

## **Terradise to Cincinnati Expedition**

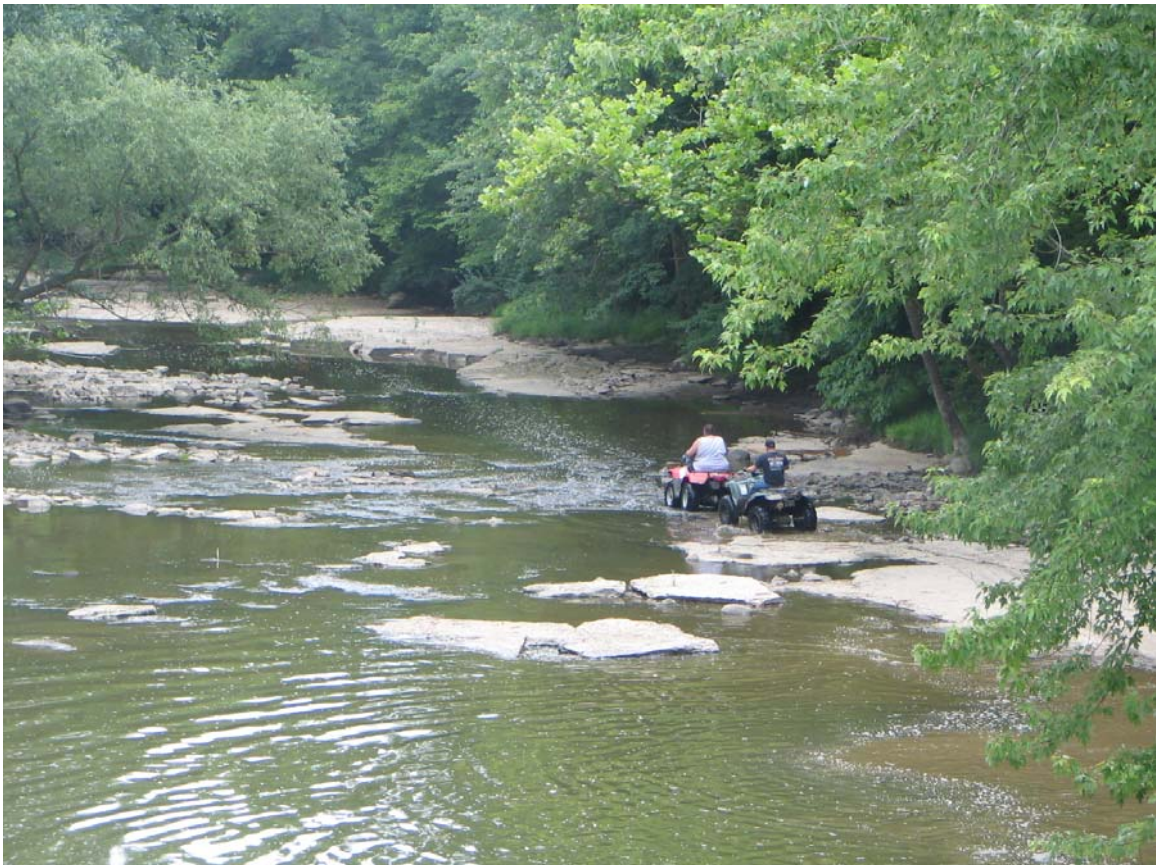
Olentangy Road to Hyatts Road – 5.16 miles

July 31, 2007 12:30 PM to 4:30 PM

This was the most difficult section so far. I like a good walk, but dragging a 75 lb kayak over the rocks is a good walk spoiled.

Fortunately the rocks are sheets of limestone bedrock, polished smooth by the river in some places, and with a surface reminiscent of those electron microscope photographs of a supposedly smooth surface, but in reality pitted with endless small round depressions which are no doubt the result of irregularities or fossils in that particular bedding plane.

A week or so earlier, I had brought the kayak to the Olentangy Road Bridge in south Delaware, hoping to spend a few hours on the river. As I stopped on the bridge to scout the river from above, two guys in ATVs came down the river, gingerly moving from one bed of limestone to the next. I figured this was not the day to paddle and drag, so I called it a day and went to Terradise to mow and work with mom.



*My Competition*

On Tuesday, July 31, I made the commitment to do this stretch, after some long term releases from Delaware Dam raised the river about 6 inches. This was the first time I forgot to bring my bicycle, so I would have to beg a ride at the end of the day from someone. I parked the truck in the spot described in the last episode along the road just east of the bridge on Olentangy Road. I packed up, left my usual note for the cops (“On River, Back at (illegible)”) and dragged the kayak easily over the weedy path to the river under the bridge.

I shoved off and paddled a few yards to the first of possible one hundred spots where the limestone bedding got too shallow for even my 6-inch draft. Easy walking, but the in-and-out of the kayak gets old after exit number 31 or so.

As I drifted along, I came upon two girls enjoying the day along the river, wading in the water. I asked them if this was the way to Cincinnati, and one replied “I think so...” So I know I’m headed in the right direction, at least.

The most interesting part of this is reaching the small dams above Route 23, which turned out to be a blessing as they backed up navigable water for a short distance. The first dam still works, but the second (only 10 inches high or so) is in such deteriorated condition as to be almost un-noticeable. At these water levels, one merely steps out of the kayak and guides it over the top, hopping back in when the water is deep enough.





There is a bikeway bridge running alongside Route 23 bridge, but it is not used. It was evidently built to carry a sewer or water line over the river and some far-sighted individual decided it could also carry a pathway. It is closed off at either end. The river is extremely shallow here, so I had to walk under both bridges and put-in on the south fork of the island just below the Route 23 bridge. But alas, only a few feet were available to float on before reaching more shallows. I won't bore you any more with this same old story, but suffice it to say that 3.5 hours later I arrived at Hyatts Road, blessing this spot and Mr. Hyatt, whoever he was, for putting a road here...

Now the job became one of finding a ride back to Olentangy Road in Delaware. In hindsight, I should have walked. I finally got a ride from my son about 6 PM, and got the truck and picked up the kayak at Hyatts Road by 7 PM, in time to get back to Cincinnati around 9:30 PM. All in all, it was good to have that section of the river behind me.



*Pretty, but...*