

CLEVELAND METROPARKS

Mill Creek Connector Trail and Ecological Restoration

Cleveland, Ohio



top: Trail and restoration plan;
bottom: Initial conditions

Mill Creek has a drainage area of over 20 square miles and flows through nine communities within southern Cuyahoga County, Ohio. This tributary to the Cuyahoga River has

Once an abused urban landscape, the Lower Mill Creek Valley now provides recreational opportunities to 450,000 people living in surrounding communities.

played a considerable role in the industrial development of the region.

Since human development of the area, the Lower Mill Creek Valley from Mill Creek Falls to the Cleveland Metroparks, Ohio & Erie Canal Reservation has undergone significant environmental degradation. Impacts to the watershed and stream include, poorly regulated industry, landfill operations, and combined sewer overflows. These actions resulted in impaired ecological condition throughout the Mill Creek Valley.

Using the framework provided in a prior study, the project team executed an ecological restoration and greenway plan for the Lower Mill Creek

Valley. The work included restoration and conservation of native vegetation and wildlife habitat, designing and constructing a stable, natural channel for Mill Creek, and constructing a bike and hike trail to connect people from the upper Mill Creek Valley to the larger Cleveland Metroparks, Ohio & Erie Canal Reservation. The plan reclaimed and enhanced a once abused landscape, and created a greenway corridor within an urban center that expands recreation opportunities for approximately 450,000 people living in the surrounding communities.

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