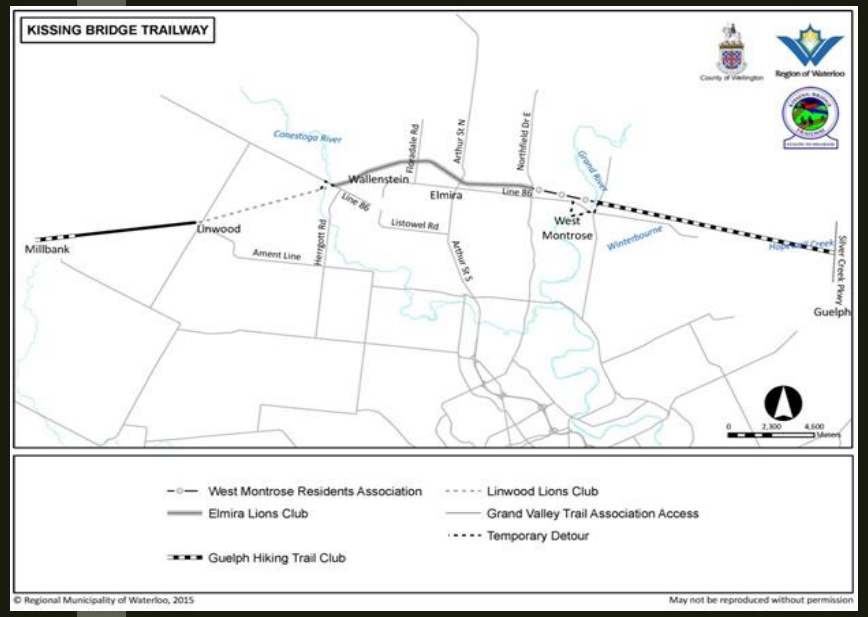
TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE KISSING BRIDGE TRAILWAY ADVISORY BOARD FOR THE YEAR 2022

Submitted to the Councils of The County of Wellington and The Regional Municipality of Waterloo: April 2023



In September 1997, the County of Wellington and the Region of Waterloo jointly leased a 44.5 kilometre stretch of abandoned rail right-of-way from the Province for development as a multi-use recreational trail between the outskirts of the City of Guelph and the Village of Millbank. During the winter and spring of 1998, the County and Region concluded Trailway Steward agreements with five community groups to develop and operate sections of the Trailway.

In May 1998, the County and Region jointly approved Terms of Reference for the Trailway Advisory Board, and appointed fifteen persons and four alternate representatives to the Board. Section 1.8 of the Terms of Reference states that the Board "will prepare an annual report to the Councils of the County of Wellington and Regional Municipality of Waterloo on its activities, initiatives, and proposals for the coming year."

The twenty-fifth annual report covers the year 2022.

KISSING BRIDGE TRAILWAY
EST. 1998
GUELPH TO MILLBANK

Trailway Advisory Board

The Trailway Advisory Board is made up of representatives of the various steward groups, adjacent non-farm landowners, a business community business representative and representatives of the agricultural community.

Mike Curtis, representative of the Guelph Hiking Trail Club was re-elected Chair of the Advisory Board for 2022 and Wayne Brabazon of the West Montose Residents' Association was elected as vice-chair.

The Trailway Advisory Board met three times in 2022. This year marked the first in person meeting since 2020.

At each meeting, representatives of the steward groups reported on the ongoing activities in each section and provided updates regarding trail use and issues that arose.

The G2G Rail Trail Inc. representative gave reports on the activities along the entire length of the trail and provided updates from the G2G Board.

Finances & Funding

The cost of developing recreational trails can be high. When the Kissing Bridge Trailway was established, it was intended that most of the cost would be borne by the community groups who are jointly developing the Trailway through fundraising and private donations.

In recent years, the G2G Rail Trail Inc. has provided funding for various initiatives in order to provide continuity across the entire length of the G2G Rail Trail.

The G2G Rail Trail Inc. and the G2G Foundation continue to look for opportunities to provide pedestrian bridge crossings over the Grand River near West Montrose and the Conestogo River in Wallenstein.

Regional and County staff provide assistance in a variety of ways to the steward groups including brochure and signage development, clerical support and technical expertise.

Trailway Steward Groups

Guelph Hiking Trail Club

- *Perth Road 116 to Perth Road 121 (Millbank)*
- *Guelph (Silver Creek Parkway) to Grand River*

Guelph to Goderich (G2G)

West Montrose Residents' Association

- *Grand River to Northfield Drive*

Lions Club of Elmira

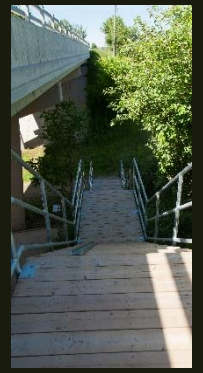
- *Northfield Drive to Wallenstein*

Linwood & District Lions Club

- *Wallenstein to Perth Road 116*

During 2022 the steward groups all took part in routine trail maintenance activities including application of stone dust, tree planting, bench installation, grass cutting and generally improving the overall appearance of the Trailway.

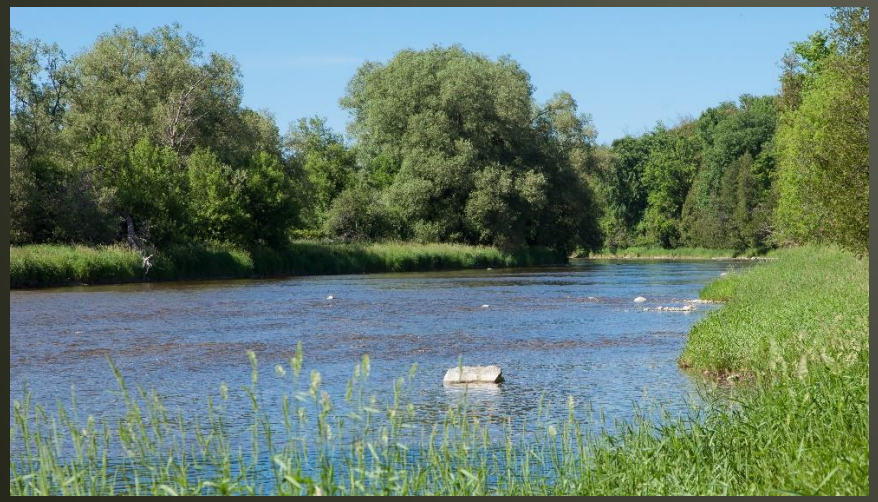
Dead and dying ash trees were removed along much of the trail in 2022 which will help reduce risks for pedestrians and improve the appearance of the trail.



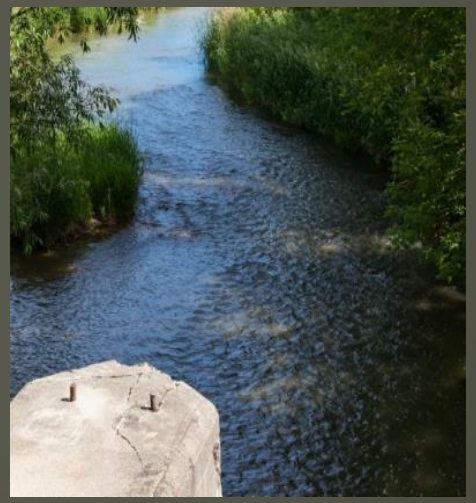
This ongoing work ensures that trail users can use the Trailway safely and maintains the overall aesthetic appearance of the trail. The steward groups also endeavor to maintain good relationships with adjoining landowners in order to address their concerns while at the same time ensuring the convenience and enjoyment of all trail users.

The Trailway Advisory Board anticipates that 2023 will continue as another busy year along the entire length of the Trailway. An inventory of trailway signage will be carried out in 2023 with the intent to replace all faded signs and to combine some of the smaller signs into a standardized format matching G2G trail and wayfinding signage.

The Advisory Board is confident that the work done by the steward groups and volunteers will result in the continued enjoyment of and support for the Kissing Bridge Trailway.



The Advisory Board continues its participation in the ongoing work of the G2G initiative and the promotion of an approximately 124 km, off-road trail connecting a network of communities across a significant portion of the southern Ontario landscape from Goderich to Guelph



Respectfully submitted,

Mike Curtis

Mike Curtis, Chair (2022)
Trailway Advisory Board
April 2023