

A BRIEF HISTORY OF

MILL CREEK

Mill Creek has at times been a regional asset to those who live and work along its banks. Other times it has been a dangerous neighbor. Here's a history of how the creek, its inhabitants, and its protectors have evolved.

1800'S

Infrastructure begins to take hold. In 1806 the **first bridge**, a floating span, is built near the mouth of the **Ohio River**. In 1826, the **Miami Canal** parallels the Creek from **Cincinnati to Hamilton**. In 1851, the **First Railroad Bridge** over the creek is completed in **Lower Price Hill**.

In 1863 **Domestic Sewage** begins to be discharged into the Mill Creek. In 1871 large quantities of **Industrial Waste** are reported.

1956

The **Mill Creek** is described as "grossly polluted" because trunk sewers are now overflowing 25% of the time. In 1959, stormwaters flood the creek and displace **THOUSANDS** of people from their homes.

1977

The **Upper Mill Creek Water Reclamation Facility** is built in **Butler County** to treat wastewater from homes, businesses, and industries.

1995

The **Mill Creek Watershed Council** (MCWC) is formed to serve as a consensus - building engine among local governments.

2010

Greater Cincinnati Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) begins a program to reduce overflow into the Mill Creek.

2020

Dr. Mike Miller presents annual **State of the Mill Creek** and announces Mill Creek water quality results are now on par with other rivers in SW Ohio.

1700'S

Local Native American **Shawnee** call the creek **Maketewa**. The first settlers arrive in **1788** and find a new use for the creek. They rename it **Mill Creek**. In 1791, the first mill is erected along the creek in **Northside**.

1900-1940

Due to pollution, **fish disappear** from the creek. Factory and **sewer waste** make up 1/4 of the creek's flow. In 1937, record Ohio River **flooding** backs up to **Hartwell**, 8 miles from the Ohio. In 1940, sewers overflow into the creek.

1948

The **Barrier Dam**, at the mouth on the **Ohio River**, blocks flooding into the Mill Creek Valley.

1962

Millcreek Valley Conservancy District is formed to control flooding in **Hamilton County**.

1972

Clean Water Act stops industries from discharging wastes into the creek.

1994

Rivers Unlimited Mill Creek Restoration Project (MCRP) is formed to regenerate the river corridor and revitalize distressed and historically under-served communities. Also in 1994, the **Mill Creek Yacht Club** (MCRYC) took their maiden voyage.

1997

American Rivers names the Mill Creek as "**the most endangered urban river in North America.**"

2018

Two organizations, MCWC and MCRP, with 20+ years each of work on the Mill Creek, merge to form **Mill Creek Alliance**.

2023

MSD biological assessment of Mill Creek finds 19 species of fish including pollution sensitive northern hog suckers, smallmouth redhorse, and rainbow darters.

