



A three-hour cruise on Beargrass Creek - the heart of Louisville, KY

Meet at The Louisville Community Boat House in Waterfront Park, upstream or east of the big Four Bridge on River Road. The Community Boat House is adjacent to the U of L Rowing facility and River Park Place

Address

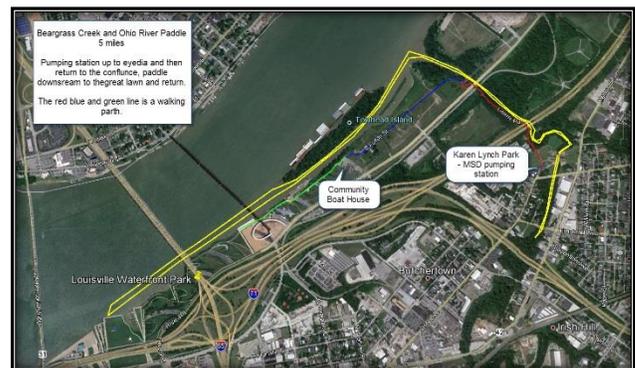
Louisville Community Boathouse
1325 River Road
Louisville, KY, 40206
(Waterfront Park -Yellow Parking Lot on River Road)

Using 30-foot Voyageur Canoes we will explore the lower reaches, the back water, of Beargrass Creek. Paddling on one mile of the Creek we are able to witness the impact of our community on the ecological and aesthetic environment. Beargrass drains 61 square miles of Jefferson County and is comprised of three forks - Muddy Fork, the Middle Fork and the South Fork.

Tour Objectives:

- Obtain better understand of our waterways from an interactive canoeing experience,
- Learn about the unique wildlife habitat in the Beargrass Creek area and means of preserving and reviving the area
- Understand stormwater management techniques and their direct impact on our waterways
- Examine the waterway's position of preservation and recreation
- Highlight the importance of connecting Cherokee Park and the Waterfront with this missing link of the Beargrass Creek Trail and other possible trail connections within the Butchertown Greenway

The Trip: We meet at the new Louisville [Community Boat House](#), and put on life jackets, receive safety and paddling instruction then paddle up stream on the Ohio to the confluence of Beargrass Creek. On the west side of the Beargrass Cut off is the [Butchertown Greenway](#) and the future site of [Botanica - Louisville's Waterfront Botanical Gardens](#). On the eastern side of the Confluence area of the creek is [Eva Bandman Park](#) while on the western side is the new development "[River Park Place](#)" We enter the canal by passing under river road and the CSX Railroad Bridge. We head up the 1850's canal also called Beargrass Creek Cut off. This is a canal completed in the 1856 and redirected the creek away from downtown. Check out the [1851 Charter of the City of Louisville](#) defining the cut off at the eastern edge of the city. The Charter was actually adopted in 1862.





We head out of the canal section and back into the natural stream bed when we pass under the I-71 Bridge and paddle up to the [MSD flood pumping station](#) and [Karen Lynch Park](#). We paddle through the gates of the pumping station, in into the stream inside the flood wall. The flood control manager, Mr. Daren Thompson recently received "[The Steering the Future of the Creek Award](#)" for his work on Beargrass Falls. Then we turn around and head back through the pumping station past several abandoned bridge abutments from the 1800's and the confluence with the Muddy fork. We paddle by a very eroded bank caused by the discharge pipe from the [Metro Police Vehicle Impoundment Lot](#). The impoundment lot has been identified by community members as a significant problem for the ecological health of the creek. [Check out a pdf of a recent report.](#) Next down the creek is one of our communities first [CSO \(Combined Sewer Overflow\)](#) - It was recently decommissioned as part of [Project WIN - Waterways Improvement Now Program](#). We continue down the creek and into the. Depending on the weather and the conditions on the Ohio River, we would paddle down "the shoot" between Louisville and [Tow Head Island](#) and explore Louisville's Waterfront Park and then return to the [Community Boat House](#).

For more information, check out:

- [2005 state of the stream report on Beargrass Creek.](#)
- Here is a nice short article from the Filson Club: [ORIGIN OF THE NAMES BEARGRASS CREEK, THE POINT, AND THRUSTON SQUARE*](#)
- The Courier Journal's major article "[Beargrass Creek – Troubled Streams of Neglect – Abuse: Would-be jewel 'is in dire straits'](#)"
- [This 1865 map](#) shows four Union forts on the eastern side of Beargrass Creek - Fort Elster, Fort Eagle, Fort Saunders and Fort Hill. An interesting thing about map is the Beargrass Creek cut off and the original route of the creek. The original route was turned into the route for a large sewer trunk line - [Check out the MSD history here](#). The map also shows the streets of the Point on the western side of Beargrass Creek cut off. The Point was totally destroyed by the 1937 flood.
- Check out this video "[A slow ride up Beargrass Creek](#)". It will give you a flavor of your upcoming experience.
- Check out the new trailer for the [Beargrass Creek documentary](#) being produced by Morgan Atkinson.
- Join the [Beargrass Creek Alliance](#) and advocate for a cleaner and healthier stream and community.