untreated sewage and rainwater directly into waterways. CSOs cause offensive odors and may leave blotch paper and other unsightly debris behind. Habitat for fish and other aquatic organisms in the creek is degraded by CSOs. Worse yet, CSOs also pose a public health hazard. CSOs are a main source of bacteria in local water. If you swallow water with high levels of E. coli, you can become ill.

Raw sewage can also contaminate water with viruses and other pathogens. After heavy rains, many Hamilton County streams, including the Mill Creek, do not meet Ohio state standards for recreational activities. For more information about CSOs visit www.projectgroundwork.org, which is a website offered by the Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati (MDSD).

Ways you can help reduce stormwater runoff, which in turn reduces flooding and CSOs:
- Install rain barrels, a cistern, or a stormwater harvesting system.
- Install a green roof, rain garden, or rain barrel to help capture storm water runoff.
- Use pervious pavement.
- Ensure downsputs & storm sewers are NOT CONNECTED to the sanitary sewer system.
- Reduce impervious surfaces (roofs, blacktop, concrete, etc.) on your property where possible, or replace impervious surfaces with pervious surfaces.
- Reduce water use, especially during rainy weather.
- Avoid planting turf or building near the sewer lines.
- If your boat capsizes, do not try to stand or walk if you are in swift-moving water. You may slip and pin a foot between submersed rocks. Once pinned, the force of the current can push the boater's body under the water and hold it there. Always keep your feet up, pointed downstream, and swim to calm water before standing.

Precautions for paddling this segment of the Mill Creek

This segment of the Mill Creek has a lengthy area of rapids on the downstream side of the Hoogle Street Viaduct as indicated by map location E. The rocky shoal is situated to the right of the bridge, a few hundred yards downstream. Small drops are not worth mentioning. To head up, they should be treated with respect. Be careful to not fail at the low water shoal in fast water. Always pack out any items.

Aid to night paddlers: You may need a headlamp in the early morning and late afternoon. Some boats have spotlights. Be courteous and respectful of the environment. If you encounter other paddlers, always pack out debris. Always bring along a first aid kit.

The Mill Creek is a great place for any type of water activity. Be courteous and respect the environment. Carry out what you carry in. Please keep the Mill Creek clean.

Hypothermia: In cold water, your body tries to conserve heat, such as silk, polypropylene, fleece or wool). This is why dressing properly (wetsuits, drysuits) is so important. The longer you are immersed in cold water, the harder it is to control your body. Hypothermia (the cooling of the body's core temperature) can set in rapidly. Loss of consciousness and death with or without drowning can result.

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