



2025

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



Mill City Rail Trail

Oregon



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Mill City is located on State Route 22, about 20 miles upstream along the North Santiam River from Stayton and Sublimity. The small community is on both sides of the river and consequently is partly in Linn County and partly in Marion County. A wrought iron railroad bridge that spans the river and once carried trainloads of lumber is now a pedestrian bridge and the centerpiece of the Mill City Rail Trail.

Begin your journey at the North Santiam Historical Society's Canyon Life Museum on NE Wall Street, housed in a restored rail station. (The trail is on the opposite side of the street.) The museum tells the story of the North Santiam Canyon, providing extensive information on the local logging industry and the railroad that made it possible.

The rail line was built by the Oregon Pacific Railroad in 1888 to serve the Santiam Lumbering Company. Ultimately, the company morphed into the Hammond Lumber company, which operated as one of the largest lumber mills west of the Rocky Mountains before its dismantling in 1957. The rail corridor survived until 1967, when Southern Pacific Railroad ended service to Mill City.

If you trek east from the museum (away from the bridge) on the paved trail, you'll soon reach its eastern endpoint along the North Santiam River, an area set to be developed by the city as Cedar Creek Park. Most people, however, will head west from the museum, crossing N. 1st Avenue and then the historic bridge. Below, you'll see a salmon-filled pool created by the Mill City Falls, found under the adjacent road bridge. The location, unsurprisingly, is a popular fishing spot.

Continuing west, the trail is soon interrupted by Memorial Wayside Park, which features a railroad water tower. The small landscaped park serves as a landmark entry for the community, but it also severs the trail in two. Continue south on SW 5th Avenue and west on SW Broadway Street to reach the remainder of the trail in the Eagles Lodge parking lot.

From here, the trail, which now has a gravel surface, continues southwest along Lyons-Mill City Drive to its terminus at SW 11th Avenue. Just beyond, an active segment of the rail line services both Frank Lumber Company and Freres Lumber Company, providing a poignant reminder of the area's once dominant—but still very much active—logging industry.



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States: Oregon

Counties: Linn, Marion

Length: 1miles

Trail end points: SW 11th Ave. and Lyons-Mill City Dr. to east of NE 5th Ave.

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Gravel

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Walking

Parking & Trail Access

To reach the Mill City Rail Trail, take SR 22 into Mill City. Turn on N. 1st Avenue. (A sign here directs travelers to the "City Center," "High School" and "Cemetery.") Turn left on NW Alder Street, and then turn left on NE Wall Street before you cross the bridge over the North Santiam River. Parking is available on-street near the Canyon Life Museum. You'll find public restrooms on N. 1st Avenue adjacent to the historic railroad bridge.



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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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