



## **KCCA Opens Some Trails for Responsible Recreation**

St. Thomas — Kettle Creek Conservation Authority is pleased to announce that some of its hiking trails will open to the public on Friday May 15, 2020. Dalewood and Lake Whittaker campgrounds remain closed at this time. KCCA staff are beginning to prepare for opening. KCCA will need time to bring campground drinking water systems back up to provincial standards, hire and train seasonal staff.

“KCCA is taking a phased approach to the opening of our conservation areas, campgrounds and hiking trails,” says Elizabeth VanHooren, KCCA’s General Manager. “We know that the public is eager to reconnect with the outdoors – especially this weekend, but we will need to phase openings based on provincial direction, staffing availability and safety.”

Starting on Friday May 15, 2020 hiking trails at Dan Patterson Conservation Area, Kirk Cousins Conservation Area, and Union Pond Conservation Area will be open for hiking only. Users are encouraged to familiarize themselves with KCCA’s updated COVID 19 Trail Etiquette available on its web site before visiting any of its trails. KCCA is operating with limited staff and are asking for the public’s help to respect the rules and keep the areas open for everyone to enjoy.

Before heading out, KCCA is asking users to review updated trail maps available on its website as some sections of trails remain closed to encourage physical distancing. All areas have updated signage to encourage physical distancing and one-way travel around loop trails. Some parking lots will be opened but all other amenities will remain closed including: pavilions, washrooms, and playgrounds. While viewing platforms, bridges and boardwalks will remain accessible, the public is reminded that these surfaces will not be cleaned. Dogs must be leashed at all times. Due to limited staffing regular maintenance is not being conducted. Use is at your own risk.

Plan ahead and bring all supplies you might need for your hike. If parking lots are full you may need to come back at another time. If you encounter another hiker, step aside to allow each other to pass with physical distance.

### **Dan Patterson Conservation Area**

**Physical Distancing Rating:** This is KCCA’s widest trail and does allow for two-way travel.

**What is available:** A modified Wetland Trail is available. Please follow the directional arrows to help promote physical distancing. If the parking lot is full, please come back at another time. Viewing platforms, bridges and boardwalks are not cleaned. Practice regular handwashing.

**What remains closed:** The pavilion and playground are closed. No picnicking is allowed. No dogs off leash in any area. No gatherings of more than five people. Please abide by all posted signage. The Old Growth Trail is closed.

### **Kirk Cousins Management Area**

**Physical Distancing Rating:** Trail is a single lane loop trail. Users are encouraged to follow directional signage to improve social distancing.

**What is available:** The full trail is available. Until further notice, no permit is required. Viewing platforms, bridges and boardwalks are not cleaned. Practice regular handwashing. If the parking lot is full, please come back at another time.

**What remains closed:** No dogs off leash in any area. No gatherings of more than five people. Please abide by all posted signage.

### **Union Pond Conservation Area**

**Physical Distancing Rating:** Trail is a single lane walk through trail.

**What is available:** The full trail is available. Until further notice, no permit is required. Protective hand railings over the dam are not cleaned. Practice regular handwashing.

**What remains closed:** No dogs off leash in any area. No gatherings of more than five people. Please abide by all posted signage.

### **Dalewood Reservoir Trail – Opening May 18**

**The Dalewood Reservoir Trail will remain closed until May 18, 2020 to allow for bridge repairs.**

**Physical Distancing Rating:** Trail is a single lane loop trail. Some sections are narrow with limited ability to physical distance to oncoming hikers. Users are encouraged to walk the trail counter-clockwise to improve social distancing. This means that users would stay or turn to the right when entering the trail from access points.

**What is available:** Viewing platforms, bridges and boardwalks are not cleaned. Practice regular handwashing. If the parking lot is full, please come back at another time.

**What remains closed:** The North Parking Lot off of Dalewood Road will remain closed. No dogs off leash in any area. No gatherings of more than five people. Please abide by all posted signage. The trail loop north of Ron McNeil Line is closed until further notice.

### **Dalewood Conservation Area - Campground**

Dalewood Conservation Area and campground remains closed at this time. The province announced on Thursday that, “private parks and campgrounds may open to enable preparation for the season and to allow access for trailers and recreational vehicles whose owners have full season contract.” KCCA staff are beginning to prepare for opening. KCCA will need time to bring campground drinking water systems back up to provincial standards, hire and train seasonal staff.

### **Lake Whittaker Conservation Area**

Lake Whittaker Conservation Area and campground remains closed at this time. The province announced on Thursday that, “private parks and campgrounds may open to enable preparation for the season and to allow access for trailers and recreational vehicles whose owners have full season contract.” KCCA staff are beginning to prepare for opening. KCCA will need time to bring campground drinking water systems back up to provincial standards, hire and train seasonal staff.

**Kettle Creek Dog Park**

We are working with our member municipalities on preparing for an opening date. However, Kettle Creek Dog Park remains closed until further notice. Please be patient.

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