

News Release

For immediate release
April 23, 2020



Cataraqi Conservation to Re-Open Some Conservation Areas starting April 25

Kingston – Cataraqi Conservation will begin to re-open public access to some of its conservation areas and the Cataraqi Trail for passive use starting April 25, 2020, with strict measures in place for all users to continue to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Cataraqi Conservation and Full Authority Board (municipal representatives) recognize the health benefits our properties provide to watershed residents and take the safety of staff, visitors, and the community very seriously, especially during these unprecedented times. At the Full Authority Board meeting held on April 22, 2020, members and staff weighed all options, information available, and considered recommendations from many sources including the Province of Ontario, local municipalities, fellow conservation authorities, Ontario Public Health, local health officials (Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit and Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington Public Health) as well as feedback from the community to make this important decision.

The number of cases of Coronavirus appear to be levelling off in the Kingston Frontenac, Lennox & Addington area, however that is not the case in all areas of our region. On recommendations from the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit, Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in the City of Brockville will remain closed at this time. Staff and health officials will be monitoring local information closely and consider next steps and possible re-opening of these properties over the next few weeks.

In support of this decision to partially re-open some of our conservation areas, the following measures are being put in place in order to facilitate a safe and appropriate “re-opening” of these areas. Additional signage and restrictions will be implemented over the coming week.

- All trail users **MUST** practice physical distancing of at least two (2) metres between yourself and other users, both on the trails and in parking areas;
- Parking lots in certain areas will be reduced to limit visitor volume, please park in designated areas and adhere to no-parking signage (particularly at entrances, access roads and along municipal roads);
- All visitors must refrain from gathering in groups of five or more at any one time;
- All conservation area amenities (touch points) remain closed, this includes washrooms/privies, picnic benches, boardwalks, pavilions, benches, and beaches; and

Cataraqi Conservation

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- Please be kind and act responsibly.

All conservation area rules and regulations still apply:

- Dogs **MUST** be leashed at all times;
- Do not litter, including garbage, personal protective equipment (i.e. gloves, surgical masks) and pet waste;
- Stay on the marked trails; and
- Conservation Areas are open only during daylight hours

What is re-opening starting April 25, 2020:

- Cataraqui Trail (Strathcona to Smith Falls)
- Parrott's Bay Conservation Area (Loyalist Township)
- Lemoine Point Conservation Area (City of Kingston)
- Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area (City of Kingston)
- Gould Lake Conservation Area (Township of South Frontenac)
- Lyn Valley Conservation Area (Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley)
- Marble Rock Conservation Area (Town of Gananoque)

Closures still in place:

- Marshlands Conservation Area due to narrow boardwalk that does not permit physical distancing (City of Kingston)
- Mac Johnson Wildlife Area on recommendations from Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit (City of Brockville)
- The Cataraqui Conservation Administration office (1641 Perth Rd., Kingston) is closed to the public until May 4. Staff remain available during regular business hours of 8:30 am to 4:30 pm by telephone or email.
- The Outdoor Centre at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area and the Nature Centre at the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in Brockville remain closed to the public until May 4. This includes all education and weekend programs.

All staff, including watershed monitoring, corporate services, flood forecasting and warning, planning and permitting and education teams are working remotely, and are available by phone or email. Documentation related to planning and permitting applications can be left in the mailbox at the Administration Office, located at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area.



With warmer weather on the way there is the possibility of increased visitation and demand on our properties. To help lessen the impact and prevent overcrowding please consider changing your visit times to off-peak hours, follow parking restrictions, and come back later if the parking lots are full. If trail users do not respect physical distancing, choose to meet in groups or access closed facilities, Cataraqi Conservation will consider additional appropriate control actions which may include closure of properties.

Cataraqi Conservation will continue to monitor the pandemic conditions, responses from the Province of Ontario, including local health officials, and provide updates on changes to operations and business continuity as they become available at www.crca.ca/coronavirus, and through social media channels.

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