



## CREATIVE PADDLE LOOPS

### NEED SOME TIME IN NATURE DURING THIS TIME OF SOCIAL DISTANCING?

Paddling is a great way to get exercise, reduce stress, and connect with nature while maintaining social distance. Mill Creek Alliance veteran paddlers have designed a few bike-boat paddle loops in the Mill Creek Watershed. Traditional one-way creek paddling requires a shuttle. A shuttle is the process of using vehicles to get to the start of a paddling journey and back from the end of the trip. But how do you accomplish this without riding in a vehicle with someone not in your “social distancing unit”? Paddle loops address this challenge.

**Suggested Paddle Loop #1: Mill Creek Greenway Trail along the Mill Creek in Northside and South Cumminsville.** A pleasant 1.5 mile beginner trip suitable for both kayaks and canoes. The bike trail is all off road with just one street crossing. Both bike and paddle trips feature a view of the Salway Riffle, a low head dam mitigation project accomplished by MCA. Opportunities on this section of the creek include a small rapids, flat pools for easy paddling, and possible sightings of kingfisher, black crowned night heron, geese, ducks, beaver, turtles, carp and small mouth bass. Read below to get an idea how a paddle loop works. Should you decide to try it out, please keep safety in mind and use a bike helmet, PPE, and a personal flotation device.

- Start by driving with your bike and boat to the Salway parking lot at the Mill Creek Greenway Trailhead. Unload and lock your boat and paddle to the bike rack.
- Drive to the Yellow Bridge and park at the pull off on the north side of Mill Creek Road. Prep your bike, don your helmet and PFD, and ride the Greenway Trail up to Salway Recreation area.
- When you reach Salway, unlock your boat, lock your bike, and carry your boat to the creek. The paddle starts with an essentially flat pool formed by the Salway riffle, followed by a small rapid. The flow of the rapid depends on the water level.\*
- Just before passing under the Yellow Bridge, the West Fork Mill Creek tributary comes in from river right. Depending on the water level, take a side trip up the creek by boat or on foot.
- The takeout for this section is just past the Yellow Bridge on river right. Carry your boat in the upstream direction under the Yellow Bridge and then up to the road. The upper part of the path is steep so be sure to watch your step. Drive back to Salway Park and pick up your bike.



\* The water level can be found on the USGS web site for “Mill Creek at Carthage” at: <https://on.doi.gov/2N7hhpR>. If the river flow is less than ~100 cfs (cubic feet per second) you may have to get out of your boat and walk through the riffle; between ~140 and ~200 cfs you’ll just zip and bump through the riffle; over 200 cfs may not be for beginners.

Salway Recreation area is managed by the Cincinnati Recreation Commission (CRC). The Greenway Trail south of Salway, and both access spots, are owned by the Millcreek Valley Conservancy District (MVCD). The MVCD provides flood control for the Mill Creek watershed and allows their land to be used for recreation.

For more information, comments, or questions about MCA recreation programs contact Linda Keller, [lkeller@themillcreekalliance.org](mailto:lkeller@themillcreekalliance.org)

**MAKING A DONATION TODAY TO MCA helps bring recreational program like Creative Paddle Loops to the public.**

See the results of the Birding Bioblitz that was held in May on iNaturalist: <https://bit.ly/MCAbirds>

**Looking for activities to do in the great outdoors while practicing COVID19 safety guidelines?** Want information about additional bike-boat paddle loops? View our Guide to Recreation in the Mill Creek Watershed online at [themillcreekalliance.org/recreationguide](http://themillcreekalliance.org/recreationguide)



# Salway-Yellow Bridge bike-paddle loop (w proposed Mitchell extension)





Salway Park access (river mile 4.79)





Yellow Bridge access (river mile 3.44)





Mitchell Avenue access (river mile 5.74)

