

'Devastating loss': Suspicious fire destroys historic wooden bridge in Low, Quebec

JACQUIE MILLER Updated: January 20, 2019



Image taken by Rick Charon last night. He lives in Fieldville. Supplied by Sandra Marsters of the Kelly Bridge.

Police are investigating what they're calling a suspicious fire that destroyed a historic covered wooden bridge near Low, Que., on Saturday night.

Police were called to the Kelly bridge on chemin du Lac Pike around 6 p.m., said Quebec provincial police Sgt. Claude Denis.

Firefighters were on the scene, but the bridge could not be saved, he said.

"It's a devastating loss," said Sandra Marsters, who lives on Peabody Farm about two kilometres from the bridge. "It was beautiful."

The Kelly Bridge was built in 1923 and refurbished in 1997. The bridge spanned 27 metres.

Marsters is suspicious about what caused the fire at the bridge in a remote rural area during a snowstorm.

"There is no way a bridge in the middle of nowhere would just ignite. It was completely engulfed in flames."

“I can’t even imagine why somebody would set a bridge on fire except just to see it burn.

“We have a lot of questions.”

Marsters uses the bridge daily to commute to work in Ottawa. A detour has been set up that will add about 10 minutes to her trip, she said. The farm also hosts barn dinners and Christmas and Easter markets.

The Kelly Bridge crosses the Stag Creek near Low, about 70 kilometres north of Ottawa.



Kelly bridge on chemin du Lac Pike near Low, Quebec. OTTWP

It’s too early to comment on whether the bridge will be rebuilt, said Low’s mayor, Carole Robert. “This is a great loss for us.”

The bridge was a local attraction, and is the second-oldest in the region, she said. “This is a very sad day for us.”

Councillors will be discussing the bridge at a meeting Monday, she said. “We’ll be discussing what the next steps should be, and what we should do.”