



Mill Creek Trail



Mill Creek Trail after leaving the Historic District.

TRAILHEAD DIRECTIONS

Starting at the Whiskeytown Visitor Center, drive west on Highway 299 to the Tower House Historic District parking lot, approximately 8.0 miles. At the end of the parking lot follow the paved trail over the Clear Creek footbridge and then turn left. Walk along the white fence and cross over the next bridge. Follow the dirt road to the left past the Tenant Farmhouse and barn. Continue past the El Dorado Mine site where the Mill Creek trailhead marker is located.

TRAIL DESCRIPTION

The Tenant Farmhouse, the El Dorado Mine and Stamp Mill are historic structures on the Mill Creek Trail. The Stamp Mill housed an apparatus in which rock was crushed by descending pestles known as “stamps.” The mill was operated by steam power. Mercury was used to separate the gold from the crushed rock through a process called amalgamation. The technique is no longer used in the United States, as mercury has been found hazardous to human health.

Continue on the trail along Mill Creek. Pass both branches of the Clear Creek Vista Trail which

FEATURES

Difficulty Level: Moderate to difficult

Length: 6.5 miles one way to Crystal Creek Road

Elevation: 1,250 to 1,600 feet

This trail connects to Clear Creek Vista Trail, Camden Water Ditch Trail and the Whiskeytown Falls Trail

veers to the left across Mill Creek and up the hill. The trail crosses the creek approximately 20 times. Footing is often slippery. The Mill Creek Trail ascends the drainage, paralleling the creek on either side.

The trail then leaves the drainage, ascends a ridge line and finally intersects with a dirt road. To continue to Crystal Creek Road, turn right onto the dirt road.

After turning right, walk until crossing the bridge signed “Mill Creek”. Follow this old road as it ascends the hill, passing two springs. The trail continues up several switchbacks to a pass, and through a locked gate. The trail then descends steeply to the east fork of Crystal Creek. Cross the creek.

Crystal Creek Campground Cut Off:

This is an alternative method of reaching Crystal Creek Road. The trail is a minimally maintained path that ends at the Crystal Creek Primitive Campsite. Follow trail directions. Shortly after crossing the bridge signed “Mill Creek”, keep a sharp look-out along the right for an unmarked path. There is a sign.

The path is steep, carefully continue down the path which will flatten out into a trail. The trail soon becomes relatively level. You will cross a wetland and reach a pass. To the right, you will be able to see the pile of rock removed during the construction of the tunnel from Lewiston Lake to Whiskeytown’s Carr Powerhouse.

This tunnel transports water from the Trinity River into Whiskeytown Lake, and



The Stamp Mill houses a steam powered machine once used to crush ore.

After the crossing, continue up a short grade. The path levels out for a short stretch. Pass the turn-off for Whiskeytown Falls. The path descends; cross the simple plank bridge on the west fork of Clear Creek. Follow the trail up a short but steep section until reaching the trailhead parking lot on Crystal Creek Road. This trailhead is located 3.5 miles from Highway 299.



Crystal Creek Campground, site #1. The trail drops you off across the creek from this site.

with another diversion, eventually into the Sacramento River.

The trail crosses the east fork of Crystal Creek and descends, reaching Crystal Creek and the Crystal Creek Primitive Campsite.



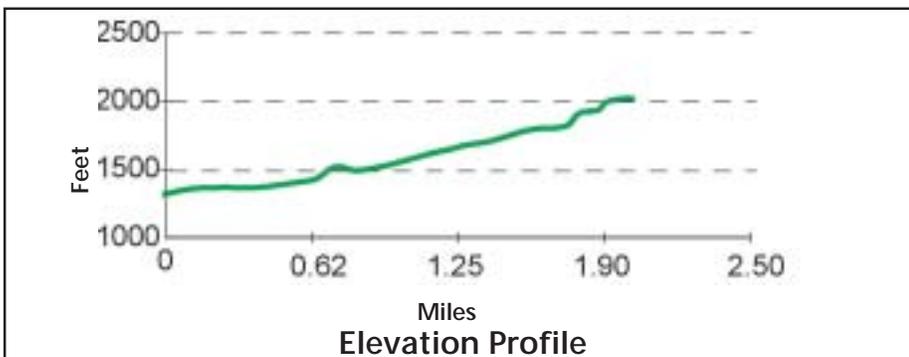
EROSION

The term "erosion" is often characterized as negative, especially when it is accelerated by human activity. This process is part of the natural sequence of events at Whiskeytown. Heavy rains, snowfall, avalanches, trees uprooted by high winds, earthquakes, and human activity can all serve as the immediate cause of landslide erosion.

The root of all landslide erosion, however, is geologic uplift and mountain-building.

The more the land is pushed up, the steeper it gets. The steeper it is, the more likely it is that something will trigger a landslide.

As you walk along the trail, look for areas that seem unstable and look for areas that have failed. What do you suspect was the cause? Mining, road-building, logging, and flooding have all left their marks along this trail.



SAFETY

Winter and spring creek flows can be fast, turn back if the creek is too high. Use caution when crossing wet and slippery stones.