

MAP & GUIDE

Tuscarawas River Water Trail

PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE

- Research the river and scout prior to boating
- Look at river gages or call locals for current conditions
- Be aware of all Ohio boating laws as well as any local rules and ordinances
- Make sure you have an approved, properly fitting lifejacket for each person
- Prepare for the weather, hazards, and emergencies
- Recreate on Durable Surfaces
- Travel on durable surfaces, such as rock, gravel, and sand, when portaging
- Stay clear of vegetation and mud
- Use existing access sites
- Leave the trail undisturbed and remember that the natural artifacts are where they belong already

Outdoor Ethic

PACK IT IN...PACK IT OUT

- Keep access sites clean for the landowners and for other boaters
- Dispose of waste in a responsible manner
- Do not litter and leave the area cleaner than you found it
- Properly dispose of what you can't pack out
- Leave What You Find

BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHER VISITORS

- Keep noises to a minimum
- Take breaks away from other visitors
- Respect the privacy and rights of the landowners as most of the shoreline is privately owned and requires permission from the landowner before entering
- Control pets or leave them at home

Rules to Live by for Boating & Fishing

The Tuscarawas River provides a serene and scenic environment, perfect for paddling and fishing. It is important to understand that all paddlers and anglers are required to adhere to Ohio Department of Natural Resource's regulations regarding each activity on the river. Be sure to check the current regulations for boating and fishing before heading to the river.

REGISTER YOUR BOAT

Boats must be properly titled, if required, and registered. Registrations are required for every recreational boat in Ohio. Out-of-state boats must be properly registered according to the home state's regulations.

PACK THE REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

The safety equipment required for each boat depends on the type of propulsion and length of the boat, as well as where and when the boat will be operated. An approved, properly fitting life jacket is always required for every boater. Other equipment requirements can be found at [watercraft.ohiodnr.gov](#).

BOATING EDUCATION REQUIREMENT

If you were born on or after January 1, 1982 Ohio law requires that you complete an approved boating safety education course to operate any powered watercraft greater than 10 horsepower. Courses can be found at [watercraft.ohiodnr.gov](#).

FISHING LICENSE AND REGULATIONS

A valid Ohio fishing license is required to fish on the Tuscarawas River. Species size requirements and bag limits apply and can be found at [wildlife.ohiodnr.gov](#).

WATER TRAIL PARTNERS

This water trail project would not be possible without the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District and Rural Action's Middle Tuscarawas River Watershed Office. Access to the river is managed by the following partners. All access point information and management is provided by these organizations. For more information about individual access points, please contact the appropriate partner for more information.

Summit Metro Parks	City of New Philadelphia
330-867-5511	330-364-1491
Stark Parks	US Army Corps of Engineers
330-773-5352	330-343-8341
Lawrence Township	Village of Tuscarawas
330-874-2731	740-922-4189
City of Dover	Village of Gradenhuttan
330-343-6726	740-254-1497
Dover Township	ODNR - Division of Wildlife
330-365-3278	540-Fork Fish Unit
City of Coshocton	740-469-2240
740-222-1465	

Welcome to the Tuscarawas River Water Trail!

From the heart of civilization to the edge of wilderness, the Tuscarawas River is a 130 mile long tributary to the Muskingum River. Beginning just south of Akron, it flows through four counties before joining the Wallowing River near Coshocton, to form the Muskingum River. The water trail takes paddlers through the center of urban living to the peaceful rural escapes of Eastern Ohio while passing historical sites and natural landscapes along the way. Whether you are looking for a quick jaunt between towns or a longer trip through quiet stretches of nature, the Tuscarawas River has it all.

From glaciated to unglaciated terrain, Ohio's beauty can be seen from the mighty Tuscarawas River.

History of the Tuscarawas River

The Tuscarawas River was named after the Native American village of Tuscarawi, located near present day Bolivar. The river was an important passageway and trade route for the Delaware tribe, and later settlers. The river offered travelers a convenient route that ran north and south, and was part of the first water passages from Lake Erie to the Ohio River. Canoes, ferries, and even steamboats have navigated the Tuscarawas at some time in the past few centuries. The Tuscarawas River was also a feeder to the Ohio and Erie Canalway that operated from 1827 to 1870.

Today, the river is a popular place for recreation, most notably for paddling and fishing. The river has always provided important habitat for abundant wildlife. Fish species that can be found in the Tuscarawas include catfish, bluegill, carp, crappie, and northern pike, plus smallmouth, largemouth, and rock bass. White-tailed deer, wild turkeys, beavers, great blue herons, and a variety of turtles sunning on rocks are a common sight while floating down the river.

Don't forget to look up while traveling along the Tuscarawas River! Migrating and nesting birds can be found along the waterway throughout the year. The riverway is also the home of several bald eagle nests. The eagles can be seen soaring up and down the river searching for their next meal.

Water Quality

The Tuscarawas River is a wonderful natural resource, with bountiful clean water for animals and people to enjoy. All the land that drains surface water into the Tuscarawas River is called the Tuscarawas River Watershed. The health of the watershed determines the health of the river and how clean the water is, or the level of water quality.

There is a long history of area residents and organizations working to make the Tuscarawas River cleaner and safer for everyone to enjoy. Projects, such as reclaiming abandoned mines and upgrading sewer plants, are ongoing, and have contributed to improving the water quality of the Tuscarawas River. The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency evaluates Ohio's surface water on a regular basis and informs the public of the quality and health of the waterway. The Tuscarawas River Watershed was assessed in the early 2000's and was found to have some of the highest water quality in the state. The main sources of pollutants in the Tuscarawas River are nutrients, sedimentation, and habitat alterations, which happens when people change the natural flow of waterways.

You have a role to play in improving water quality, too! Practice "leave no trace" when on the river, and do not alter the banks or flow of the river. For more information about the Tuscarawas River Watershed, and to view the entire water quality report, check out visit [MWCD.org/waterfalls](#).

River Safety

The Tuscarawas River provides a beautiful and relaxing atmosphere to enjoy nature, but as with all outdoor activities includes inherent risks that can lead to injury or possibly death. Always remember that paddling and river conditions are always changing, therefore proper planning and preparation will greatly reduce possible risks. There are many sources for river safety information, such as completing a paddling skills course offered by local parks, books and videos from organizations like the American Canoe Association, or joining a local paddling club. Paddlers are responsible for their own safety and are encouraged to follow the tips listed below.

ALWAYS WEAR A PROPERLY-FITTING LIFEJACKET

Over 80% of boating fatalities occur because the victim was not wearing a lifejacket. Ohio law requires that children under 10 must wear a personal flotation device (PFD) or lifejacket at all times while on a boat, but leading authorities encourage every paddler to wear a properly-fitting PFD on every boating trip. There are a larger variety of extremely comfortable lifejackets designed especially for paddlers.

BE PREPARED BY PROPERLY RESEARCHING AND PACKING

Check the weather and respond accordingly. Avoid extreme weather conditions. Pack your phone, snacks, and other valuable items in a waterproof bag. Pack plenty of water to stay hydrated, insect repellent, sunscreen, and first-aid kit. Carry personal identification and notification of medical conditions or allergies. Research the area and know who to call for help. In case of emergency, call 911. Know where you are on the trail to assist emergency personnel.

Look Out for Hazards

Paddling on Ohio's streams and rivers can be relaxing or exciting, but can also be dangerous. Paddlers should be aware of potential dangers and be prepared to respond accordingly.

DAMS

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operates and maintains two large flood-protection dams along the Tuscarawas River, including the Dover Dam which spans the entire river. These dams control water levels and discharge to regulate the flow of water downstream and can prevent flooding in times of high precipitation or snowmelt runoff. These dam structures can create unpredictable currents and are extremely dangerous. NEVER attempt to boat through the dam structures as there are unseen hazards that can cause entrapment or injury. Plan to begin your trip downstream of these dams, and upstream, or portage around.

LOWHEAD DAMS AND WATERFALLS

Before heading out, know the location of any lowhead dams and waterfalls, on the trail. NEVER attempt to boat over a dam or waterfall. Even if it is small and looks harmless, hydraulic turbulence at the base of any dam is capable of trapping boats and people underwater. Always portage around these hazards.

River Gauging & Safety

A stream gauge or gauging station is placed along bodies of water to measure water levels and discharge or flow. Data is collected and can be used for public safety information as well as understanding water management, hazard management, environmental research, and infrastructure design. The US Geological Survey (USGS) placed the first streamgauge in 1889 and has over 7,000 gauges nationwide.

Streamgages are placed at numerous locations along the Tuscarawas River. Search for the streamgauge information before heading to the river and check water levels and flow rate. High waters and swift running rivers are dangerous conditions for boaters. Examine boater experience levels and current water conditions to decide if it is safe to proceed. Real time river conditions are displayed at [waterdata.usgs.gov](#).

SWIMMING AND WADING

Paddling in cool river water is the perfect solution for hot summer days. Remember that most river drownings are swimming related. Always wear your lifejacket while in the water. Do not stand or walk in swift running water above your knees. Swift currents, slippery river bottoms, or drop-offs can cause injury. If swimming, keep feet pointed downstream and floating on the surface.

TRAVEL SMART

NEVER paddle alone. Share your trip plans with someone. Leave a "float plan" with a reliable person, detailing where you are going and what time you will leave and return. Remember to contact the person when you have returned safely. NEVER paddle over lowhead dams or paddle through dam structures. NEVER paddle under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Sharing the River

The Tuscarawas River is a community asset and it is important to understand and abide by simple guidelines to make the river experience better for all.

- Know the boundaries of public and private lands. Respect public property by following Leave No Trace principles and respect private property along the riverbanks by not trespassing.
- Respect wildlife.
- Understand the river before traveling along an unfamiliar section. Follow boating regulations and safety guidelines to keep you and other river users out of danger.
- Be courteous of other river users by allowing for space, privacy, and solitude. Be aware of anglers, on shore and in the water, and give them a wide berth, passing by quietly.

Tuscarawas River Water Trail

USGS Gauge

Hazard

Boat Ramp

Carry Down

Drinking Water

Food Nearby

Parking

Picnic Area

Restroom

Trailhead

Camping

Tuscarawas River Water Trail

Public Access Not Available

Other Waterways

Towpath Trail

Interstate

Park Land

City

County

0

10

Miles

Medina

Portage

Summit

Stark

Carroll

Harrison

Guernsey

Coshocton

Wayne

Holmes

Barberton

Clinton

Canal Fulton

Navarre

Bolivar

Dover

New Philadelphia

Tuscarawas

Port Washington

Newcomerstown

West Lafayette

Orange

Waterworks Park - Coshocton

Charles B Miller Boat Ramp

Snyder's Landing Boat Launch

416 Boat Ramp

Fairview Avenue Trailhead

Lake Avenue Trailhead

Massillon Submerged Pipe

Lawrence Township River Community Park

Canal Lands Park

Dover Dam River Access

Canal Dover Park

Dover Lowhead Dam

Waterworks Park - New Philadelphia

416 Boat Ramp

Charles B Miller Boat Ramp

River Glenn Estates Access

Orange Access

416 Boat Ramp

This access site is managed by the City of New Philadelphia and is located two miles southeast of New Philadelphia, on the east side of OH-416.

Snyder's Landing Boat Launch

This access site is managed by the Village of Gradenhuttan and is located near the intersection of Tuscarawas Rd SE and Fellers Dr. A large parking area is located near the concrete boat ramp within 100' of the access site on river right. This access site can accommodate large boats and trailers.

Charles B Miller Boat Ramp

This access site is managed by the Village of Gradenhuttan and is located at the west end of W. Main Street. At the end of the street, follow the drive to the left around the storage building. Limited parking is available within 200' of the access site on river left. Primitive camping is available by permit only. Call 740-254-4116 for camping information.

Orange Access

This access site is managed by the ODNR Division of Wildlife for fishing access and is located five miles east of Newcomerstown, near the intersection of OH-751 and County Road 254 just south of US-36. Limited parking is available within 200' of the access site on river left.

River Glenn Estates Access

This access site is managed by the ODNR Division of Wildlife for fishing access and is located near the intersection of OH-93 and US-36. Parking is available at the Park & Ride lot 600' from the river access on river right. The river access is on the west side of the OH-93 bridge.

Waterworks Park - Coshocton

This access site is managed by the City of Coshocton and is located near Baird Concrete, at the north end of N. Water Street. Restaurants are located within walking distance. This area is close to the confluence of the Tuscarawas River and Wallowing River, forming the Muskingum River. This is also the first access site along the Muskingum River Water Trail.

Signs Along the Trail

Danger Submerged Dam Ahead

Fairview Trailhead

Look for signage along the roads and on the river to identify Water Trail Access sites.

Paddling Terminology

Cubic Feet Per Second (CFS): Used to measure water flow

Chute: Clear passage through rapids

Confluence: Place where two or more streams flow together

Hydraulic Recirculating current formed by concrete dam

Water Drops over a large rock, ledge, or lowhead dam

Portage: Carry the boat around some hazard in the river and re-enter downstream

River Left: As you look downstream in the direction the water is flowing, the left side of the river

River Mile: The distance from the mouth of the river, beginning at zero and increasing upstream

Ohio & Erie Canalway Towpath Trail

The Ohio & Erie Canalway Towpath Trail, one of Ohio's longest and most scenic trails, follows the Tuscarawas River through Summit, Stark, and a portion of Tuscarawas County. This trail follows the original mule path that ran along the Ohio & Erie Canal. The canal was a manmade channel constructed in the 1820s and 1830s to provide a transportation route that was faster than horse and overcame challenges of the river systems. The Ohio & Erie Canal ran from Lake Erie in Cleveland to the Ohio River in Portsmouth. It was used from the 1830s to the 1870s, when flooding and the railroads made it obsolete.

Today the Ohio & Erie Canal corridor is full of remarkable recreational opportunities. Many of the river access sites are shared trailheads with the Towpath Trail. It is important to understand and abide by simple guidelines to make the river experience better for all.

Waterworks Park - New Philadelphia

This access site is managed by the City of New Philadelphia and is located near the intersection of E. Front Street and S. Wooster Avenue. Located at 8645 Dover-Zoar Rd, Zoar OH 44697, the park is open dawn to dusk. A large parking area is located within 100' of concrete boat ramp on river right.

New Philadelphia Submerged Pipe

Portage available on river left.