

# Highlights of 2020

MCA: 2020 Greater Cincinnati Nonprofit of the Year Awards Finalist!

## RESTORATION

Magnifying our impact by partnering with communities to restore the local watershed.

- \$590,000 in grants awarded for wetland enhancement and dam mitigation
- 700 feet of streambank restored
- 400 live stakes installed
- 2.0 acres floodplain planted in native species
- 24 adults attended restoration workshop and tour
- 4 interns hosted
- 2 stream restoration projects completed
- 1 subwatershed plan approved

## EDUCATION

Engaging the next generation of Mill Creek Stewards

- 88 youth and adults participated in 1 of 8 educational programs
- New online educational video series got over 500 views
- 71 volunteers donated over 575 hours as citizen scientists in our WQM program
- 16 participants received OEPA Qualified Data Collector Level II training
- 8 interns worked over 500 hours on WQM and environmental justice

## RECREATION

Encouraging residents to explore Cincinnati's hidden gem, the Mill Creek

- 101 participants paddled on 1 of 7 Urban Stream Adventures
- 37 bikers/walkers inaugurated MCA paddle/peddle loops on the Mill Creek Greenway Trail
- 116 volunteers donated over 1,100 hours picking up trash along the Mill Creek, and removed over 5 tons of trash and more than 300 tires in 1st ever Trash-a-Thon
- 6 iNaturalist projects documented over 7,500 observations of 1,126 species by 746 citizen scientists in the Mill Creek Watershed

## Things to Look Forward to in 2021

- Mill Creek Yacht Club Public Urban Stream Adventures (May, June, Aug, Sept, Oct)
- Volunteer Opportunities: water quality monitoring, watershed cleanups by land and by canoe, Citizen Science Opportunities (bioblitz/species counts, WQM lab work), rain garden installation and other planting events
- New Restoration Project Tours & Workshop opportunities
- Education programs and service learning opportunities, including new virtual content
- 9th Annual Mill Creek water sampling season
- 2021 State of the Mill Creek Address with Dr. Mike Miller (March)
- 3rd Annual Run the Riffles Community & Great Outdoor Weekend Event (September)

**Become a Donor  
Be a Force of Nature.**

**DONATE NOW**

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**MILL CREEK  
ALLIANCE**

**December 2020  
ANNUAL APPEAL**

**Together, We Are a Force of Nature**



## #MILLCREEK restoration

MCA is working together with community partners, like the city of Reading, to magnify the impact of our restoration projects.



## #MILLCREEK education

Thomas More Intern Rebecca Kaye is putting her skills into practice as MCA Lab Leader for the Water Quality Monitoring Program.



## #MILLCREEK recreation

MCA is encouraging Cincinnati residents to explore the Mill Creek and enjoy this urban gem by land and by water.

This year has brought unprecedented challenges to our communities, our country, and to our work. We've had to accept restrictions which have changed our everyday lives in ways we would have never imagined a year ago. The pandemic has required MCA to creatively adapt all of our projects and programs. Working remotely much of the time and becoming Zoom experts were certainly not in any of our plans a few short months ago.

One thing has not changed! With your support, Mill Creek Alliance is a Force of Nature and a Force For Nature. With your help, we have created virtual educational resources for our many school partners. With your help, we have continued to restore Mill Creek and its watershed, literally and figuratively shifting the current on the health of the stream and our watershed communities. This year saw MCA complete two stream restoration projects and successfully obtain funding for 3 additional projects.

With your help, we have continued to make the Mill Creek a better place to live, work, and play, removing, literally, tons of trash and tires from Mill Creek and its tributaries. With your help, we make the Mill Creek Watershed cleaner. Outdoor activity and trail use has boomed during the pandemic and MCA is actively extending the Mill Creek Greenway Trail and introducing ever more people to the joys of hiking, biking, paddling, and fishing along the stream.

With your help, we have continued and increased our monitoring of the health of the stream (now at 57 locations) and are tracking the remarkable return of freshwater mussels, walleye, mink, osprey, and many other indicator species to the watershed.

Despite all of our successes, we urgently need your continued support. The pandemic has had a devastating impact on state and local budgets. Some private foundations have diverted resources into much-needed COVID responses. These pressures will continue well into 2021, and will likely impact funding available to MCA. In order for Mill Creek Alliance to continue the amazing resurgence of Mill Creek, I need to ask you a favor:

Be a Force of Nature...**donate to MCA now.**

I am so grateful for your continued support,  
Dave Schmitt

## TESTIMONIALS

*"I had a great experience last week on a cleanup! Got quite muddy and saw quite a bit of creek! Leaned a lot and look forward to helping out again!"*

—Justin S.

*"We really appreciated all the work the MCA does to support our environment and playscape. We were grateful for the kayak outing during Run the Riffles."*

— C. Rozen

*"Thank you for the project tour and hike yesterday. We very much enjoyed it. Bennett was very professional, informative, and great."*

— Katie R.

*"Thanks so much! We had a very good time on our canoe outing the other day – and we learned a lot too! We'll definitely be back."*

— Mack M.

*"Thank you for pulling this workshop together. It really encompassed everything that any organization or municipality should consider."*

— Ken P.