



2023

Ware River Watershed

Public Access Management Plan Update



Ware River upstream of MWRA Shaft 8 horseshoe dam

September 2023

Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Water Supply Protection
Office of Watershed Management
Quabbin/Ware Region

ABSTRACT

The Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Water Supply Protection (DWSP), controls over 25,000 acres of land and water in the Ware River Watershed. DWSP manages these resources primarily for drinking water quality protection. The Ware River Watershed was included in the first DWSP public access management plan in 1988. The first separate Ware River Watershed Public Access Management Plan was written in 2000; this is the third subsequent update of the plan (a previous update was published in 2009). The *2023 Ware River Watershed Public Access Management Plan* explains DWSP's policies and procedures related to public access management on its property in the watershed. The plan outlines control and monitoring mechanisms used to mitigate possible negative impacts from general and specific public access activities within DWSP managed lands and waters the watershed. DWSP has involved its stakeholders since 1988 in its public access policy development, review, and modification. These stakeholders – MWRA, local residents, land abutters, visitors, and environmental organizations – have been supportive of DWSP's policies to protect the public drinking water supply while allowing controlled access for recreation.

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Correction to 2023 Ware River Watershed Public Access Management Plan Update

In the publication *2023 Ware River Watershed Public Access Management Plan Update* (Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Water Supply Protection. Boston, MA. 2023), there were clarifications required for the term “Distance” Swimming, which appeared in several locations of the document. After discussions held through the Ware River Watershed Advisory Committee, the phrase has been replaced in May 2024 with “Open Water” swimming. DCR/DWSP defines “Open Water” swimming as swimming by an individual(s) outside the designated Comet Pond swim area for exercise or athletic purposes without direct supervision. “Open Water” swimming has been inserted in the following locations: page 35 (#14 superscript); page 37; and page 65. The latter two pages also include a clarification that Open Water swimming access point is from the Comet Pond beach.

ACRONYMS

AIS	Aquatic Invasive Species
BCB	Boston City Base elevation
CMR	Code of Massachusetts Regulations
DCR	Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
MassDEP	Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
DWSP	DCR's Division of Water Supply Protection
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FEE	Complete ownership of land
hp	Horsepower
MDC	former Metropolitan District Commission (currently DCR)
mgd	million gallons per day
MGL	Massachusetts General Laws
MOA/MOU	Memorandum of Agreement/Memorandum of Understanding
MWRA	Massachusetts Water Resources Authority
ORV	Off-road Vehicle, includes four-wheeled, three-wheeled, and two-wheeled (dirt bike) motorized vehicles.
PILOT	Payment in Lieu of Taxes
SDWA	Safe Drinking Water Act
SWTR	Surface Water Treatment Rule
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle ("drone")
USACOE	US Army Corps of Engineers
WMA	Wildlife Management Area
WPR	Watershed Preservation Restriction
WSCAC	Water Supply Citizens Advisory Committee
WRWAC	Ware River Watershed Advisory Committee

I. Introduction

The DCR/MWRA Water Supply System provides source drinking water to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) for treatment and distribution to over 3 million people in 53 communities, primarily in the Boston region (**Figure 1**). The source of this water comes from rainfall collected in water courses and bodies contributing to three separate watersheds: Quabbin Reservoir, Ware River, and Wachusett Reservoir watersheds. The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Division of Water Supply Protection, Office of Watershed Management (DWSP) is responsible for the management of lands and waters in these three watersheds. DWSP manages its resources for drinking water supply protection and allows for limited public access on the property under its control. DWSP presently manages 23,803 acres of land in the Ware River watershed. This land is owned in fee by DWSP. DWSP also controls the development rights to 1,404 acres in the Ware River watershed through deeded Watershed Preservation Restrictions on private lands.

The purpose of this plan is to guide and control public access and use of lands and waters owned by DWSP within the Ware River watershed (**Figure 2**). The Ware River watershed is approximately 60,000 acres, wholly or partly situated in the eight towns of Rutland, Oakham, Phillipston, Barre, Hubbardston, Templeton, Princeton, and Westminster, Massachusetts. This Plan is an update to DWSP's *Public Access Management Plan Update 2010 - Ware River Watershed*.


Public access and recreational uses of water supply property are complex and sometimes controversial issues. There is an inherent conflict between drinking water supply protection and public demand for access to these resources. Any human activity on or near water supply source waters can introduce disease-causing agents or pollutants to the drinking water supply. Water supply managers must exercise caution when considering policies for public access and recreation on water supply lands. DWSP factors into its management that the source water protection program provided for MWRA's water supply must meet strict state and federal oversight guidelines as it serves one of the few unfiltered drinking water supplies in the nation. At the same time, DWSP recognizes that these reservoirs and lands surrounding them are valuable environmental resources of the Commonwealth that are attractive to watershed residents and the public. DWSP, whose primary responsibility is drinking water supply protection, views its public access management plans as a blueprint for determining the levels of access that may be reasonably allowed without risking water supply safety, security, or re-directing DWSP resources.

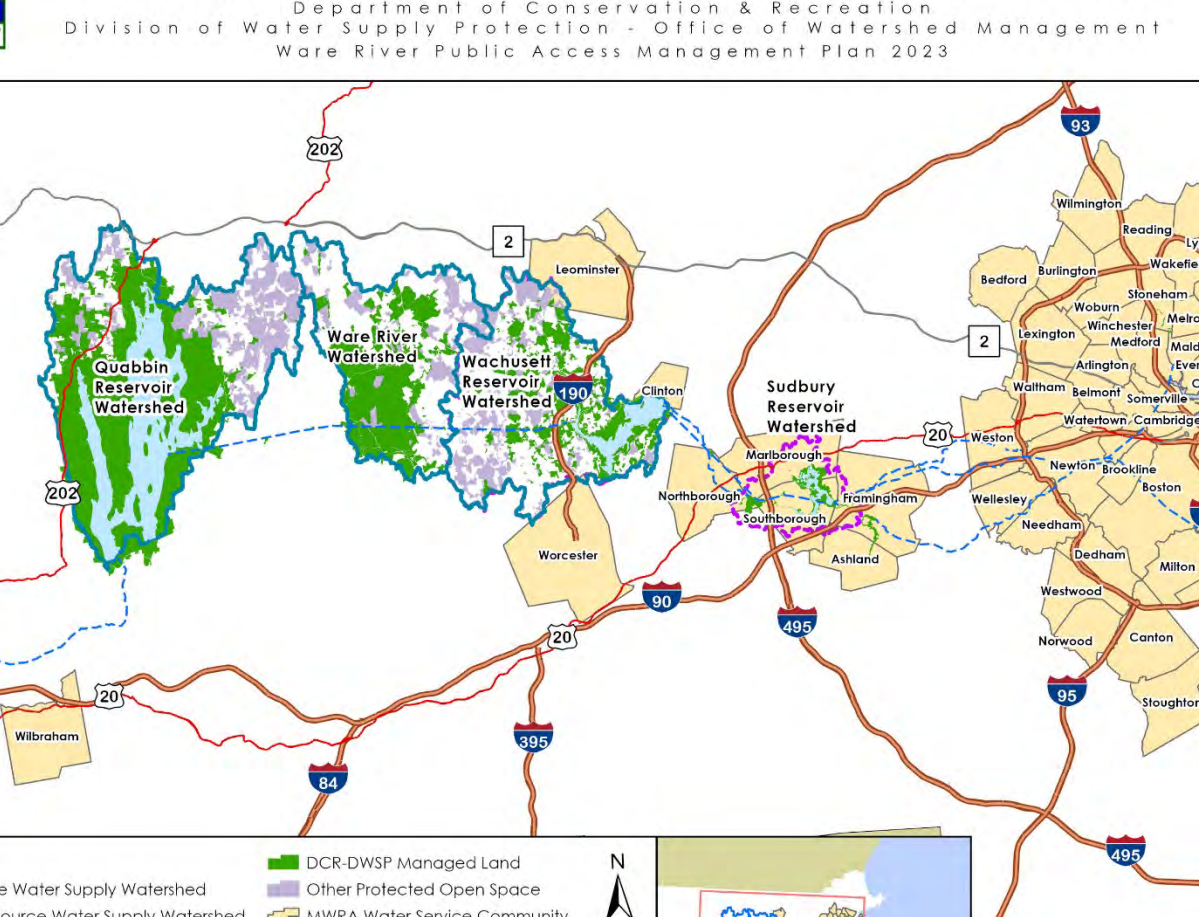
The policies outlined in this plan are for the 23,803 acres of land owned in fee by DWSP. DWSP also controls the development rights to 1,404 acres in the Ware River watershed through deeded Watershed Preservation Restrictions. WPRs, like Conservation Restrictions, are land restrictions on private property in DWSP's Watershed System encompassing the Quabbin Reservoir, Ware River, and Wachusett Reservoir watersheds. The purchase of a WPR by DWSP does not give the public any rights to access the private property. ***Public access on land subject to WPRs is solely at the discretion of the landowner.***

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

DCR/MWRA Water Supply System

Department of Conservation & Recreation
Division of Water Supply Protection - Office of Watershed Management
Ware River Public Access Management Plan 2023

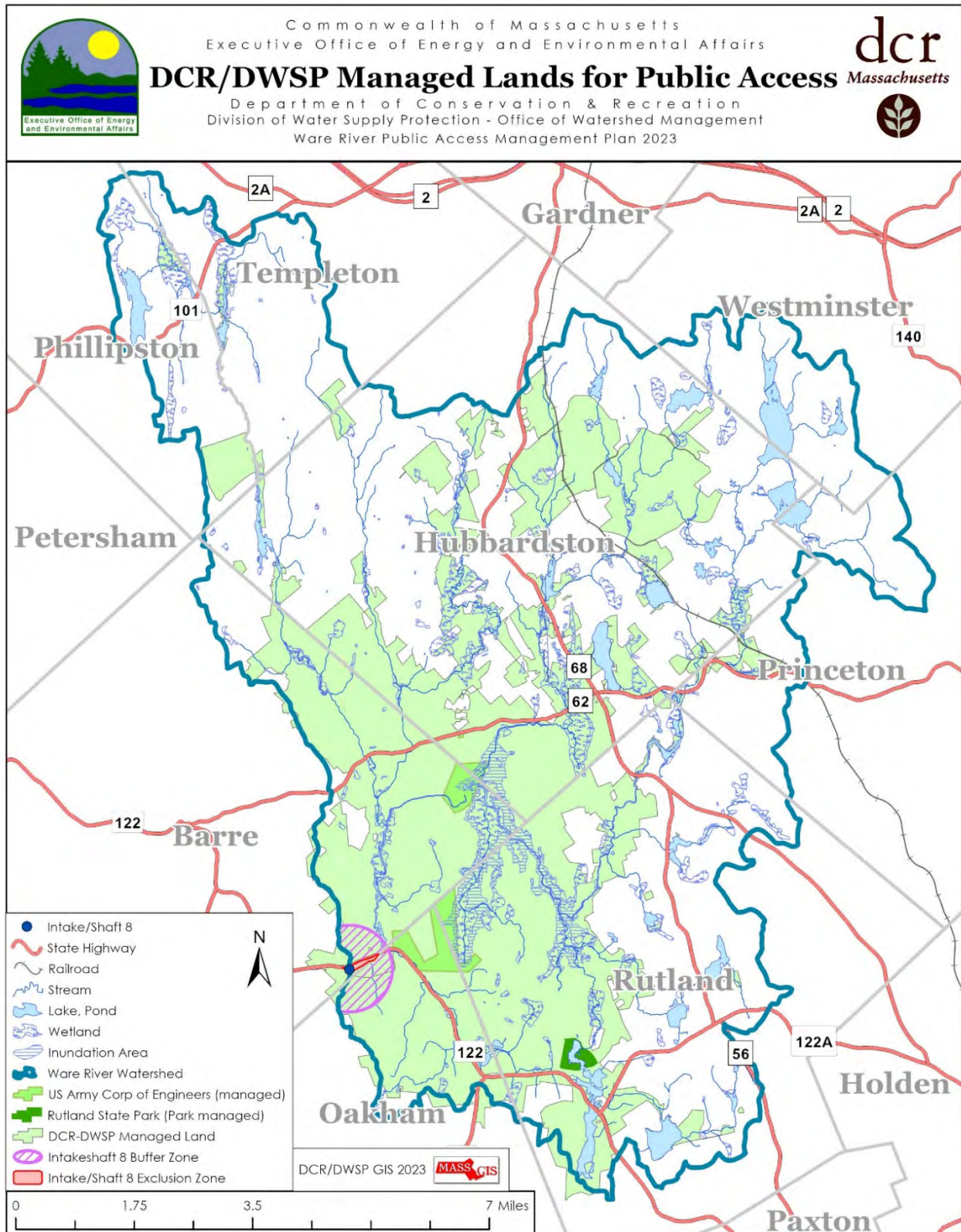




0 5 10 20 Miles

DCR/DWSP GIS 2023

Map 2. DCR/DWSP Managed Lands for Public Access in the Ware River Watershed



A. Overview of the DCR/MWRA Water Supply System

The Boston metropolitan area drinking water supply has grown from 18th century cisterns to two source supply reservoirs that were the largest of their kinds when constructed in the first half of the 20th century. The name of the agency responsible for these invaluable resources has changed many times over the past two centuries, but the mission of stewardship has remained constant. Shortly after the construction of the Wachusett Reservoir in 1908, Chapter 313 of the Acts of 1919, Section 12 transferred control of this water supply system from the Metropolitan Water and Sewer Board to the water division of a newly created state agency, the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC). Despite Wachusett Reservoir's size, it was determined that additional capacity was required for the Boston region. As part of the Ware River Diversion Project, approximately 23,000 acres of land were taken by the State of Massachusetts and cleared in conjunction with the Swift River Valley, to protect the watershed area of the Ware River Diversion Facility.

Engineers designed the drinking water supply system to collect, store, and transport water from the Quabbin Reservoir's watershed to metropolitan Boston and three communities in central Massachusetts. Due to an ingenious design, the gravity-based intake design system at Shaft #8, diverted water can be transported west to the Quabbin Reservoir or east to the Wachusett Reservoir without the use of pumps through the Quabbin Aqueduct (aka, Quabbin Tunnel). MWRA may divert water seasonally, between October 15 and June 1, from the Ware River through the Quabbin Aqueduct and to the Quabbin Reservoir. The system is a remarkable example of sacrifice by former landowners in the lost valleys, efficient design of a two-way gravity powered, underground aqueduct, and long-term vision. This commitment to create and protect a vital public resource – a clean, adequate, drinking water supply for the people in the Commonwealth – requires equal commitment in its stewardship. Since the 1920s, DWSP has acquired water supply lands in the Ware River watershed and now owns 24,304 acres outright and controls 3,563 acres in Watershed Preservation Restrictions (WPR) on undeveloped land and water in this watershed. There have been no waterborne disease outbreaks to date attributed to this unfiltered, public drinking water supply system.

The Ware River watershed is one of three active watershed areas of the DCR/MWRA water supply system. It is located between the Quabbin Reservoir watershed and Wachusett Reservoir watershed. Designated DWSP owned lands in each watershed are available to the public for limited, low-impact recreational uses such as hiking, fishing, and hunting, when compatible with water supply protection and when conducted in accordance with DWSP's relevant public access policies. Recreation is allowed in areas specifically designated for recreational access. There are other areas closed to public access, which are typically marked by "No Trespassing" signs or similar types of posted signs. Recreational users are expected to respect the rights of private property owners whose property abuts DWSP's lands. Specifically, entry on or exit from DWSP's land shall be made through gates or other designated areas. Recreational users shall not trespass on private lands in order to access DWSP lands. DWSP strives to responsibly provide controlled public access to DWSP's lands. The *Watershed Protection Plan FY24-FY28* assessed the potential risk of water supply contamination from recreation/public access on water supply lands in the Ware River Watershed as medium importance (DCR, 2023).

As part of the efforts to clean up Boston Harbor, the Massachusetts legislature, under Chapter 372 of the Acts of 1984, divided the former MDC Water Division into the MDC Division of Watershed Management (DWM) and the Waterworks Division of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA). The MDC/DWM became responsible for reservoir watershed operation and management to supply a safe and sufficient supply of water to the MWRA; the MWRA became responsible for the treatment and distribution of this water. Additional historic materials can be found on both the DCR and MWRA websites (www.mass.gov/orgs/dcr-office-of-watershed-management; www.mwra.com/04water/html/hist1.htm).

In July 2003, Chapter 26 of the Acts of 2003, section 290 merged the MDC with the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) to create the Department of Conservation and Recreation. The responsibilities of the former MDC/DWM were transferred in their entirety to the Office of Watershed Management within the Division of Water Supply Protection. Despite these name changes, the mission of the Division of Water Supply Protection's Office of Watershed Management remains consistent with its predecessors: to provide pure water through responsible land management. Together, DWSP and the MWRA provide high quality drinking water to approximately 3 million residents in 53 communities, primarily in the Boston region.

There is a well-established working relationship between DWSP and MWRA. MWRA's ratepayers entirely fund the Office of Watershed Management's annual budget, including costs associated with land acquisition and payments in lieu of taxes. The terms of this relationship are defined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two agencies. The latest version of this MOU, developed soon after the creation of DWSP, was signed into effect in April 2004.

The legislature further enhanced the ability of DWSP to maintain this drinking water supply by establishing a Water Supply Protection Trust, created by Chapter 149 of the Acts of 2004, s. 27, and written into the general laws at Massachusetts General Law (MGL) c. 10, § 73. The Trust provides an efficient mechanism for MWRA's funding of DWSP's Office of Watershed Management. The Water Supply Protection Trust has a five-person board of trustees responsible for approving the Office of Watershed Management's annual work plan and budget each spring for the following fiscal year beginning in July.

B. DWSP Mission

The DWSP's mission is laid out in its enabling legislation and subsequent amendments, found at MGL c. 92A½, §2. The statute directs DWSP to:

...construct, maintain and operate a system of watersheds, reservoirs, water rights and rights in sources of water supply [to] supply thereby a sufficient supply of pure water to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, and shall utilize and conserve said water and other natural resources to protect, preserve and enhance the environment of the Commonwealth and to assure the availability of pure water for future generations.

Building on this legislatively defined mission, DWSP's current responsibilities include:

- Safe and efficient operations and maintenance of the source facilities (including dams).
- Preservation and enhancement of the water quality of the supply sources, using education, enforcement, and cooperation to meet state and federal water quality standards and protect public health.
- Watershed management activities associated with surface water protection.
- Public outreach and education to involve watershed towns, residents, and the public to increase stewardship of the water resources under DWSP's care and control.

DWSP staff concentrate on the management, operation, and maintenance of the DCR/MWRA water supply system watersheds, reservoirs, dams, and dikes. The MWRA is responsible for water treatment and distribution. MWRA finances the Water Supply Protection Trust, which funds DWSP, as well as major capital infrastructure, including the Winsor and Wachusett Dams. DWSP and MWRA work closely together, as defined in a 2004 Memorandum of Understanding. DWSP staff includes professional engineers, analysts, planners, watershed rangers, foresters, aquatic biologists, natural resources specialists, geographic information specialists, wildlife biologists, and support staff with a variety of skills and training. DWSP staff carry out specific watershed protection programs, provide public outreach and environmental education to watershed communities and visitors, and administer and enforce watershed protection regulations (313 CMR 11.00). Staff activities are guided, integrated, and prioritized by DWSP's *Watershed Protection Plan FY24-FY28* and an annual *Work Plan*. Public access management within land owned by or on waters controlled by DWSP is an important element of the DWSP comprehensive watershed protection program.

DWSP manages land and water within the Ware River Watershed in order to protect the quality of water, enhance the ecological integrity of the watershed, and ensure the future protection of these valuable resources from pollution, encroachment, and environmentally damaging public use.

C Regulatory Overview

Public drinking water supplies are highly regulated in the United States to protect public health. Both federal and state laws, including the U.S. Safe Drinking Water Act along with its 1996 Amendments, the Surface Water Treatment Rule, and the Massachusetts State Surface Water Supply Regulations, 310 CMR 22.00 require water providers to meet rigorous water quality standards for source waters (Appendix B). Public water systems have responsibilities under 310 CMR 22.00 to control activities and to take enforcement to protect sources. These standards change over time based on research and testing. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administers federal water quality regulations throughout the country. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) has been given primary responsibility for assuring compliance with state and federal drinking water regulations, and consistently monitors water quality throughout the DCR/MWRA water system to ensure compliance with these regulations.

The DCR/MWRA water supply system is subject to further scrutiny because it is an unfiltered water system. The Federal Surface Water Treatment Rule (SWTR, 1989) and Interim Enhanced SWTR (1998) essentially requires filtration for all surface water supplies across country but does

allow for a waiver from this expensive infrastructure for the highest quality source waters that maintain effective watershed control programs which demonstrate “substantial control” over all pollutant sources. MassDEP’s Watershed Resource Protection Plan Policy (89-09) set standards for the information required in a Watershed Control Program plan for SWTR filtration avoidance, including: maps; description; activities (natural and manmade); control of activities; land agreements and ownership; and management and operations. MassDEP also established in 1996 a set of “Measures of Success” for Unfiltered Watershed Protection Efforts, requiring programmatic milestones in several categories: Watershed Control; Public Access/Recreation; Wildlife Management; Infrastructure Improvements; In-lake Problems; Sampling; System Operation/Maintenance, Staffing; Emergency Planning/Response; and Education/Multi-town Coordination.

DWSP and its predecessor agency, MDC, have successfully met MassDEP’s “Measures of Success” since the first comprehensive Watershed Protection Plan was developed for the Quabbin Reservoir watershed in 1991. The watershed protection program, including the Watershed Protection regulations, 313 CMR 11.00, were a key factor in the successful defense against a federal lawsuit that attempted to require the MWRA to build a filtration plant (*USA v. Massachusetts Water Resources Authority and Metropolitan District Commission (Civil Action Number 98-10267)*).

There are several state laws and statutes that further guide DWSP watershed management activities:

- **310 CMR 22.00 Drinking Water Regulations**
These regulations are administered by MassDEP and apply to all public water supplies in Massachusetts. DWSP and MWRA are required to demonstrate compliance with these regulations to MassDEP. DWSP has primary responsibility for assuring the watershed system meets the surface water supply protection requirements in 310 CMR 22.20B.
- **Chapter 372 of the Acts of 1984 (MWRA Enabling Act)**
This law created the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority and divided drinking water responsibilities between the MWRA and the Metropolitan District Commission’s Division of Watershed Management. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) further delineated each agency’s role in watershed management. **Chapter 26 of the Acts of 2003, s. 290** created the Department of Conservation and Recreation; the Division of Water Supply Protection assumed all responsibilities of the former MDC Division of Watershed Management and a new MOU was established with MWRA.
- **MGL c. 92A ½ (Watershed Management)**
This general law is the legal basis for most elements of the Division of Water Supply Protection. It incorporates the provisions of Chapter 36 of the Acts of 1992, the Watershed Protection Act (“the Cohen Bill”). Section 14 is the legislative support for the Ware River Watershed Advisory Committee.
- **MGL c. 10, § 75 (Water Supply Protection Trust)**
The legislature enhanced the ability of DWSP to maintain the drinking water supply by establishing a Water Supply Protection Trust. This is the general law based on Chapter 149 of the Acts of 2004, s. 27 that created the Trust. The trust provides an efficient

mechanism for MWRA's funding of DWSP and for the reviewing, monitoring, and approving of the annual *Work Plan*.

- **313 CMR 11.00 (Watershed Protection Regulations)**

These regulations incorporate the provision of MGL c. 92A½ as well as other rules on the management of the watershed system. Sections 11.01-11.08 cover the Watershed Protection Act, which controls development in the Quabbin Reservoir, Ware River, and Wachusett Reservoir watersheds. Section 11.09 contains the "General Rules and Regulations for the Protection of Watersheds and the Watershed System," including many provisions regarding public access and recreational activities. These regulations were formerly listed as 350 CMR 11.00 but were changed in February 2017 to 313 CMR 11.00 in order to be listed as a DCR regulation.

- **MGL c. 92A ½, s. 14 (Ware River Watershed Advisory Committee-WRWAC)**

The Massachusetts legislature passed an act in 1995 creating the Ware River Watershed Advisory Committee (WRWAC) (Acts of 1995, Chapter 242). This Act relieved the Quabbin Watershed Advisory Committee (QWAC) of its advisory duties within the Ware River Watershed. Since 1999, WRWAC members have contributed to the reviews and updates of the Ware River Public Access Management Plans.

Both the MassDEP and US EPA maintain strict oversight of DWSP operations and watershed protection activities in the Ware River watershed. MassDEP conducts annual watershed inspections of the system because MWRA is a public water supplier. MassDEP uses four distinct criteria in its evaluation of DWSP's watershed protection efforts:

- Demonstration and implementation of watershed control.
- On-site inspection of the water supply system.
- Documented absence of waterborne disease outbreaks.
- Compliance with the existing U.S. Safe Drinking Water Act's maximum contaminant levels.

MassDEP – Office of Water Resources' inspection of the watersheds and review of drinking water treatment processes includes an evaluation of specific criteria to measure the system's ability to produce safe drinking water. Inspection elements included the following:

- A review of the effectiveness of the Watershed Protection/Control Program Plan.
- A review of the physical condition of the source intakes and how well they are protected.
- A review of the appropriateness of the system's disinfection equipment and maintenance program in order to ensure a high operating reliability.
- An inspection of the disinfection equipment and review for appropriateness and physical deterioration.
- A review of management/operating procedures.
- A review of data records that included source water total and fecal coliform bacteria data and turbidity levels with the objective of ensuring that all required tests were conducted and recorded.
- A separate review of bacteriological data for the occurrence of coliform in the distribution

system in order to ensure that the disinfection process is effectively applied.

- A review of disinfection byproduct data from the distribution system.
- An identification of any improvements that are needed in the equipment, system maintenance, system operation, or data collection processes.
- A review of the status of any Safe Drinking Water Act compliance issues previously identified.
- Confirmation that the system is using a laboratory certified by MassDEP for the required analytical methods.

MassDEP's annual inspection report carefully documents issues in the watersheds. It has made clear that complete implementation of the DWSP's Public Access Management Plans is key to retaining filtration avoidance. MassDEP, in its January 2019 report, reiterated that trails and unauthorized activities reaching into the interior of the Ware River watershed may lead to contamination and that DWSP must completely manage and monitor all activities to prevent adverse impacts. In subsequent conversations, MassDEP has continued to express the importance of controlling and limiting public access and has pressed DWSP to bring the level of public access controls more in line with the Quabbin Reservoir and Wachusett Reservoir watersheds.

The implementation of watershed management plans, including the comprehensive *Watershed Protection Plan FY24-FY28* and *Division of Water Supply Protection 2017: 2017 Land Management Plan*, as well as each watershed's Public Access Management Plan, ensures that over 3 million residents in Massachusetts continue to enjoy an abundant and high-quality water supply.

II. Plan Update Process

There are three critical components to the DWSP planning process for each watershed. The Public Access Management Plan describes the management policies that allow people to recreate on DWSP lands while still protecting water quality. The Land Management Plan is a thorough description of the watershed's physical features, the natural resources on DWSP property, and the variety of techniques used by the agency to enhance water quality, including land protection and forest and wildlife management. The Watershed Protection Plan takes information from the Public Access Management Plan and Land Management Plan and integrates water monitoring findings and other studies to create an action plan that is the basis for DWSP's annual Work Plan and budget. The Watershed Protection Plan acts as an "umbrella," encompassing all efforts by DWSP that affect both public and private watershed lands in the quest to provide high quality drinking water that requires minimal treatment.

A. Public Engagement

This document updates and replaces the 2010 *Public Access Management Plan Update: Ware River Watershed*. DWSP's planning process has historically used a ten-year interval to update its Public Access Management Plans. The current update effort began in 2018 with initial meetings between DWSP, the Ware River Watershed Advisory Committee (WRWAC), and formally organized recreational groups. DWSP utilized a mutually agreed upon Public Engagement Plan (see Appendix E) in 2018 to guide this process, as outlined in the following

steps. Minutes from the regular update meetings with WRWAC are posted on-line at www.mass.gov/service-details/ware-river-watershed-advisory-committee-wrwac.

1. Kickoff Meeting

DWSP staff attended a meeting on April 12, 2018, with WRWAC and the public. The purpose of the meeting was three-fold: to review DWSP's watershed management priorities and the context for the plan revision; to establish common understanding of geographic references and trail names; and to capture the initial range of concerns and interests from WRWAC and user groups. Both WRWAC and the public asked DWSP to better articulate its criteria for decision making at this meeting.

2. Communicating Decision Criteria and Approach to Public Engagement

DWSP staff attended a meeting with WRWAC and the public on September 13, 2018, with the following two goals:

- Present DWSP's Watershed Management Principles for the Ware River, so all stakeholders have a common understanding of DWSP's goals and constraints governing public access (Appendix D).
- Propose a Public Engagement Plan for discussion, to ensure effective ongoing communication and collaboration with stakeholders (Appendix E).

3. In-Depth Issue Identification

From September through December 2018, DWSP worked with all stakeholders to identify the key issues to be addressed by the Plan update, guided by the Watershed Management Principles (Appendix D). Public sources of input during this phase included:

- A Stakeholder Survey of watershed recreational users and land abutters (Appendix C).
- DWSP "office hours" in Belchertown, Oakham, West Boylston, or on-site. Stakeholder user groups were invited to select up to three representatives for these appointments. DWSP staff met with representatives of Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts (S.A.M.), Barre Riding and Driving Club, Bay State Riders, Worcester County League of Sportsmen and New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA) - Wachusett Chapter.
- Online comment portal, posted at town halls, on town websites, and disseminated through WRWAC.

During this phase, DWSP also met with sister agencies, including the MWRA, MassDEP, MassWildlife, the Army Corps of Engineers, and DCR State Parks; Non-Governmental Organizations, including the Appalachian Mountain Club, Wachusett Greenways, and the Sierra Club; and local watershed town Police Departments from Rutland, Hubbardston, and Oakham.

4. Stakeholder Survey

A stakeholder survey was conducted in conjunction with the plan update process. The focus of the survey was on issue identification related to public access on DWSP lands in the Ware River Watershed. The survey was administered electronically through a Survey Monkey account, taking advantage of current internet technology that allows both ease of submitting comments

and interpreting the data. Information about the survey was distributed through WRWAC, the DCR website, and 1,071 postcards sent to abutters. The survey was open for two months, from December 2018 to January 2019; over 900 people responded to the survey

DWSP utilized the public survey to aid in the evaluation of access policies by obtaining a perspective of both abutters of its Ware River Watershed lands as well as visitors and their current concerns. Major themes that emerged from the survey focused on concerns about limits to access for biking, ORVs, swimming, geocaching, and horseback riding, on the one hand, and concerns about impacts from many of these uses on the other hand. Respondents also mentioned concerns about trespassing, parking and road conditions, hunting safety, boating and aquatic invasive species, trash and dumping, and adequate signage and enforcement. Respondents also expressed appreciation for the natural beauty, solitude, and opportunities for recreational access. See Appendix C for complete results of the survey.

5. Solution Analysis

Over the winter, spring and into the fall of 2019, DWSP engaged in focused, solution-oriented discussions with stakeholder groups to address the key public access management issues. These collaborative sessions, framed by the DWSP's Watershed Management Principles for Public Access in the Ware River Watershed (Appendix D), helped inform the development of the Public Access Management Plan Goals (see Section IV-A-1), as well as formulate solutions. The meetings were user-group specific (e.g., the biking access meeting did not focus on solutions for hunters). While DWSP sought consensus wherever possible during these meetings, the outcomes were not necessarily all consensus decisions. During this same timeframe, DWSP also held meetings with local town public works and police departments and regularly updated WRWAC.

6. Solution Proposals

In the fall of 2019, plan elements representing the proposed solutions to the identified issues were presented for review and feedback to WRWAC and the public in written form. This meeting brought to light a few key issues requiring resolution, which were brought back to DWSP's internal working group.

7. Hiatus due to Covid-19

The Covid-19 pandemic upended all aspects of life, including the completion of this plan. A proposed public meeting on March 19, 2020, was cancelled and further review of the *Ware Reservoir Watershed Public Access Management Plan Update* was suspended while DWSP focused on immediate management issues. Over the next two years, DWSP continued to communicate with several interest groups while several DCR administration changes delayed further work on the plan. DWSP was eventually able to develop a draft plan through the summer and fall of 2023.

8. Draft Plan and DWSP Response

A completed draft of the *Ware Reservoir Watershed Public Access Management Plan Update* was presented at a public meeting on November 29, 2022, with a three month long public comment period to February 28, 2023. There was a robust response to the draft, with over 250 written comments from individuals and legislators, letters from local Boards of Selectmen and

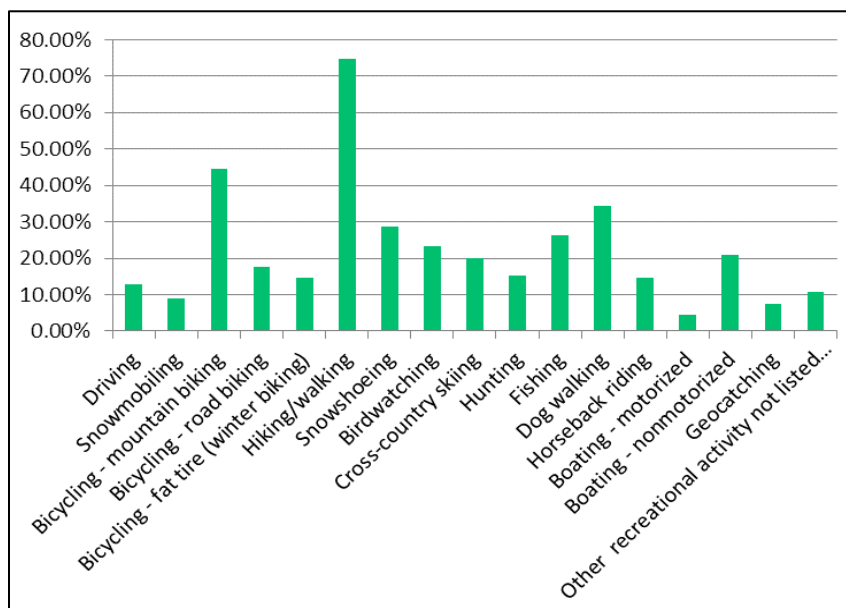
Historical Commissions, and a petition with almost 500 signatures. DWSP compiled the submitted comments and held follow-up meetings with interest groups, legislators, state executives, and state drinking water regulators.

Several draft policies were modified in response to these comments and subsequent discussions. The most significant modifications include allowing for limited large group horse ride permits, modifying but still allowing large motor permits on Long Pond, allowing open water swimming access on Comet Pond, increasing the number of internal roads that will be open to general vehicular traffic, and developing limited permit programs for night-time hunting of certain species and night-time snowmobile group rides. Details regarding the final policies can be found in Section IV. Additional information on the 2022 draft, public comments, and the process leading to subsequent modifications can be found in Appendix F.

B. Major Themes from 2019 Ware River Watershed User Survey

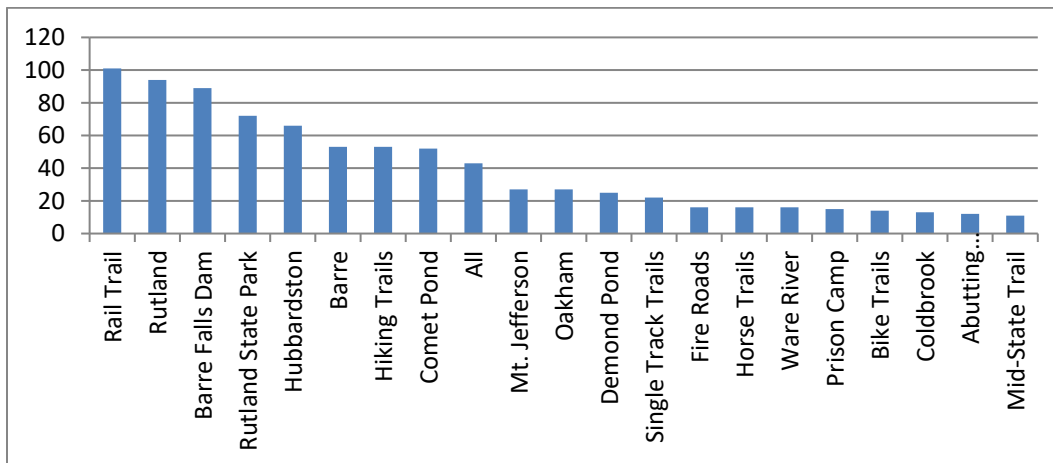
Over 900 people responded to DWSP's on-line survey regarding public access on the Ware River watershed. Appendix C has a complete summary of the results. This section provides several major themes that emerged from the survey. This information was an important first step for DCR as it began the process of reviewing access policies.

1. What Type of Recreation Do Respondents Engage in?



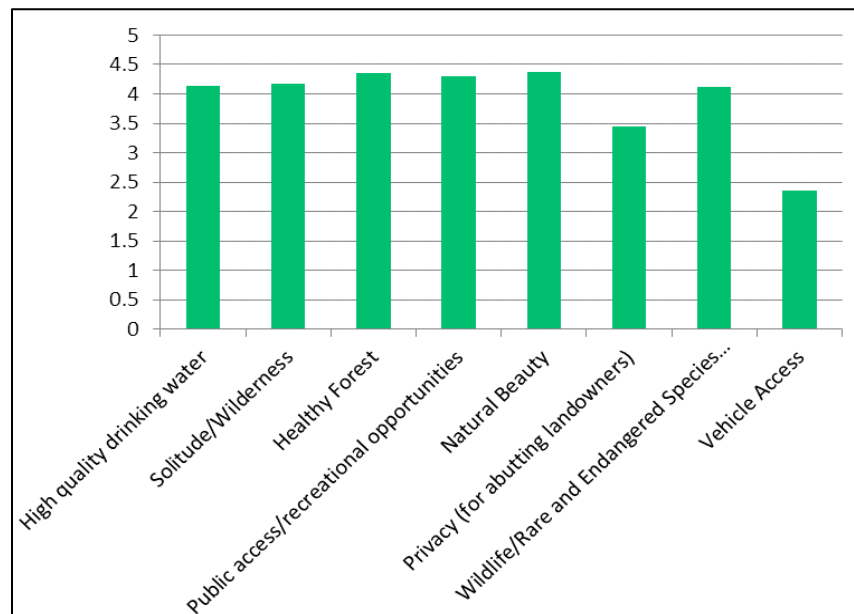
Many people also wrote in that they used the watershed for swimming (4%), running (1%), mushrooming (0.7%) and Frisbee golf (0.7%). 96% of respondents recreated individually/informally, while 13% recreated with a formal group.

2. Where do Respondents Recreate?



Graph shows locations mentioned by at least 1% of respondents.

3. Relative Importance to Respondents of the Watershed Land Values



Scale from 0 (“not at all important”) to 5 (“extremely important”)

Primary reasons for those who mentioned vehicle access included: access trailheads and more remote hiking/hunting areas; boat access; emergency vehicles; snowmobile/ATV access; horse trailers; handicapped access. Many comments stated that vehicles are a disturbance and access should be limited.

4. Conflicts Between Users

Eighty three percent of respondents said they did not experience conflicts with other users. The following are the prominent themes of those who did experience conflicts (in approximate order by number of times mentioned):

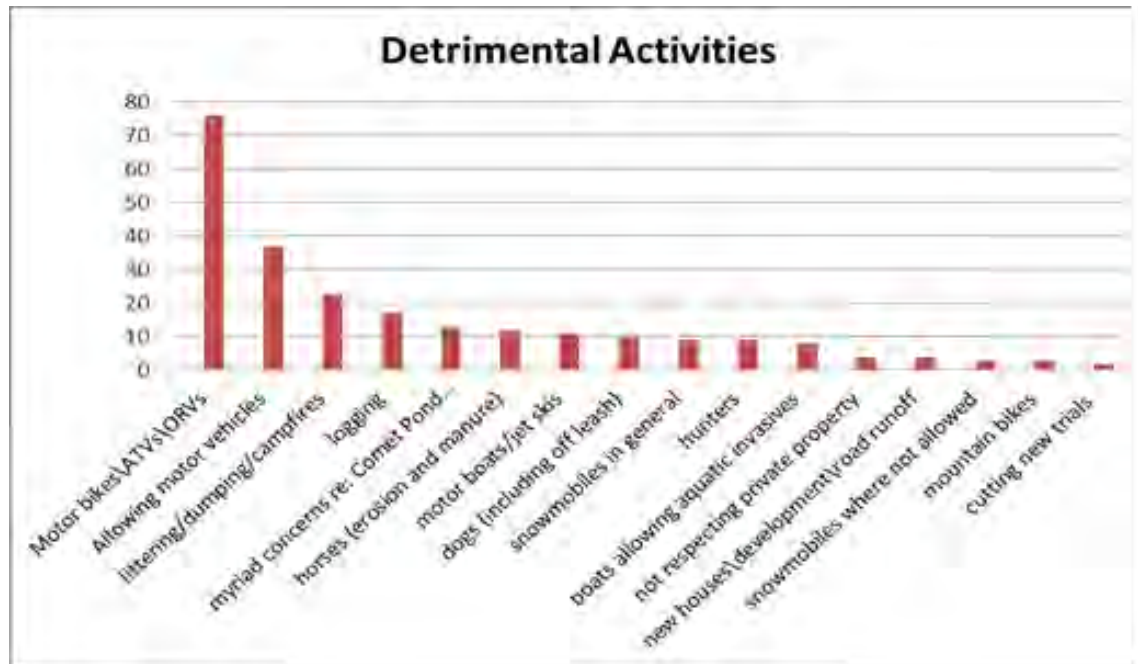
- Aggressive driving, noise, and smell of ATVs/4-wheelers and snowmobiles.
- Pond users not following rules (litter, outside proper areas for recreation, speeding and oversized boats, unauthorized types of recreation, destruction of vegetation and erosion, lack of boat washing); much concern about danger of boat/swimmer collision.
- Hikers afraid of danger from hunters; hunters feel harassed.
- Concern about unleashed dogs.
- Concern about horse waste.
- Dangerous driving and parking.
- Trespassing on private property.

5. Significant Problems While Using Water Supply Lands and Waters

Forty percent of respondents stated they experienced no significant problems. The following are the prominent themes of those who did experience significant problems while using DWSP watershed lands (in approximate order of number of times mentioned):

- Lack of access/restrictions for: biking, ATV, swimming, geocaching, horseback riding
- Trail and natural resource impacts
 - ATVs/4 wheelers: trail and stream destruction; noise; physical danger of collision
 - Illegal trail building and erosion from snowmobiles, biking, and other uses
 - Trash (camping and campfires, general litter, fishing gear)
 - Dogs off leash (dog waste; fear of dogs)
 - Logging (forest disturbance; clearcutting)
- Boating concerns
 - Aquatic invasives
 - Oversized boats/motors
 - Poor signage for access points
 - Danger of collision with swimmers
- Swimming concerns
 - Shoreline erosion and vegetation destruction
 - Illegal access points
 - Dangerous locations
 - Trash
- Trail usability problems (dead ends; poor maintenance; poor signage)
- Beavers (flooding of trails; creation of swamps; mosquitoes; impacts to trout habitat; impacts to septic fields and wells)
- Rangers/personnel (harassment by rangers; not enough patrol/enforcement)
- Hunters/hunting (feel endangered by hunters; off-season poaching)
- Parking and road conditions
 - Obstruction of roads and trails by parked vehicles
 - Poor road conditions
 - Speeding
- Trespassing

6. Respondents' Perception of Activities Detrimental to Water Quality, Natural Resources/Wildlife, Public Enjoyment, or Abutters



7. Respondents' Identification of Illegal Activity

The following activities were most frequently mentioned (in approximate order by number of times mentioned)

- ATVs/Dirt bikes/4-wheelers
- Dumping of trash/littering
- Unauthorized trail cutting and trail use by mountain bikers
- Partying/fires
- Snowmobiling
- Public drinking/underage drinking/drug use
- Illegal and dangerous swimming
- Failure to clean boats of invasive aquatics
- Dogs off leash
- Oversized boats
- Horseback riding outside designated areas
- Hunting Sundays/out of season

C. DWSP Internal Working Group

DWSP staff updated the Public Access Management Plan using an analytic-deliberative process (NRC, 1996). This process integrates field experience, research, and public participation. The goal of this process is to develop a well-synthesized and balanced management plan. The next section contains a brief description of the internal resources used to update this Plan.

Representatives from each DWSP work group in the Quabbin/Ware Region (Watershed Rangers, Environmental Quality specialists, etc.) make up the DWSP Public Access Working Group. This group guides the revision process and content of the Public Access Management Plan updates. This working group considers long-term water quality influences along with short-term, human dimensions (i.e., political, economic, and social considerations) when assessing the water quality effects of public access and recreational activities within the water supply watersheds. DWSP tries to strike a balance between public health protection and controlled amounts of low intensity, public access within the water supply lands when developing its Public Access policies.

DWSP recognizes that controlled public access can assist water supply protection by increasing public awareness of the water supply watershed, alerting the agency to problems on the watershed, and discouraging unauthorized access on either land or water.

The Public Access Working Group uses adaptive management techniques to revise, reassess, and deliberate DWSP's recreational policies within a 5-10-year cycle. DWSP, with a mandate to provide pure water for current and future generations, will remain cautious in allowing new or expanded activities.

D. Final Plan

DWSP staff believes the collaborative stakeholder and internal process led to a final updated Plan that supports all DWSP's Watershed Management Principals while providing broad opportunity for public access and recreation. Specifically, the updated Plan:

- Significantly improves water quality protections in the proximity of the Ware River Intake/Shaft 8.
- Preserves and, in some cases, enhances many recreational opportunities in the watershed where access is compatible with natural resource management and water quality protection goals.
- Improves public safety.
- Improves DWSP's ability to control illegal activity on watershed land.
- Helps establish ongoing channels of communication and collaboration with user groups.

III. Existing Conditions

A. Historical Overview

The Ware River watershed, while often overlooked, is an important piece of the drinking water supply system for Greater Boston and the Chicopee Valley. Located between the Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs, this is the land and water which drain to the MWRA diversion facility on the Ware River in Barre and travels to the Quabbin Reservoir through an underground tunnel, the Quabbin Aqueduct. While the aqueduct was originally designed to transport water to either the Quabbin Reservoir or to the Wachusett Reservoir, it has been used almost exclusively one-way, to the Quabbin Reservoir, since the mid-1930s.

Approximately 23,000 acres of land, acquired by the State of Massachusetts in conjunction with the more famous work in the Swift River Valley to create Quabbin Reservoir, were taken to protect the watershed area of the Ware River Diversion Facility. Three towns, as well as Rutland State Prison, were cleared of all farms, factories and homes:

- 1) West Rutland Village
- 2) Coldbrook Springs (site of mineral springs attracting visitors for its “Rare Medicinal Virtues” in Oakham. It is reported that the springs were filled with gravel to prevent their future use.)
- 3) White Valley.

A total of 350 people lost their homes and businesses to the state to protect the water quality at the Ware River Intake (Maria Beiter-Tucker, Personal communication).

The Ware River has two forks. The longest, the East Branch, begins near Hubbardston. The river joins the Quaboag River and ends in the town of Three Rivers, where it joins the Chicopee River on its way to the Connecticut River. The Brigham Pond Dam, which forms a pond of the same name, first impounds the East Branch of the Ware River near Hubbardston. The watershed north of Hubbardston feeds tributaries of the Ware and Millers Rivers; the Millers River generally runs west, and the Ware River generally runs south. The Ware River is part of the DCR/MWRA drinking water system that serves the greater Boston area.



Rutland Worsted Company, West Rutland, MA

The river was named for early fish weirs (locally pronounced). In 1928 the building of a 12.5-mile (20.1 km) long aqueduct connecting the Ware River to the Wachusett Reservoir commenced, a major public works undertaking. The twelve-foot-wide massive horseshoe shaped conduit, known as the Wachusett-Colebrook Tunnel, had to be blasted through solid rock at a depth of 200 feet (70 m). The arrival in 1931 of the first water from the Ware River by way of this tunnel probably saved the Wachusett Reservoir from drying up, for a prolonged drought had reduced Wachusett's water supply to less than 20 percent of capacity.

In 1933 the Quabbin Aqueduct was completed, ready to transport water from the Quabbin Reservoir, then under construction. The Swift River Diversion tunnel was in full use, by-passing water around the dam area.

The Ware River starts at an elevation of about 830 ft (253 m) Boston City Base (BCB), fed from the numerous small streams within its watershed, before ending at the town of Three Rivers at an elevation of about 290 ft (88.4 m) BCB. The river flows through many historic mill towns where its fall towards the sea provided power. One of the largest such towns is Ware, Massachusetts, which shares its name with the river. The Ware River is part of the Chicopee River Watershed.

The Ware River remains as a picturesque artifact of those bygone days when the mill towns used waterpower. The river's power, however, still starts the natural siphon at the Ware River Diversion in South Barre. Its water also diverts for storage in the Quabbin Reservoir, using this same facility.



West Rutland Village Memorial 2009

B. Operation of Diversion Facility

The Ware River may be diverted between May 31 and December 1 with prior approval from the State Department of Public Health (Acts of 1926, Ch. 375). No diversion of Ware River flows is allowed from June 15 through October 15 (Ware Department "Permit" March 1928).

Diversion to the Quabbin Reservoir under "normal" operating conditions and diversions made between June 1 to June 15 and October 15 to November 30, must have prior permission from the MassDEP Division of Water Supply (Filtration Waiver - Administrative Consent Order ACO-BO-91-5001). Practically speaking, these transfers are limited to times when the Quabbin Aqueduct is not being used to transfer water from Quabbin Reservoir to Wachusett Reservoir.

While water from the Ware River can physically be diverted either to the Quabbin or the Wachusett Reservoir, the likelihood of a diversion to Wachusett Reservoir is very low. Currently, under normal operating procedures, MWRA diverts Ware River water flows to the Quabbin Reservoir through the Quabbin Aqueduct.

Water from the river is taken (aka “skimmed”) by nine siphon spillways into a well on top of Shaft 8. Four butterfly valves control the transfer of water from the well into the Shaft. The diverted water then drops 260’ vertically following a centrifugal path down a shaft lined with helical guides. This pathway provides the energy necessary to move the water from Shaft 8 to the outlet at Shaft 11A and into the Quabbin Reservoir. Once it enters Quabbin, Ware River water typically undergoes approximately a four-year residence time before complete mixing.



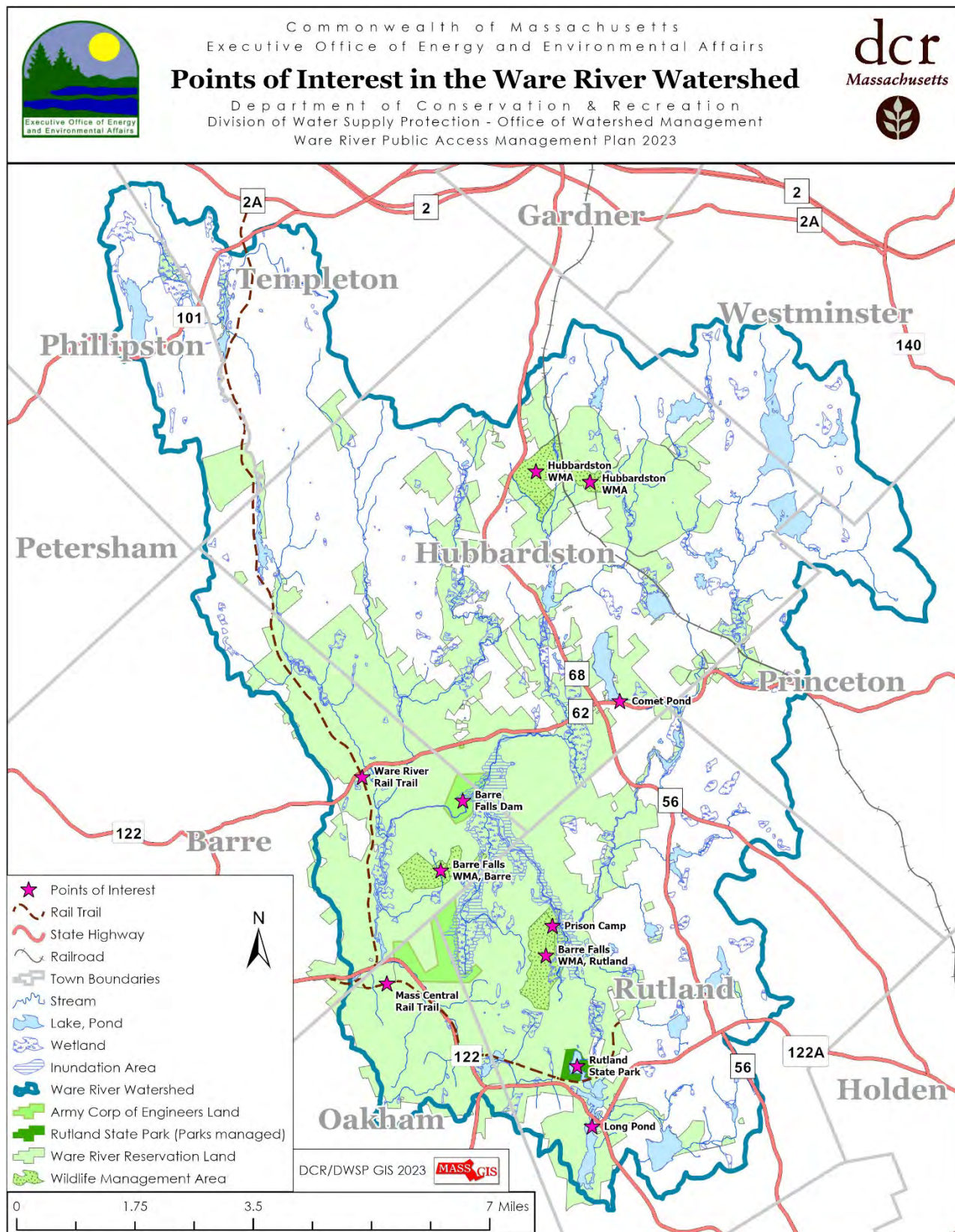
Builders of the Quabbin Aqueduct in the Aqueduct

C. Points of Interest in the Ware River Watershed

There are several distinct recreational sites within the Ware River watershed; some are owned and managed by DWSP, others are owned by DWSP but managed by other entities, and there are locations that are not DWSP property but are often considered by the public to be part of DWSP’s Ware River watershed (Map 3). DWSP has worked with DCR-State Parks to clarify responsibilities regarding management of Rutland State Park, Asnacomet (Comet) Pond, the Ware River Rail Trail and the Mass Central Rail Trail.

The policies in this plan are for those properties that are both owned and managed by DCR’s Division of Water Supply Protection. All property owned by DWSP, even if managed by another organization, is part of the Watershed Payment in Lieu of Taxes program (see Section III–D–4).

Map 3. Points of Interest in the Ware River Watershed



1. Rutland State Park

Rutland State Park is an approximately 300-acre area, primarily focused around Whitehall Pond. The land was originally taken by the state in the 1930s when the Ware River watershed was established as a water supply (Map 4). The park was created in the 1950s when DWSP's predecessor agency, the Metropolitan District Commission, entered into an agreement with DCR-State Parks predecessor, the Department of Conservation. The land remains DWSP property, as the town of Rutland receives watershed Payments in Lieu of Taxes for this area; management and day-to-day operations, however, are the responsibility of DCR-State Parks. Rutland State Park provides a range of recreational opportunities to the region, including swimming, picnicking, boating, and biking. Some of the trails in Rutland State Park connect with the trail system throughout the Ware River watershed (Map 6).

2. Ware River Rail Trail

The Ware River Rail Trail is a 15-mile-long dirt track on the abandoned Ware River Railroad right of way, which was an independent line built in 1868 that ran north/south from Palmer north to the Cheshire Railroad in Winchendon. This unpaved state-owned trail is open for public use from Coldbrook to Baldwinville. Much of the Ware River Rail Trail runs through DWSP property; Payments in Lieu of Taxes are made on this land. The trail is currently managed by DCR-State Parks, however there is a discussion internally within DCR about DWSP having responsibility for the area on its property.

3. Mass Central Rail Trail

The 104-mile Mass Central Rail Trail runs from downtown Boston to Northampton, MA. The remnant of a railroad that was destroyed in the 1938 hurricane, the right of way traverses 27 Massachusetts cities and towns. The former railroad bed, however, is not owned or managed by a single entity. An independent organization has been working over 20 years to create a unified trail across the entire length of this east-west corridor. Many sections are complete and open to the public. Several of these current and future stretches of the rail trail are on DCR lands. The Norwottuck Trail in Northampton, Hadley, Amherst, and Belchertown is operated by DCR-State Parks. Wachusett Greenways operates 17 miles of the rail trail through the Wachusett Reservoir and Ware River watersheds. Approximately half of that distance, 8.4 miles, is in the Ware River watershed, with 5.7 miles on DWSP property. DWSP makes Payment in Lieu of Taxes on property it owns, however maintenance is the responsibility of Wachusett Greenways, as outlined in a MOU between DWSP and Wachusett Greenways.

4. Barre Falls Dam

The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) owns and operates the Barre Falls Dam in the town of Barre, MA. It was completed in July 1958 to substantially reduce flooding along the Ware, Chicopee, and Connecticut Rivers. The large area behind the dam – in the towns of Barre, Hubbardston, Oakham, and Rutland – does not hold back water in a reservoir but is there to retain flood waters when necessary. These federal public lands encompass wetlands, forests, open fields, and river areas and are surrounded by DWSP property. Activities allowed by USACOE include picnicking, canoeing, hiking, cross-country skiing, and disc golf. DWSP works closely with the USACOE in managing the natural resources of the region. DWSP does not make Payments in Lieu of Taxes on these lands.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Rutland State Park
Department of Conservation & Recreation
Division of Water Supply Protection - Office of Watershed Management
Ware River Public Access Management Plan 2023

dc
Massachusetts

The map displays the Rutland State Park area, including Whitehall Pond and Long Pond. The park is shaded in green, and the surrounding land is light green. The town of Rutland is labeled in the center. Major roads shown include State Route 122 (red line) and State Route 122A (red line). Other roads include Barrack Hill Road, Rutland State Park Road, Main Street, and Ware Road. The map also shows the Central Mass Rail Trail (dashed orange line) and Rutland State Park Access Roads (purple lines). Various DCR gates are marked with numbers and letters (e.g., WH-3, RIPI, PC-1, BH-1, CR-1, 122-14, 122-15). A legend in the bottom left corner defines the symbols used: DCR Gate & Number (yellow square), Parking (yellow square with 'P'), Central Mass Rail Trail (dashed orange line), Rutland State Park Access Road (purple line), Town Road (grey line), State Route (red line), Rutland State Park (green area), DCR-DWSP Managed Land (light green area), Town Boundaries (dashed grey line), Stream (blue line), Lake, Pond (blue area), Wetland (blue wavy line), and Inundation Area (blue wavy line). A scale bar at the bottom indicates distances from 0 to 0.8 miles. The map is credited to DCR/DWSP GIS 2023 and includes the MASS GIS logo.

Whitehall Pond

Rutland

Long Pond

122

122A

BARRACK HILL ROAD

RUTLAND STATE PARK ROAD

MAIN STREET

WARE ROAD

122-14

122-15

CR-1

WH-3

RIPI

PC-1

BH-1

122

0 0.2 0.4 0.8 Miles

DCR/DWSP GIS 2023

MASS GIS

Legend:

- DCR Gate & Number
- Parking
- Central Mass Rail Trail
- Rutland State Park Access Road
- Town Road
- State Route
- Rutland State Park
- DCR-DWSP Managed Land
- Town Boundaries
- Stream
- Lake, Pond
- Wetland
- Inundation Area

5. Asnacomet (Comet) Pond

Asnacomet (Comet) Pond is a Great Pond that is surrounded by both DWSP property and private landowners. A great pond is a natural pond larger than 10 acres, which by legislation is owned by the Commonwealth (MGL Chapter 91). There is a public beach and boat ramp on DWSP property at Comet Pond. DWSP entered into an agreement several years ago for DCR-State Parks to manage the beach; the MA Department of Fish and Game's Office of Fishing and Boating Access manages the boat ramp. Boat motor sizes are limited to 20 hp for two-stroke engines and 25 hp for four-stroke engines. DWSP continues to establish policies regarding recreational uses on Comet Pond and its surrounding lands, while Watershed Rangers also patrol the area. DWSP makes Payments in Lieu of Taxes on the beach and other land that surrounds Comet Pond.

6. Long Pond

Long Pond is a 180-acre Great Pond that is completely surrounded by DWSP lands. It is not part of Rutland State Park. There is a public boat ramp on the south end installed and maintained by the MA Department of Fish and Game's Office of Fishing and Boating Access. DWSP allows power boats on Long Pond. A limited number of boat motors larger than 20 hp or 25 hp are currently allowed with a seasonal DWSP permit. DWSP makes Payments in Lieu of Taxes on the lands surrounding Long Pond.

7. Prison Camp

The approximately 20-acre Prison Camp site in Rutland, MA on DWSP property encompasses remnants of an early 20th century prison built for minor offenders. The prison site included a fully functioning vegetable and dairy farm as well as a tuberculosis hospital. The entire area was taken over for water supply protection in the 1930s when the Ware River watershed was established as a water supply.

DWSP and its predecessor agencies have allowed access to the remnants of the Prison Camp for decades. The area, unfortunately, has been exploited by vandalism, hate graffiti, and off-road vehicles. DWSP is working with local groups to sufficiently control the area so that public access can still be allowed at the Prison Camp while protecting public safety by keeping people from entering any of the ruins. DWSP makes Payments in Lieu of Taxes on the Prison Camp lands.

8. Wildlife Management Areas

DWSP has issued MassWildlife a permit allowing that agency to manage Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) on watershed management land in Hubbardston (Hubbardston WMA) as well as in Rutland and Barre (Barre Falls WMA). Hunting and trapping are permitted on WMAs, but with different policies (www.mass.gov/info-details/list-of-wildlife-management-areas-by-district#central-district-; www.mass.gov/service-details/wildlife-management-area-regulations). DWSP makes Payments in Lieu of Taxes on these WMA lands.

D. Watershed Assessment

The Ware River watershed (the catchment area of Roger H. Lonergan Intake in the MWRA diversion facility (Shaft 8,) in Barre, Massachusetts along the Ware) includes approximately 61,740 acres (96 square miles). The watershed encompasses portions of eight towns - Barre, Hubbardston, Oakham, Phillipston, Princeton, Rutland, Templeton, and Westminster. The Ware River watershed contributes approximately 14% (41 mgd) of the DCR/MWRA water supply system's safe yield of 300 mgd. At a larger scale, the Ware River watershed is within the Chicopee River basin. The watershed contains both public and private property; DWSP manages over 25,000 acres of land and waters in this central Massachusetts region for drinking water quality protection and supply as well as for ecological purposes.

1. Water Quantity

The water level in the Ware River fluctuates seasonally due to natural factors such as precipitation, evaporation, evapotranspiration, and wildlife activities (e.g., construction of beaver dams), as well as due to human factors. While the elevation changes on the river primarily depend on natural factors, operational factors, including flood control activities by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the Barre Falls Dam, influence the river's elevation and thus play a role in diversion decisions.

Water resource professionals define a safe yield of a water supply system as the annual volume of water that can be safely withdrawn without adverse impact on the system. The entire DCR/MWRA system safe yield is approximately 300 million gallons per day, as shown in **Table 1** (J. Gregoire - MWRA, personal communication). At the time of this writing, the present annual average daily demand on the system is approximately 200 million gallons per day.

Table 1. DCR/MWRA Water Supply System Safe Yield

Source Water	Watershed Area* (square miles)	System's Safe Yield (mgd)
Ware River at MWRA Intake	96	41
Quabbin Reservoir	187	158
Wachusett Reservoir	117	101
Total	400	300

Source: MWRA, 2019. mgd = million gallons per day

* Including area of reservoir surface for Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs

The Ware River watershed is an important component of the entire watershed system relative to its contribution to the system's safe yield. Both DWSP and MWRA consider the Ware River watershed an important element of the overall public water supply system. The Ware River watershed thus helps ensure water supply for current and future populations in both the metropolitan Boston area and in the Chicopee Valley.

2. Water Quality Monitoring

Environmental Quality (EQ) staff conducts water-sampling activities at eighteen sites within the Ware River watershed on a biweekly basis. MWRA staff analyze the water samples at the MassDEP-certified Quabbin and Central (Deer Island) laboratories. Select water quality parameters measured from samples taken at one sampling site, Shaft #8 (Ware River Intake) are summarized in Table 2. DWSP staff considers the water quality at Shaft # 8 to represent the average annual water quality collected off the Ware River watershed above the intake works. DWSP's water quality goals are not limited just to the water at the Ware River intake, but encompass the entire watershed, even remote locations.

Table 2. Water Quality Parameters Measured at Lonergan Intake 2017- 2021

Parameter	Statistic	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Water Temperature (°C)	n	26	26	27	23	26
	Range (Min - Max)	-0.04 - 23.1	-0.06 - 25.7	-0.2 - 22.5	-0.08 - 25.1	0.10 - 23.7
	Median	11.6	7.81	9.84	9.26	10.9
	Mean	9.97	10.4	9.36	10.6	10.7
pH	n	26	26	27	23	26
	Range (Min - Max)	4.51 - 6.84	5.03 - 6.43	6.04 - 7.07	5.99 - 7.21	5.12 - 6.91
	Median	5.75	5.67	6.58	6.53	6.15
	Mean	5.81	5.75	6.56	6.52	6.19
Specific Conductance (µS/cm)	n	26	26	27	23	26
	Range (Min - Max)	65.9 - 142	61.4 - 131	53.8 - 123	67.9 - 123	68.3 - 126
	Median	105	98.5	103	108	104
	Mean	108	100	98.5	105	103
Turbidity (NTU)	n	26	25	26	19	26
	Range (Min - Max)	0.43 - 4.00	0.40 - 4.00	0.51 - 5.20	0.51 - 3.00	0.47 - 2.50
	Median	1.15	1.00	1.25	1.20	1.10
	Mean	1.54	1.60	1.61	1.30	1.24
<i>E. coli</i> (MPN/100 mL)	n	27	26	26	19	26
	Range (Min - Max)	10 - 345	10 - 1550	10 - 538	10 - 395	10 - 341
	Median	31.0	41.0	15.0	20.0	41.0
	Mean	60.7	145	53.0	85.1	71.9
Nitrate-N (mg/L)	n	4	4	5	24	26
	Range (Min - Max)	0.010 - 0.026	0.016 - 0.024	0.010 - 0.063	0.005 - 0.054	0.005 - 0.058
	Median	0.020	0.021	0.038	0.016	0.016
	Mean	0.019	0.020	0.039	0.023	0.021
Total Phosphorus (mg/L)	n	4	3	5	24	52
	Range (Min - Max)	0.008 - 0.042	0.013 - 0.027	0.010 - 0.026	0.018 - 0.050	0.008 - 0.048
	Median	0.022	0.015	0.022	0.034	0.022
	Mean	0.024	0.018	0.019	0.032	0.023

Source: DWSP, 2021. "n" is number of samples; the COVID-19 pandemic impacted sampling frequencies in 2020.

3. Land Use, Land Cover, and Land Protection

Land use and land cover data are an important tool for developing watershed protection strategies. Overall, the active DCR/MWRA water supply system is characterized by large tracts of undeveloped land with low population densities in the developed portions of the watersheds. Detailed analyses have been conducted for DWSP's watershed protection plans. The *FY24-28 Watershed Protection Plan* utilized the [MassGIS 2016 Land Cover/Land Use](#) data, which was developed collaboratively by MassGIS and the federal National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of Coastal Management, released in 2019 to the public. This dataset consists of two components, which when used together, made it possible to display and quantify the portions of commercial parcels which are

covered by impervious surfaces, or to show portions of residential parcels which are used as developed open space (e.g., yards).

DWSP took advantage of these possible combinations to fine tune the queries used to determine each land cover or land use category. These analyses changed a few of the previous land use categories, providing a differentiation between non-impervious and impervious surfaces. This perspective is especially noticeable when comparing residential or commercial/industrial percentages between this plan and earlier versions. For example, it was previously only possible to select an entire parcel as a residential or commercial/industrial parcel, even if only a small portion of the parcel was impervious (e.g., house, parking area, building, etc.). The new MassGIS dataset made it possible to select and measure the specific areas on a parcel where impervious use was detected (e.g., structures, decks, pools, parking areas, etc.).

Table 3. Percentage Summary of Land Use and Land Type in the Ware River Watershed

Land Cover/Land Use (%) (excluding the reservoirs)							
<i>Non-Impervious</i>					<i>Impervious</i>		
Forest	Wetland	Agriculture	Open Water	Other	Residential	Commercial/ Industrial	Other
74.77	11.61	3.81	3.22	3.19	0.87	0.06	2.47

Source: DCR and MassGIS. MassGIS data, <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massgis-data-2016-land-coverland-use>, published in 2019. Open Water excludes reservoir area. Please refer to Appendix A for details on how these values were calculated.

* Due to classification limitations, several areas of land on DWSP property consisting of harvested forestry areas and shoreline were identified as agriculture. Total mis-classified in Ware /River watershed – 0.3%.

The Ware River watershed is largely undeveloped and forested (75%), with approximately 1% in residential land use, and a minimal area classified as commercial or industrial land use. Wetland, cropland and pasture comprise the majority of the non-impervious land types. Open water represents 3.2% of the watershed. Ownership patterns have changed in recent years for private lands, with average parcel size declining as larger parcels are subdivided for residential development or through the estate probate process as large landowners die and their land is passed on to multiple descendants. The Ware River watershed is approximately 3% impervious.

This large, forested land cover offers attractions to those seeking residential relocation and recreational destinations. Based on analysis of land cover, land use, and field surveys, DWSP staff have estimated that existing recreational activity occurs in approximately eighty-nine percent of the Ware River watershed area (i.e., throughout the forestlands, wetlands, agricultural lands, and open water).

In the Ware River watershed, 54% of the land is classified as protected open space. Of this total, DWSP controls 25,207 acres, or 41% of the watershed. DWSP owns approximately 23,803 acres in fee, with an additional 1,404 acres controlled through Watershed Preservation Restrictions. Other government agencies, local governments, and non-government organizations own the remainder of protected open space (Table 4.)

Table 4. Summary of Protected Lands in the Ware River Watershed

	DWSP Fee (acres)	DWSP WPR (acres)	Other Protected (acres)	Total Protected (acres)	Land Area
Acres	23,803	1,404	7,874	33,081	61,671
% of watershed	38.6%	2.3%	12.8%	53.6%	

Source: MassGIS and DWSP, June 2022

WPR = Watershed Preservation Restriction, similar to a Conservation Restriction.

Other Protected lands constitute property identified by MassGIS as Open Space protected in perpetuity less DWSP fee lands and WPRs.

DWSP manages land use in the Ware River watershed under its Watershed Protection regulations, 313 CMR 11.00. Specific land use regulations, found in 313 CMR 11.04, along with regulations implemented by MassDEP, local Conservation Commissions, and Departments of Public Health, provide general environmental protection control and enforcement authority throughout the watershed. The General Rules and Regulations for the Protection of Watersheds and the Watershed System, 313 CMR 11.09, are the basis for all public access policies in the Ware River watershed. For a more in-depth description of DWSP's land management activities in the Ware River watershed, please refer to DWSP's Watershed Protection Plan, Land Management Plan, Environmental Quality Assessments (EQA), and Water Quality reports.

Population trends continue to show steady growth in the Ware River watershed communities as the area is a desirable location for both Worcester and Boston suburban housing options.

Table 5. Ware River Watershed Town Population- 1980-2020

Town	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Barre	4,102	4,546	5,113	5,398	5,530
Hubbardston	1,797	2,797	3,909	4,382	4,328
Oakham	994	1,503	1,673	1,902	1,851
Phillipston	953	1,485	1,621	1,682	1,726
Princeton	2,425	3,189	3,353	3,413	3,495
Rutland	4,334	4,936	6,353	7,973	9,049
Templeton	6,070	6,438	6,799	8,013	8,149
Westminster	5,139	6,191	6,907	7,277	8,213

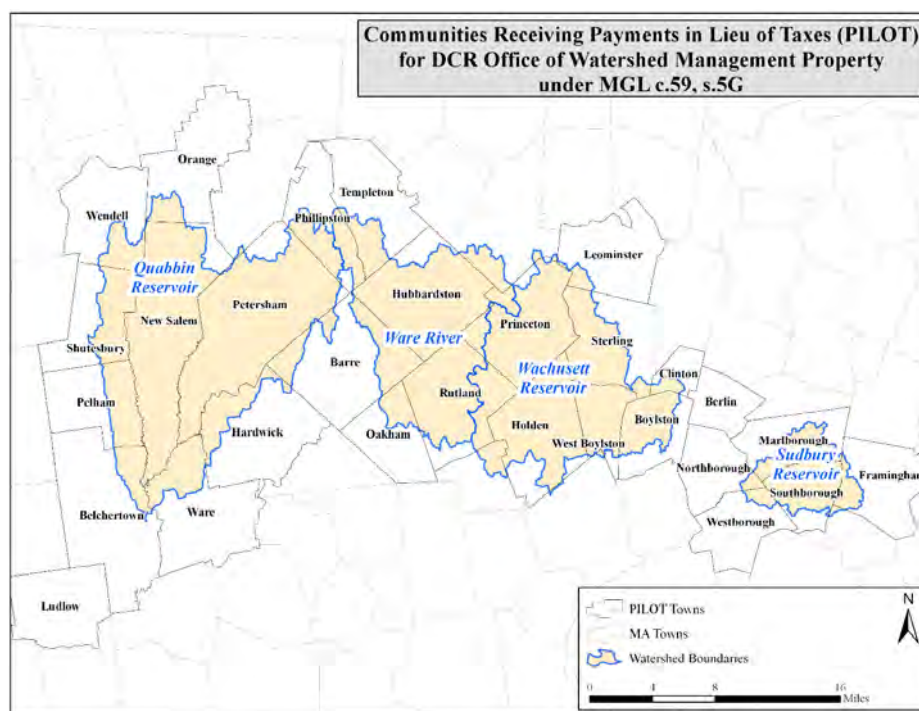
Source: <http://www.donahue.umassp.edu/business-groups/economic-public-policy-research/massachusetts-state-data-center>

4. Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program

The Watershed Management Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) program is the method that the DWSP compensates communities that contain the land and water bodies that comprise one of the nation's largest unfiltered water supply systems (Map 5). The PILOT program guarantees regular and stable payment to the 31 communities shown below. Since 1985, over \$190 million has been distributed in watershed protection PILOT payments. Approximately 18% of the total PILOT each year is distributed to Ware River watershed communities; in Fiscal Year 2023, \$1,580,585 was paid to Ware River watershed towns; over the previous five years \$7.6 million

has been distributed to these communities (Table 6). Please note that most of DWSP property in Princeton is in the Wachusett Reservoir watershed.

Map 5. Communities Receiving Payments in Lieu of Taxes



The Watershed Management PILOT program is mandated by MGL Chapter 59, Section 5G. This legislation updated old payment laws MGL Chapter 59 Sections D, E, & F, which were written in the 1940s, and did not value lands in all communities currently entitled to payments. The current PILOT law was first ratified in 1984 for the Quabbin Reservoir and Ware River watersheds. The law was amended in 1987 to include communities in the Wachusett and Sudbury Reservoir watershed.

The Watershed Management PILOT amount is determined by multiplying the Department of Revenue (DOR) valuation of DWSP land by the local commercial tax rate. The process used by DOR for valuing State Owned Land (SOL – which includes DWSP) under MGL c. 58 changed in FY19 due to the Mass Municipal Modernization Act, Chapter 218, Section 108 of the Acts of 2016. Under the new process, DOR determined a base year SOL valuation for each community as of January 1, 2017. This base year valuation used DOR guidelines on segmenting lands into prime lots (the requisite frontage and area needed to build a single-family home in each community), rear acreage and unbuildable acreage, as well as discount adjustments for the total number of prime lots and total acreage. After a hearing and appeal process, base year SOL valuations were finalized. Going forward under this process, the base year valuations are now adjusted every two years by a percentage equal to the change in a city or town's equalized cash value (EQV). Valuations are also updated annually to include the value of any acquisitions and/or dispositions in a community. Calculations for acquired lands will be made using the cost per acre average for each town, adjusted by the EQV.

Table 6. DCR Watershed Payment in Lieu of Taxes to Ware River Watershed Towns FY19-FY23

Community	FY23 PILOT	Total PILOT FY19-FY23	Total Harm Holdless FY19-FY23	% of PILOT from Hold Harmless
Barre	\$186,169	\$930,845	\$344,075	37%
Hubbardston	\$380,387	\$1,797,617	\$26,355	1%
Oakham	\$147,068	\$735,340	\$59,041	8%
Orange	\$11,568	\$55,524	\$1,280	2%
Phillipston	\$11,913	\$59,565	\$47,729	80%
Princeton	\$316,538	\$1,438,233	\$29,624	2%
Rutland	\$525,860	\$2,629,300	\$668,168	25%
Templeton	\$1,082	\$5,410	\$943	17%
Total Ware River PILOT	\$1,580,585	\$7,651,834	\$1,177,215	15%
Total PILOT	\$8,479,324	\$41,937,544	\$10,152,028	24%
Ware River% of Total PILOT	19%	18%	12%	

DCR DWSP, 2023

There is a wide variation in the per-acre PILOT payment from community to community. This is due to varying real estate prices, which are a key factor in determining land valuation, and local tax rates. *A critical provision of the Watershed PILOT legislation is that payment can never be less than that of the previous year, even if the value of the land or tax rates decrease.* This “hold harmless” clause provides the watershed communities the security of level funding even if a drop in valuation or tax rate combines to lower the calculated PILOT. Without the “hold harmless” provision, the entire watershed system would have averaged \$2 million less per year from Fiscal Year 2019 to 2023; “hold harmless” was responsible for a significant amount of several Ware River towns’ total PILOT (Table 6).

Money for the PILOT program comes from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) rate payers who use the reservoir waters. MWRA provides DWSP with the funds needed to make the PILOT payment. DWSP makes an annual payment in full to each community in the program. For more information, please see www.mass.gov/info-details/watershed-payments-in-lieu-of-taxes-pilot.

IV. Public Access Procedures and Policies

Public access for low-impact recreational activities is allowed, with conditions, on lands and waters managed by the DWSP in the Ware River Watershed when compatible with water supply protection and public safety, and when guided by DWSP's Public Access Management Plan Goals.

As an unfiltered water supply, DWSP is required by MassDEP and EPA to implement a public access/recreation plan which controls public access and recreational activities on the lands and waters so that they do not pose a threat to the drinking water's quality. Access controls are put in place proactively to maintain water quality in the watershed. Responding to issues only after identifying water quality impacts is contrary to watershed protection strategies.

Changes made to DWSP access policies since 2010 are summarized in Table 7 and detailed in the individual activity sheets found in this Section. In total, there are 31 fact sheets representing historical, existing, and potential recreational uses of drinking water supply lands and waters.

A. Public Access Management Plan Update Goals, Evaluation, and Future Updates

1. Public Access Management Plan Goals

The following goals were articulated for the plan update in the spring of 2019, reflecting the outcomes of the earlier phases of stakeholder engagement. (See section II.A)

- Enhance water quality protection by moving public access activity away from the most sensitive areas, including the Ware River Intake/Shaft 8, streams, ponds, and wetlands (except at designated beaches and boating areas) in the Ware River Watershed.
- Maintain the recreational experience, protect natural resources, and reduce noise pollution by replacing dense trail networks with a more dispersed trail network that prioritizes connectivity over larger areas.
- Support a sufficient range of access for different authorized uses while avoiding significant expansion of total trail mileage by adopting a shared-use approach to most trails.
- Promote public safety and protect natural resources by applying sustainable trails management principles to the design, construction, and maintenance of trails.
- Reduce illegal activity – including littering/dumping, unauthorized use, dangerous activity, and habitat destruction – through improved signage and outreach, road access restrictions, partnerships with user groups, and increased enforcement.
- Support dispersed deer hunting through vehicle access on internal roads during deer season.
- Reduce user conflicts and increase user and pet safety by requiring dogs to be leashed at all times in all locations, except when licensed hunters are in the act of hunting or hunt training (compatible with MassWildlife regulations).

- Improve public awareness of allowable uses, restrictions, access locations, and some of DWSP's highly visible land management practices:
 - Improve signage (clear, consistent, strategically located).
 - Develop high quality maps of authorized trails with an emphasis on digital availability.
 - Publish friendly fact sheets summarizing DWSP's timber harvesting practices and beaver management practices, as presented in *Division of Water Supply Protection: 2017 Land Management Plan*.
- Promote a shared-stewardship model of watershed management through partnerships with user groups that can assist with several activities, including:
 - Trail maintenance and repair
 - Outreach and education
 - Reporting illegal activity.
- Address multiple concerns related to water quality, shoreline erosion, and user access at Comet Pond.

2. Plan and Policy Evaluation

DWSP will continue to conduct periodic reviews to evaluate the plan in general, as well as any policy concerns or conflicts that arise. DWSP considers the following elements when evaluating new or expanded activity requests: potential water quality impacts, regulatory compliance, user benefits and potential conflicts, DWSP budgetary implications and land management activities, long-term ecosystem health, biological diversity, and cultural and historical resources. This review is coordinated through the Ware River Watershed Advisory Committee (WRWAC) during their regularly scheduled meetings. Meetings provide an opportunity to discuss, evaluate and, if necessary, adopt any minor policy changes (proposed by DWSP or by user groups), and will include a public input component. This review process will also continue to inform the larger plan and policy update process that is conducted every ten years.

3. Ten Year Management Plan and Policy Update Process

DWSP updates its public access management plans for each watershed every ten years. Typically, approximately one year before the ten-year update deadline, DWSP staff review and provide field input to an internal working group on issues or needs related to public access policies. DWSP staff then consults with the citizen advisory committee associated with the watershed, as well as its partners at MWRA and appropriate federal and state agencies. Survey data are also typically collected regarding abutters, recreational users, and other stakeholder's views on existing recreation policies. A draft plan update is typically submitted for review to MWRA and MassDEP and subsequently publicly presented at the citizen advisory committee and/or other public meetings, and subsequently posted on the DCR website for public response; all public input is considered prior to final modifications.

The Ware River Watershed Advisory Committee (WRWAC) requested in 2017 that DWSP undertake a more thorough stakeholder engagement process for the 2020 Ware Public Access Management Plan update. In response to that request, DWSP initiated the update process two years before the update deadline, consulted with a DCR Stakeholder Engagement Specialist on process design, and undertook a robust collaborative engagement process with WRWAC, many organized recreational user groups, and the public. This process is described in Section II.A and in Appendix E. DWSP intends to conduct an evaluation of the expanded public engagement process in the months following the release of the final plan and incorporate the outcome of that evaluation into the approach for future plan updates.

B. Ware River Watershed Access Policies

DWSP has general conditions under which allowed activities must be conducted which are detailed below. Specific access conditions are presented in Table 7, which contains a summary of each policy. The recreational policies are arranged by recreational activity type. Each activity policy is classified by three DWSP management areas in the Ware River Watershed: 1.) Ware River Watershed System; 2.) Intake Buffer Zone; and 3.) Exclusion Zone. The two symbols used in Table 7 are: 1) a circle with a slash that symbolizes that the activity is prohibited; and 2) a square, which indicates that it is allowed in that management area. A footnote, if necessary, describes any special conditions related to the activities. All authorized activities must comply with the general access policy as well as the specific, if applicable, policy. DWSP may close its properties to public access during weather, emergency, security, or other operational situations.

1. Ware River Watershed General Access Policies

- It is the responsibility of the visitor to know and abide by the applicable rules, regulations, and conditions for access.
- General public access within the Ware River Watershed System is allowed one hour before sunrise until one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only, and prohibited at night (one hour after sunset until one hour before sunrise) unless authorized by a permit from DWSP or its designee.
- Vehicles are allowed only on designated DWSP internal roads.
- Access is prohibited in the Exclusion Zone around the Ware River intake and, with limited exceptions, restricted to foot access only in the 1-kilometer Buffer Zone (see map).
- Gates may be closed by DWSP for seasonal or operational needs.
- Dogs must be leashed unless they are hunting/hunt training with a licensed hunter under existing regulations.
- Groups of 25 or more are required to obtain an access permit from the Quabbin Visitor Center prior to access.
- Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited.
- Feeding wildlife is prohibited.
- Visitors are advised that active logging operations may be in progress on DWSP properties. Please avoid visiting such areas, entering logging areas, or coming within three hundred feet of logging equipment.
- Visitors are asked to respect the rights of owners of adjacent property and not trespass on private lands.
- Because of the importance of protecting water quality, visitors are prohibited from depositing human waste on watershed lands by using portable toilets and planning accordingly.
- Visitors are prohibited from washing any objects in any watercourse.
- Smoking is not allowed in any public building (MGL c. 270 s.22(b)(3)). Visitors are asked to limit outdoor smoking activities, properly extinguish all embers to help prevent wildfires, and carry out any refuse.
- Please report any suspicious or dangerous activity on lands or waters by calling the MA State Police at 413-323-7561.
- Contact the Quabbin Visitor Center 413-323-7221 or Ware River Watershed Rangers 617-777-2877 for any additional information or questions.

2. Ware River Watershed Specific Access Policies

Map 6. Managed Lands for Public Access in the Ware River Watershed

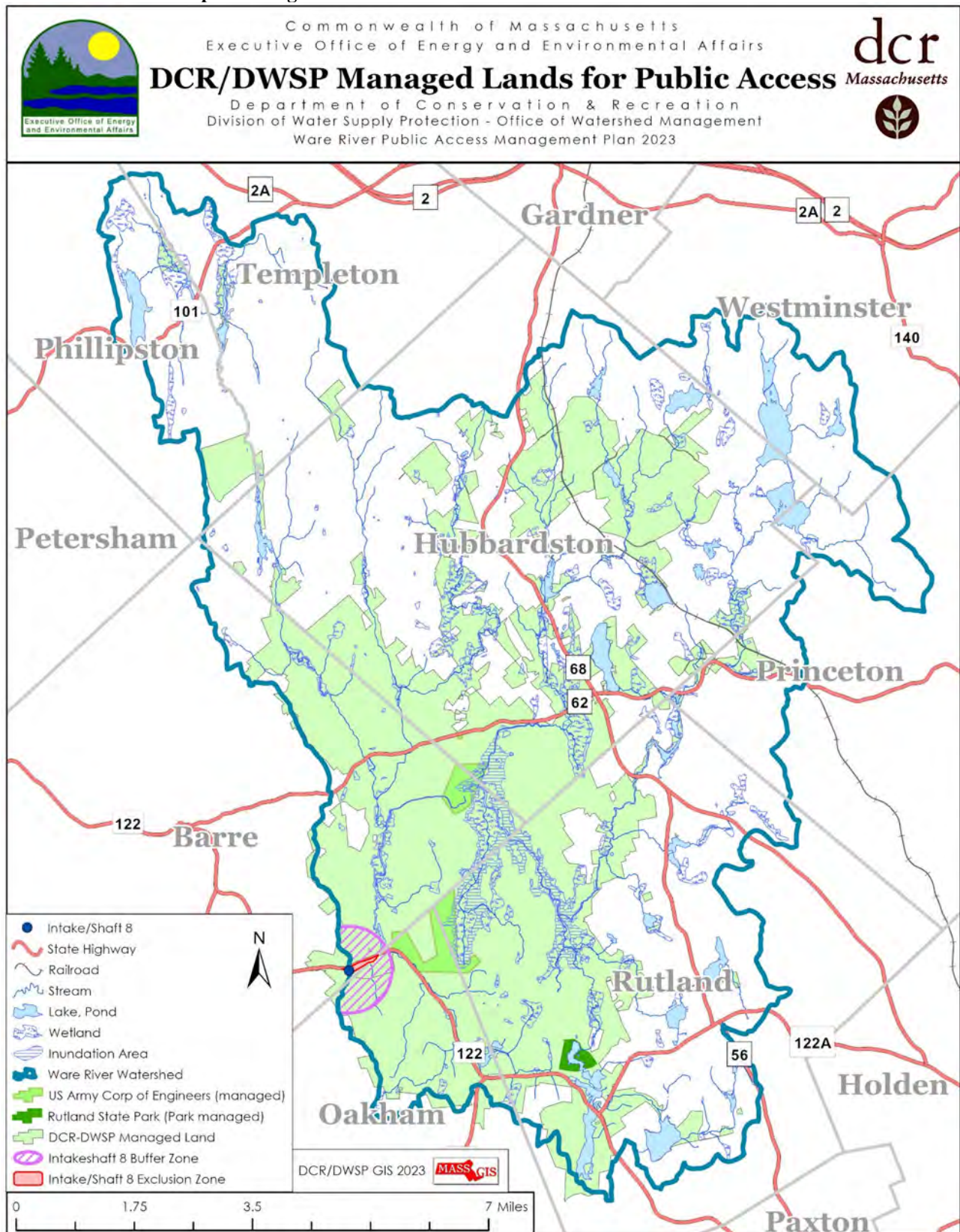


Table 7. Ware River Watershed Public Access Policies 2023

<i>Activity</i>	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Night Access	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Vehicle Access	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ²	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Motorized Boating	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Dogs and Domestic Animals	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁴	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hunting/Trapping	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁵	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁵	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Snowmobiling	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁶	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Bicycling	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁷	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁷	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Walking/Hiking/Snowshoeing/ Cross-country Skiing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Horseback Riding	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁸	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ice Fishing/Ice Skating	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fishing	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹⁰	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹⁰	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wildlife Viewing/Nature Study	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Non-motorized Boating	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹¹	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Marking or Cutting Trails/Roads or Advertising	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Foraging	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹²	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹²	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Unmanned Aerial Vehicles ("Drones")	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Paddle boarding	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹³	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fires and Cooking	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Swimming/Wading	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹⁴	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Personal Water Craft	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Camping	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Organized Sports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Programs and Assemblies	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹⁵	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹⁵	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fishing Derbies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Off-Road Vehicles	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Alcohol Possession or Cannabis Smoking/Consumption	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Metal Detecting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Target Shooting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Geocaching and Related Activities	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹⁶	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Commercial Activities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Other Activities Not Listed: Please call the Quabbin Visitor Center at 413-323-7221 or Watershed Ranger Station at 413-323-0192

☒ Prohibited ☐ Allowed - General Restrictions ☐# Specific Restrictions

General Restrictions:

- ☐ General public access within the Ware River Watershed System is allowed from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. This chart is based on the Watershed Protection Regulations 313 CMR 11.00, copies of which are available at the Quabbin Visitor Center. Littering is strictly prohibited. Carry in/Carry out. Do not feed wildlife.

"Ware River Watershed System" refers to all real and personal property interests held by DCR's Division of Water Supply Protection as defined in 313 CMR 11.03.

Specific Restrictions:

- ¹ Night access permits will be issued to licensed hunters specifically to hunt only the following species: coyote, fox, raccoon, or opossum. Group night access permits may be issued for snowmobile clubs for a specific date and location.
- ² Vehicle access is allowed during daylight hours only on Coldbrook Road, Intervale Road, Prison Camp/Brigham Road north from the intersection with Intervale Road to where it intersects with the East Branch Ware River, Brigham Road south from Route 62 to where it intersects with West Branch Ware River, and Gilbert Road north of Route 62 to where it intersects with Rice/Fisher Roads. All other roads are closed to vehicle access unless authorized with a DWSP permit. Additional roads will be opened during hunting season to allow permitted hunter access. DWSP roads may be closed at any time due to road conditions, weather, or public safety. Travel on existing town and state roads are not included in this policy.
- ³ Motorized boating in the Ware River Watershed System is permitted only on Brigham Pond, Comet Pond, Demond Pond, and Long Pond (south basin), areas designated by the Watershed Protection Regulations (313 CMR 11.00). Current Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention Program requirements must be met for access.
- ⁴ Dogs must be on a 6-foot long or less physical leash/tether while on Ware River Watershed Property. Dogs may be off-leash only when hunting or hunt-training with licensed hunters under existing regulations. Off-leash dogs must be under the handler's control at all times. All dogs are prohibited from the Buffer and Exclusion Zones.
- ⁵ DCR Division of Water Supply Protection property in the Ware River Watershed is open for hunting and trapping consistent with MassWildlife seasons and regulations except for the Exclusion Zone of the Ware River Intake. A DCR Division of Water Supply Protection Hunting Access Permit is also required. DWSP will open additional internal roads for hunter vehicular access from two weeks prior to the deer archery season until December 31 for licensed hunters with a valid DWSP hunting access permit for the concurrent hunting season.
- ⁶ DCR allows limited snowmobile access along the designated trail system with specific restrictions. Restrictions include season, snow depth, location, and speed. Snowmobile use is prohibited in the Exclusion Zone and the Intake Buffer Zone, except for a small segment of designated snowmobile trail that passes through the Intake Buffer Zone. A limited number of night access permits may be issued upon request to organized snowmobile organizations to conduct prearranged rides.
- ⁷ Bicycle access allowed only on trails designated by DCR Division of Water Supply Protection lands in the Ware River watershed. Bicycling restricted during mud-season, watershed management operations, and other situations, which will be posted.
- ⁸ Equestrian access allowed only on trails designated by DCR Division of Water Supply Protection lands in the Ware River watershed under specific conditions. Equestrian access is restricted during mud-season, watershed management operations, and other situations, which will be posted.
- ⁹ Limited ice fishing and ice skating activities are allowed on Great Ponds according to MGL Chapter 91.
- ¹⁰ Shoreline fishing allowed with a valid MA fishing license and according to State regulations with the exception for the Exclusion Zone.
- ¹¹ Non-motorized boating access – canoeing and kayaking – is allowed from DCR water supply lands in the Ware River watershed except in the Exclusion Zone. Paddle Boarding is considered a separate activity. AIS Prevention Program requirements must be met for access.
- ¹² Foraging activities by individuals for individual consumption of edible plant materials (e.g., blueberries, grapes, fiddleheads, mushrooms, etc.) in a non-destructive manner for non-commercial uses is allowed.
- ¹³ Prohibited unless authorized by Commissioner. Paddle Boards are allowed only at Comet Pond, where swimming is also allowed.
- ¹⁴ Limited swimming access is allowed within Designated Swimming Areas of Rutland State Park and Comet Pond Beach according to posted restrictions. Open Water swimming is allowed from a DCR access point on Comet Pond beach.
- ¹⁵ Any assembly of twenty-five individuals or more must obtain a DCR Division of Water Supply Protection Group Access Permit.
- ¹⁶ Review by Quabbin Visitor Center required for any cache placement (also applies to “munzing,” “letterboxing,” “questing,” or other forms of related “hide and seek” activities).

C. Summary of 2023 Policy Updates

DWSP has updated its policies for public access and recreation activities allowed with restrictions on DWSP's lands and waters within the Ware River watershed for 2023. Various

updates and clarifications to DWSP's 2010 public access policies have been made in this plan (Table 8). For more detailed descriptions, see the fact sheets later in this section.

Table 8. Summary of Policy Changes 1988-2023

Access Activity	Policy Status 2010 to 2023	Comments
Night Access	Modified	Night access (one hour after sunset until one hour before sunrise) is now prohibited. Night access permits will be available for hunting specific species and snowmobile organization group rides.
Vehicle Access	Modified	Access is now limited to specific internal roads from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset. Additional roads open to permitted hunters during fall deer hunting season.
Boating (motorized)	Modified	Long Pond large motor permits are now capped at 50 boats and will be reviewed for impacts. A limited permit program will be developed to allow Comet Pond shoreline owners to access Comet Pond with larger motors.
Dogs and Domestic Animals	Modified	Dogs must now be leashed unless they are hunting/hunt training with a licensed hunter under existing regulations.
Hunting and Trapping	Modified	All hunting now requires a free five-year DWSP hunting permit. Some roads that are otherwise closed to vehicles will be open for hunting from 10/1-12/31 with a DWSP hunting permit.
Snowmobiling	Modified	Reviewed and revised authorized trails. Expanded trail mileage while shifting use away from sensitive areas. Groups may apply for night access permits.
Bicycling	Modified	Reviewed and revised authorized multi-use trails. Expanded trail mileage while shifting use away from sensitive areas.
Hiking/Walking/ Snowshoeing/ Cross country Skiing	Modified	Reviewed and revised authorized multi-use trails. Expanded trail mileage while shifting use away from sensitive areas.
Horseback Riding	Modified	Reviewed and revised authorized multi-use trails. Expanded trail mileage while shifting use away from sensitive areas. Two permits per year limit for groups larger than 25 horses.
Ice Fishing/ Ice Skating	Modified	Unchanged except as affected by night access prohibition.
Fishing	Modified	Unchanged except as affected by night access prohibition.

Access Activity	Policy Status 2010 to 2023	Comments
Wildlife Viewing/ Nature Study	Modified	Unchanged except as affected by night access prohibition.
Boating (non- motorized) - Canoes and Kayaks	Modified	The Rt. 122 canoe/kayak launch site will be reconfigured to prevent vehicle access to river.
Marking or Cutting Trails/Roads and Advertising	Modified	Added a process to propose new or modified trails.
Foraging	Added	Foraging is allowed for individual consumption.
Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs, “Drones”)	Added	This activity is prohibited.
Paddle boarding	Added	This activity is allowed only at Comet Pond.
Fires and Cooking	No Change	
Swimming/ Wading	Modified	Clarified that Open Water Swimming is allowed at Comet Pond, with access from Comet Pond beach.
Operating Personal Water Craft (“Jet skis”)	No Change	
Camping	No Change	
Organized Sports	No Change	
Programs/ Assemblies	No Change	
Fishing Derbies	No Change	
Operating ORVs	No change	
Possessing/ Consuming Alcohol	Modified	Added consumption of cannabis is prohibited on state property.
Collecting/ Metal Detecting	No Change	

Access Activity	Policy Status 2010 to 2023	Comments
Target Shooting	No Change	
Geocaching and Related Activities	No Change	
Commercial	Added	Commercial activities are prohibited.
Other	No Change	

D. Public Access Policy Fact Sheets

This section provides one-to-two-page summaries of the DCR policies, rules, and explanation for the 31 common types of public access activities on DWSP's lands in the Ware River Watershed System that are listed in Table 4. These are designed as stand-alone documents that can be reproduced and distributed as needed.

Please note that any human activity in this drinking water supply watershed has the potential to impact water quality. DWSP managed property in the Ware River Watershed is often remote; and has few restroom facilities. Any recreation activity can lead to improper disposal of human fecal waste; visitors are encouraged to plan ahead for attending to bathroom needs. DWSP has installed a system of accessible portable toilets that are strategically sited, actively monitored, and maintained to address human sanitary waste concerns.



Ware River from a DWSP staff kayak patrol

Night Access

Policy

Night access is prohibited on DWSP property in the Ware River Watershed System, except in case of emergency or with written permission from DWSP. Night access is defined as one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise.

Night access permits will be issued to licensed hunters specifically to hunt only the following species: coyote, fox, raccoon, or opossum. All state-wide hunting regulations for these species must be followed. Access permits must be visibly displaced on vehicle dashboards and also carried on person while present on DWSP property after dark.

Group night access permits may be issued for snowmobile clubs for a specific date and location.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Night Access	⊘ ¹	⊘	⊘

⊘ Prohibited

¹ Night access permits will be issued to licensed hunters specifically to hunt only the following species: coyote, fox, raccoon, or opossum. Group night access permits may be issued for snowmobile clubs for a specific date and location.

Explanation

Prohibiting Night Access on DWSPs lands in the Ware River Watershed Systems allows DWSP staff better means of adequately controlling illegal activities.

Potential water quality impacts from night access includes physical and microbial water quality threats from erosion, and behavior such as illegal body/water contact, littering or vandalism. Restricting Night Access is consistent with access policies on all other state land, including DCR State Parks and MassWildlife. In the past, unrestricted Night Access presented issues with illegal dumping, vandalism, fires, parties, and camping on Ware River watershed lands.

Vehicle Access

Policy

Vehicles may only use Coldbrook Road, Intervale Road, Prison Camp/Brigham Road north from the intersection with Intervale Road to where it intersects with the East Branch Ware River, Brigham Road south from Route 62 to where it intersects with West Branch Ware River, and Gilbert Road north of Route 62 to where it intersects with Rice/Fisher Roads within the Ware River Watershed System from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset (Map 7). These roads may be closed at DWSP's discretion due to roadwork, road conditions (e.g., mud season), forest management, public safety, or security reasons.

Vehicle access on additional DWSP roads is permitted for hunters with a DWSP hunting permit, through open gates, two weeks prior to the start of the deer archery season through December 31 for hunting only. Vehicles are not permitted in the Exclusion and Intake Buffer Zones.

Any unauthorized Vehicle Access is prohibited on DWSP lands and internal roads without a DWSP permit.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Vehicle Access	☐ ¹	⊘ ¹	⊘

⊘ Prohibited

- ☐ General public access within the Ware River Watershed System is allowed from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Night Access is prohibited on DWSP owned lands in the Ware River Watershed System. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. Littering is strictly prohibited. Carry in/Carry out. Do not feed wildlife. Groups of 25 or more are required to obtain a group access permit from the Quabbin Visitor Center prior to access.

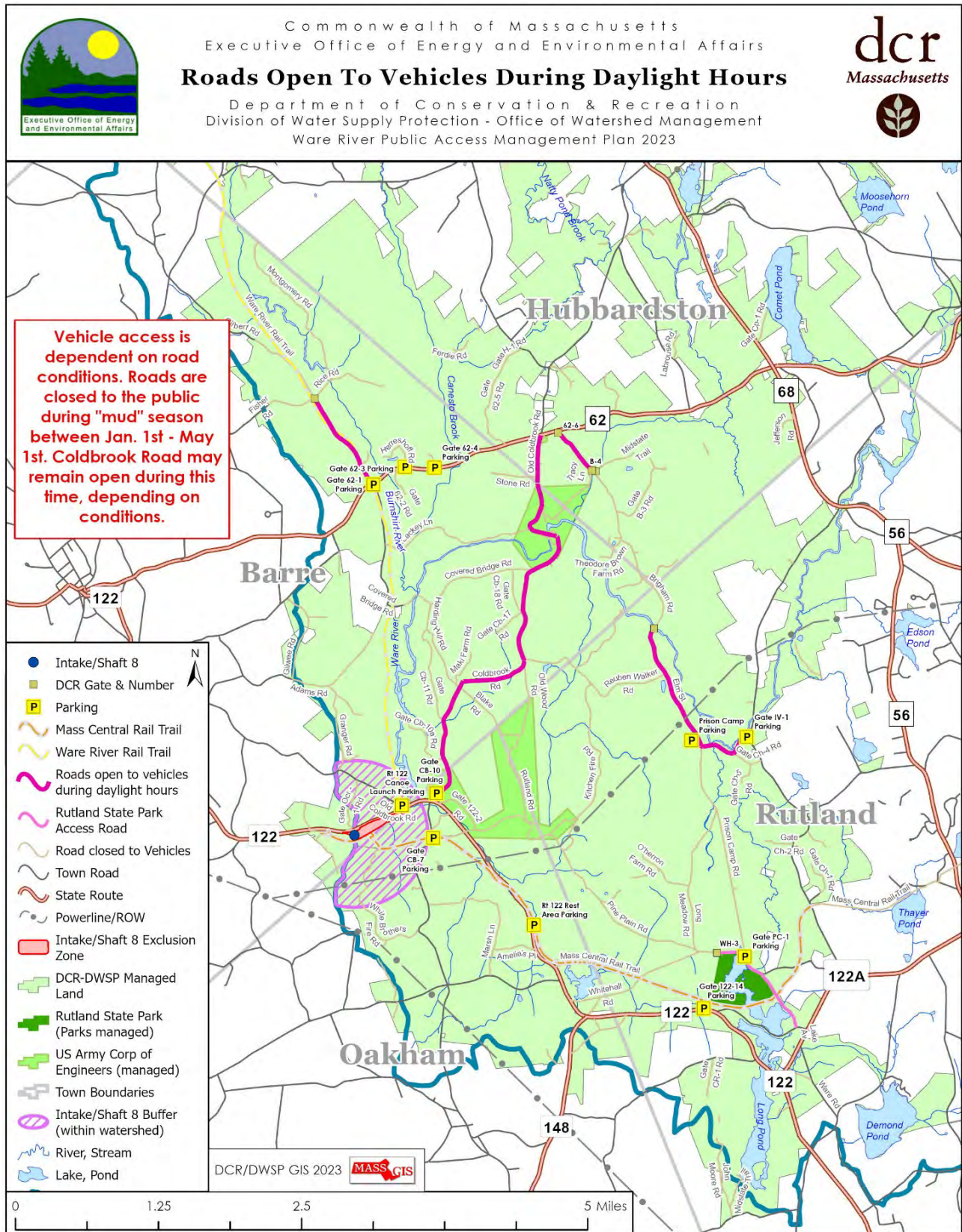
¹ Vehicle access is allowed during daylight hours only on Coldbrook Road, Intervale Road, Prison Camp/Brigham Road north from the intersection with Intervale Road to where it intersects with the East Branch Ware River, Brigham Road south from Route 62 to where it intersects with West Branch Ware River, and Gilbert Road north of Route 62 to where it intersects with Rice/Fisher Roads. All other roads are closed to vehicle access unless authorized with a DWSP permit. Additional roads may be opened during hunting season to allow hunter access. DWSP roads may be closed at any time due to road conditions, weather, or public safety. Travel on existing town and state roads are not included in this policy.

Explanation

Vehicles may leave toxic chemicals (e.g., motor oil, engine coolant) on the road surface. These chemicals can concentrate in parking areas and may be transported to the system's tributaries through stream or overland flow. In addition, the introduction of exhaust compounds, erosion, disturbance of wilderness character, and behavior such as dumping is associated with this activity.

Limitations on vehicle access is consistent with access policies on all other state land, including DCR State Parks and MassWildlife properties. Unrestricted public motor vehicle access has presented several water quality and security issues, including vehicles in unauthorized areas (including wetlands), illegal dumping, deteriorating road conditions, vehicles breaking down, and vehicles requiring maintenance or towing on public lands. Unrestricted vehicle access directly contradicts DWSP's efforts to manage lands for water protection purposes. MassDEP, which regulates drinking water supplies in the Commonwealth, has told DCR that unrestricted vehicle access in the Ware River watershed is an unacceptable risk to the DCR/MWRA water supply system.

Map 7. Ware River Watershed Authorized Vehicle Access



Motorized Boating

Policy

Gasoline and electric motorized boating in the Ware River Watershed System is permitted only in the following designated areas, according to the Watershed Protection Regulations (313 CMR 11.09(2)(c)3): Brigham Pond, Comet Pond, Demond Pond, and Long Pond (south basin). Boat ramps exist at these four locations. DWSP limits boat motor size on these ponds to 20 horsepower for two-stroke engines, and 25 horsepower for four-stroke engines. A limited permit program will be developed by DCR to allow Comet Pond shoreline owners to use larger motors. Fifty large motor permits will be issued (by lottery) for Long Pond in 2024. E-mail and in-person surveys will also be conducted at Long Pond to assess large motor utilization. Future Long Pond permits will be determined based on information collected in 2024. Current Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention Program requirements must be met for access.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Motorized Boating	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

☒ Prohibited

☐ General public access within the Ware River Watershed System is allowed from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Night Access is prohibited on DWSP owned lands in the Ware River Watershed System. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. Littering is strictly prohibited. Carry in/Carry out. Do not feed wildlife. Groups of 25 or more are required to obtain a group access permit from the Quabbin Visitor Center prior to access.

☐ Allowed - General Restrictions

☐ Specific Restrictions

¹ Motorized boating in the Ware River Watershed System is permitted only on Brigham Pond, Comet Pond, Demond Pond, and Long Pond (south basin), areas designated by the Watershed Protection Regulations (313 CMR 11.00). Current Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention Program requirements must be met for access.

Explanation

Potential impacts caused by motorized boating includes physical and microbial water quality threats from soil erosion on landing areas, contamination by chemicals used in boat maintenance, turbidity and nutrient re-suspension caused by motor use and introduction of exotic, invasive species. Associated impacts include erosion, chemicals left on parking areas, and behavior such as littering. These impacts may introduce sediment, chemicals, and pathogens to the water. An Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention Program has been implemented in water bodies of the Ware River Watershed according to DWSP's AIS Management Plan.

In Massachusetts, public access for motor boating from DWSP owned lands on ponds is regulated by many parties (e.g., Chapter 91, DCR, local town boards, Office of Fishing and Boating Access (320 CMR 2.00), etc.). DWSP does not promote motorboat access since motorized boating on small ponds causes erosion of riparian areas, increased turbidity, contamination of a small water body from leaks, introduction of aquatic invasive species, and noise pollution.

DWSP restricts boat access by limiting motor size on boats launched from DWSP owned lands onto Great Ponds in the Ware River Watershed according to the Massachusetts Watershed Protection Regulation, 313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)3: "Powered boats are prohibited within the Waters of the Watershed System except in areas designated by the Commissioner."

Dogs and Domestic Animals

Policy

DWSP limits dog and other domestic animal access to water supply lands in the Ware River Watershed System with specific restrictions. Dogs must be on a 6-foot long or less physical leash/tether while on DWSP properties in the Ware River Watershed System. Waste and fecal matter must be picked up and removed from the area and deposited off-site. Animals shall be restricted from entering the water. The use of a service animal by a person with a disability is allowed in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (see Section IV-C-2). Licensed hunters engaged in hunting or hunt training, and those participating in sanctioned field trials are exempt from the leash rule. Dogs may be off-leash only when hunting or hunt-training with licensed hunters under existing regulations. All other domesticated animals (excluding horses) are prohibited on DWSP lands in the Ware River watershed. All dogs are prohibited from the Intake Buffer and Exclusion Zones of the Ware River Intake.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Dogs and Domestic Animals	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

☒ Prohibited

☐ Allowed - General Restrictions

☐ Specific Restrictions

☐ General public access within the Ware River Watershed System is allowed from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Night Access is prohibited on DWSP owned lands in the Ware River Watershed System. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. Littering is strictly prohibited. Carry in/Carry out. Do not feed wildlife. Groups of 25 or more are required to obtain a group access permit from the Quabbin Visitor Center prior to access.

¹ Dogs must be on a 6-foot long or less physical leash/tether while on Ware River Watershed Property. Dogs may be off-leash only when hunting or hunt-training with licensed hunters under existing regulations. Off-leash dogs must be under the handler's control at all times. All dogs are prohibited from the Buffer and Exclusion Zones.

Explanation

This policy is based on State drinking water regulations (310 CMR 22.20B(3)), (310 CMR 22.20B(7)) and the Division of Fish and Wildlife's WMA regulations.

The presence of dogs and other domestic animals within a public drinking water supply watershed, especially near its surface waters, is incompatible with DWSP's water quality and public health protection goals. Dogs may carry bacteria and viruses in their waste products and deposit it near streams or brooks. Consequently, disease causing organisms (e.g., bacteria and viruses) may directly enter the water supply or spread to other animal populations (e.g., deer, beavers, etc.). If dogs directly enter a tributary, they may shed disease organisms into the drinking water supply.

Dogs that are off-leash are at increased risk for interactions with wildlife. Domestic animal/wildlife interactions can have both direct (physical injury) and indirect (disease) impacts. Both wildlife and pets may have diseases that can be passed on to other animals. Additionally, domestic animals can be exposed to rabies, canine distemper and *Baylisascariasis* by wildlife.

Watershed Protection Regulation, 313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)13, states: "No Person shall bring any animal within any Watershed System property except for horses and dogs in the Ware River Watershed at areas designated by the Commissioner."

Hunting and Trapping

Policy

DWSP property in the Ware River Watershed, excluding the Exclusion Zone of the Ware River Intake, is open for hunting and trapping consistent with MassWildlife seasons and regulations. All hunters, however, must possess a five-year watershed hunting permit; permits are free and available to all hunters through the DWSP website (www.mass.gov/info-details/dcr-dwsp-hunting-and-trapping-access-permits#five-year-watershed-hunting/trapping-access-permit). Commercial hunting activities on all DWSP watershed lands are prohibited. All other applicable state, local, and federal rules and regulations apply.

DWSP has issued MassWildlife a permit allowing them to manage Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) on watershed management owned land in Hubbardston (Hubbardston WMA), as well as in Rutland and Barre (Barre Falls WMA). Hunting and trapping are permitted on WMAs, but with different policies (www.mass.gov/service-details/wildlife-management-area-regulations).

DWSP will open designated gates two weeks prior to the deer archery season until December 31 for vehicle access by licensed hunters with a valid DWSP hunting access permit for the concurrent hunting season. Hunters may access DWSP lands in the Ware River watershed system through these gates for hunting and trapping only. Vehicle access through the gates is prohibited for all other users.

Please follow these guidelines to minimize the potential risk of the spread of disease and possible water contamination:

- Do not wash your hands or animals in streams or ponds. Hand washing in streams or ponds on DWSP lands is strictly prohibited.
- No animal parts may be disposed of within 100' of wetlands, streams, brooks, ponds or other water bodies.
- Field dressing only allowed at least 100' away from wetlands, streams, brooks, ponds or other water bodies.
- Use portable toilets where provided.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Hunting/Trapping	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

☒ Prohibited

☐ Allowed - General Restrictions

☐ Specific Restrictions

☐ General public access within the Ware River Watershed System is allowed from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Night Access is prohibited on DWSP owned lands in the Ware River Watershed System. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. Littering is strictly prohibited. Carry in/Carry out. Do not feed wildlife. Groups of 25 or more are required to obtain a group access permit from the Quabbin Visitor Center prior to access.

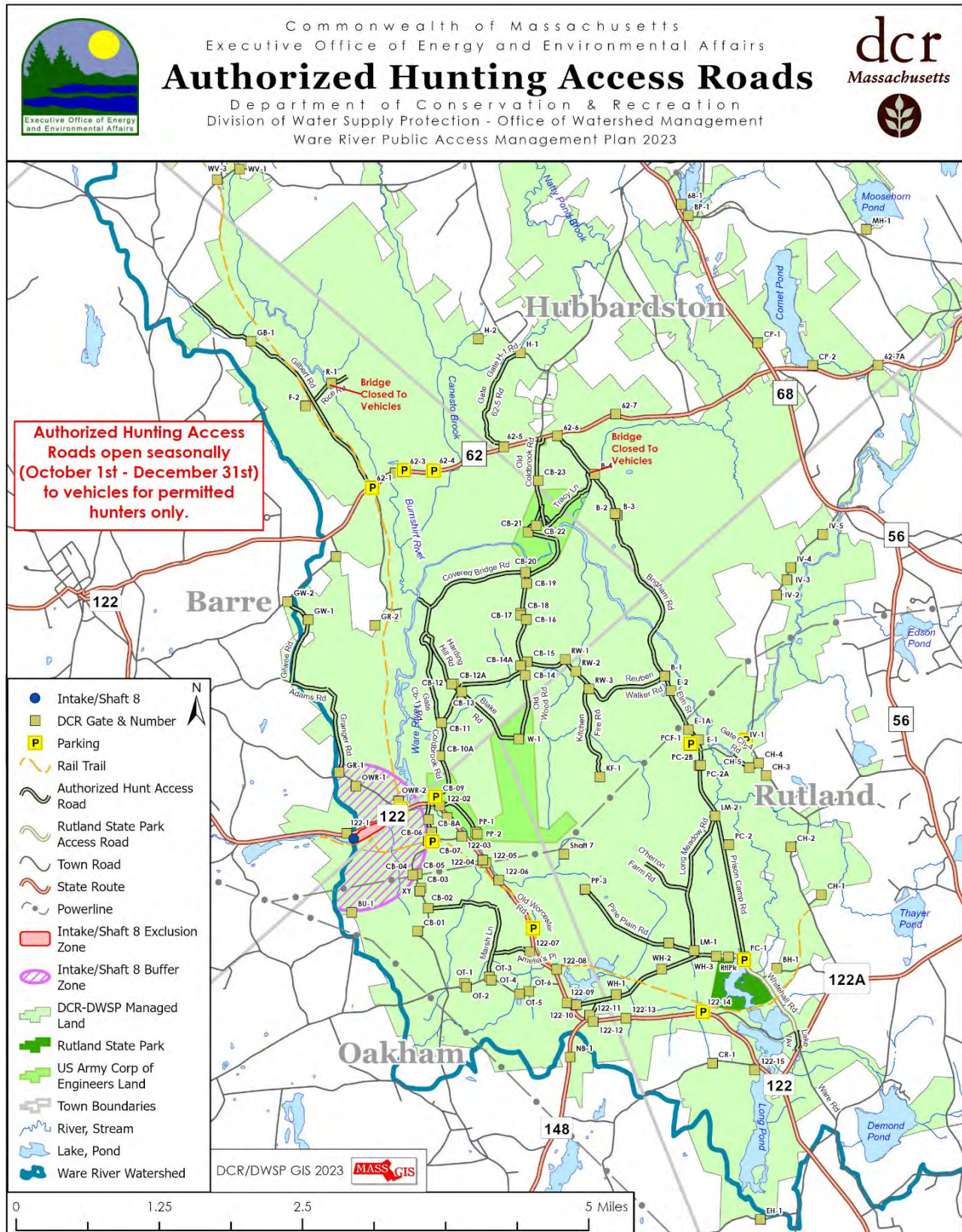
¹ DCR Division of Water Supply Protection property in the Ware River Watershed is open for hunting and trapping consistent with MassWildlife seasons and regulations except for the Exclusion Zone of the Ware River Intake. A DCR Division of Water Supply Protection Hunting Access Permit is also required. DWSP will open additional internal roads from two weeks prior to the deer archery season until December 31 for licensed hunters with a valid DWSP hunting access permit for the concurrent hunting season.

Explanation

DWSP has historically allowed recreational hunting and trapping activities within areas of the Ware River Watershed System. White-tailed deer management is necessary to limit over-browsing and facilitate the natural regeneration of the forest needed for sustainable water quality. Proper access for hunters is imperative for deer hunter success on lands as large as the DWSP properties in the Ware River Watershed System.

The Massachusetts Watershed Protection Regulation, 313 CMR 11.09(2)(a)22, states: “No Person may hunt, shoot or trap animals on or within any Watershed System property except at times and in areas designated by the Commission or its designee.” DCR land within the Ware River watershed, excluding the Exclusion Zone of the Ware River Intake, is a designated area for hunting and trapping. Potential water quality impacts from hunting within the exclusion zone include physical and microbial water quality threats from erosion, and behavior such as illegal body/water contact, littering, or vandalism.

Map 8. Ware River Watershed Authorized Hunting Access Roads



Snowmobiling



Policy


DWSP allows limited snowmobile access on its property along the multi-use trail system on its lands in the Ware River Watershed System. Snowmobile use is strictly prohibited in the Exclusion Zone and most of the 1-kilometer Intake Buffer Zone. Grooming is only allowed on existing roadways within the multi-use trail system with DWSP's advance, written permission and according to the grooming requirements detailed below. Snowmobile access restrictions are as follows: a minimum of six inches of snow coverage on a designated trail is required for access; access is allowed only after December 31; and access speed is restricted to safe speeds on all DWSP roads. A limited number of night access permits may be issued upon request to organized snowmobile organizations to conduct prearranged rides.

Grooming Requirements

- Advanced written permission from DWSP before any grooming.
- A route map on existing DWSP roads.
- Equipment must be in good working order and carry a spill kit in plastic five-gallon buckets.
- Any oil or gas spills or accidents must be immediately reported to DWSP. Any spill or threat of spill equal to or more than ten gallons of petroleum need to be reported directly to MassDEP and MEMA at 888-304-1133.
- Fueling and maintenance must occur off DWSP lands and 400' from water resources.
- DWSP plowed roads are excluded from allowed routes.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Snowmobiling	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹		

 Prohibited

☐ Allowed - General Restrictions

☐# Specific Restrictions

☐ General public access within the Ware River Watershed System is allowed from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Night Access is prohibited on DWSP owned lands in the Ware River Watershed System. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. Littering is strictly prohibited. Carry in/Carry out. Do not feed wildlife. Groups of 25 or more are required to obtain a group access permit from the Quabbin Visitor Center prior to access.

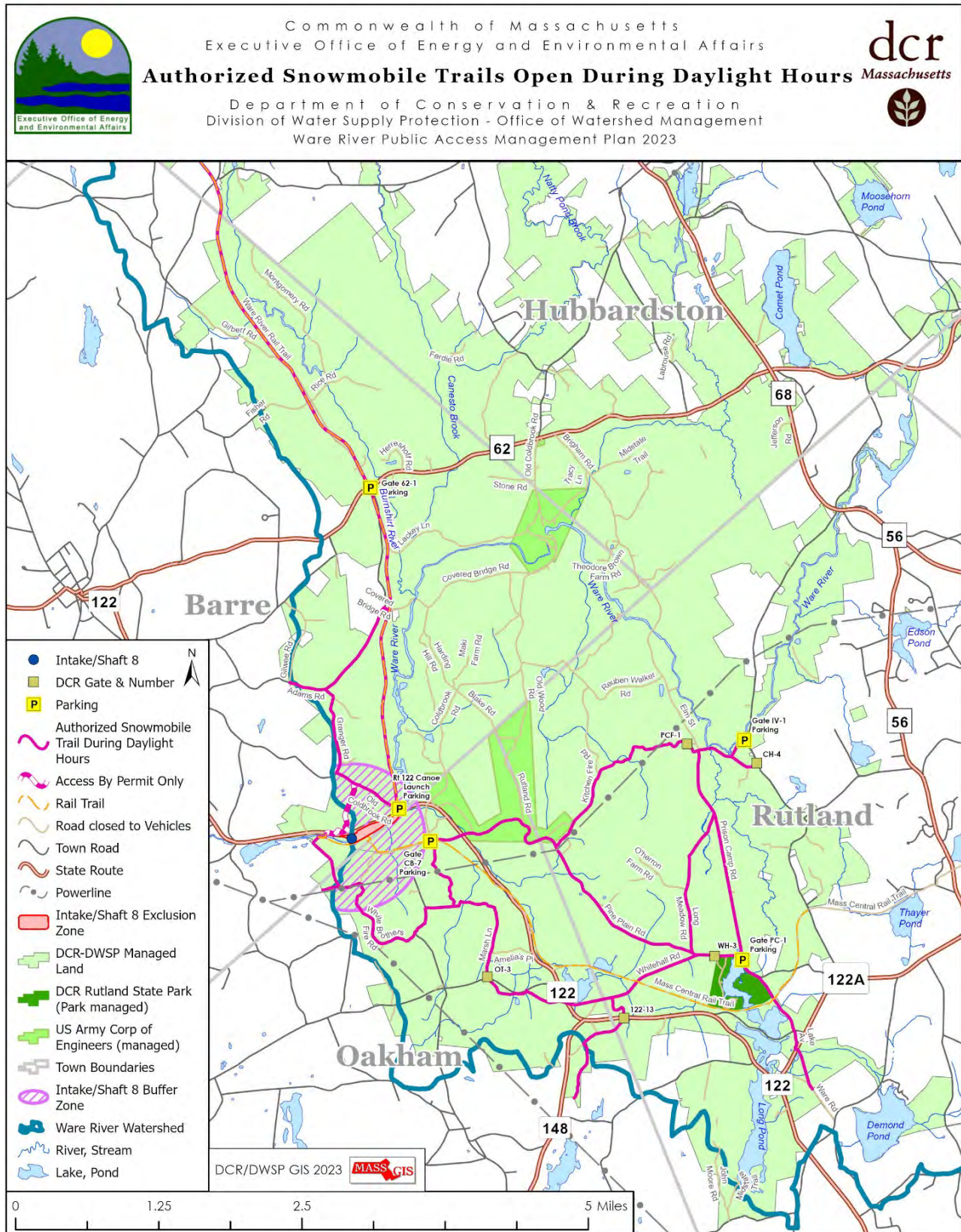
¹ DWSP allows limited snowmobile access along the designated trail system with specific restrictions. Restrictions include season, snow depth, location, and speed. Snowmobile use is prohibited in the Exclusion Zone and the Intake Buffer Zone, except for a small segment of designated trail that passes through the Intake Buffer Zone. A limited number of night access permits may be issued upon request to organized snowmobile organizations to conduct prearranged rides.

Explanation

DWSP limits public access for snowmobiling to designated trails on watershed management land in the Ware River watershed. Snowmobile use has the potential to disturb vegetation as well as introduce exhaust compounds, fuel contamination, and other hazardous materials from accidents or equipment failure. In addition, there is the possibility of illegal dumping in remote locations, and trespassing on abutting private lands. The creation of any trail can encourage other unpermitted activities that are difficult to monitor, control, and enforce.

DWSP designated areas for snowmobile access is in accordance with the Massachusetts Watershed Protection Regulation, 313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)12, which states: "...Recreational vehicles are prohibited on all Watershed System property except the use of snowmobiles in areas designated by the Commissioner..." All applicable local or state and local regulations and restrictions not detailed here but related to snowmobiling also apply (e.g., 323 CMR 3.00 *Use of Recreation Vehicles and Snow Vehicles*; 304 CMR 12.29 *Snow Vehicle Operation*).

Map 9. Ware River Watershed Authorized Snowmobile Trails



Bicycling

Policy

DWSP allows bicycle access on authorized roads and trails within water supply lands in the Ware River Watershed (Map 10) except within the Exclusion Zone of the Ware River Intake. DWSP restricts bicycling during “mud-season,” during watershed management operations, and during other situations, which are posted. Electronic bicycles are allowed on DWSP roads and rail trails, but they are prohibited on all natural surface trails.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Bicycling	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input type="checkbox"/>

- ☒ Prohibited ☐ Allowed - General Restrictions ☐ Specific Restrictions
- ☐ General public access within the Ware River Watershed System is allowed from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Night Access is prohibited on DWSP owned lands in the Ware River Watershed System. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. Littering is strictly prohibited. Carry in/Carry out. Do not feed wildlife. Groups of 25 or more are required to obtain a group access permit from the Quabbin Visitor Center prior to access.
- ¹ Bicycle access allowed only on trails designated by DCR Division of Water Supply Protection lands in the Ware River watershed. Bicycling restricted during mud-season, watershed management operations, and other situations, which will be posted. E-bikes are allowed only on existing roads and rail trails; they are not permitted on single track or other natural surface trails.

Explanation

Watershed regulation (313 CMR 11.09(2)(a)14.) provides: “The use of bicycles, skis and other means of non-motorized transportation within the Watershed System shall be permitted only in areas designated by the Commissioner.” DWSP has identified 75 miles of forest roads, rail trail, and single-track trail for bicycle use.

Bicycling has multiple potential water quality impacts, including physical and microbial water quality threats from erosion, and behavior such as illegal body/water contact, littering or vandalism. Creation of illegal trails can impact historic and cultural resources, wetlands, and endangered species habitat.

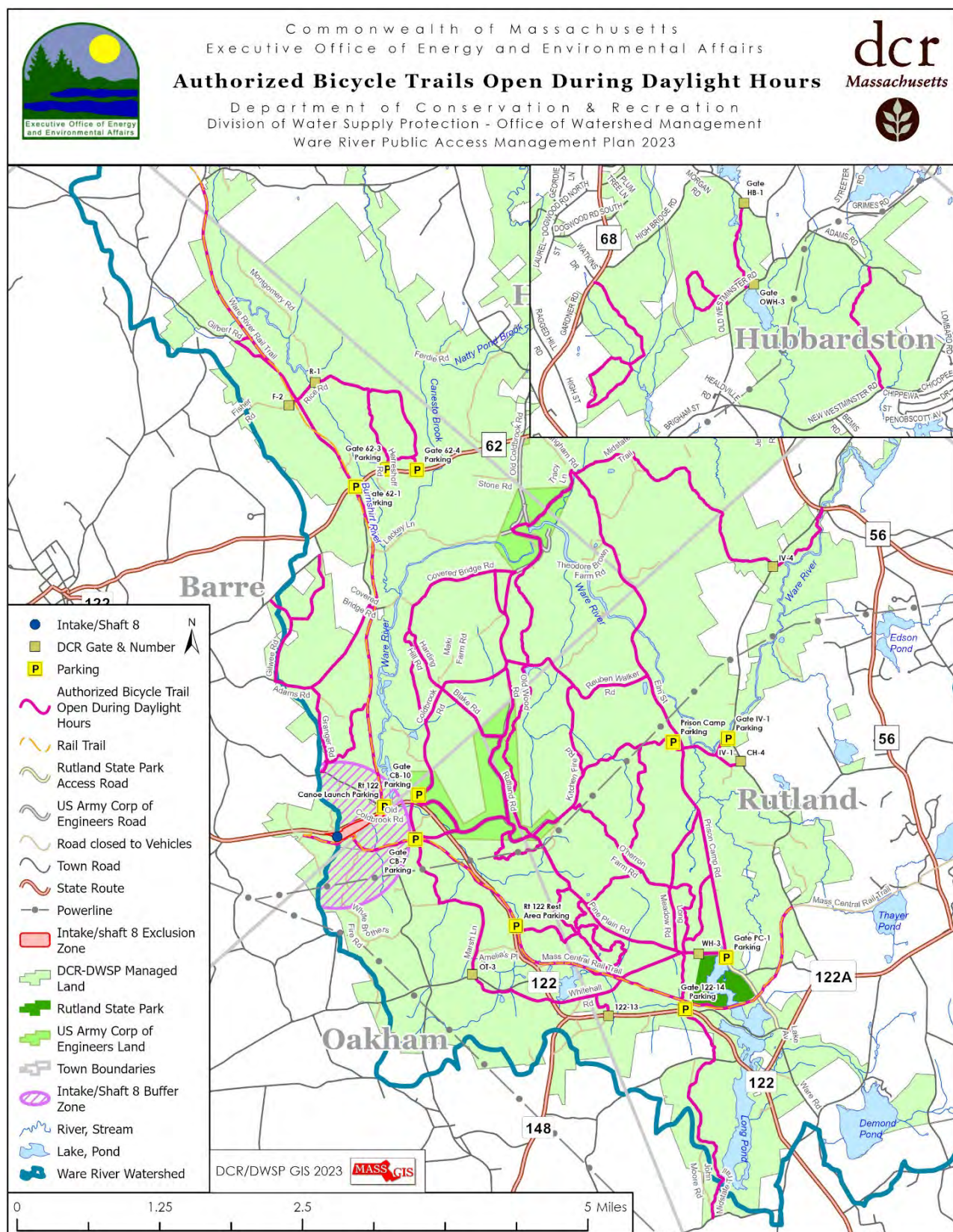
Well planned, constructed, and maintained single-track trails can provide sustainable recreational opportunities while minimizing risks to watershed resources. DWSP worked with the mountain biking community to identify and develop a set of authorized trails/roads that avoid sensitive areas (buffer zone and riparian areas), ensure that proper stream crossings are in place, avoid leading riders to or from private property, emphasize connectivity within the watershed, and reduce the redundancy of multiple trails within an area. Existing trails that are not part of the authorized network will be abandoned and allowed to return to a natural state.

DWSP specifically prohibits bicycling on pedestrian only footpaths and skid roads designed for temporary watershed management. DWSP restricts bicycling during mud season and for operational needs.

Legislation which went into effect on August 10, 2022 defines an e-bike as either a Class 1 or Class 2 electric bicycle ([St. 2022, c. 176, ss 14-17](#)). E-bikes are considered “non-motorized” as they are specifically excluded from the definitions of “motorized bicycle” in [M.G.L. c. 90, s. 1](#) and [M.G.L. c. 90D, s. 1](#). E-bikes – like traditional bicycles – can be used only in areas designated by the Commissioner. As traditional bicycles are allowed on DWSP’s Ware River Watershed internal roads and improved surface trails, then e-bikes are also allowed in those places.

The 2022 legislation, however, also provides that an e-bike cannot be “operated on a trail designated for nonmotorized traffic, that a ... state agency has jurisdiction over, if such trail has a natural surface tread made by clearing and grading the soil and no surfacing materials have been added...[unless the agency promulgates regulations permitting otherwise]” (St. 2022, c. 176, s 14). Current Watershed Protection regulations do not permit this use; therefore, e-bikes are currently not allowed on any single-track bike trail or any other natural surface way on DWSP property in the Ware River watershed.

Map 10. Ware River Watershed Authorized Bicycle Trails



Hiking, Walking, Snowshoeing, and Cross-Country Skiing



Policy

Hiking, walking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing are permitted on roads, multi-use trails and pedestrian use trails on DWSP's lands in the Ware River Watershed system with one exception. DWSP prohibits hiking, walking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing access and activities in the Exclusion Zone of the Ware River Intake. There are additional specific rules and policies regarding dog walking (see Domestic Animals Fact Sheet).

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Walking/Hiking/Snowshoeing/ Cross-country Skiing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

- ☒ Prohibited ☐ Allowed - General Restrictions ☐ Specific Restrictions
- ☐ General public access within the Ware River Watershed System is allowed from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Night Access is prohibited on DWSP owned lands in the Ware River Watershed System. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. Littering is strictly prohibited. Carry in/Carry out. Do not feed wildlife. Groups of 25 or more are required to obtain a group access permit from the Quabbin Visitor Center prior to access.

Explanation

Potential water quality impacts from walking, snowshoeing, or cross-country skiing include physical and microbial water quality threats from erosion and behavior such as illegal body/water contact, littering or vandalism. DWSP prohibits hiking, walking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing access and activities in the Exclusion Zone of the Ware River Intake area to provide enhanced protection of the drinking water.

To limit potential impacts outside the Exclusion Zone, access is provided only on existing paved, gravel, and woods roads as well as designated trails to protect water quality. The Massachusetts Watershed Protection Regulation, 313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)1 states: "Entrance on or exit from land of the Watershed System shall be made through gates or other designated areas." The Watershed Protection Regulation, 313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)14, states: "the use of bicycles, skis, and other means of non-motorized transportation within the Watershed System shall be permitted only in areas designated by the Commissioner."

To aid in appropriate sanitation, DWSP has installed a system of accessible portable toilets that are strategically sited, actively monitored, and maintained to address human sanitary waste concerns posed by this passive recreational activity.

Horseback Riding

Policy

DWSP prohibits horseback riding within all its water supply lands and waters, except for authorized equestrian trails on DWSP Properties in the Ware River watershed under specific conditions. These authorized trails replace all previous equestrian access roads and trails (see Map 11). The following are specific restrictions on equestrian access to DWSP lands.

- Riding is allowed on DWSP authorized equestrian trails only.
- Horse feces within sight of any tributary or surface water must be removed from trail by riders.
- Horse wading in, watering in, or disposal of any waste in or adjacent to a tributary or surface water is prohibited.
- Horseback riding is prohibited during “mud season” when all DWSP trails are closed for access. Trails may be closed for operational needs.
- Horseback riding for commercial purposes on state land is prohibited.

Organized rides for groups up to 25 require a DWSP group access permit issued at least one week prior to the ride. Contact the Quabbin Visitor Center for information on the permit. Groups are limited to 25 individuals. DCR may issue up to two permits per year for groups larger than 25 people.

Large group horseback riding permit requests will be reviewed and either approved or denied. Permit conditions may include trail access, manure management, signage, etc.

DWSP may revoke a permit and/or reject future permit applications if conditions are not met or significant impacts occur.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Horseback Riding	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

☒ Prohibited

☐ Allowed - General Restrictions

☐ Specific Restrictions

☐ General public access within the Ware River Watershed System is allowed from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Night Access is prohibited on DWSP owned lands in the Ware River Watershed System. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. Littering is strictly prohibited. Carry in/Carry out. Do not feed wildlife. Groups of 25 or more are required to obtain a group access permit from the Quabbin Visitor Center prior to access.

¹ Equestrian access allowed only on trails designated by DCR Division of Water Supply Protection lands in the Ware River watershed under specific conditions. Equestrian access restricted during mud-season, watershed management operations, and other situations, which will be posted.

Explanation

This policy is based on state and federal surface water protection regulations that restrict horse access on public drinking water supply lands and waters to safeguard the quality of the public's

drinking water supplies (e.g., 310 CMR 22.20B(2)(b) and Interim Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule). Unrestricted horseback riding within a public drinking water supply watershed, especially near surface waters, is incompatible with DWSP's water quality and public health protection goals.

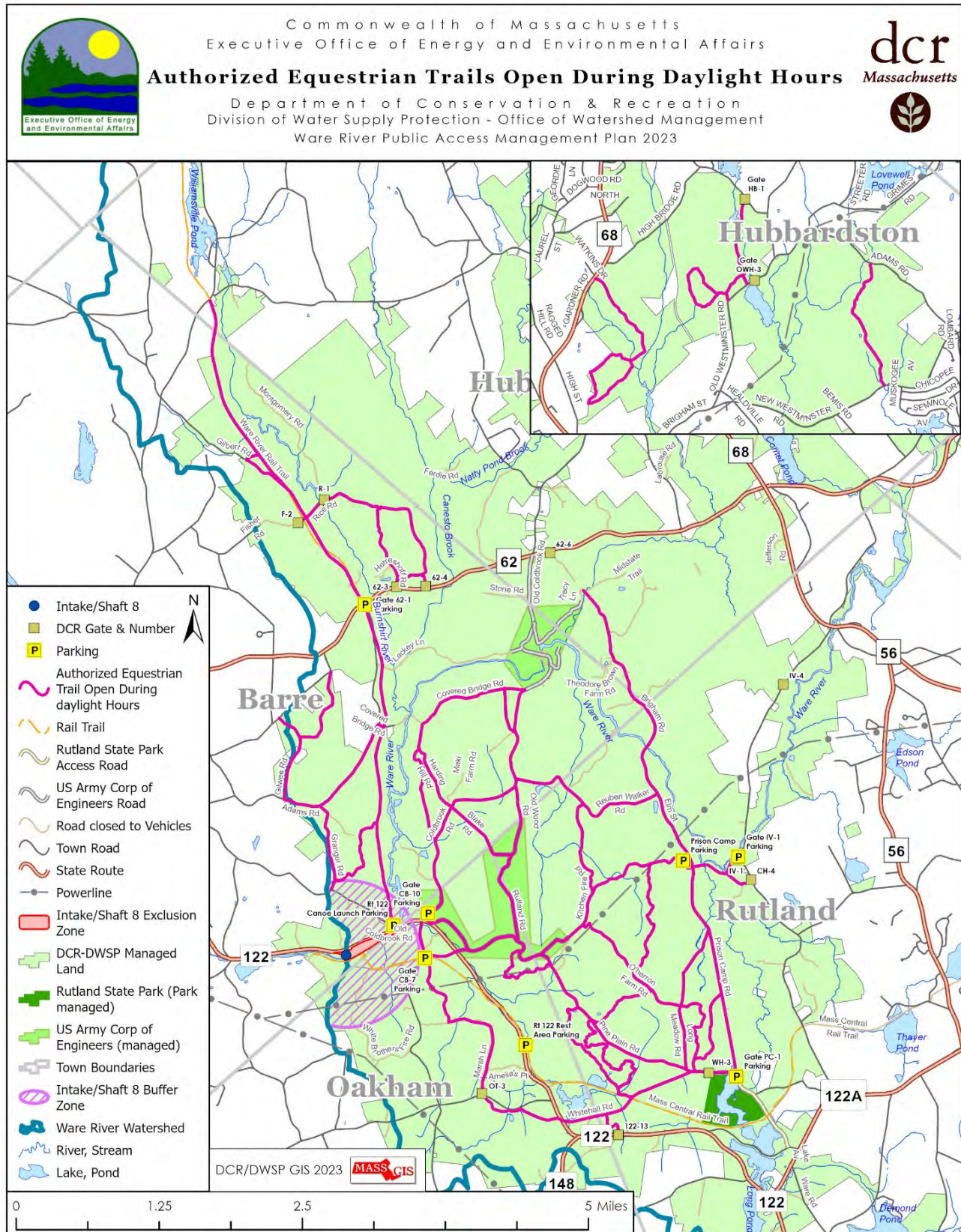
Potential water quality impacts from horseback riding include physical and microbial water quality threats from erosion, improperly managed animal fecal waste sanitation, and behavior such as illegal body/water contact, littering, or vandalism. Creation of illegal trails can impact historic and cultural resources, wetlands, and endangered species habitat.

Potential water quality effects of horseback riding include:

- Improper disposal of sanitary wastes from horses and the resulting threat of microbiological contamination.
- Increase in the sediment/nutrient inputs caused by large numbers riding on trails, riding off trails, or riding on closed trails.
- Attraction of wading or watering horses in nearby, off-trail surface waters or tributaries to the drinking water supply.

The first DWSP authorized horseback riding trails in the Ware River watershed were created in 1988 through a public process. Local horse owners and DWSP staff identified the authorized trails based on water quality protection and preferred routes. DWSP policies have since evolved, reflecting new scientific research, federal regulations, and enhanced watershed protection strategies. DWSP's revised authorized trails for 2023 in the Ware River watershed limits access to appropriate locations for equestrian use by prohibiting horses on trails with unbridged stream crossings and outside a one-kilometer exclusion zone from the Ware River Intake.

Map 11. Ware River Watershed Authorized Equestrian Trails



Ice Fishing and Ice Skating

Policy

DWSP allows ice fishing and ice skating access from DWSP's water supply lands in the Ware River watershed excluding the Exclusion Zone and Buffer Zone of the Ware River Intake (Shaft 8). Ice fishing and skating access is allowed according to DWSP's general public access policies.

Clean-up (e.g., fish entrails, shiners, fires, trash, etc.) from ice fishing activities is required to minimize the threat of water quality contamination. In addition, all other applicable state, local, and federal rules and regulations apply to these activities.

Car access and snowmobile access onto ice from DWSP property is strictly prohibited.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Ice Fishing/Ice Skating	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

☐ Prohibited

☐ Allowed - General Restrictions

☐ Specific Restrictions

☐ General public access within the Ware River Watershed System is allowed from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Night Access is prohibited on DWSP owned lands in the Ware River Watershed System. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. Littering is strictly prohibited. Carry in/Carry out. Do not feed wildlife. Groups of 25 or more are required to obtain a group access permit from the Quabbin Visitor Center prior to access.

¹ Limited ice fishing and ice skating activities are allowed on Great Ponds according to MGL Chapter 91.

Explanation

Traditional ice fishing or ice skating activities are allowed on Great Ponds within the Ware River watershed according to MGL c. 91. Overall, these activities have little impact, but their associated actions can affect water quality: parking impacts and behavior issues such as littering or vandalism. This policy is considered the permission necessary for these activities under 310 CMR 22.20B(6).

DWSP is concerned by the threat of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) introduced by Ice Fishing. An Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Program has been implemented in water bodies of the Ware River Watershed according to DWSP's *AIS Management Plan*.

Fishing

Policy

DWSP allows shore fishing from DWSP's water supply lands in the Ware River Watershed, except in the Exclusion Zone of the Ware River Intake (Shaft 8). Unauthorized trail cutting to shorelines or along shorelines is strictly prohibited. Clean-up along shoreline is required. In addition, all other applicable local, state, and federal rules and regulations apply to these activities.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Fishing	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

☒ Prohibited

☐ Allowed - General Restrictions

☐# Specific Restrictions

☐ General public access within the Ware River Watershed System is allowed from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Night Access is prohibited on DWSP owned lands in the Ware River Watershed System. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. Littering is strictly prohibited. Carry in/Carry out. Do not feed wildlife. Groups of 25 or more are required to obtain a group access permit from the Quabbin Visitor Center prior to access.

¹ Shoreline fishing allowed with a valid MA fishing license and according to State regulations with the exception for the Exclusion Zone.

Explanation

Potential water quality impacts from shore fishing include physical and microbial water quality threats from erosion, and behavior such as illegal body/water contact, littering, vandalism, creating unplanned paths and potential transfer of aquatic invasive species unknowingly transported from other water bodies. The Watershed Protection regulations, 313 CMR 11.09(2)(c)1, allows fishing in the Ware River watershed. DWSP controls, such as the strategic placement of portable toilets, fisherman education, and Watershed Ranger patrols, limit potential water quality impacts.

Wildlife Viewing/Nature Study

Policy

DWSP allows wildlife viewing and nature study on DWSP lands for non-commercial activities. Bird watching and nature study activities are prohibited in the Restricted Area of the Ware River Intake. Harassment of wildlife by means of an intentional or negligent act which creates the likelihood of injury to wildlife by disrupting it to such an extent as to significantly alter normal behavioral patterns such as breeding, feeding, or sheltering is prohibited. Such acts may include significant habitat modification or degradation. Feeding of wildlife is strictly prohibited.

Collection of plants or wildlife requires a scientific collection permit from the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife.

DWSP's lands in the Ware River Watershed are open for hunting and wildlife viewers are advised to take adequate precautions to avoid potential conflict with hunting.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Wildlife Viewing/Nature Study	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

☒ Prohibited

☐ Allowed - General Restrictions

☐# Specific Restrictions

☐ General public access within the Ware River Watershed System is allowed from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Night Access is prohibited on DWSP owned lands in the Ware River Watershed System. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. Littering is strictly prohibited. Carry in/Carry out. Do not feed wildlife. Groups of 25 or more are required to obtain a group access permit from the Quabbin Visitor Center prior to access.

Explanation

Wildlife viewing (e.g., bird watching) and nature study is allowed on Ware River Watershed water supply lands, given the diffuse nature of the activity and low impact to water quality. However, potential impacts to water quality could include physical and microbial water quality threats from erosion, and behavior such as illegal body/water contact, littering or vandalism. Access is prohibited in the Exclusion Zone around the Ware River Intake.

Non-motorized Boating

Policy

DWSP allows non-motorized boating access – canoeing and kayaking – from its water supply lands in the Ware River Watershed according to DWSP’s general public access policy except near the Restricted Area of the Ware River Intake. Paddle Boarding is considered a separate activity (see Paddle Boarding Fact Sheet). Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention Program requirements must be met for access.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Non-motorized Boating	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

☒ Prohibited

☐ Allowed - General Restrictions

☐# Specific Restrictions

☐ General public access within the Ware River Watershed System is allowed from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Night Access is prohibited on DWSP owned lands in the Ware River Watershed System. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. Littering is strictly prohibited. Carry in/Carry out. Do not feed wildlife. Groups of 25 or more are required to obtain a group access permit from the Quabbin Visitor Center prior to access.

¹ Non-motorized boating access – canoeing and kayaking – is allowed from DWSP water supply lands in the Ware River watershed except in the Exclusion Zone. Paddle Boarding is considered a separate activity. AIS Prevention Program requirements must be met for access.

Explanation

Potential water quality impacts from non-motorized boating include physical and microbial water quality threats from erosion, and behavior such as illegal body/water contact, littering or vandalism.

Public access for non-motorized boat access – canoes and kayaks – across DWSP owned lands within the Ware River Watershed has been a traditional activity. DWSP has not observed significant problems related to this activity and therefore will continue to allow non-motorized access from DWSP lands onto rivers, ponds, and Great Ponds.

An Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Program has been implemented in water bodies of the Ware River Watershed according to DWSP’s AIS Management Plan.

Marking or Cutting Trails/Roads and Advertising







Policy

Unauthorized marking, cutting, and/or the creation of trails or roads is prohibited on DWSP's lands within the Ware River Watershed System without written permission from DWSP.

Unauthorized signs, structures and trails will be removed. Advertising or any other unauthorized placement of signs is prohibited in the Ware River Watershed System.

Summary

<i>Activity</i>	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Marking or Cutting Trails/Roads and Advertising			

 Prohibited

Explanation

The Watershed Protection Regulation 313 CMR 11.09(2)(a)5 states: "...No person shall build or construct any object or structure on the property of the commonwealth except with written permission of the Commissioner." The locations of accessible routes for public access within the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed System have been carefully selected with water quality considerations in mind. Any marking and construction of new trails for any recreational purpose is a potential threat to introduce erosion and sedimentation from associated human activity.

The Watershed Protection Regulation 313 CMR 11.09(2)(a)20 states: "Commercial signs and advertising are prohibited in the Watershed System, without written permission of the Commissioner."

For requests for new trails, see plan implementation section below.

Foraging

Policy

Foraging activities by individuals for individual consumption of edible plant materials (e.g., blueberries, grapes, fiddleheads, mushrooms, etc.) in a non-destructive manner for non-commercial uses is allowed on DWSP's lands in the Ware River Watershed System.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Foraging	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

- ☒ Prohibited ☐ Allowed - General Restrictions ☐# Specific Restrictions
- ☐ General public access within the Ware River Watershed System is allowed from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Night Access is prohibited on DWSP owned lands in the Ware River Watershed System. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. Littering is strictly prohibited. Carry in/Carry out. Do not feed wildlife. Groups of 25 or more are required to obtain a group access permit from the Quabbin Visitor Center prior to access.
- ¹ Foraging activities by individuals for individual consumption of edible plant materials (e.g., blueberries, grapes, fiddleheads, mushrooms, etc.) in a non-destructive manner for non-commercial uses is allowed.

Explanation

The Watershed Protection Regulations 313 CMR 11.09(2)(a)5 state: "All acts which injure the property of the Commonwealth are prohibited. No Person shall injure, deface, destroy, remove or carry off any property, real or personal, under the care and control of DCR, including but not limited to, all historic artifacts and natural materials, except that the collection of edible plants, such as blueberries and mushrooms in a non-disruptive manner and for non-commercial use, is allowed."

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV or “Drones”)

Policy

The landing on or taking off by Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs or “drones”) from DWSP lands is prohibited except in the case of an emergency by authorized personnel, or with written permission from DWSP. Any permit that may be granted would be specific to a designated location/time, for designated purposes, and with a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) registered UAV operated under FAA rules.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV)	⊘	⊘	⊘

⊘ Prohibited

Explanation

Potential water quality impacts from UAV use include physical and microbial water quality threats from erosion, chemicals, and behavior such as illegal body/water contact, littering or vandalism. UAVs also risk unwanted wildlife harassment.

Recent technological advances have made civilian use of UAVs an increasingly popular activity. The unregulated use of UAVs can cause security concerns, public safety and public enjoyment problems, and interfere with wildlife.



DWSP will review and issue permit applications for affiliated research projects that propose the use of UAVs on a case-by-case basis, provided such research does not interfere with security, wildlife functions or public safety.


Paddle Boarding

Policy

DWSP prohibits Paddle Boarding launching from its lands and in its waters in the Ware River Watershed unless authorized by the Commissioner with the following exceptions. Paddle Boarding is allowed only on water bodies where there is authorized swimming. Therefore, the activity is allowed on Comet Pond, the one DWSP-controlled water body in the Ware River watershed that has an authorized swimming area; launching/landing only allowed from the designated swimming beach.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Paddle Boarding	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹		

 Prohibited

☐ Allowed - General Restrictions

☐ Specific Restrictions

☐ General public access within the Ware River Watershed System is allowed from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Night Access is prohibited on DWSP owned lands in the Ware River Watershed System. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. Littering is strictly prohibited. Carry in/Carry out. Do not feed wildlife. Groups of 25 or more are required to obtain a group access permit from the Quabbin Visitor Center prior to access.

¹ Prohibited unless authorized by Commissioner. Paddle Boards are allowed only at Comet Pond, where swimming is also allowed.

Explanation

To prevent fecal contamination in a public drinking water supply no person shall wade or swim in any Tributary or Surface Waters on or within the property of the Commonwealth except at areas designated by the Commissioner (313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)8). MassDEP water supply regulations (310 CMR 22.00) also prohibit bodily contact with water. Primary contact recreation such as swimming has been identified as direct cause, and bathers, a source, of water contamination and waterborne disease outbreaks (Craun, 2005). Access to water bodies by watercraft also pose a risk of contact with the water from users accidentally or intentionally falling from the watercraft and/or from a need to enter the water to use the watercraft. DWSP believes that there is a sufficiently high risk of bodily contact with paddle boarding that it must limit the activity only to areas where swimming is also allowed.

Fires and Cooking

Policy

DWSP prohibits fires and cooking, including the use of gas grills, throughout DWSP water supply lands in the Ware River Watershed System.

Summary

<i>Activity</i>	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Fires and Cooking	⊘	⊘	⊘

⊘ Prohibited

Explanation

Fires and cooking are prohibited because forest fires in the DCR Watershed System have been identified as originating from these sources. In addition, the prohibition of fires and cooking is required by the Watershed Protection regulation, 313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)6 that states: “Cooking and all fires are prohibited within the Watershed System.”



Swimming and Wading


Policy

DWSP prohibits swimming from DWSP lands in the Ware River watershed. There are two exceptions for DWSP property that is managed by DCR State Parks. Limited swimming is allowed at Designated Swimming Areas at the DCR State Parks managed facility on Comet Pond and from the DCR State Parks managed facility on Whitehall Pond within Rutland State Park. In addition Open Water swimming is allowed from a DCR access point on Comet Pond beach. Sanitary waste facilities are monitored and maintained at both locations by DCR State Parks.

DWSP allows wading in tributaries located on DWSP lands in the Ware River watershed only with waders or hip boots.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Swimming/Wading	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹		

 Prohibited

☐ Allowed - General Restrictions

☐[#] Specific Restrictions

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¹ Limited swimming access is allowed within Designated Swimming Areas of Rutland State Park and Comet Pond Beach according to posted restrictions. Open Water swimming is allowed from a DCR access point on Comet Pond beach.

Explanation

Swimming in any public surface water supply/Class A water is prohibited because direct body-water contact increases the likelihood of microbiological contamination by pathogens. In addition, walking in and out of the water tramples vegetation and erodes soil along the shoreline. Swimming also includes any wading not associated with fishing with waders. Primary contact recreation such as swimming has been identified as direct cause, and bathers, a source, of water contamination and waterborne disease outbreaks (Craun, 2005). Watershed Protection regulation 313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)8 states, “No person shall wade or swim in any Tributary or Surface Waters on or within the property of the Commonwealth except at areas designated by the Commissioner.”

Open Water swimming is defined by DCR/DWSP as swimming by an individual(s) outside the designated Comet Pond swim area for exercise or athletic purposes without direct supervision. Open Water swimming is done at the individual’s own risk, following similar guidelines used at DCR’s Walden Pond Reservation in Concord, MA.

Personal Watercraft

Policy

DWSP prohibits launching personal watercrafts (e.g., jet skis) on any surface water of the Ware River watershed from DWSP lands.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Personal Water Craft	⊘	⊘	⊘

⊘ Prohibited

Explanation

Personal watercraft require bodily contact with the water, can cause shoreline erosion from wave action, suspend sediments causing increased turbidity, and cause noise pollution. Watershed regulations, (313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)8, state “No person shall wade or swim in any Tributary or Surface Waters on or within the property of the Commonwealth except at areas designated by the Commissioner.”

Camping

Policy

DWSP prohibits overnight camping on DWSP water supply lands in the Ware River watershed. Camping includes, but is not limited to, tenting, trailers, lean-tos, and motor homes. Overnight parking on DWSP lands in the Ware River Watershed System is prohibited.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Camping	⊘	⊘	⊘

⊘ Prohibited

Explanation

DWSP prohibits overnight camping on water supply lands within the Ware River watershed because of a number of public health and safety concerns. These issues would divert water management resources from water rate payers to conduct intensive recreational management activities on water supply lands.

Camping, historically prohibited in the system, increases sanitation problems and fire protection issues. Chapter 737, the Acts of 1972 prohibit camping on DWSP property in the Ware River watershed. The Watershed Protection regulation 313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)2 states that: “No Person is allowed within any land of the Watershed System, except from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset, unless authorized by a written permit from the Commissioner.”

Organized Sports and Field Sports

Policy

DWSP prohibits organized sports and field sports on DWSP's water supply lands in the Ware River watershed, except by written permission from the Quabbin Regional Director.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Organized Sports and Field Sports	⊘	⊘	⊘

⊘ Prohibited

Explanation

Organized sports and field sports introduce increased recreation and concentrated attendance and observers to an area, thus increasing water quality threats such as improper waste disposal and land use alterations, which cause erosion and sedimentation.

The development and maintenance of playgrounds or sports fields are inappropriate with the DWSP's watershed management goals, which are aimed at limiting or minimizing new recreational activities or increased intensity of existing activities in the public water supply watershed.

Programs and Assemblies

Policy

DWSP allows non-commercial programs and assemblies of less than 25 individuals. However, groups less than 25 individuals should notify DWSP by contacting the Quabbin Visitor Center at least 48 hours in advance of an activity. Access is allowed according to DCR's general public access policy. DWSP requires any assembly of 25 individuals or more to obtain a DWSP Group Access Permit from the Quabbin Visitor Center, at least one week prior to access request date. Please visit the DCR website for current permit applications, at www.mass.gov/service-details/watershed-permits.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Programs and Assemblies	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

☒ Prohibited

☐ Allowed - General Restrictions

☐# Specific Restrictions

☐ General public access within the Ware River Watershed System is allowed from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Night Access is prohibited on DWSP owned lands in the Ware River Watershed System. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. Littering is strictly prohibited. Carry in/Carry out. Do not feed wildlife. Groups of 25 or more are required to obtain a group access permit from the Quabbin Visitor Center prior to access.

¹ Any assembly of twenty-five individuals or more must obtain a DCR Division of Water Supply Protection Group Access Permit.

Explanation

The Watershed Protection Regulation 313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)18 states: "Public assemblies of more than 25 persons shall not be allowed within the Watershed System without a written permit from the Commissioner." Certain locations on DWSP lands are increasingly requested to be utilized for special ceremonies, such as weddings and memorials. DWSP must manage the physical resources for water quality as well as public safety, therefore needs to limit the number of people at special events.

Fishing Derbies

Policy

DWSP prohibits fishing derbies on DWSP water supply lands and waters in the Ware River Watershed except with written permission from the DCR Commissioner

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Fishing Derbies	⊘	⊘	⊘

⊘ Prohibited

Explanation

DWSP prohibits fishing derbies for raising or collecting funds, according to Watershed Protection Regulations, 313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)16: “Parades, games, fairs, carnivals, fishing derbies, bazaars, gifts or solicitations for raising or collecting funds shall not be permitted within the Watershed System without written approval of the Commissioner.”

Off-Road Vehicles

Policy

DWSP prohibits the operation of Off-Road Vehicles (ORV), such as All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) and motorized dirt bikes, on roads, trails, or off trails, throughout DWSP lands in the Ware River watershed.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Off-Road Vehicles (ORV)	⊘	⊘	⊘

⊘ Prohibited

Explanation

ORVs have multiple potential water quality impacts, including physical and microbial water quality threats from erosion and behavior such as illegal body/water contact, littering or vandalism. ORV use on unpaved surfaces can also cause substantial vegetation and soil damage. In addition, this activity causes both air and noise pollution, erosion, sedimentation, petrochemicals and other chemicals left on the land which can quickly migrate to the water supply system.

DWSP's Watershed Protection regulations, 313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)12, prohibit off-road motorized driving: "No Person shall drive a motorized vehicle within the Watershed System except upon roads authorized for such use by the Commissioner. Recreational vehicles are prohibited on all Watershed System property except the use of snowmobiles in areas designated by the Commissioner..."

Alcohol Possession or Cannabis Consumption

Policy

DWSP prohibits the possession or drinking of alcoholic beverages while on DWSP lands in the Ware River watershed. Consumption of cannabis is also prohibited on DWSP property.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Alcohol Possession or Cannabis Consumption	⊘	⊘	⊘

⊘ Prohibited

Explanation

The Massachusetts Watershed Protection Regulation, 313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)11 states: “...Possession of and drinking of alcoholic beverages is prohibited within [the Watershed] system.” DWSP staff continues to report evidence of regulatory violations related to the possession of alcohol within the Ware River Watershed System. Excessive consumption of alcohol leads to a disregard of DWSP’s rules, regulations, and policies.

While cannabis possession/consumption is legal in Massachusetts for people 21 and older, the Massachusetts Cannabis Commission’s rules do not allow use in any form (e.g., smoking, vaping, edibles, etc.) on public land (<http://mass-cannabis-control.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Fact-Sheet-Consumption.pdf>).

Metal Detecting



Policy

DWSP prohibits metal detectors and metal detecting activities within DWSP's water supply lands in the Ware River Watershed System.

Summary

<i>Activity</i>	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Metal Detecting	⊘	⊘	⊘

⊘ Prohibited

Explanation

DWSP prohibits collecting and metal detecting activities on DWSP lands in the Ware River Watershed System, to protect historic and pre-colonial sites. The Massachusetts Watershed Protection Regulation, 313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)5 states: "All acts which injure the property of the Commonwealth are prohibited. No Person shall injure, deface, destroy, remove, or carry off any property, real or personal under the care and control of DCR, including but not limited to, all historic artifacts and natural materials." In addition, 313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)25 states: "The possession of all types of metal detectors or similar devices is prohibited on all of the Watershed System property."

Target Shooting

Policy

DWSP prohibits target shooting on DWSP's water supply lands in the Ware River watershed.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Target Shooting	⊘	⊘	⊘

⊘ Prohibited

Explanation



DWSP prohibits target shooting on DWSP's lands in the Ware River Watershed System. The Watershed Protection regulation, 313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)21, states: "All forms of target shooting are prohibited on or within the Watershed System."


Geocaching and Related Activities

Policy

A review process is conducted by DWSP Visitor Center staff on the placement of any geocache, letterbox, or related activity, with particular emphasis given to site location, impacts to water quality, sensitivity of ecological or cultural resources, public safety, facility security, proximity to other existing sites, suitability of trails to absorb additional use and other pertinent factors on any DWSP's water supply lands in the Ware River Watershed System. All geocache placements must be registered with www.geocaching.com; other activities must register with similar, appropriate websites. DWSP will continue to work with these organizations to prohibit placement of materials in unacceptable locations, such as cellar holes, historically sensitive area, and areas closed to the public.

Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Geocaching and Related Activities	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹		

 Prohibited

☐ Allowed - General Restrictions

☐[#] Specific Restrictions

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¹ Review by Quabbin Visitor Center required for any cache placement (also applies to "munzing," "letterboxing," "questing," or other forms of related "hide and seek" activities.

Explanation

In recent years recreational activities such as geocaching, questing, letterboxing, and benchmarking have grown significantly in popularity. Security concerns associated with geocaching have prompted DWSP to reconsider its access policy for this activity. Land managers from public agencies and private organizations have experienced problems with the establishment of unauthorized and unregulated cache sites on their property. Potential water quality impacts from geocaching include physical and microbial water quality threats from erosion, chemicals, and behavior such as illegal body/water contact, littering or vandalism. In addition, geocaches can be hidden in suspicious containers, prompting security concerns and unnecessary responses from law enforcement personnel.

DCR has worked on policies for Geocaching, Letterboxing and similar activities on all DCR lands, including the watershed system. The following guidelines for these activities on DWSP lands in the Ware River Watershed System have been guided by the agency discussions:

- All caches to be placed on DWSP property must be registered on www.geocaching.com, www.letterboxing.org or similar websites, noting that Ware River Watershed rules must be adhered to when on the property. Each cache must contain contact information of the owner. In the event a cache has to be removed by DWSP staff, effort will be made to notify the owner.
- Caches placed near unauthorized trails or areas deemed to be inappropriate by the DWSP Watershed Rangers will be removed immediately and kept at the Ware River Field Office or Quabbin Visitor Center for thirty days. Effort will be made to notify the owner of the cache removal.
- Caches and other materials and activities must be located so participants travel on existing roads or authorized trails.
- Caches CANNOT be placed in the following locations:
 - Areas that would encourage disturbance or dismantling of historic structures, historic buildings, rock walls or cellar hole foundations.
 - Wetland resources protected under the 310 CMR 10.00.
 - Areas that could potentially cause danger to visitors trying to locate the cache.
 - Underwater or in streams.
 - Wildlife dens.
 - Intake Protection Zone of the Ware River Watershed.
- Caches must be in transparent containers (e.g., Tupperware or Rubbermaid) and clearly marked as a Geocache or Official Geocache. Metal (ammo boxes), PVC pipes, or other non-transparent containers are prohibited.
- No digging or excavation is permitted at any time in the placement or retrieval of a cache.
- No defacement or alteration to DWSP property, including but not limited to signs, benches, buildings, or natural features, is allowed.
- No removal or significant disturbance of vegetation, plant growth, or other flora is permitted at any time in the placement or operation of a cache or other associated materials.
- Caches will not contain food, alcohol, firearms, drugs, dangerous items (e.g., fireworks or matches), or sexually explicit material. No natural materials from DWSP watershed lands shall be placed into the cache.
- No monies or profits can be derived from the placement of a cache by the owner or an affiliated business or organization.
- Any questions regarding geocaching, letterboxing, or similar activities can be directed to the Quabbin Visitor Center at (413) 323-7221.

This policy is based on the Watershed Protection Regulation 313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)5 which states, “No Person shall build, construct, bury, or conceal any object, memorial, or structure on the property of the Commonwealth except with the written permission of the Commissioner.”

Commercial Activities

Policy

Commercial activities on all DWSP watershed lands are prohibited without a written permit from the DCR Commissioner.

Summary

<i>Activity</i>	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Commercial Activities	⊘	⊘	⊘

⊘ Prohibited

Explanation

The Watershed Protection regulation 313 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)19 states: “No person shall engage in any business, sale, or display of goods, wares, or services within the Watershed System without a written permit from the Commissioner.” Programs, trips, or other outings on DWSP land or the Reservoir where participants are charged a fee by the host is a commercial activity.

Other

Policy

Not applicable.

Explanation

If an activity is not listed by DWSP, including, but not limited to, pursuits such as rockets, kites with cameras, or any other air, ground, or water activity, please contact and discuss with the Quabbin Visitor Center at (413) 323-7221 or the Ware River Watershed Rangers at (617) 777-2877 before proceeding.

V. Management Plan Implementation 2023-2033

DWSP staff will communicate, implement, monitor, and enforce its updated policies regarding public access on DWSP property in the Ware River Watershed following plan adoption in 2023. Watershed protection strategies change over time, depending on new scientific information, regulatory changes, land use changes, DWSP watershed management experiences, and public values. Given these externalities, DWSP fully recognizes the likelihood that individual policies may need to be clarified during the next decade.

This *2023 Ware River Watershed Public Access Management Plan Update* demonstrates DWSP's control of public access within its lands and waters of the Ware River Watershed, which is a critical component of DWSP's comprehensive Watershed Protection Program

Specific functions related to the policies in this plan will be detailed in DWSP's annual Work Plans. DWSP will amend or update this plan and maps in 2033, or earlier if needed.

A. Regulatory Compliance Strategy

As an unfiltered drinking water supply, the DCR/MWRA Water Supply system must comply with federal and state drinking water regulations. The Surface Water Treatment Rule (SWTR, June 1989) essentially requires filtration of all surface water supplies but allows filtration waivers if specific criteria are met. One of the criteria required for unfiltered public water systems is an effective watershed control program that can preserve high quality source water through control of pollutants in the watershed. Public access control on water supply lands and waters is a critical part of the DWSP's comprehensive watershed protection program.

The DCR/MWRA Water Supply System is comprised of three separate watersheds: Quabbin Reservoir, Ware River, and Wachusett Reservoir. The watershed system is large and well protected. These water supply lands are attractive to watershed residents and the public. It is not feasible or desirable to ban all access by the public on these lands. Therefore, public access is controlled through DWSP's monitoring and enforcement of compliance with watershed regulations and public access policies. This allows for limited public access that does not compromise water supply safety and security. A variety of tools are used to attain compliance with DWSP's regulations and policies

B. Monitoring and Enforcement

Monitoring the public's activities on DWSP lands and waters is essential to determine if policies, rules, and regulations are being followed, as well as to identify and correct violations.

DWSP has a staff of Watershed Rangers to assist with enforcing the watershed rules and regulations.. The Watershed Ranger mission statement summarizes their efforts:

As part of the DWSP Watershed Team, the Rangers seek to help safeguard the quality of the DCR/MWRA Water System by maximizing public compliance with the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Water Supply Protection's rules, regulations, and policies. The Rangers strive to achieve their

mission by being a proactive presence on watershed property and educating the public through formal and informal means.

Recognizing the importance of monitoring, DWSP increased its Watershed Ranger staffing by hiring two additional Rangers for the Ware River watershed in 2021. DWSP established a new field office in 2019 for Watershed Rangers dedicated to the Ware River Watershed. Rangers are scheduled in the watershed seven days a week.

DWSP Watershed Rangers enforce 313 CMR 11.09: Watershed Protection; 302 CMR 18.00: Aquatic Nuisance Control Plan; 302 CMR 11.00: Parkways, Traffic, and Pedestrian Rules; and MGL 92A½ §8: Watershed Management Enforcement. Watershed Rangers will continue to employ education and enforcement methods and for all serious offenses utilize the Massachusetts State Police, the Environmental Police, local Police Departments, and federal agencies (e.g., FAA, FBI, CIA). There is also a requirement under 310 CMR 22.20B(7) to report all enforcement actions to DEP.

Over the years, regulatory compliance violations on water supply lands addressed by DWSP staff have included: unauthorized trail construction, maintenance, and expansion; unauthorized trail signage; ecologically sensitive area disturbance and damage by unauthorized trail construction and use; and cultural heritage damage (e.g., stonewall deconstruction).

C. Public Outreach

The main goal of DWSP public outreach is to ensure that visitors are aware of our regulations and understand the need to protect our resources. Outreach efforts include internal staff training to deliver a consistent message to the public; targeted patrols of DWSPs infrastructure, lands and waters which afford encounters with the public; comprehensive signage program; collaboration with Advisory Committees and other stakeholder groups; and maintaining up-to-date information on DCR's website. Watershed Rangers speak informally with users while patrolling the property. Interpretive Services staff provide formal programs for a wide variety of groups as well as operate the Quabbin Visitor Center.

D. Interpretive Services

Public education is a vital component of DWSP's watershed protection strategy. DWSP strives to directly communicate not only what the rules and regulations are, but also why the rules are needed for drinking water supply protection. In many cases regulatory compliance can be achieved by ensuring visitors understand DWSP regulations and the reasons for them.

The Quabbin Visitor Center interpretive staff conduct educational programs for students that focus on watersheds, watershed management, wildlife, forestry and the history of the Quabbin and Ware River watershed areas. An emphasis is placed on conducting these programs for communities in the watershed and water user communities to provide a deeper understanding of the management of DWSP lands.

Interpretative Services staff also conduct programs for a wide variety of groups and for the public. The Quabbin Visitor Center is staffed and open to the public most days of the week (please see schedule at www.mass.gov/info-details/quabbin-reservoir-watershed-education-

[programs#the-quabbin-visitor-center-\)](#) providing visitors with a deeper understanding of the history of the area, management of the Quabbin Reservoir and its surrounding forest and wildlife among other topics.

Based on input from the 2018 Stakeholder Survey and the 2018-2019 Public Engagement Plan process, DWSP Interpretive staff will be expanding its public programming in the Ware River Watershed. The 2018 Survey respondents indicated, nearly equally, that they would be interested in attending three types of programs: 1) History Talk; 2) Guided Hike; and 3) Environmental Education.

E. Structural Access Controls

Structural access controls include locked metal and wooden gates, barways, concrete barriers, and internal road intersection signage. Some gate systems may be modified to accommodate existing user groups while maintaining the structural integrity of the gates. In addition, new gates will be installed as required to implement the changed policy of vehicular access to DCR internal roadways. The gate locking system will continue to be monitored by DWSP staff. DWSP staff coordinates security with MWRA.

F. Signage

DWSP fully recognizes the need for improved signage across its lands in the Ware River watershed. Over the next few years, DWSP staff will continue to redesign and replace all existing signage to improve communication of access policies, to better identify locations (e.g., trail names), and to provide emergency contact information. Signage consists of gate signage, tree signage, and kiosk signage. As part of the implementation tasks of the 2023 Plan update, DWSP will formalize its signage policies and procedures to remove, redesign, replace, and maintain its signage into the future.

G. Mapping

DWSP has developed a GIS based trail inventory application used in staff monitoring efforts. DWSP staff has made significant progress migrating unauthorized trail datasets into one location and conducting quality control/quality assurance procedures to the master data set. Data collected by field staff in the forestry and environmental quality sections from 2016 to 2018 have been merged and standardized with attribute tables. Data, including photos, collected through several crews of the Student Conservation Association has been carefully reviewed and added to the database. The DWSP's Trail Inventory includes unauthorized trails, authorized trails and routes, and photos (e.g., restoration efforts used in unauthorized trail closure).

DWSP concluded that a better monitoring and inventory tool was needed while standardizing this trail data. GIS section staff have initiated developing a Trail Inventory Application in ArcGIS Collector. This tool has been used to store and analyze trail inventory data from 2016-present, monitor and update existing data, and add new data on unauthorized trails – specifically stream crossing or trails in resource areas. Unauthorized trails which have been closed or rerouted prior to the finalization of this Plan update are being collected by staff through an ArcGIS Online database and monitored by field staff using the newly created Trail Application.

Public access maps will continue to be updated, as needed, to provide users with better location information. Hardcopy maps will be available through the Watershed Rangers, Visitor Center, and on the DWSP website. Online mapping information for enhanced communication is a major goal for DWSP. DWSP is in the process of developing an electronic interactive map for the public showing authorized access areas and authorized trails accessible for varying types of recreational activities throughout the year.

H. Trail Modifications

It is expected that there will be requests for new trails on DWSP property in the Ware River watershed throughout the ten-year time span of this plan. In between plan updates, starting the year after initial implementation, the public can propose to add, change, or remove a trail or to alter trail use through an initial review by WRWAC. WRWAC will then provide an initial recommendation on any proposals to DWSP once each calendar year. DWSP will evaluate the proposals at the beginning of the calendar year and return to WRWAC for further discussion before a final determination is made by DWSP regarding trail modifications.

VI. Conclusion

DWSP's top priority for the Ware River Watershed is to provide a safe and adequate supply of drinking water to the MWRA while maintaining compliance with filtration avoidance requirements. Given the multitude of pressures for public access for recreation and the inherent complexity of each issue on drinking water supply lands and waters, DWSP takes a conservative attitude toward all land uses that might have a repercussion on the integrity of the drinking water supply.

The *2023 Ware River Watershed Public Access Management Plan Update* allows for continued public access and recreation on substantial acreage managed by DWSP where it does not pose a threat to the drinking water supply for over 3.1 million people.

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- Watershed Protection Plan FY24-FY28
(www.mass.gov/doc/dcr-watershed-protection-plan-fy24-fy28/download)
- Watershed Protection Plan FY19-FY23
(www.mass.gov/doc/dcr-watershed-protection-plan-fy19-fy23/download)

Annual Work Plans:

- FY24 Annual Work Plan
(www.mass.gov/doc/fy2024-dcr-watershed-management-work-plan/download)
- FY23 Annual Work Plan
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- FY22 Annual Work Plan
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- FY21 Annual Work Plan
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- FY20 Annual Work Plan
(www.mass.gov/doc/fy2020-dcr-watershed-work-plan/download)

Annual Reports:

- FY22 Annual Report
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- FY19 Annual Report
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Public Access Management Plans:

- Public Access Management Plan Update: Quabbin Reservoir Watershed System, 2018
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- Water Quality Report: 2022 Quabbin Reservoir Watershed Ware River Watershed.
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Other DCR Documents:

- 2010 Aquatic Invasive Species Assessment and Management Plan.
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VIII. Appendices

Appendix A – Regulations and Legislation

1. Watershed Protection Regulations (selected sections)

WATERSHED PROTECTION – Sections 11.09 and 11.10

313 CMR 11

Department of Conservation and Recreation

February 24, 2017

Official Disclaimer: These regulations are provided to you for your convenience. Official versions of all Massachusetts State statutes are available through the [State Bookstore](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/spr/sprcat/catidx.htm) (<http://www.sec.state.ma.us/spr/sprcat/catidx.htm>). When downloading from the web please be aware that the copy you receive may differ from the official version. If you need the statutes for work that may have any legal implications, make sure to get the official version from the State bookstore.

11.09: General Rules and Regulations for the Protection of Watersheds and Watershed System

In order to facilitate review of all regulations promulgated by DCR relating to Watersheds and the Watershed System, 313 CMR 11.09 includes regulations of general applicability to Waters of the Watershed System.

(1) Waters of the Watershed System.

(a) No Person shall take or divert any Waters of the Watershed System and no Person shall corrupt, render impure, waste or improperly use any such water.

(b) No Person shall:

1. engage in any construction activity involving filling, dredging, grubbing or altering land without adequate provisions to prevent erosion resulting in clay, silt or other turbidity laden waters from entering the Waters of the Watershed System;

2. construct, establish or maintain any agricultural facility or place where animal manure may be deposited or accumulated without adequate provision to prevent any manure or other Pollutant from flowing or being washed into the Waters of the Watershed System;'

3. engage in any other activity which could degrade the quality of Waters of the Watershed System or interfere with their use as a source of water supply.

(c) No Person shall allow a condition to exist on such Person's property which could result in the direct or ultimate discharge of any Pollutant into the Waters of the Watershed System.

(d) Any records of any board of health or health agent concerning matters within the Watershed shall be open to inspection by the employees and agents of DCR and MassDEP.

(e) Whenever an incident occurs, is likely to occur, or a situation exists that threatens to add Pollutants to the Waters of the Watershed System, the Person causing or contributing to the pollution or potential pollution shall notify DCR and MassDEP immediately.

(2) Watershed System.

(a) General Regulations.

1. Entrance on and exit from land of the Watershed System shall be made through gates or other designated areas.
2. No Person is allowed within any land of the Watershed System, except from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset, unless authorized by a written permit from the Commissioner; or for the purposes of authorized night fishing along the Swift River downstream of the Y-pool below Winsor Dam, at Pepper's Mill Pond, or at South Spectacle Pond.
3. Powered boats are prohibited within the Waters of the Watershed System except in areas designated by the Commissioner.
4. All acts which pollute or may pollute the Waters of the Watershed System are prohibited. No litter or refuse of any sort may be thrown or left in or on any land or water within the Watershed System. All Persons within said System shall use the sanitary facilities provided for public use.
5. All acts which injure the property of the Commonwealth are prohibited. No Person shall injure, deface, destroy, remove or carry off any property, real or personal, under the care and control of DCR, including but not limited to, all historic artifacts and natural materials, except that the collection of edible plants, such as blueberries and mushrooms in a non-disruptive manner and for non-commercial use, is allowed. Unless otherwise authorized, the removal from the Watershed System of gravel, topsoil, stones, boulders, or other earthen material is prohibited except for removal for use by DCR for land management purposes. No Person shall build, construct, bury, or conceal any object, memorial, or structure on the property of the Commonwealth except with the written permission of the Commissioner.
6. Cooking and all fires are prohibited within the Watershed System.
7. No Person shall wade or swim in any reservoir except wading while using boots for the purpose of launching boats at designated boat launch areas.
8. No Person shall wade or swim in any Tributary or Surface Waters on or within the property of the Commonwealth within the Watershed System except at areas designated by the Commissioner.
9. Organized sports activities, including but not limited to orienteering and baseball, are prohibited in the Watershed System except by written permission from the Commissioner.
10. The Division or Department and its employees are not responsible for any damage to or loss of property sustained by fishermen, or for any injury or loss of life which may be

incurred in connection with public use of the reservoirs and Watershed Systems.

11. Breach of peace, profanity or other disorderly conduct offensive to the general public is strictly prohibited within the Watershed System. Possession of and drinking of alcoholic beverages is prohibited within said System.

12. No Person shall drive a motorized vehicle within the Watershed System except upon roads authorized for such use by the Commissioner. Recreational vehicles are prohibited on all Watershed System property except the use of snowmobiles in areas designated by the Commissioner. Motor vehicles shall be parked only in areas designated by the Commissioner. Operators of motor vehicles shall obey all regulatory signs unless otherwise directed by a police officer or person in charge. No Person shall willfully obstruct the free passage of vehicles or Persons within the Watershed System. Vehicle access for official use may be granted by the Commissioner.

13. No Person shall bring any animal within any Watershed System property except for horses and dogs at the Ware River Watershed at areas designated by the Commissioner.

14. The use of bicycles, skis and other means of non-motorized transportation within the Watershed System shall be permitted only in areas designated by the Commissioner.

15. No Person, except in an emergency, shall bring, land or cause to descend within any Watershed System property any aircraft except with a written permit from the Commissioner.

16. Parades, games, fairs, carnivals, fishing derbies, bazaars, gifts or solicitations for raising or collecting funds shall not be permitted within the Watershed System without written approval of the Commissioner.

17. Lotteries, raffles, gambling and games of chance are prohibited within the Watershed System. No Person shall have possession of machinery, instruments or equipment of any kind for use of same in the Watershed System.

18. Public assemblies of more than 25 persons shall not be allowed within the Watershed System without a written permit from the Commissioner.

19. No Person shall engage in any business, sale or display of goods, wares or services within the Watershed System without a written permit from the Commissioner.

20. Commercial signs and advertising are prohibited in the Watershed System, without written permission of the Commissioner.

21. No Person, unless authorized by law, license, or permit, shall have possession of or discharge any weapon, firearm, fireworks, or other explosive on or within the Watershed System. All forms of target shooting are prohibited on or within the Watershed System.

22. No Person may hunt, shoot or trap animals on or within any Watershed System property except at times and in areas designated by the Commissioner.

23. All Persons within the Watershed System shall obey the lawful directions of regulatory signs, police officers, DCR Rangers, or persons in charge, or of Federal or Commonwealth wardens or enforcement officers.

24. The Watershed System or parts thereof may be closed for public access at the discretion of the Commissioner when necessary to protect the lands and waters under the care and control of DCR.

25. The possession of all types of metal detectors or similar devices is prohibited on all Watershed System property.

(b) Special Regulations for Quabbin Reservoir.

1. Persons in compliance with Commonwealth Fish and Game Laws and Regulations, will be allowed to fish from shore in areas designated by the Commissioner. A valid state fishing or sporting license is required by any Person renting or launching a boat at any DCR facilities subject to 313 CMR 11.09. Reasonable fees for the use of boats, for rental of outboard motors for fishing purposes, or use of DCR facilities, including parking and boat ramps, may be charged by DCR. Fishing from the shorelines of Quabbin Reservoir and its tributaries within the Watershed System or fishing from boats shall be allowed only during a season designated by the Commissioner.

2. Persons permitted to fish from boats shall, at all times, be responsible for the sanitary condition of the boats. Persons under 16 years of age must be accompanied by a Person possessing a valid fishing license in order to boat on Quabbin Reservoir.

3. Only boats of a minimum length of 12 feet, and of a type considered safe by DCR, shall be used. No inboard motors, collapsible boats, sailboats, pontoon boats, square sterned canoes, or other similar craft will be permitted in the water, and no boats will be permitted in the water except in areas designated for boating by the Commissioner. Outboard motors shall have a rating of not more than $\frac{1}{2}$ (one-half) the Boating Industries of America (BIA) or Outboard Boating Council (OBC) rated horsepower for the boat and shall not exceed 20 horsepower for two-stroke engines and 25 horsepower for four-stroke engines, except that outboard motors for DCR boats less than 14 feet six inches in length shall not exceed ten horsepower. Boats less than 14 feet six inches in length will be limited to three occupants, and boats of that length and in excess thereof may carry four occupants. No boats shall carry more than four occupants. Canoes, kayaks, and jon boats of a minimum length of 12 feet, and of a type considered safe by DCR, shall be used only in areas designated for boating by the Commissioner on Pottapaug Pond above the regulating dam and at Gate 31 above the regulating dam. Canoes less than 16 feet and jon boats less than 14 feet six inches in length will be limited to two occupants, and canoes and jon boats in excess thereof may carry three occupants. All boats must be in compliance with current Commonwealth boating laws. All boats must be clean and contain no refuse of any kind. DCR personnel shall have the right to inspect all private boats launched at Commonwealth facilities and may deny access in order to protect water quality or the safety of occupants. Chock blocks must be used on vehicles when removing boats from the Reservoir.

4. No Person shall operate a motor boat at a speed other than reasonable and proper or in such a manner as to annoy or endanger the occupants of other boats.

5. All privately owned boats, motors and other equipment must be removed from Watershed Property of DCR each day.

6. Boats shall not leave the mooring areas before dawn, and must return at the time posted at each mooring area. The beaching of boats at any point except at the designated mooring and landing areas is strictly prohibited, except in cases of extreme emergency.

7. Any violation of 313 CMR 11.09 will be deemed sufficient cause for revocation of fishing privileges for a period of time not less than one year from the time of violation.

(c) Special Regulations for Ware River.

1. Persons in compliance with Commonwealth Fish and Game Laws and Regulations will be allowed to fish in the Ware River in areas designated by the Commissioner.

2. Powered boats and powered canoes are prohibited within the Ware River Watershed Reservation. *[For definition of Ware River Watershed Reservation, see Ch. 737 Acts of 1972, Section 11 (Kelly-Wetmore Act)]*

3. On Watershed System property outside of the Ware River Watershed Reservation, outboard motors on boats launched from DCR property shall be limited to 20-horsepower for two-stroke engines and 25-horsepower for four-stroke engines, except that larger motors may be allowed on the portion of Long Pond that is south of Route 122 in Rutland with a written permit from the Commissioner.

4. Any violation of 313 CMR 11.09 will be deemed sufficient cause for revocation of fishing privileges for a period of time not less than one year from the time of violation.

11.10: Enforcement

(1) Any Person who, without lawful authority, takes or diverts any Waters of the Watershed System or corrupts or defiles any such Waters or any source of such Waters or who violates and refuses to comply with any rule, regulation or order of DCR shall be subject to the fines set forth in MGL c. 92A 1/2, § 9. The provisions of 313 CMR 11.00 shall be enforced upon petition of the Commission or of any town or Person interested by the Supreme Judicial Court or Superior Court or any justice of either court as provided in MGL c. 92A 1/2, § 10. In addition, upon written request by the Division, MassDEP shall have the authority to enforce the provisions of St. 1992 c. 36 and 313 CMR 11.00 by all legally permitted enforcement mechanisms including, but not limited to: issuing notices of noncompliance; convening pre-enforcement conferences; issuing water supply orders pursuant to MGL c. 111, § 160; and imposing administrative penalties pursuant to MGL c. 21A, § 16 and 310 CMR 5.00. Such written request by the Division to MassDEP may seek enforcement for a specified type of violation or area, for a designated group of cases or for an individual matter.

(2) Any person determined by DCR to have acted negligently in requiring a search and rescue response by DCR may be required to make restitution for the cost of those services as determined by the Commissioner.

2. Kelly-Wetmore Act

ACTS, 1972. — CHAP. 737.

659

years from their dates. The bonds or notes shall be signed by the county treasurer and countersigned by a majority of the county commissioners. The county may sell the said securities at public or private sale, upon such terms and conditions as the county commissioners may deem proper, but not for less than their par value. Indebtedness incurred hereunder shall, except as herein provided, be subject to chapter thirty-five of the General Laws.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

Approved July 17, 1972.

Chap. 737. AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE CONSERVATION AND REGULATION OF CERTAIN LANDS UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COMMISSION.

Be it enacted, etc., as follows:

SECTION 1. In this act, the following words and phrases, unless otherwise expressly provided or the context otherwise provides, shall have the following meanings:

"Commission", the metropolitan district commission.

"Commissioner", the commissioner of the metropolitan district commission.

"Ware river watershed", those parcels of land under the control of the commission and being situated wholly or partly in the towns of Rutland, Oakham, Barre, Hubbardston, Templeton and Princeton and being shown on plan of land entitled "Ware River Watershed, General Plan", dated November 22, 1965, Metropolitan District Commission, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, filed in the office of the commission.

"Quabbin reservoir area", those parcels of land including the Prescott Peninsula, so-called, contiguous to the reservoir under the control of the commission and presently lying within the bounds of Routes 9, 32, 32A, 122 and 202 and being situated wholly or partly in the towns of Pelham, Belchertown, Ware, Hardwick, Petersham, New Salem and Shutesbury, and being shown on plan of land entitled "General Plan of Quabbin Reservoir Watershed, dated February 18, 1959, Metropolitan District Commission, Water Division, Quabbin Section, Commonwealth of Massachusetts", filed in the office of the commission.

"District", the combined lands identified in this act as the Ware river watershed and the Quabbin reservoir area, which are a portion of the total lands comprising the Quabbin section of the metropolitan water district.

SECTION 2. The natural ecology of the district shall be maintained, and it shall be conserved in its present degree of wilderness character and shall be protected in its flora and fauna in all reasonable ways to assure the balanced wildlife habitat and to allow camping with the approval of the district superintendent and in areas subject to his approval. Except as otherwise specifically authorized herein, no act or practice shall be undertaken which will adversely affect the balance of nature in the district. The commission shall make and promulgate such rules and regulations regarding the uses authorized herein as are reasonably necessary to conserve the wilderness, watershed and reservoir character of the district.

SECTION 3. No lands or real property which are a part of the district shall be leased or sold or otherwise transferred without approval of the general court, nor shall there be any new or additional construction on said lands or real property except by the commission consistent with the purposes of this act.

SECTION 4. No new or additional roads or ways shall be constructed within the district, excepting only such ways as shall be required for forest management and fire control, or for watershed and reservoir purposes, nor shall existing soft surface roads or ways be hard surfaced, provided, however, that existing ways may be maintained and kept passable and in repair.

SECTION 5. The commission shall not permit the dumping of refuse or waste within the district except where such is allowed by permit granted by the commission prior to the effective date of this act for as long as such permit remains in effect, except, however, the commission may dispose of such refuse or waste resulting from normal operation of the district.

SECTION 6. No person shall take or remove and no town within the district shall authorize the taking or removal of sand, gravel, dirt or soil, nor any other mineral, from or within the district, except only that the commission may take such of these materials as are required for commission use within the district and may allow such use of these materials as may be required pursuant to section five.

SECTION 7. The commissioner, or his designee, shall annually prepare a plan detailing forestry activities, logging or lumbering activities, proposed plantings and the like which are to be undertaken for the next following year, which plan shall be open to inspection by the public.

SECTION 8. Lumbering or logging operations shall be permitted within the district to the extent and for the purpose of maintaining and conserving its forests in a healthful state of natural ecological balance consistent with reservoir and watershed purposes, but such lumbering and logging operations shall not be of a tree farming nature, so called, wherein natural diversification of tree species is upset nor wherein wildlife habitat or food chain growth is adversely affected. All lumbering or logging operations shall be performed under private contract pursuant to the bidding laws of the commonwealth the proceeds of which shall be used in whole or in part for the further management of the selfsame forests, excepting only for such emergency salvage operations as are deemed necessary by the forester, and with the further exception that the commission may take such lumber as is needed for its own use consistent with this act. All such lumbering or logging operations shall be supervised by the forester who shall designate cuttings and shall make and enforce such rules as are necessary regarding disposal of slash and toppings, construction of logging ways or ramps, or the like, to conserve said forests within the intent of this act. No tree shall be felled or cut within one hundred feet of any river or stream or flow line of reservoir or pond within the district which change the character of stream beds, except for such emergency or salvage cuttings as aforesaid.

SECTION 9. The public shall have access to the lands of the district for such recreational uses as are permitted by, and are consistent with the provisions of this act, except that the Prescott peninsula shall be set aside as a natural site for ecological and wildlife study and access thereto shall be regulated by the commission.

SECTION 10. Hunting shall not be allowed in the Quabbin reservoir area, however hunting may be permitted within the Ware river watershed subject to the rules and regulations of the commission and the division of fisheries and game regulating hunting.

SECTION 11. Powered boats or powered canoes shall not be used anywhere within that portion of the Ware river lying within the present bounds of Routes 68, 62, 122, 122A and 56, nor shall all-terrain or amphibious vehicles be operated in, on or through the streams, ponds or other waters within these same bounds except for official use.

SECTION 12. There shall be no overnight camping within the Quabbin reservoir area nor within that portion of the Ware River Watershed defined in the first sentence of section eleven of this act, nor shall tents be erected nor trailers or other vehicular sleeping accommodation be parked overnight therein.

SECTION 13. Motor vehicles, snowmobiles and other recreational vehicles may be operated within the Ware River Watershed only upon established vehicular ways and trails, or in such other areas as shall be designated by the commission. Public entry to the Quabbin reservoir area shall be limited to foot passage only, except that motor vehicles and manually operated bicycles may be admitted to such roads and ways within the Quabbin reservoir area as shall be designated by the commission. There shall be no racing of motor driven vehicles within the district, nor shall any associated rallies or commercial ventures be held therein. Snow vehicles or all-terrain vehicles shall be permitted within the Quabbin reservoir area only for official use.

SECTION 14. Notwithstanding any other provision of this act the establishment, construction and operation by the University of Massachusetts, hereinafter referred to as the university, of an astronomical observatory may be continued in compliance with and pursuant to the permit granted November twenty-sixth, nineteen hundred and sixty-nine by the commission, to the university, provided that access to the site of the said astronomical observatory shall be limited to such access road as may be specifically designated by the commission for the purpose, and provided further that no person or equipment, other than construction, maintenance and repair personnel and equipment, operating personnel and equipment and such students in the field of astronomy as may be authorized by the university for the purpose, shall be entitled to be admitted to the aforesaid site except in accordance with and under the provisions of this act. Any such person so admitted shall be subject to supervision while on the site by an officer or official of the university designated for said purpose. Similarly, the construction, maintenance and operation of the United States Air Force antenna installations in compliance with and pursuant to the permit granted November twenty-sixth, nineteen hundred and sixty-nine may be continued under the agreements pertaining thereto.

SECTION 15. The provisions of this act and of all rules and regulations made under the authority thereof shall be enforced by the commissioner, his duly appointed agents, by metropolitan district commission police officers, by police officers of any city or town, by members of the state police and by enforcement officers of the department of natural resources.

Approved July 17, 1972.

3. Enforcement Legislation

PART I. ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT

TITLE XIV. PUBLIC WAYS AND WORKS

CHAPTER 92A1/2. WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

Chapter 92A1/2: Section 8. Enforcement of Sections 1-7

Section 8. The department, and its employees designated for the purpose, shall enforce sections 1 to 7, inclusive, and the rules, regulations and orders made thereunder, and may enter into any building, and upon any land for the purpose of ascertaining whether sources of pollution there exist, and whether the sections and the rules, regulations and orders made as aforesaid are complied with.

4. Advisory Committee Legislation

PART I. ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT

TITLE XIV. PUBLIC WAYS AND WORKS

CHAPTER 92A1/2. WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

Chapter 92A1/2: Section 14: Ware river watershed advisory committee

Section 14. The commissioner shall establish a Ware river watershed advisory committee. The purpose of the committee shall be to advise the division on its policies and regulations regarding recreational activities, land use and environmental, wildlife and habitat matters within the Ware river watershed. The commissioner of the department shall appoint to the advisory committee 1 person from 3 names nominated by each of the following organizations: the Massachusetts Council of Sportsmen, the Worcester County League of Sportsmen, Trout Unlimited, a rod and gun club located in the town of Barre, Hubbardston, Oakham or Rutland, a designee of the board of selectmen of each of the towns of Barre, Hubbardston, Oakham and Rutland, a representative of the historical societies in each of the towns of Barre, Hubbardston, Oakham and Rutland, a representative of the Massachusetts Wildlife Federation, a representative of the Massachusetts Audubon Society, a representative of the Sierra Club, and a representative of the Upper Ware river watershed association and 1 member from the general public.

The committee shall elect a chairperson from among its members, shall meet at least twice each calendar year and may provide for alternate members to participate fully in its meetings whenever a regular member is unable to do so.

5. Watershed Management Plan Legislation

PART I. ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT

TITLE XIV. PUBLIC WAYS AND WORKS

CHAPTER 92A1/2. WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

Chapter 92A1/2: Section 16. Periodic watershed management plans

Section 16. The commissioner shall at least once every 5 years, adopt after public hearing one or more periodic watershed management plans for the watershed system, which shall have been prepared with the participation of a professionally qualified forester and the appropriate watershed advisory committee. Any watershed management plan shall provide for, but need not be limited to, forestry, water yield enhancement and recreational activities. All forestry activities shall be subject to sections 40 to 46, inclusive, of chapter 132.

6. MA Drinking Water Regulations, Surface Water Supply Protection 310 CMR 22.20B

310 CMR: DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

22.20B: Surface Water Supply Protection

(1) To protect surface waters used as sources of drinking water supply from contamination, the requirements of 310 CMR 22.20B shall apply to Zones A, B, C of a surface water source, except at:

- (a) Rivers and streams designated as Class B waters pursuant to 314 CMR 4.00: *Massachusetts Surface Water Quality Standards* which are used as drinking water sources and are not impounded at some point by means of a dam or dike to create a reservoir at which the water supply intake is located;
- (b) Emergency sources approved by the Department under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 21G.

(2) On and after January 1, 2001, a public water system shall prohibit the following new or expanded land uses within the Zone A of its surface water sources.

- (a) All underground storage tanks,
- (b) Above-ground storage of liquid hazardous material as defined in M.G.L. c. 21E, or liquid propane or liquid petroleum products, except as follows:

- 1. The storage is incidental to:
 - a. normal household use, outdoor maintenance, or the heating of a structure;
 - b. use of emergency generators;
 - c. a response action conducted or performed in accordance with M.G.L. c. 21E and 310 CMR 40.000: *Massachusetts Contingency Plan* and which is exempt from a ground water discharge permit pursuant to 314 CMR 5.05(14); and
- 2. The storage is either in container(s) or above-ground tank(s) within a building, or outdoors in covered container(s) or above-ground tank(s) in an area that has a containment system designed and operated to hold either 10% of the total possible storage capacity of all containers, or 110% of the largest container's storage capacity, whichever is greater. However, these storage requirements do not apply to the replacement of existing tanks or systems for the keeping, dispensing or storing of gasoline provided the replacement is performed in accordance with applicable state and local requirements;

(c) Treatment or disposal works subject to 314 CMR 3.00: *Surface Water Discharge Permit Program* or 5.00: *Ground Water Discharge Permit Program*, except the following:

- 1. the replacement or repair of an existing treatment or disposal works that will not result in a design capacity greater than the design capacity of the existing treatment or disposal works;
- 2. treatment or disposal works for sanitary sewage if necessary to treat existing sanitary sewage discharges in non-compliance with 310 CMR 15.000: *The State Environmental Code, Title 5: Standard Requirements for the Siting, Construction, Inspection, Upgrade and Expansion of On-site Sewage Treatment and Disposal Systems and for the Transport and Disposal of Septage*, provided the facility owner demonstrates to the Department's satisfaction that there are no feasible siting locations outside of the Zone A. Any such facility shall be permitted in accordance with 314 CMR 5.00: *Ground Water Discharge Permit Program* and shall be required to disinfect the effluent. The Department may also require the facility to provide a higher level of treatment prior to discharge;
- 3. treatment works approved by the Department designed for the treatment of contaminated ground or surface waters and operated in compliance with 314 CMR 5.05(3) or (13).
- 4. discharge by public water system of waters incidental to water treatment processes.

(3) (a) All on-site subsurface sewage disposal systems, as defined in 310 CMR 15.000: *The State Environmental Code, Title 5: Standard Requirements for the Siting, Construction, Inspection, Upgrade and Expansion of On-site Sewage Treatment and Disposal Systems and for the Transport and Disposal of Septage*, within Zones A, B, and C, shall be in compliance with the requirements of 310 CMR 15.000.

(b) Within the Zone A of all surface water supplies and tributaries as defined in 310 CMR 22.02, all sewer lines and appurtenances are prohibited, except as required to eliminate existing or potential pollution to the water supply, or where the crossing of tributaries is necessary to construct a public sewer system. Where the exception is met, watertight construction of sewer lines and manholes shall be used.

(c) Within 1,000 feet of surface water supplies and tributaries, all pumping stations shall have standby power and high water alarms telemetered to an appropriate location that is manned at all times. An emergency contingency plan must be developed by the owner of the wastewater treatment facility and submitted to the Department for approval.

310 CMR: DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

22.20B: continued

- (d) Beyond 1,000 feet, and within the watershed of surface water supplies, the Department may in specific circumstances, after review, require additional controls when deemed necessary for protection of public health.
- (4) No stabling, hitching, standing, feeding or grazing of livestock or other domestic animals shall be located, constructed, or maintained within 100 feet of the bank of a surface water source or tributary thereto. Owners and operators of agricultural operations should consult the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources *On-farm Strategies to Protect Water Quality - An Assessment & Planning Tool for Best Management Practices* (December 1996) for information about technical and financial assistance programs related to erosion and sediment control and nutrient, pest, pesticide, manure, waste, grazing, and irrigation management.
- (5) No burial shall be made, except by permission in writing by the Board of Water Commissioners or like body having jurisdiction over such source of supply, in any cemetery or other place within 100 feet of the high water mark of a source of public water supply or tributary thereto. No lands not under the control of cemetery authorities and used for cemetery purposes, from which lands the natural drainage flows into said source of water supply or tributary thereto, shall be taken or used for cemetery purposes until a plan and sufficient description of the lands is presented to the Department and until such taking or use is expressly approved in writing by the Department.
- (6) No person shall swim, wade or bathe in any public surface water source and no person shall, unless permitted by written permit by the Board of Water Commissioners or like body having jurisdiction over such source, fish in; enter or go in any boat, seaplane, or other vehicle; enter upon the ice for any purpose, including the cutting or taking of ice; or cause or allow any animal to go into, or upon, any surface water source or tributary thereto.
- (7) Enforcement. A public water system has the following enforcement responsibilities with respect to protection of the Zone A, B, and C of its surface water source(s)
- (a) A public water system shall conduct regular and thorough inspections of Zones A, B, and C to determine and enforce compliance with 310 CMR 22.20B. The public water system shall take prompt enforcement actions against persons violating 310 CMR 22.20B, and report all such enforcement actions to the Department in the system's Annual Statistical Report the results of the regular inspections made during the preceding calendar year. The report shall include the number and dates of the inspections, the number, nature and outcome of violations found, and enforced against by the public water system, and the general condition of the watershed at the time of the last inspection.
- (b) the public water system shall document on a form provided by the Department and submitted to the Department in calendar year 2001, that the public water system has established a protocol that provides the system with an opportunity to review and comment on all proposed new or expanded land uses or activities within the watershed of its surface water source(s) to local boards, commissions and other authorities with primary responsibilities for approving such uses and activities.
- (c) The Department may take enforcement actions against any public water system which fails to carry out its enforcement responsibilities under 310 CMR 22.20B, or may enforce directly against persons violating 310 CMR 22.20B.
- (8) No person shall apply herbicides to any surface water body including but not limited to any reservoir and their tributaries, which serve as a source of public water supply without a permit issued by the Department pursuant to M.G.L. c. 111, § 5E. This requirement does not apply to the application of algaecides containing copper by the public water system. However, the public water system shall notify the Department in writing prior to the application of such algaecides.

This is an excerpt from the entire Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations, 310 CMR 22.00. A copy of the entire regulation is available at:
www.mass.gov/files/documents/2016/10/us/310cmr22_372_16185.pdf.

Appendix B – AWWA Policy Statement on Recreational Use of Domestic Water Supply Reservoirs (2022)

The American Water Works Association (AWWA) supports the principle that water of the highest quality should be used as the source of supply for public water systems. Accordingly, the risks and potential mitigation measures of any recreational activity on water supply reservoirs should be identified and evaluated. In the evaluation, utility-, customer- and other stakeholder-determined acceptable levels of risk should be considered. No recreation should be permitted on finished-water reservoirs (as opposed to raw-water reservoirs) under any circumstances.

Protection of public health and drinking water quality should be the highest priority in operational decisions for reservoirs used jointly for water supply and recreation. Decisions regarding recreational use of domestic water supply reservoirs should be consistent with any governing or applicable source water protection goals and objectives developed and implemented by the utility and other responsible parties, all in an effort to safeguard reservoir water quality. Utilities should have an active outreach effort to ensure that they remain informed about reservoir management policies and activities, particularly if they do not have direct ownership or management control of the subject reservoir(s).

Recreational uses of domestic water supply reservoirs and the land-based infrastructure necessary to support such uses can add microbial, physical, and chemical contaminants to the drinking water produced from the reservoirs. Water utility decisions on permitting recreational uses of water supply reservoirs should consider the following issues: (1) the potential for water quality degradation, (2) the public health risk, (3) the acceptance of such health risks by customers, (4) the current required level of treatment, and (5) additional treatment requirements, uncertainties, and costs that may be incurred. Recreational uses should be prohibited in those instances where a scientifically-based risk assessment, or, in the absence of a risk assessment, the best available scientific data demonstrates a probable or imminent degradation of water quality or hazard to public health that cannot be controlled or mitigated in a cost-effective manner.

When considering proposals for recreational use of domestic water supply reservoirs, the water utility should work with stakeholders to develop an integrated reservoir management plan that includes consideration of a wide range of factors (e.g., nutrient loading, invasive species, boating and body-contact activities, and appropriate water quality monitoring) as a means to evaluate and, if necessary, mitigate water quality impacts and associated risks. In cases where the utility does not have direct management control, the utility should strive to partner with landowners, as well as local, state, and federal government entities in an effort to shape recreational management policies and actions in favor of water quality protection. Body-contact recreation (e.g., swimming, water skiing, wind surfing), as well as the use of gasoline- and diesel-powered engines on watercraft, should be discouraged. In addition, boat inspection/washing stations and restrictive use of live bait should be considered to prevent the introduction of invasive species (such as zebra mussels or non-native algal species) that could potentially destabilize a reservoir's ecology and water quality. Where feasible, costs for monitoring, evaluations, and mitigation should be borne by those proposing or benefiting from the recreational activity, not by the utility or its customers.

If recreation already exists on a reservoir, the water utility should work or continue to work with stakeholders to develop an integrated reservoir management plan and associated implementation actions to mitigate water quality impacts and risks. Practices specified in this policy statement are consistent with all other pertinent AWWA policy statements.

Adopted by the Board of Directors June 13, 1971, reaffirmed Jan. 28, 1979, and Jan. 25, 1987, and revised June 23, 1996, and June 13, 2004, and Jan. 25, 2009, and June 10, 2012, January 14, 2017, and April 5, 2022.

Source: American Water Works Association Policy Statement on Recreational Use of Domestic Water Supply Reservoirs. American Water Works Association, April 2022. www.awwa.org/Policy-Advocacy/AWWA-Policy-Statements/Recreational-Use-of-Domestic-Water-Supply-Reservoirs.

Appendix C – 2019 Stakeholder Survey – Public Access Issues in the Ware River Watershed

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Division of Water Supply Protection (DWSP), manages approximately 25,000 acres in the towns of Barre, Hubbardston, Oakham, Phillipston, Princeton, Rutland, and Templeton which were acquired to protect the water supply. This land is part of an unfiltered, public drinking water supply system that provides high quality drinking water to over 2.5 million people in 53 Massachusetts communities, including several in the central part of the state. To view a map of the Ware River Watershed, please click [here](#). Return to the survey by closing the map window.

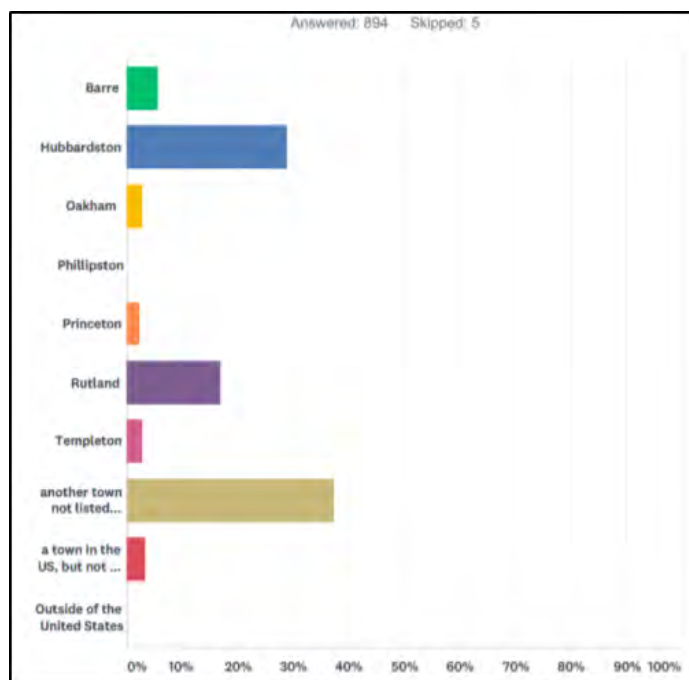
The DCR-DWSP operates under Federal and State regulations that require proper management and adequate control of public access on its lands and waters.

Public input is one important source of information the DCR-DWSP uses in evaluating and improving its access policies. Your input is important to us.

Please complete the following survey questions. This should take approximately five to eight minutes.

Thank you for your time.

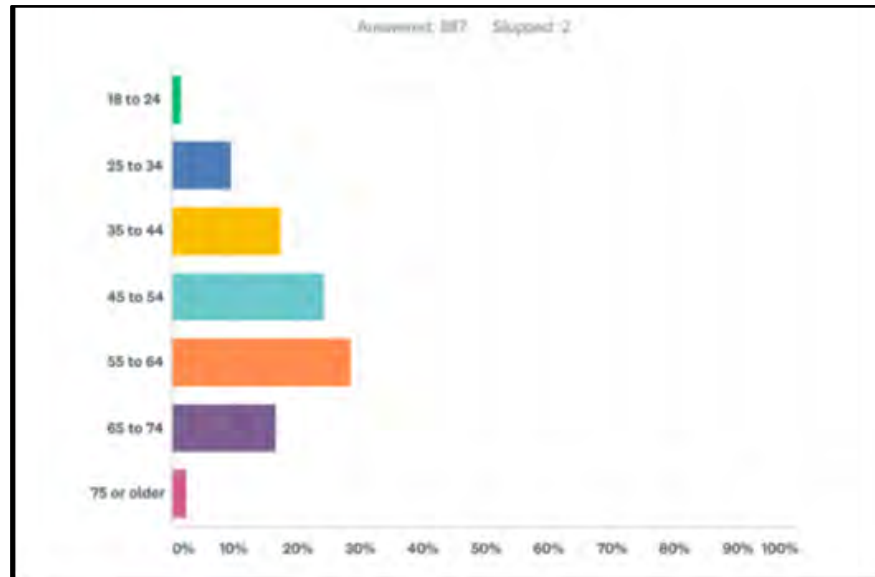
In what town do you live (place your cursor on the box)?



Town	#	%
Barre	51	5.7%
Hubbardston	259	29.0%
Oakham	24	2.7%
Phillipston	2	0.2%
Princeton	20	2.2%
Rutland	152	17.0%
Templeton	24	2.7%
Another town not listed above in Massachusetts	333	37.3%
A town in the US, but not in Massachusetts	29	3.2%
Outside of the United States	0	0.0%

What is your age?

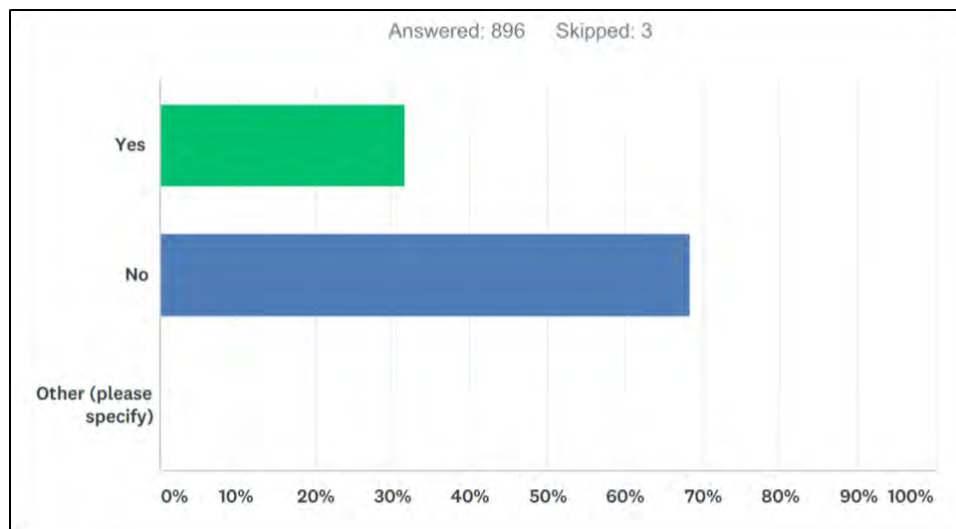
☐ 18 to 24
 ☐ 25 to 34
 ☐ 35 to 44
 ☐ 45 to 54
 ☐ 55 to 64
 ☐ 65 to 74
 ☐ 75 or older



Age	#	%
18 to 24	13	1.5%
25 to 34	85	9.5%
35 to 44	156	17.4%
45 to 54	217	24.2%
55 to 64	256	28.5%
65 to 74	149	16.6%
75 or older	21	2.3%

Are you a landowner abutting DCR-DWSP lands in the Ware River Watershed?

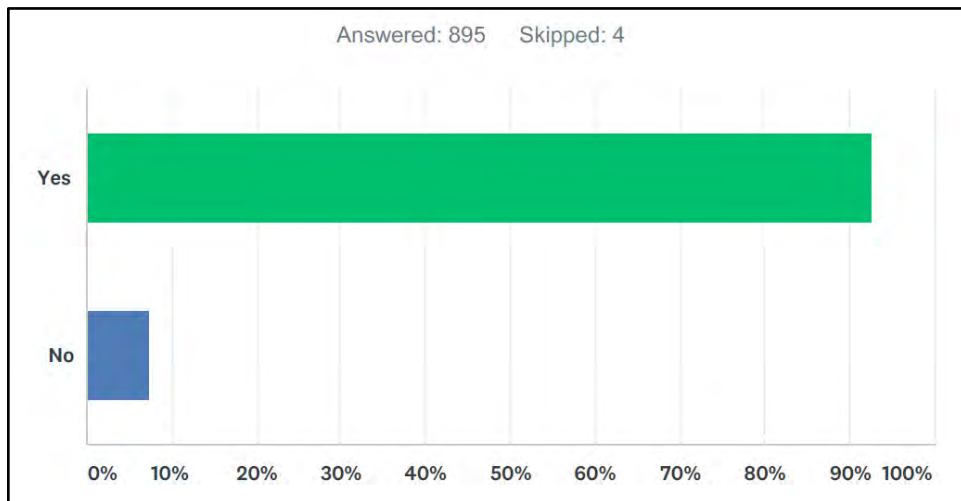
☐ Yes
 ☐ No



Abutting Landowner	#	%
Yes	283	31.6%
No	613	68.4%

Are you a recreational user of DCR-DWSP owned land or water in the Ware River Watershed? If "No", please scroll directly to question #14.

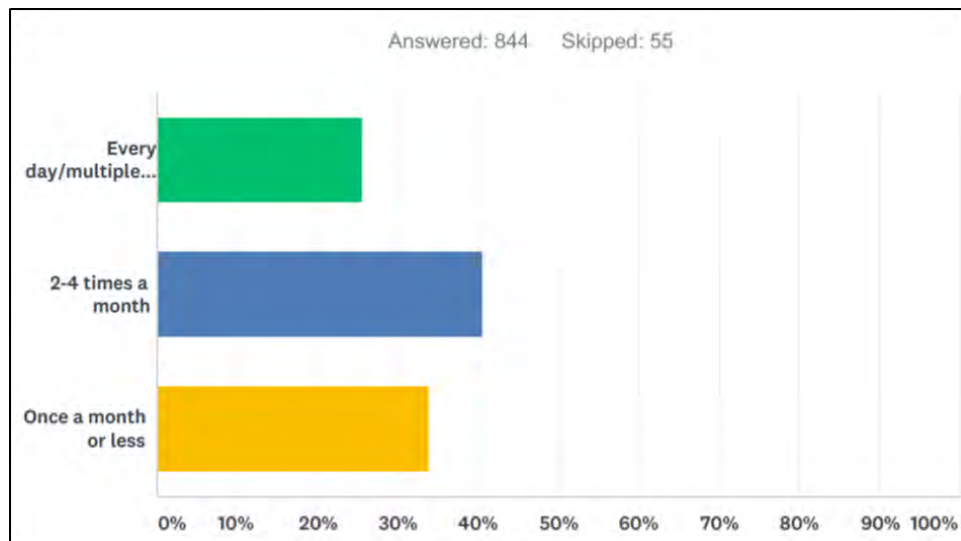
☐ Yes ☐ No



Recreational User of DCR-DWSP Owned Land	#	%
Yes	830	92.7%
No	65	7.3%

On average, how frequently during the year do you access DCR-DWSP lands/waters?

☐ Every day/multiple times a week ☐ 2-4 times a month ☐ Once a month or less



How Frequently Do You Access DCR-DWSP Lands/Waters	#	%
Every day/multiple times a week	215	25.5%
2-4 times a month	343	40.6%
Once a month or less	286	33.9%

When do you mostly access DCR-DWSP lands or waters?

☐

Weekend nights

☐

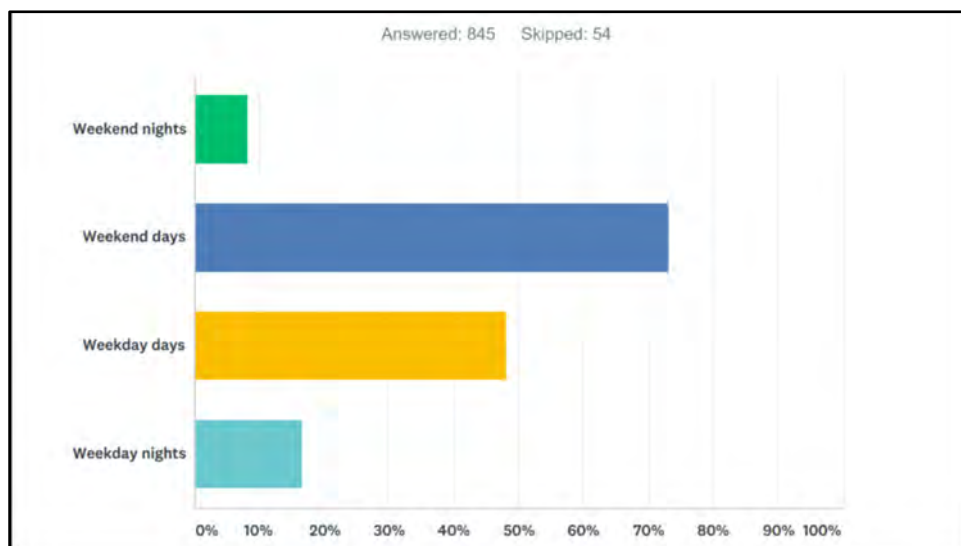
Weekend days

☐

Weekday days

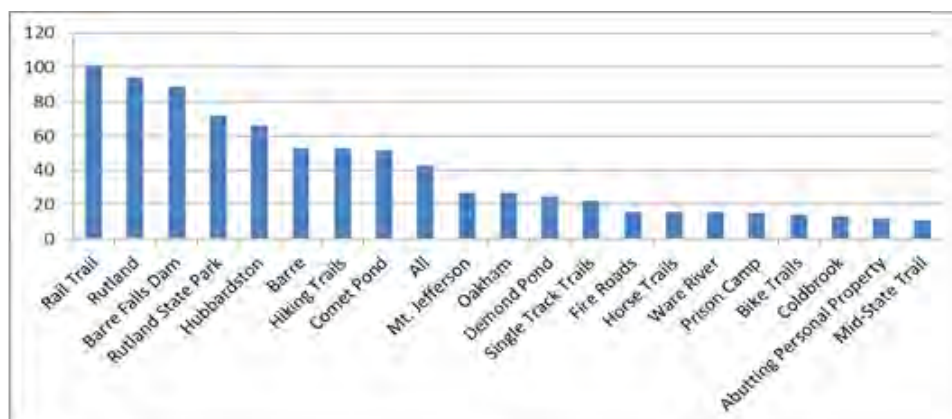
☐

Weekday nights



When do you Mostly Access DCR-DWSP Lands/Waters	#	%
Weekend nights	69	8.2%
Weekend days	619	73.2%
Weekday days	407	48.2%
Weekday nights	139	16.4%

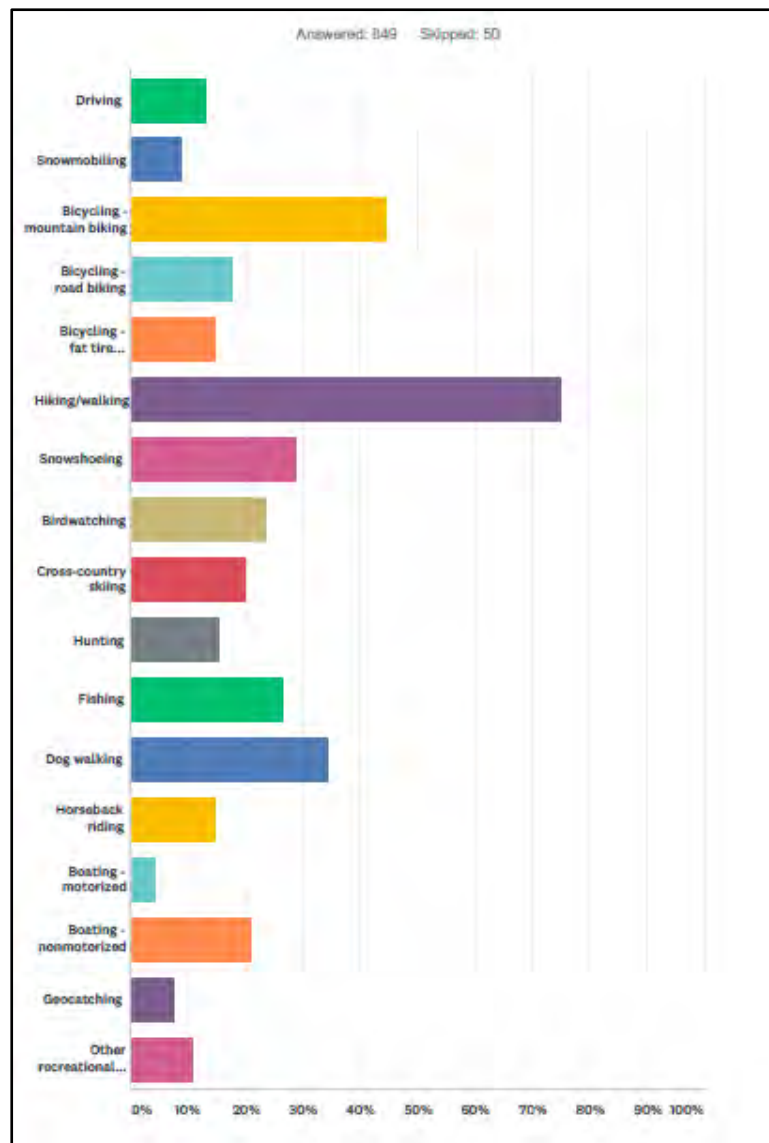
Where on DCR-DWSP lands/waters in the Ware River watershed do you recreate most often?



Graph shows locations mentioned by at least 1% of respondents.
See end of report for complete list of responses.

**What recreational activities do you engage in on DCR-DWSP lands or waters (check box)?
You may indicate more than one activity, if needed.**

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Driving | <input type="checkbox"/> Cross-country skiing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Snowmobiling | <input type="checkbox"/> Hunting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycling - mountain biking | <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycling - road biking | <input type="checkbox"/> Dog walking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycling - fat tire (winter biking) | <input type="checkbox"/> Horseback riding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking/walking | <input type="checkbox"/> Boating - motorized |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Snowshoeing | <input type="checkbox"/> Boating - nonmotorized |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Birdwatching | <input type="checkbox"/> Geocaching |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other recreational activity not listed above | |



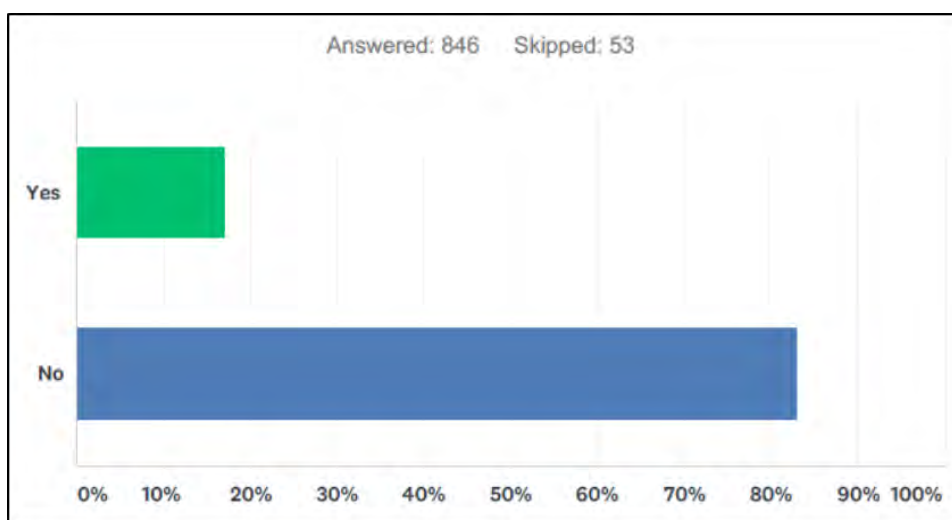
Recreational Activities	#	%
Driving	110	12.9%
Snowmobiling	75	8.8%
Bicycling - mountain biking	378	44.5%
Bicycling - road biking	149	17.5%
Bicycling - fat tire (winter biking)	124	14.6%
Hiking/walking	635	74.8%
Snowshoeing	244	28.7%
Birdwatching	199	23.4%
Cross-country skiing	169	19.9%
Hunting	130	15.3%
Fishing	224	26.4%
Dog walking	293	34.5%
Horseback riding	124	14.6%
Boating - motorized	38	4.5%
Boating - nonmotorized	178	20.9%
Geocaching	64	7.5%
Other recreational activity not listed above	91	10.7%

Other recreational activities listed:

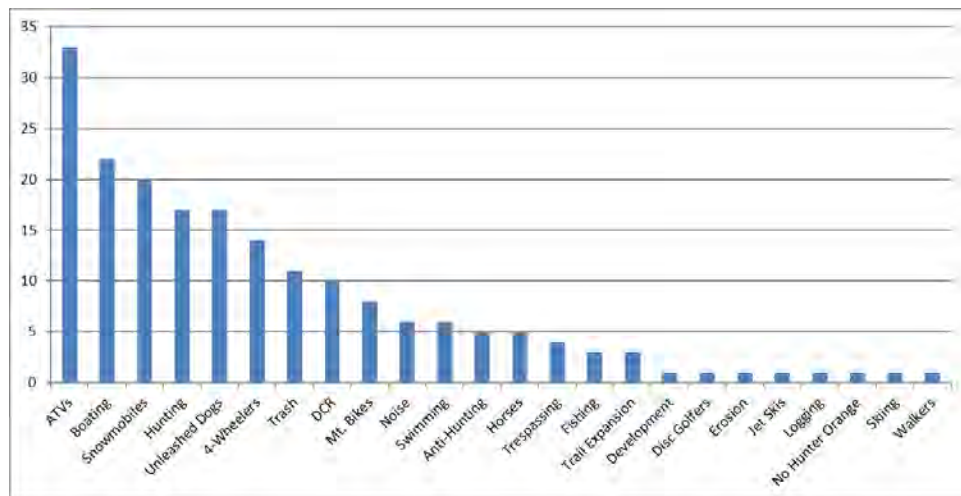
Swimming	Disc Golf	Mushroom Hunting
Forestry Studies	Picnicking	ATV
Running/Trail Running	Scout Activities	Paddle Boarding
Stargazing	Camping	Photography

Do you experience any recreational conflicts with other users while on DCR-DWSP lands in the Ware River Watershed?

☐ Yes ☐ No If you responded yes, what types of conflict do you experience?



Do You Experience Recreational Conflicts	#	%
Yes	145	17.1%
No	702	82.9%



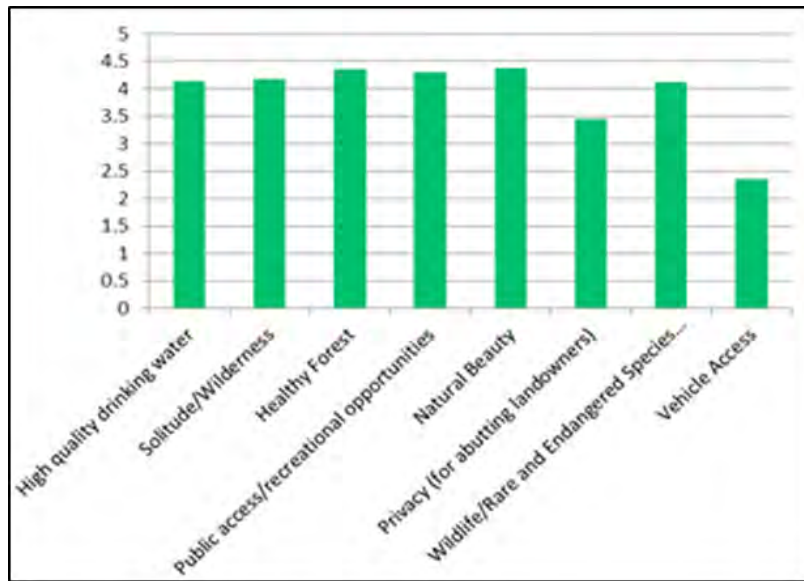
See end of report for complete list of responses.

Below is a list of things that the lands and waters managed by the DCR-DWSP provide. Please rate how important or unimportant each item is to you using the following scale:

1 - Not at all important to me 2 - Somewhat important to me 3 - Moderately important to me 4 - Very important to me 5 - Extremely important to me 6 - N/A

High quality drinking water	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Solitude/Wilderness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Healthy Forest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public access/recreational opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Natural Beauty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Privacy (for abutting landowners)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wildlife/Rare and Endangered Species and Habitat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vehicle Access	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please describe to where and/or for what purpose you value "Vehicle Access" if applicable.

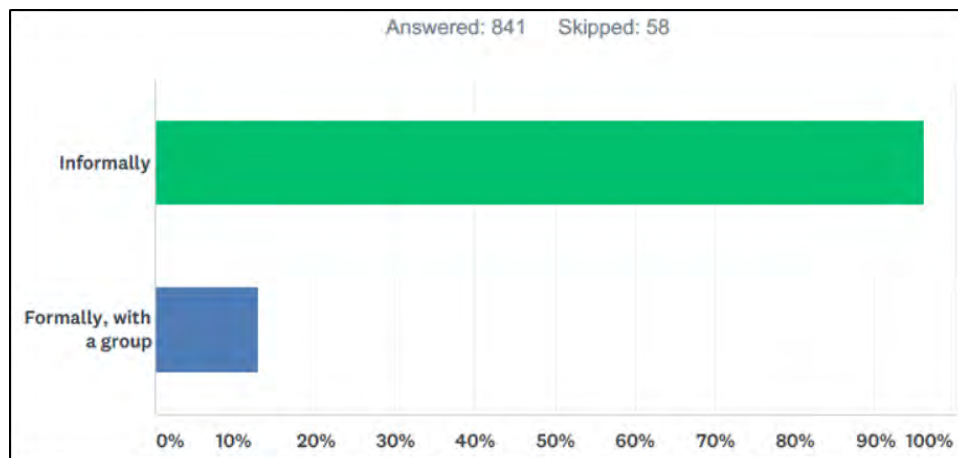


Service Provided	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Avg
High quality drinking water	26	53	103	241	394	28	845	4.13
Solitude/Wilderness	21	32	122	274	390	4	843	4.17
Healthy Forest	7	17	86	297	430	4	841	4.35
Public access/recreational opportunities	18	34	89	232	468	4	845	4.31
Natural Beauty	5	9	88	304	435	4	845	4.37
Privacy (for abutting landowners)	70	111	220	188	207	48	844	3.44
Wildlife/Rare and Endangered Species and Habitat	12	55	138	258	380	5	848	4.11
Vehicle Access	280	191	188	84	69	22	834	2.35

See end of report for complete list of responses to Vehicle Access question.

When you access DCR-DWSP lands/waters, do you do so with a formally organized group/event or informally?

☐ Informally ☐ Formally, with a group



Do You Access DWSP Lands Formally/Informally	#	%
Informally	810	96.3%
Formally	31	3.7%

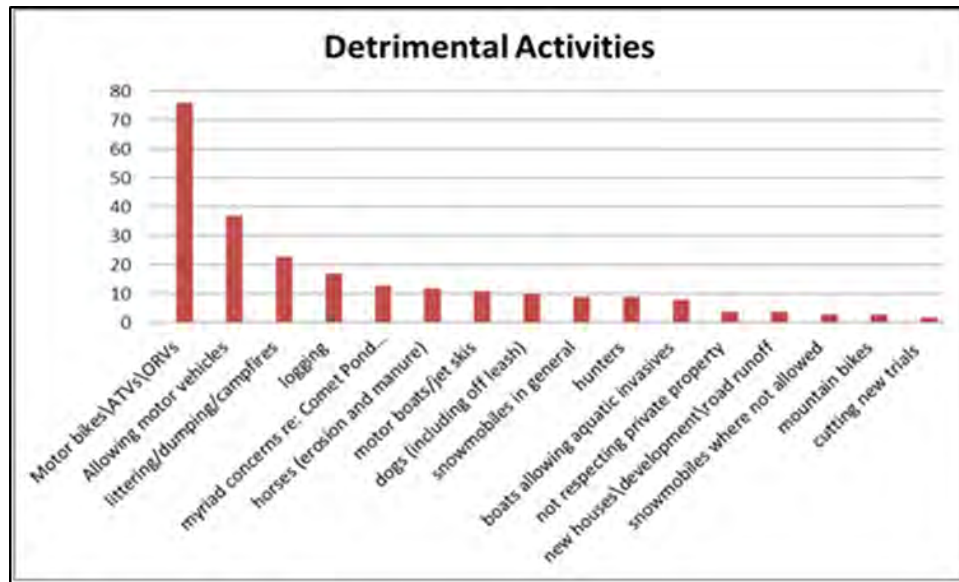
To help DCR collaborate with key organizations, please list any recreational groups you know of that DCR should be working with.

See end of report for complete list of responses.

If you have encountered any significant problems while using DCR-DWSP lands, please describe them.

See end of report for complete list of responses.

If you think there are any activities or locations of activities in the Ware River Watershed that are detrimental to 1) water quality, 2) wildlife/natural resources, 3) public enjoyment, or 4) abutters, please describe them.



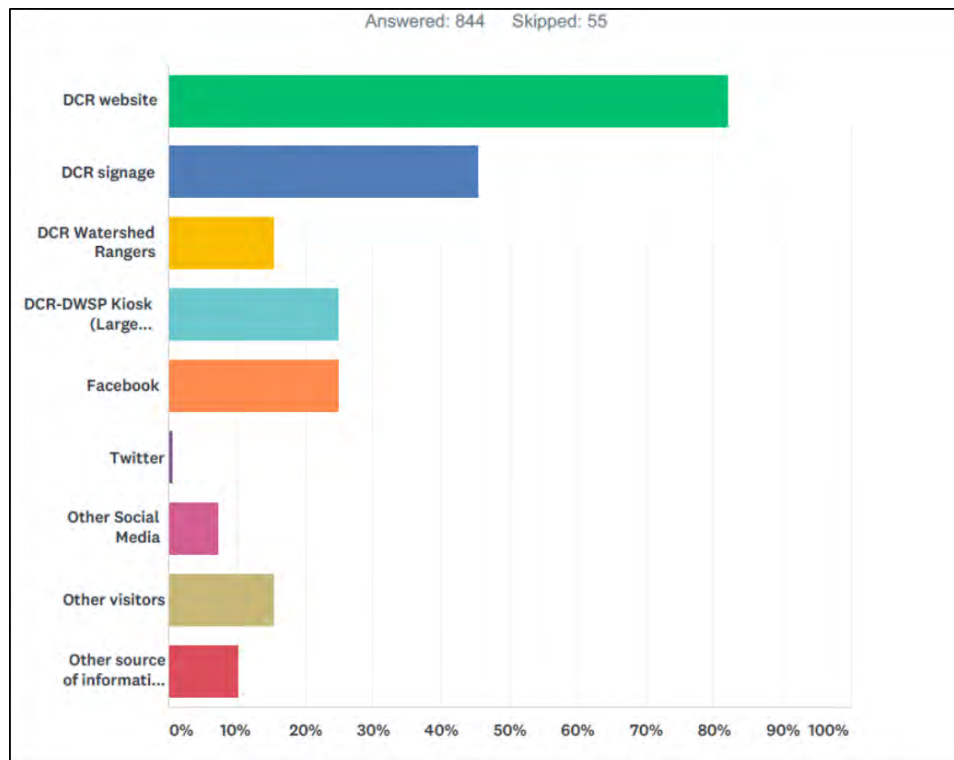
See end of report for complete list of responses.

DCR-DWSP would like to better understand the nature of unauthorized activities on its lands in the Ware River Watershed. This survey is completely anonymous. If you are willing to say, please tell us what illegal or unauthorized activities you are aware of people engaging in on DCR-DWSP lands in the Ware River Watershed.

See end of report for complete list of responses.

When looking for information about DCR-DWSP lands, where do you try to find answers?

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DCR website | <input type="checkbox"/> DCR signage | <input type="checkbox"/> DCR Watershed Rangers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DCR-DWSP Kiosk (Large information structure) | <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Twitter | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Social Media | <input type="checkbox"/> Other visitors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other source of information not listed above (please specify) | | |



Where Do You Look for Information on DWSP Lands	#	%
DCR website	692	82.0%
DCR signage	384	45.5%
DCR Watershed Rangers	130	15.4%
DCR-DWSP Kiosk (Large information structure)	211	25.0%
Facebook	210	24.9%
Twitter	6	0.7%
Other Social Media	62	7.3%
Other visitors	130	15.4%
Other source of information not listed above (please specify)	87	10.3%

Other sources of information listed:

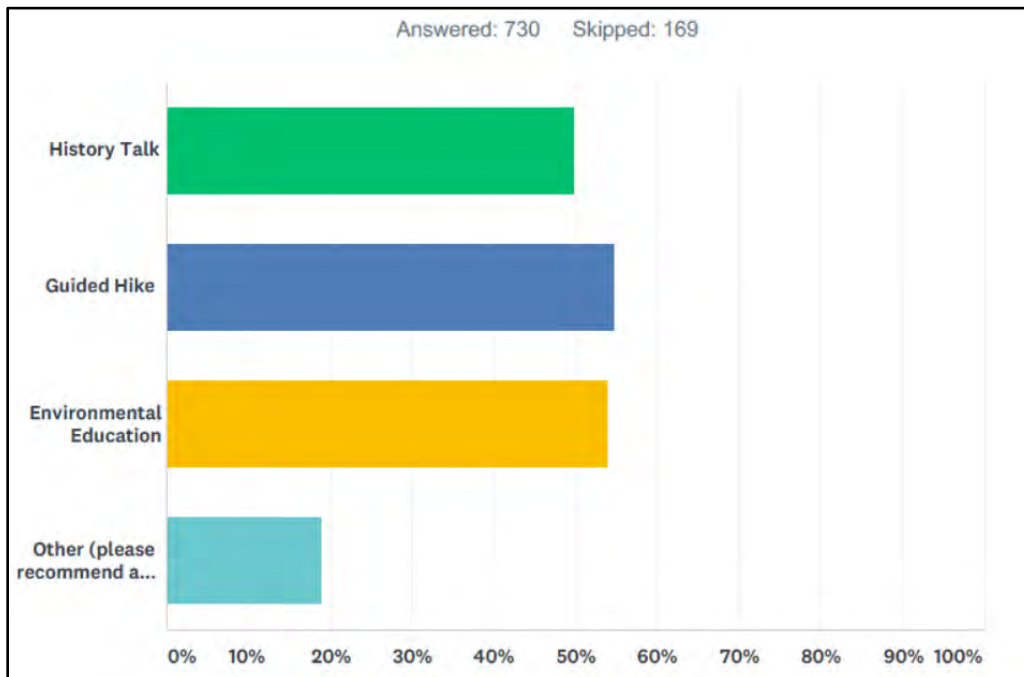
Ware River Watershed Advisory Committee
 Community Members/Neighbors
 Call DCR/DCR Maps/DCR Plans
 NEMBA
 Demond Pond Watershed Association

Asnacomet Pond Association
 Friends of the Ware River Watershed
 Wachusett Greenways
 Google Maps
 Topo Maps

If DCR-DWSP were to offer programing in the Ware River Watershed, what type of program would you likely attend in the future?

☐ History Talk ☐ Guided Hike ☐ Environmental Education

☐ Other (please recommend a program type, if not listed above)



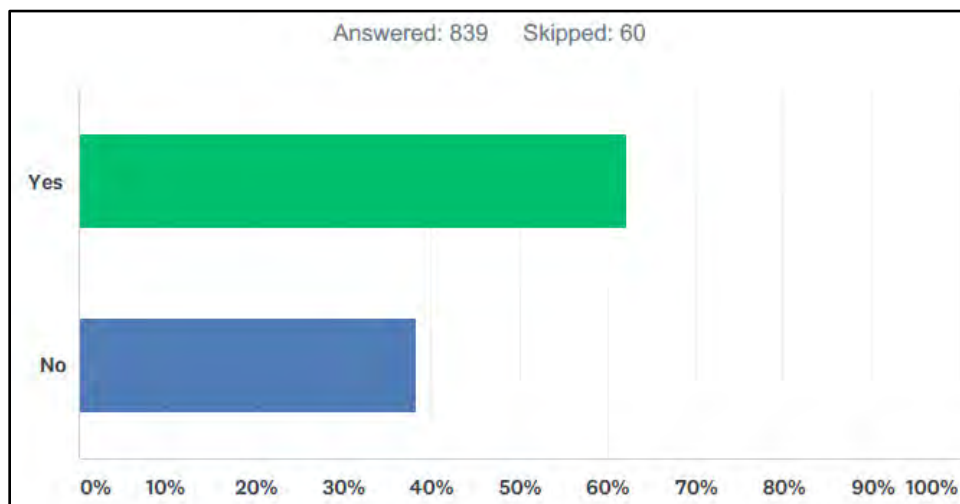
See end of report for complete list of responses to "Other, please recommend a program type."

What Type of Programming Would You Like	#	%
History Talk	363	49.7%
Guided Hike	400	54.8%
Environmental Education	394	54.0%
Other (please recommend a program type, if not listed above)	137	18.8%

While you are on DCR-DWSP lands in the Ware River watershed, is it clear to you what public access activities are allowed where and which are prohibited?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered "Yes", what source of information was most clear to you (DCR website, DCR signage...)?

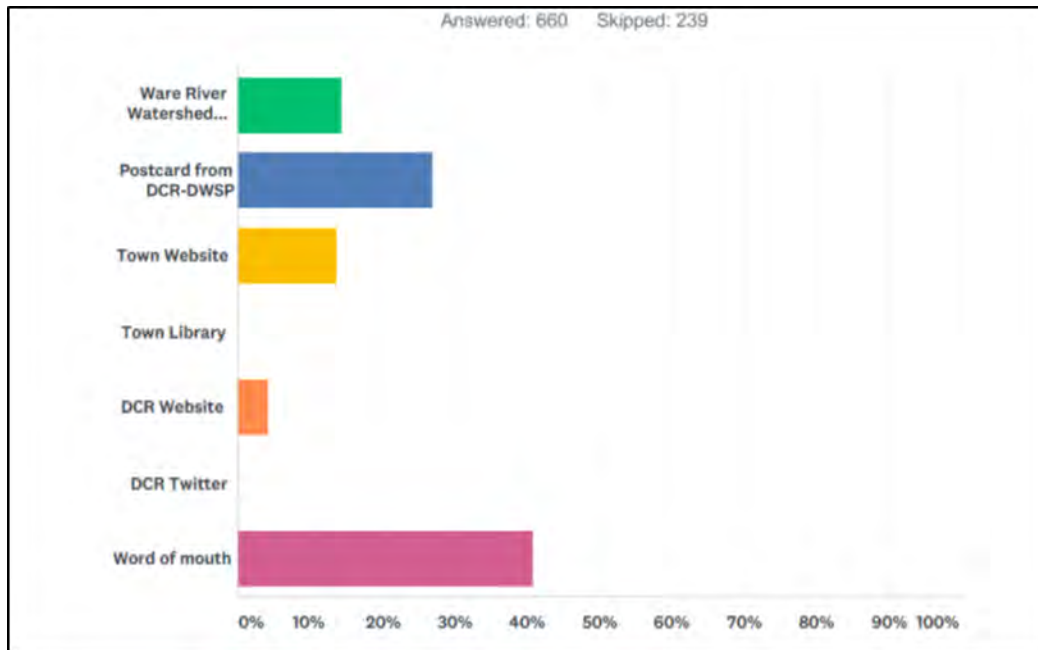


Is DCR-DWSP Signage Clear to You	#	%
Yes	521	61.8%
No	322	38.2%

See end of report for complete list of responses to "Other, please recommend a program type."

How did you learn about this survey?

- ☐ Ware River Watershed Advisory Committee (WRWAC)
 ☐ Postcard from DCR-DWSP
 ☐ Town Website
☐ Town Library
 ☐ DCR Website
 ☐ DCR Twitter
 ☐ Word of mouth
 ☐ Other (please specify)



How Did You Learn About This Survey	#	%
Ware River Watershed Advisory Committee (WRWAC)	94	14.3%
Postcard from DCR-DWSP	178	27.0%
Town Website	90	13.6%
Town Library	1	0.1%
DCR Website	27	4.1%
DCR Twitter	1	0.1%
Word of mouth	269	40.8%

See end of report for complete list of responses to "Other, please specify."

Thank you for taking your time to complete this survey. The results of this survey will be posted on DCR-DWSP's website in 2019.

Open Ended Responses

7. Where on DCR-DWSP lands/waters in the Ware River watershed do you recreate most often?

- (Previously) Via Rutland Midstate trail
- 14 mile trail from Coldbrook Rd to Glenwood Rd and back, extension off Coldbrook switchbacks to Coldbrook. Coldbrook to Barre Falls Dam and back, Mountain bike
- Access trails
- Across from my home on River Road
- All over (11 times)
- All snowmobile trails within the area
- All Trails, barre falls dam ,
- along the Burnshirt River
- Along the central mass rail trail
- Anacommet pond
- any single track trails
- Anywhere I can fish and or canoe.
- approved trails
- Asnacomet Pond also known as Comet Pond (11 times)
- Asnacomet Pond, Rutland State Park, Midstate Trail, Barre Falls Dam
- Back yard and Barre Falls Dam
- Barre (19 times)
- Barre and Hubbardston
- Barre and Rutland (2 times)
- Barre Falls
- Barre Falls & Hubbardston lands
- Barre Falls / Rutland State park (3 times)
- Barre Falls and behind Hale Road
- Barre Falls Dam recreation area (15 + 30 + 2
- Barre Falls Dam(side near cemetery), comet pond, Army Corp of Engineers (off 122), Rutland state park
- Barre Falls Dam, and/or Central Mass Railtrail
- Barre Falls Dam, Brigham Pond
- Barre Falls or down at the ware river off of 122 in Barre
- Barre Falls WMA, and area around the east and west branches of the Ware River
- Barre Falls, Hubbardston Forest
- Barre Falls/ Rutland Prison Camps
- Barre Oakham Coal brook road
- Barre Road Trails
- Barre, Hubbardston, Oakham, Rutland & Petersham
- Barre, MA area
- Barre, Oakham
- Barre, Rutland, Oakham (2 times)
- Barry falls dam, comet pond
- Between barre falls dam and Kingston ma
- Between Waites Pond, Cunningham Pond and RTE. 68
- Bicycle Trails (5 times)
- bike and hiking trails
- Bike rail trail, hike and kayak frequently
- Brigham & Comet pond, hiking trails in Hubbardston and all surrounding towns
- Brigham Pond (3 times)
- Burnshirt river and B.F. Dam areas
- Burnshirt River area (3 times)
- Burnshirt River, Still River
- Canesto Brook
- Central Mass Rail Trail (5 times)
- Central Mass Rail Trail, Rutland State Park/Prison Camps
- Central rail trail & Rutland State Park
- CMass Rail Trail, Midstate Trail
- Coldbrook Road area (7 times)
- Comet Pond (19 times)
- Comet Pond and Barre Falls Dam
- comet pond and ware river
- Comet Pond, Barre Falls Dam, Midstate Trail
- comet pond,rail trail, Brigham Rd. mid state trail
- Dam
- DCR Horse Trail
- DCR trails off 122A
- Demond Pond & Asnacomet Pond
- Demond Pond (22 times)
- Demond Pond/Rutland State Park
- Dirt roads
- Dirt roads (not the prohibited back woods trails)
- Dirt roads and the mass central rail trail
- Don't know the exact name I only know where the trail starts.
- DWSP roads and MCRT
- East branch of the Ware River
- East branch of the Ware river & Comet pond
- East of Rt 68 and Prison Camp area
- East Quabbin
- Evergreen Rd., Hubbardston
- Everywhere (2 times)
- Fells reservoir
- Fire roads , trails
- Fire roads and rail trail near Rutland SP
- fire roads, and the mountain bike trails before they were closed
- Forest trails
- frequent all
- From felton field
- From my dock
- From Shaft 8 up through Hubbardston and Oakham
- Gate 45
- Gilbertville
- Hale Road area
- Hardwick
- Hardwick, New Salem, Petersham, Rutland
- Harold Parker SF
- High Bridge Road gate
- Hiking / biking trails
- hiking on old farm/logging roads & trails
- Hiking trails (3 times)
- Hiking, atv
- Holden
- Holden Rutland
- Horse and bike trails
- Horse trails (6 times)
- Hubbardston (39 times)
- Hubbardston along rte 68 and Barre Falls area
- Hubbardston and Barre (3 times)
- Hubbardston and Oakham
- Hubbardston and Princeton
- Hubbardston and Rutland
- Hubbardston Forest/ Mount Jeff
- Hubbardston Mount Jeff, Rutland, Mass Central Rail trail, Barre dam, Ware River rail trail
- Hubbardston near Mason brook
- Hubbardston New DCR land
- Hubbardston old Westminster road
- Hubbardston state forest (3 times)
- Hubbardston Wildlife management area
- hubbardston, barre, petersham
- Hubbardston, Barre, Rutland
- Hubbardston, on Natty Pond Brook
- Hubbardston, Petersham. lake dennison
- Hubbardston, Rutland, Barre, Templeton and Winchendon.
- Hubbardston Town Forest, Malone @ Mt. Jeff
- I live on Rt 68 and am surrounded by DCR land. I either walk with my dogs off my property onto DCR land or access from High Bridge Rd area or off Westminster Rd.

- I love the trails that provide views of the water.. I'm a bird watcher and love to see the migratory birds on their way to Winter haunts.
- I try different places all the time.
- I try to very the areas
- In the prison camp area (Ware River IBA - birding)
- Intervale Rd
- Intervale Rd access to Long Pond and north to bridges over East and West Ware River branches
- It varies
- It's a mix. I'm a geocacher
- ITS 71
- Jefferson
- Joslin Brook/Cunningham Pond
- Kayak and hike many places
- Kayak from barre to Hardwick
- Kayaking and biking Rutland State Park
- Lake Dennison (5 times)
- Lake Dennison, Leominster state forest hiking biking trails
- Land (2 times)
- Land near Hale Rd. & Mt. Jefferson Rd. in Hubbardston, also rail trails in Rutland and Hubbardston.
- Land on New Westminster Rd Hubbardston
- local ponds
- Local trails
- Long Pond (2 times)
- Long Pond and Rutland State Park
- Long Pond, Whitehall pond
- MA Central Rail Trail, dirt roads in Rutland, Oakham, and Barre
- Many places (2 times)
- Mass Central Rail Trail (7 times)
- Mass Central Rail Trail/ Wachusett Greenways
- Mass Central Rail Trail; around Rutland State Park; around Long Pond on Midstate Trail
- mid-state trail (2 times)
- Moosehorn Pond (5 times)
- Moosehorn Pond, Asnacommet Pond, Rutland SP
- Moosehorn, Comet, Barre Falls
- Most of the fire roads nearest to Barre Falls Dam. The Midstate Trail.
- most time at west river
- Mostly land rather than water for the most part, throughout the watershed.
- Mount Jefferson (2 times)
- Mount Jefferson and Central Mass Rail trail
- Mount Jefferson Conservation, Ware River, Burnshirt River
- Mount Jefferson, comet pond, Wachusett, Hubbardston state forest
- Mountain Bike Trails (2 times)
- Mountain Bike Trails off Worcester Rd
- Mt Jeff, state forest, burnshirt area
- MT Jefferson and Barre Dam
- Mt Jefferson area, Comet Pond; rail trails, Hubbardston, Barre, Rutland
- Mt Jefferson, Coldbrook, Rutland State Park
- Mt. Jefferson (9 times)
- Mt. Jefferson, Central Mass Rail Trail
- multiple locations
- Multiple spots for fishing and hunting
- my own land
- n.rutland
- Natty brook and Mt Jeff
- Natty Pond - Canesto Brook area
- Natty Pond and Barre Falls Dam areas
- Natty Pond Area
- near army corps of engineers property and mass fish and wildlife managed areas
- Near Oakham
- Near Stone Bridge
- Near the old prison
- Necca and birch hill dam
- New Boston, White Hall, Dikes, along rivers
- No certain location
- No where yet
- None in 34 years in Rutland
- North Quabbin Reservoir
- North side of New Westminster Rd and Barre Falls Dam area
- Northern Parts
- not exactly sure
- Oakham (6 times)
- Oakham and Rutland
- Oakham State Forest & Rutland State Park
- Oakham, Rutland, Barre
- Oakham/Rutland
- Oakham/Rutland rail trail and backwoods
- Off 122
- Off Brigham St. Comet Pond. Cunningham's. Mt Jefferson
- Off Granger Rd in Barre for daily walks
- off hubbardston rd, barre
- Off New Westminster Rd, Williamsville Rd, & other trails throughout town
- Off New Westminster Road
- Off of Adams Road in Hubbardston
- Off route 62
- Oakham state Forrest and treasure valley
- Old colony road foot bridge
- Old Mill Road
- on the horse trails
- On the river
- On the trails
- On the ware river itself and abutting land from Princeton to Ware
- On various trail systems
- Our property abutting land and mt. Jefferson conservation area
- Out back along the old trails in the woods, along the river
- Petersham (3 times)
- Phillipston
- Pines plains road
- Pleasant dale rd
- Princeton (2 times)
- Princeton between gates and hubbardston rd
- Princeton-next to my house
- Prison camps (3 times)
- Prison Camps to Rail Trail and to Barre Falls Dam
- prison camps, coldbrook rd, trails off the beach
- Prison camps, rail trails
- Prison camps. Rutland State park. Comet pond
- Prison Camps/Rutland State Park
- Quabbin (5 times)
- Queen Lake
- Rail Trail (21 times)
- Rail trail and Demond Pond
- Rail Trail and Midstate Trail
- Rail trail and roads from white pond. Used to enjoy the whole space but trail access was lost.
- Rail trail from Hubbardston to 122 in barre looping around onto granger road and up Gilbert road.
- Rail Trail in Rutland through the Rutland State Park
- Rail trail in Rutland/Oakham/Barre
- Rail trail, fire roads, mostly south of Reuben Walker Rd
- Rail Trail, hiking trails and roads
- Rail trail, Rutland State Park
- Rail trail, State Forest trails, Barre Falls
- Rail trail, Trails on both sides of the Ware River North West of 122

- rail trail; Ware River
- Rail trails / beds, ware river, barre falls dam, snow mobile trails, etc...
- Rail Trails and the Midstate Trail
- rail trails, barre falls dam, comet pond, canesto brook, burnshirt river, ware river
- Reservoir
- Riding trails
- River St. Holden/ Rutland 122 parking area
- road
- Route 62 south to Powder Mill Pond
- Run, walk, bike the rail trail and hike and hunt in the forest
- Rutland (55 times)
- Rutland , Oakham, Barre
- Rutland / Oakham / Barre / Hardwick areas
- Rutland and Barre (5 times)
- Rutland and Oakham state forest land, Mass Central Rail Trail
- Rutland and Sterling
- Rutland Hubbardston
- Rutland Oakham Barre Hubbardston
- Rutland Oakham Barry
- Rutland Park, Oakham, Barre Falls area
- Rutland Parks, Rail trails etc
- Rutland rail trail (3 times)
- Rutland rail trail
- Rutland Rail Trail and Rutland Prison Camps / State Park
- Rutland SF area, mid-state trail
- Rutland side
- Rutland State Forest (8 times)
- Rutland State Forest and Mass Central Rail Trail
- Rutland State Park (22 times)
- Rutland State Park and Barre Falls Dam
- Rutland State Park and rail trails
- Rutland State Park and the Rail Trail
- Rutland State Park and various rail trails
- Rutland State Park to Barre Falls
- Rutland state park to dennison
- Rutland State Park up to Barre Falls
- Rutland State Park, "prison camps" Rutland
- Rutland state park, barre falls dam
- Rutland State Park, Barre Falls Dam, Various Gates along 122 and 62
- Rutland State Park, Hubbardston wildlife management areas
- Rutland state park, Molton pond
- Rutland state park, rail trail (4 times)
- Rutland water ponds
- Rutland, Barre, Oakham.
- Rutland, Barre, Princeton, Hubbardston
- Rutland, Hubbardston
- Rutland, Oakham
- Rutland,oakham and hubbardston
- Rutland/Barre (3 times)
- single and double track trails
- Single track
- Single track and fire roads throughout.
- Single Track Mountain Bike Trails (17 times)
- Singletrack trails, road network, waterways, rail trails, and forests
- Snowmobile trails (3 times)
- Snowmobile trails in barre, oak ham and north up its71 toward Templeton
- south of Barre Falls Dam and Central Mass Rail Trail
- Surrounding trails
- Swift river
- The area access from Coldbrook Road and also from 122 Cormier Bridge. sometimes at the falls.
- The legal trails only
- the ones with horse trails
- The Ware River Rail Trail off Rt. 62.
- The water in front of my house
- Through rt 122.
- Trail riding horseback on appropriate trails
- Trails (27 times)
- Trails accessed from Barre Riding and Driving Club. Old railroad bed as well.
- trails all around Rutland State Park; Ware River Rail Trail; Trails off Coldbrook Rd both sides of Rt 122
- Trails allowing horseback riding
- trails and cartroads off of Hale Road and Mount Jefferson in Hubbardston
- Trails and roads (3 times)
- Trails and the woods
- Trails approved for Horses
- Trails around hubbardston, barre, Rutland and oakham
- Trails for horseback riding
- Trails in the state park
- Trails leaving Rutland SP
- Tried rail trail
- Unsure
- Varies (7 times)
- Wachusett
- Waite Pond
- walk,hike many different trails on regular basis.
- Walking and biking trails
- Ware (2 times)
- Ware rail trail area
- Ware River (2 times)
- Ware river and various rail trails and hiking trails.
- Ware river fishing
- Ware river for canoeing & Mount Jefferson
- Ware river N of Rte 122
- Ware River Rail Trail (4 times)
- Ware River rail trail near Williamsville Road and Ware River between 122 bridge and Barre falls dam.
- Ware River rail trail, Central Mass rail trail
- Ware River watershed
- Water for fishing and kayaking
- West branch of the Ware River, north of Brigham St, Hubbardston
- West hill dam
- West Princeton near Savage Hill
- western half
- Wheeler Road Rutland
- Where there is water access for kayaking: Ware River, Moosehorn Pond, Asnacommet Pond, Williamsville Pond,
- White Hall
- White Pond & Long Pond
- Williamsville Pond (3 times)
- Williamsville Rd (3 times)
- Within Rutland SP
- Woods (3 times)
- woods behind my house
- woods, trails, beaver ponds,fields and hedge rows
- Wsf

9. Do you experience any recreational conflicts with other users while on DCR-DWSP lands in the Ware River Watershed?

- 4 wheelers / atv
- 4 wheelers/dirt bikes on paths
- A person had a 4-wheeler on the trail
- Anti hunters (2 times)
- As a boater on Comet Pond we are seeing far too many swimmers from the boat launch. Often they are swimming in the middle of the pond and cannot be seen by boaters.
- As a trails advocate I often find myself having to educate users with in the bike community on how to interact with others in a multi use park like this one. Not every day is a "strava" day. I often employ a bell on my handle bars so that i do not "jump" unsuspecting walkers.
- Atv driving creates ruts in the roads and leave trash
- atv and dirt bike riding
- Atv and dirtbikes on dirt roads
- Atv trails should be allowed
- ATV users. Snowmobiles
- ATVs - snowmobiles tearing up area, cutting trees paths, running into them while out waking - speed. Hunters - not cleaning up after themselves driving into areas they shouldn't be.
- Atvs destroying habitat
- ATV's has no respect for others/ walking
- ATV's have ruined the Ware River rail trail for bicycling in the Williamsville Pond area. The surface of the trail has become loose sand and rocks.
- ATVs push walkers off the trail with aggressive driving
- atvs, dirt bikes
- bad karma
- Bicycles & vehicles can be rude
- Bikers are taking over the natural areas
- Bikers without hunter orange in the prison camp during pheasant season
- Boaters illegally docked on dcr shore
- boaters not cleaning their boats before launching
- Boats
- Boats being put in at Comet Pond ramp. Trash left along shore.
- Boats with motors too big will occasionally use the pond.
- Concerned with Town of Rutland's Selectboard voting to develop abutting land for a 25 acre solar farm
- conflict with motorized activities
- conflicts with people that do not agree with ethical hunting are becoming more common
- Cross country skiers swinging their poles thinking I'm not passing them safely. Sometimes their dogs chase us as well.
- DCR users walk on to our private property traveling to and from woodlands. This includes hunters that have been repeatedly told they are trespassing.
- dirt bikes and 4 wheelers on ware river rail trail
- dirt bikes chew up the roads a bit-not a big deal
- Dirt Bikes/Atvs ripping by
- Dog walker. Dogs not on leash.
- dogs can be an annoyance; occasionally a horse where they don't belong
- dogs not cleaned up after
- dogs off leash
- Dogs off leash and waste not being picked up
- Don't like to hike during hunting season
- During hunting season we are afraid to hike except on Sundays.
- Expo stopped my wife and I and screamed like a 2 yr old at us for dog walking off leash (trained elderly dog)
- Failure to compensate community for restrictions
- Fisherman at boat ramp on Comet have not decontaminated their boats before launching on
- Comet-we are doomed
- Folks who don't respect ecology
- four wheelers and snowmobiles on the rail trail
- Frequently find owners with dogs off leash and the dogs run up to other people.
- Frisbee golfers vs bird hunting with dog
- Have been yelled at to not ride horses on trails :(
- Have witnessed guns being fired too close to rail trail and nearby roads; Negative interactions with stocked-hunt bird hunters (while I was legally and visibly passing through on Prison Camp road); However I have always had positive interactions with other hunters.
- horse
- Horse back riders, 4 wheelers and snow mobilers cutting down trees, branches to make paths. I have reported it several times over the 30 + years. People fishing sometimes litter along the river and road, but for the most part they have been a minimum problem.
- Horses
- Horses , they go to the bathroom everywhere in the middle of the trails. Hunters, they are out there in excess firing all times of the day, traffic and parking al down the road is a hazard. Can't enjoy the area during hunting season.
- hunter/fishing harassment
- Hunters trespassing
- Hunting (3 times)
- Hunting Season, can only safely access on Sundays
- I avoid most areas during deer hunting season.
- I do not appreciate unleashed dogs running toward me. We encounter horses, bikes, cars, walkers, dogs on leashes, hikers with no issues, but the unleashed dogs are a nuisance.
- I don't but I do wish horse owners would clean up after horses. Don't have any problem with them on trails just the huge piles of poop that are hard to bike around
- I don't feel safe in the woods during deer hunting season.
- I feel unsafe to walk in the woods during hunting season. I stick to Sundays when hunters are in the woods.
- I find it a shame and a missed opportunity that the state restricts use of other forms of use of our publicly owned lands such as regulated ATV and development of mountain bike trails.
- I have been harassed by mountain bikers and snowmobilers
- I have experienced interactions with unprepared/irresponsible hunters, and have interacted negatively multiple times with ATV/snowmobile users.
- I wear blaze orange to avoid certain types of "recreational conflicts."
- I'm being deprived of enjoying biking use of single track trails we all used to enjoy using in Rutland
- Illegal four-wheelers,dirt bikes and trash dumping
- in hunting season, I don't feel safe walking in areas where hunting is allowed. I have even found hunters on my own property near Brigham Pond.
- inconsiderate motorboat operators, litterers/polluters
- Increase in outside motor boat/jet ski activity - worried about the invasive weeds being brought in and excess activity to the fragile ecosystem
- jet skiers
- Just numbers of users disturbing the peace
- Just the occasional users that dont wear hunter orange during hunting seasons, nothing confrontational though
- Large Boats, not paying attention getting to close to Kayaks
- Loggers are very noisy, smelly and they leave a mess
- LOTS of ATV at night and on Weekends that com in

from Grimes road, they disturb wildlife, tear up the trails, and disturb animals and hunters. I have had a few run-ins with ATV riders and they do not care. We need this area monitored

- Motorized boats while swimming
- motorized vehicles
- Motorized vehicles namely snowmobiles on the pond during the winter even though it is now allowed.
- motorized vehicles where they shouldnt be
- Motorized vehicles, 4 wheelers etc
- Mountain Bikers off trail
- Mountain Bikes, Bicycles, Dogs off leashes
- Mountain biking is not allowed in certain areas. NEMBA is a very active local group who help to conserve land together with the state
- Much trash left at fishing/swimming spots on Long Pond
- Multiple vehicles, many with boat trailers parked on the side of the road (Pleasantdale) on busy summer weekends.
- Noise and smell associated with snowmobiling decreases enjoyment by other groups.
- noise from groups and bikers that scares away the wildlife
- Noise, I go for the peaceful space.
- Occasional motor bikes/4 wheelers
- Occasionally run into someone on a dirt bike or atv. Don't mind snowmobiles.
- Occasionally Snowmobile riders and motorbikes on wrong trails
- Occasionally the DCR police give us a hard time about swimming at Comet
- Occasionally with off leash dogs
- Only 1 time - motorized boat wake flooding low trail
- Only on Comet pond: swimmers from private property, with motorized boats -- some towing water skiers or tubers, and kayakers all in the same space make for a disaster waiting to happen. I avoid boating there during swim season.
- Other boaters not living on the pond water skiing and tubing on a small pond. Also non resident boaters contaminating Demond pond with other ponds or lakes weeds from their trailers.
- overpowered boats, boats with invasive species, trash
- people are using undesignated areas (the shorelines) for access to the water
- People fishing and swimming off wooded areas and causing erosion of land as well as cutting bushes and trees to make larger open spaces to picnic,etc
- People go on private land
- People leaving trash, building campfires and eroding the banks of Comet Pond
- People swimming illegally on the East side of Comet Pond and swimmers entering the boat launch to swim the middle of the Pond.
- People swimming off of dcr property
- People walking there dogs while I'm trying to deer hunt!
- People with dogs not leashed
- People with dogs usually don't have them leashed as required which creates a hazard to others.
- Persons camping out for the day on the shoreline of Comet Pond. Swimming from shoreline. Has lead to shoreline erosion and much trash left behind
- Rangers blocking trail access to mountain bikes.

Ridiculously

- Rangers telling you to not ride bikes there
- reckless ATV riders
- Rest Room facilities. Proper outdoor fire facilities, Land Conservation, boating law violations
- Restricted access
- Said no, but occasionally run into unauthorized 4 wheeler and motor bikes
- Skiing or snowshoeing and getting run down by snowmobiles
- Snowmobile, 4 wheeler and unlicensed motorbike use on Charnock Hill Rd to access DCR-DWSP
- snowmobiles
- Snowmobiles and other motorized offroad vehicles create noise, air pollution, erosion, and harm or scare off wildlife.
- Snowmobiles speeding on legal and illegal dirt roads and the Rail Trail.
- Some motor boats and inappropriate use of lands-building fires,leaving trash
- Sometimes ice fisherman are too close together
- Swimmers who illegally swim from the state boat ramp or the shore out in the middle of the pond. Dangerous with motorized boats.
- The main conflicts seem to be with the DCR staff
- The pond is experiencing a large growth in popularity. Although kayaks and canoes are welcome, not everyone is following the rules as we understand them.
- The Public accessing Demond Pond shows little regard for Boat Motor HP restrictions - and throw trash onto our land on Demond Pond.
- There are some people who like to make fires, leave trash, and trample the brush on the East shore of Asnacomet Pond.
- to many outside land owner motor boating
- too many motor boats on Demond Pond; too many builders encroaching Demond Pond
- Too many people on the rail trail. Hard to hike alone, so go off trail and into woods a lot hiking.
- Trash left behind by illegal swimmers
- Trucks, atv, snowmobiles
- Unauthorized and repetitive cutting of new trails by mountain bikers bike
- unleashed dogs
- Unleashed dogs and their waste
- Unleashed dogs, or irresponsible owners.
- Unpleasant Noise and exhaust from snowmobiles
- Use of ATV on land surrounding old Westminster road despite posted signs and cameras in place
- USGS driving erratically, swearing, and drug usage
- Vehicles using the fishing turn off on River Road leave behind garbage.
- Walkers confronting me about hunting
- We are abutters on Waite Pond which is over growing with weeds and trash brought in by other users.
- We avoid going into the woods during hunting season
- Wheeled vehicles in restricted area.
- Witnessing boaters who don't fill out self-inspection forms.
- Would appreciate it if dog walkers kept their dogs in sight.
- Yes, mountain bikers do not stay on permitted trails .

10. Reasons for Vehicle Access

- Adequate Parking
- if bicycle is being considered vehicle, this is very important
- "Prison Camp" area roads + others to access hiking/biking / X-C Skiing areas.
- A place to park or unload so kayak does not require lengthy portage to water.
- Ability to park my car so I can access the rail trail/watershed area
- Ability to park our vehicle & horse trailer
- Access
- Access for emergency vehicles and Parking for guests is important
- Access for mobility impaired people
- Access for trail work and maintenance.
- Access on River Road fishing turn off. should be monitored. I have seen people leaving behind debris including used needles.
- Access over DCR land to my house.
- Access to areas in Barre Falls and rail trail access for snowmobiles
- access to mid-state trail
- Access to parking areas
- Access to privately owned property over dcr property
- Access to trailheads (5 times)
- Accessing and exploring the Rutland State Forest
- Accessing deeper, more secluded parts of the area.
- Adequate access to the Mass Central Rail Trail
- Adequate parking in a designated area to access the site
- All areas, important for mobility impaired people.
- all lawful access to public lands
- All trails should have snowmobile access, all dirt roads truck access. Lake Denison is the perfect example of what not to do. In the last 10 years many great trails and roads have had access blocked w rocks and logs inviting user injury for no apparent reason
- Ample parking
- Ample parking areas
- atv
- Atv and snowmobile access
- Availability of parking for vehicles
- Barre falls area
- Being able to access the miles of beautiful MTB trails that have been used for decades.
- Being able to access wooded areas for hunting
- Being able to get to trailheads and have a place to park
- Being able to park my trailer
- Bicycle access on trails is important to me
- Bike access is very important car access not as important
- Bikes should be allowed on more trails. Motorized vehicles should be limited.
- biking
- Biking
- boat launch
- Boat ramp availability - it would be great if it could be monitored so any boat is the proper hp and clean before it enters the pond and so that not too many boats are on the pond
- Boat ramps (2 times)
- Boat ramps close street side parking for access to ponds,
- boat towing
- car access/parking at trailheads for hiking
- cars don't belong in the woods
- Clearing of the trails.
- Close proximity to trails
- Comet Pond
- convenience
- Cunningham state forest
- Currently don't but would be nice to have better places for ATV access
- DCR and other official vehicles need access everywhere in order to care for the property. The trail is fine for snowmobiling.
- DCR maintained roads and paths provide additional ways of access for our property.
- designated parking areas; easier access to waterways.
- Dirt rd limited at trails would be nice
- Do not value it at all.
- Don't like snowmobiles or all terrain vehicles
- Drive to trail head locations
- Driving in to hunt and park closer to huntable areas is important. Closed gates make it too far of a hike to some areas.
- Driving into Whitehall/RSP, into Barre Falls Dam, into prison camp area to begin a dog walk or bike ride (when I can't from my house) is important to me. Extended vehicle access on older dirt roads/cart paths is *not*.
- driving on the fire roads
- drop off and parking for snowmobiling and fishing
- Easy access to walking areas
- Emergency
- Emergency access and maintenance
- Emergency and Fire personnel
- Emergency and fire vehicles
- Emergency and maintenance access ONLY
- Emergency only
- Emergency or forest service maintenance only
- Emergency services
- Emergency vehicle access only.
- Emergency vehicles for access to injured riders.
- Enough room for parking truck and trailers to trails allowing horseback riding.
- Fewer the better. None at all would be great
- fire and rescue only
- Fire control , maintenance.
- Fire truck access
- Fishing (three times)
- Following or finding equestrians
- for car parking, not driving through
- For handicap accessible
- for hunting
- For me vehicle access refers exclusively to mountain bikes being allowed in the trails they used to ride the trail network (all the T system and some others). However, I understand that some of those trails might have to be rerouted.
- For parking
- for the disable. the elderly. emergency and fire access
- Four wheeler
- Getting into house
- Getting to certain fishing and mountain biking destinations
- Good & adequate parking availability
- Good parking
- Handicapped
- Horse Trailer parking (4 times)
- Hubbardston/ parking
- Huge... we are your eyes and ears as to what is going on in the state properties. We also can hunt further in if we can drive in. traditional forestry must be kept up with to help animals succeed. Remember 100 years ago most of the forest was fields back then and animals survived. We need you to manage state property so we don't become like California and burn when a small brush fire develops.
- Hunting (2 times)
- hunting and fishing
- Hunting/Dog walking

- Hunting/Fishing
- I consider a vehicle to have a motor , I don't consider a bicycle or skis a vehicle.
- I could care less now about vehicle access cuz we r such avid walkers, but I would be sad if in my future and I was too old to walk I could I could not drive the park!!!
- I do not drive into these areas
- I do not need to drive through the lands, but do use the parking lot on Charnock Hill Rd.
- I do not value vehicle access. You kick us off the bicycle trails and allow monster trucks.
- I don't care for 4 wheelers and motor bikes
- I drive to parking lots to get to hiking trails. I don't like dealing with vehicles on the trails themselves. They detract from the natural beauty and solitude I seek when hiking.
- I feel a designated trail system would help build a rural economy based on promoting regulated use of ATV's and mountain biking.
- I just need a place to park so I can access different parts of the land
- I like seeing where the dirt roads go
- I need to be able to drive and park at these places so as to access. I do not necessarily 'need' to drive into all over but access to park inside is appreciated. Truth be told I usually park on the outskirts and hike or ride into the areas. On some occasions when there is no parking and a few of the places we go we have the option to drive into and that is always nice when needed. Also I believe people should have clean water to drink. I personally have well water at my residence.
- I need to be able to drive to the trail head
- I only wish for a parking area for horse trailer.
- I prefer basic access to vital areas of the watershed. I prefer hiking into the remoter areas and enjoy the winter when most of the watershed gates are closed.
- I sue a wheelchair and drive accessible roadways in my van and also use improved trails.
- I think dirt roads should left in gated for fire dept , DRC and environmental police to protect and patrol
- I think that vehicle access causes more problems
- I use the dirt roads to drive to kayak put in and take out areas of the Ware river.
- I wish back roads were closed to hunters.
- I would like to restrict the size of the boats that can use this pond. Post for smaller horse power engines.
- I would like to see Bicycle riding on the Quabbin Reservoir trails.
- I would rather access the area via bicycle/foot then car
- If "vehicle access" refers to jeeps/4-wheelers, not important
- If mountain bikes are considered vehicles.
- If vehicles are including mountain bikes, then greater access to actual trails would be of value. If it's defined solely as cars/trucks/etc. only somewhat important.
- In MA , I've been told that bikes are by law vehicles. This is a misleading question, as most believe vehicles to be motorized.
- Internal combustion vehicles should not be allowed
- It is nice to drive down to some of the spots that are deep in the woods where I couldn't normally take my family due to it being too far out.
- It is not important for me to have but I also don't want vehicles driving all over.
- It would be nice if there was closer car access within the Quabbin Reservoir. It can be a pretty long hike from the gates to the shore access areas.
- It's not
- just need parking area access to do other activities
- Just parking lots to access river for kayaking and parking to access rail trails, hiking trails.
- Just to get to the parking lot
- Just want parking areas to allow access to the ware river watershed
- Kayak / canoe access. Trail heads.
- Large parking areas for multiple usage
- larger parking areas to accommodate horse trailers
- Liberty and "the people" own it
- Limited ATV access. Hunting on Sunday
- Main roads to access fishing hunting and hiking NO. Off road needed
- Maintained parking areas at trail heads
- Mobility handicap access, emergency response
- Most of my activities allow me ability to access all parts of the area's I live-however it's nice/important to have safe spots for cars to park. I utilize some of the spots deeper in woods when looking for quiet/privacy
- Mostly a place to park by trail access.
- Motorized vehicle access is important to me for emergency response purposes and to facilitate non-motorized access (kayak put ins; parking for biking skiing etc.)
- 'Motorized' vehicle access only when dirt roads are clear of ice, mud, and standing water.
- Mountain bike access to all watershed lands/trails
- Mountain Bike and Fat Bike
- Mountain bike trails
- Mountain biking (7 times)
- Mountain Biking, Motorized Vehicles, Snowmobiles
- nearby parking for horse trailer
- no motors in the woods!
- NO RESPECT FOR HIKERS "VEHICLES NOT ALLOWED"
- No value for motorized vehicles / snowmobiles
- noise pollution is not something to pursue
- Non motorized
- nonmotorized vehicle access (bicycles) on all suitable trails, not only the rail trail
- Not everyone who drives ATVs are out to destroy forests, drinking water, creatures or personal property. In fact, it's probably 1% of riders. These trails are very valuable to ALL users. We enjoy the forests and land and are very respectful of the trails.
- not important
- Nowhere
- Occasional drive into more remote areas to hike from there.
- Occasionally drive on the dirt roads, maybe once a year
- Off road parking
- off rt 122a Rutland
- OHV access. No current access for ATV/4x4
- On fire roads, for rec access and snowmobiling
- Only for emergency services.
- Only for emergency vehicles, or non-motorized (bikes).
- Only for public safety
- Only to trailheads from public roads, would prefer no vehicles on trails
- Open more trails roads to atv use
- park horse trailers
- Parking (9 times)
- Parking access close to trails
- Parking area.
- Parking areas close to the Rail Trail
- parking areas large enough for horse trailers
- Parking areas near access points
- Parking areas would be fine
- Parking areas, as opposed to people parking along the street, keep vehicles in one place
- Parking at appropriate access points
- Parking at comet pond
- Parking availability
- Parking close to trails
- Parking for horse trailers

- Parking for horse trailers and cars
- Parking for more than two cars
- Parking for my horse trailer
- Parking for use
- Parking horse trailer
- Parking horse trailer and vehicles for hiking
- Parking large enough for trailers
- Parking near trail entrances.
- Parking near trails
- Parking only
- Parking only
- Parking options
- Parking to access trails
- Parking to access trails etc
- Parking to gain access to main roads and trails
- parking/ not walking on busy roads to access
- Paved roads to parking areas
- place to park to go hiking or hunting
- Places to park that allow me to access different trail entry points.
- prefer bike in access, to public vehicles pose personal safety issue
- Prefer walking where cars are not allowed.
- Prison Camp
- prison camp roads
- Public boat launch area should be closed. They bring in invasive species on their boats
- Public boat ramp should be better maintained and policed to insure that incoming boats have no invasive weeds
- quicker and easier access to a variety of areas especially for mobility impaired people
- rescue/safety
- Reservoir
- Running Dogs, access to pheasant fields, seeing wildlife with young kids!!!! Oh and it also belongs to the people of Massachusetts
- Safe parking
- Safety
- Safety/fire protection
- scenic rides, access to fishing spots
- Scenic rides. fishing.
- Shared access for all those who should have access. If vehicle users participate in conserving the land they should be able to enjoy it. Separate vehicle use areas from pedestrian/cyclist please!
- Should be able to drive in the prison camps
- Simply a place to park, no access to trails is necessary for me (other than a place to park along the roadside)
- small plowed parking areas at gates
- snowmachine, atv, motorbike should all be allowed
- Snowmobile / Boating
- Snowmobile and Atv should be allowed
- Snowmobile and grooming access on all snowmobile trails
- snowmobile for grooming for xc skiing
- Snowmobile, atv
- Snowmobiles and emergency vehicles, not for USGS to take naps in their trucks
- snowmobiles should be allowed in appropriate areas.
- Snowmobiles, maintenance
- Snowmobiling (8 times)
- So I can park close to the trails
- So people with disabilities can enjoy the area. Vehicles also keep the roads from overgrowth
- Some of the dirt road get tore up due to bad drainage on them. Specifically the ones marked 4x4 only. Also maybe road signs informing when roads are flooded.
- sportsman access for hunting and fishing, with elderly partners
- State forest, prison camp, dirt roads in the area
- take kayaks to put ins transport bikes to trailheads
- The boat ramp access road is the start of our driveway. Other than land owners, no one needs to come down our road. Lots of people do, strolling, walking dogs that poop all over the road and sides of the road, in the woods.
- The East side of comet Pond is my driveway. Also, the boat ramp is needed to launch our watercraft.
- The staff should maintain the cartroads and be able to access the property, recreational users should go elsewhere.
- The whole barre falls area, being able to drive closer to fishing/hunting areas that our licenses help pay for is a major asset that I would hate to see taken away.
- there should only be access to the gates
- They should not be allowed except to parking areas
- Think gov Baker Should allow ATVs during certain times of the year.
- To access different areas year round
- To access distant areas to ride or hike
- To access my property in Hubbardston
- To get closer to my destination.
- to get deeper in and park safely
- to get to my house
- To get to boat ramps and off street parking areas
- To get to more remote hiking areas
- To get to trailheads
- To park our horse trailers
- To take mobility-limited friends on tours, to fishing/picnic spots when we don't have time to hike the entire way.
- To trailheads.
- To use existing roads to enjoy fishing/hunting areas
- To various points on the rail trail, to explore different areas away from other user groups and areas to use for parking to unload horses away from other user groups
- too many locked gates
- totally opposed. Noise. Pollution. Destruction.
- Tow horse trailer and snowmobile trailer
- Trail head access
- Trail head parking with horse trailer space availability
- Trail maintenance
- Trail maintenance purposes
- Trailering in horses
- Trailhead access
- Trailhead access for mountain biking and snow shoeing year round
- Trailheads for parking
- Trails - Pedal assisted bikes and Enduros
- Trails in barre falls could open up to connect Hubbardston to oakham
- Unless the vehicle is a mountain bike. For water it's all for Boston
- Unless we are talking bicycles then that is extremely important to me
- Various spots to launch kayaks and access to fishing spots as well as geocaching
- vehicle access is irrelevant. if you can't walk in, then stay out
- Vehicle access on some of the main trails would be valuable to me because it would allow me to get farther away from main highways for the purpose of hunting with my hounds.
- Vehicle access only to get to trails, etc. Other than that, I don't want to see vehicles on this natural land
- Vehicle access other than parking lots at the periphery is in conflict with most of the other goals listed above.
- Vehicle access should be curtailed to a minimum.
- Vehicle Access to be able to park closely to access trails.
- Vehicle Access to edge of land only
- Vehicle access to more water locations would be nice,

- most water locations/fishing spots are extremely difficult to get to if not impossible without a boat
- Vehicle access to parking for hiking or mountain biking
- Vehicle as having an engine or motor? They should not be allowed
- vehicles
- Vehicles are very intrusive. Should not be allowed

- Vehicles should NOT be allowed on Demond Pond in the winter for ice fishing!
- We like to trailer the horses to the trailheads
- Where and when gates are presently opened to public
- would rather not have vehicle access

12. To help DCR collaborate with key organizations, please list any recreational groups you know of that DCR should be working with.

- 4-H Clubs
- All
- All the groups I know of already work with DCR
- AMC (4 times)
- AMC NEMBA Seven Hills Wheelmen
- AMC Worcester Chapter
- AMC, AWA
- AMC, Friends of the Ware River Watershed, NEMBA, NQTA
- AMC, MA Fish & Wildlife
- AMC, Seven Hills Wheelmen
- Any hunting or fishing groups
- Any of the many Rod and Gun Clubs in the surrounding towns.
- Appalachian Mountain Club, Seven Hills Wheelmen
- Army corps
- Asnacom Pond Association (10 times)
- Atv groups
- Barre Business Association
- Barre Riding & Driving Club, Bay State Trail Riders Association
- Barre Riding & Driving Club, New England Equestrian Center of Athol
- Barre riding & driving, CSTR
- Barre Riding and Driving Club (17 times)
- Barre Riding and Driving Club & Friends of the Ma Park Ranger Mounted Unit
- Barre Riding and Driving club and Coldbrook Snow Mobile Club, Boy and Girl Scouts, Quabbin Regional High school conservation
- Barre Riding and Driving Club, Cross State Trail Riding Assoc.
- Barre Riding and Driving Club, Hampshire Count Riding Club
- Barre Riding and Driving. Hubbardston Open Space Committee
- Barre riding club, Ma trail riders
- Bay State Horse association and related
- Bay State Trail Riders Association (10 times)
- Bay State Trail Riders Association, Barre Riding & Driving Club, Central Ma. Trail Riders
- Bay State Trail Riders, Barre Riding & Driving
- Bay State Trail Riders, Barre riding and driving club, NEMBA, Central Mass trail riders
- Bay State Trail Riders, Lake Dennison Trail Riders, NEECA
- Bay State Trailriders, Barre Riding & Driving club
- Boy Scouts (6 times)
- BRDC, BSTR, NQTA
- BRDC, MEMBA, AMC
- BSTR and Barre Riders and Drivers
- Central MA Trail Riders
- Central Mass Geocachers
- Central mass riders
- Central Massachusetts Association of Geocachers (Facebook)
- C-Mass Geocachers or New England Geocachers, or Geocaching.com, the parent organization
- Cold Brook and Sam's but include ATV for future use.
- Coldbrook Snowmobile Club (16 times)
- Coldbrook Snowmobile Club and Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts
- Coldbrook Snowmobile Club, Ware River Snowmobile Club, Lake Dennison Trail Riders, BASTRA
- Comet Pond Association (5 times)
- Cross State Trail Ride, Baystate Trail Riders, Barre Riding and Driving Club, NEECA
- Cross state trail riders, barre riding and driving club
- CTMS Mountain Bike Club
- Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Lions Club
- Cyclin groups
- Demond Pond Watershed Association (11 times)
- Disability groups in the area
- Don't know (6 times)
- Dunroeb Farm
- Equestrian facilities
- Equine groups
- Finn Park Neighborhood Association (2 times)
- Fish and Game
- Fish and wildlife and the "friends of" groups
- Friends of the ware river watershed and NEMBA
- Friends of the Ware River Watershed, Central Tree Middle School Mountain Biking Club
- Friends of the WRW; NEMBA
- Geocaching community (6 times)
- Girl and Boy Scout groups
- girl scouts. 4H, local school clubs, wilderness groups
- GOAL (2 times)
- GOAL, Audubon, Scouting
- Goal, NRA
- god
- Greater Worcester Land Trust, White Oak Land Trust, Seven Hills Wheelmen, Mass Audubon
- hikers, Massbike, NEMBA, snowmobile assn of MA, ATV assns (even tho excluded), 4 wheeler assns, equestrian assns, dog clubs, boating assns, geocaching assns, area outing and nature clubs
- Horse back riding clubs
- Horse clubs and Snowmobile clubs and Bikes
- Horse councils and riding clubs
- Horse riding clubs; biking clubs; open space committees; nature clubs
- Hubbardston Land Use Committee
- Hubbardston Open Space Committee (2 times)
- Hubbardston Senior Center walking group
- Hubbardston Town Recreation Committee
- hunter/fishing education
- Hunters, snowmobile and mountain bikers.
- I am not sure which agencies could monitor the rate of speed of cars and trucks that travel on Evergreen Rd from the turn off Old Princeton Rd over the bridge and along the straight away. Trying to fish or walk along that stretch is dangerous due to speeding vehicles. If the road width increases i fear the vehicles will travel at a greater speed than they do now. Children like to fish at the bridge and walk along the roadside. Pet and wildlife have been killed, my mailbox was destroyed by a car, i was side swiped by a car mirror..on and on.
- I do not know (4 times)
- I would like the DCR to collaborate with the New England Mountain Bike Association to allow responsible mountain biking on its trails.
- International Mountain Bicycling Association (Trail Solutions)
- know none
- land trusts
- local mountain biking groups

- Local riding clubs
- local trail riding groups and snow mobile groups as these folks assist in trail maintenance regularly and is part of the requirements to belong to such groups.
- Love the bears
- MA Forest Alliance
- Mass Audubon (5 times)
- Mass Bikes, Boston Cyclist Union
- Mass Central Rail Trail Coalition
- Mass Central Rail Trail, Massachusetts Midstate Trail
- Mass wildlife (4 times)
- Massachusetts Audubon, North County Land Trust
- Massachusetts Greenway
- massachusetts snowmobile association
- MassBike
- MassWildlife, boy scouts, girl scouts
- Masters and triathlon swim group
- Midstate Trail organizers
- More local school interaction to teach kids about conservation and importance
- Mountain bikes, horseback riders, ITV/ dirtbikers, hunters
- Mountain Biking (3 times)
- Mountain biking(ei: nemba) paddlers
- Mt. Biking, and horse access on designated trails.
- N/A (33 times)
- NE mountain bike assoc
- NE Mountain Bike Association
- NEA4WD & NEMBA
- NEBMA, Colebrook Snowmobile Club, Snowbirds Snowmobile club
- NEECA of Athol, Barre riding and driving club
- Neece snowbound club
- NEMBA BSTR
- Nemba - <https://www.nemba.org/chapters/wachnemba>
- NEMBA (Greater Boston Chapter)
- NEMBA and Friend of Ware River Watershed
- nemba midstate trail greenways horses snowmobiles
- NEMBA Wachusett Chapter, Midstate Trail group or Worcester AMC which has a role in maintaining Midstate Trail
- NEMBA, IMBA
- NEMBA, Boston Bowhunters
- Nemba, Bstra
- Nemba, equestrians, amc, Midstate trail committee, snowmobilers
- NEMBA, Friends Groups
- NEMBA, Friends of the Ware River Watershed
- NEMBA, friends of ware River watershed
- Nemba, imba
- NEMBA, Mass Audubon
- NEMBA, Mass Sportmen's Council
- NEMBA, Seven Hills Wheelmen
- NEMBA, TROUT UNLIMITED
- NEMBA. Proactive, responsible, volunteerism. But, they also need to step up their game as far as trail user education.
- Nemba. (New England mountain bike association) EFTA (Eastern fat tire association)
- Nemba. Cold brook snowmobile club
- Nemba/ friends of the watershed
- NEMBA; 7 Hills Wheelmen; AMC
- New England Equestrian Center of Athol
- New England Equestrian Center of Athol, Bay State Trail riders, Central Mass Trail Riders, Cross State Trail Riders, Barre Riding & Driving Club
- new England horse & trail
- New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA) (172 times)
- New England Mountain Bike Association, IMBA
- New England Mountain Biking Association, Mass Sportsman action league, Mass fish and game
- New England Wildflower Society, Massachusetts Audubon Society
- New England Wildflower, Mass Butterfly Club, Petersham Gun Club
- NMBA, equestrians, mountain bikers, hikers
- None (20 times)
- North Quabbin Trails Association
- Not sure (2 times)
- possibly town parks and recreation committees
- princeton land trust
- Quabbin Cross Country, Coldbrook Snowmobile Club
- Reddington Rock Riding Club and Westfield Riding Club
- Rod and gun clubs (2 times)
- Rutland (or any local) cub scout and boy scout troops.
- Rutland BOS
- Rutland Cub Scout Pack 141, and other area Cub and boy scouts
- Rutland Sportsman Club (2 times)
- S.A.M., coldbrook snowmobile club
- SAM snowmobile association of ma (4 times)
- Scouts, bird watchers, north central hiking association,
- Seven Hills Wheelmen (5 times)
- Seven Hills Wheelmen, and Worcester County Women's Cycling
- Sledmass (2 times)
- Sledmass
- snowmobile and horse groups
- Snowmobile ass of mass and any atv/sxs group
- Snowmobile clubs (3 times)
- Sportsman clubs
- Team Bums
- The riding clubs for horseback riding
- They should try to understand that public funds were utilized on these areas to promote a variety of activities including recreational. The possibility of the recreational use being eliminated is frustrating. While I understand the importance of the environmental habitat quality, it needs to be balanced by recreational user needs. This land is taken away from the tax base and it seems as if it's unfair to have the recreational components reduced simply because of budget cuts or the agency wanting to turn their land back over to nature completely.
- Timber cutters
- Town conservation groups
- Town of Rutland
- Treadlightly
- Treasure Valley Scout Reservation, NEMBA
- Trout Unlimited (5 times)
- Trout Unlimited, Ruffed Grouse Society
- Unknown (6 times)
- Wachusett Greenways (6 times)
- Wachusett Greenways, Appalachian Mountain Club, Midstate Trail
- Wachusett Greenways, municipalities (senior walking groups, Rec departments, schools*** (our middle schoolers are no longer allowed to mountain bike in this area because of adult abusers of the land, despite multiple requests for a special permit).
- Wachusett Greenways, NEMBA, scouts, schools etc
- Ware River Nature Club (3 times)
- Ware river race
- Ware river watershed advisory committee
- Ware River Watershed, NEMBA (Central MA), AMC (Wachusett)
- Wachusett Mountain Bike Association
- We are not a organization. We are a group of friends that love trail riding.
- Worcester 7 hills bicycling group, local AMC
- Worcester County Womens Cycling

- Worcester County Women's Cycling & Central Mass Striders
- WRWAC, NEMBA, AMC, Barre Riding and Driving Club, and Coldbrook Snowmobile Assn.

13. If you have encountered any significant problems while using DCR-DWSP lands, please describe them.

- 20 years ago I enjoyed mountain biking now I cant
- Abandoned car
- Abutting Natty Pond and Natty Pond brook. Significant loss of flowing water due to invasive grass resulting in fewer water dependent animals, use for canoeing, fishing.
- Access (2 times)
- Access to Rutland State Forest and DCR land has been cut off for mountain biking
- Accessing trails for hiking biking and skiing. I never know what is allowed and where. I enjoy the beauty of nature and if I get there by bike, foot or skies. I feel that the more people who can enjoy it the better. Why let nature do its thing if people can't admire the beauty.
- aggressive rangers
- All of the mountain bike trails have been closed
- Allowing hiking but not hiking for geocaching.
- Area and Gate Closures
- As above with respect to persons camping for the day, bringing rafts and kayaks and swimming from unauthorized shoreline. There is a public beach available
- As above, trash. :(
- As described above Rutland River Road Fishing turn off garbage.
- As indicated earlier there use of motorized vehicle such as ATVs and Snowmobiles especially on frozen ponds such as Moosehorn are becoming more prevalent. Also the building of fires, drinking of alcoholic beverages and trash left by some groups when ice-fishing is deteriorating the pond's habitat.
- At Comet Pond; some property owners disregard the walkers, when driving!
- Attempts to disallow bicycles
- ATV damage near Williamsville Road
- ATV riders have fires and leave trash near williamsville pond
- ATV. dirt bikes. Beavers
- Atvs spooking horses
- ATV's tearing up the trails on Rice Ledges
- ATV-Snowmobile- Off season hunter use to include poaching. I've found several deer carcasses that were stripped in the woods by hunters that were young. Abutters using their personal ATVs to create areas to ride on. ATV's driving over the canesto brook and other waterways that feed the canesto. When the water is too high they find other areas to cross. Forestry done on that blocks waterways.
- Avoid areas with camera traps
- Banning Mountain biking
- Beaver dams
- Beaver dams! They have created more swamp. I think this is a major concern in the state and is a cause of the rise in mosquito born illness
- Beavers have caused destruction of parts of my property
- Been shot at twice - people target shooting without proper backstops sight lines. I am not sure target practice is allowed; if not it should be posted as such.
- Bicyclists ruining the hiking trails
- bikers drive recreational walker off the land
- Blocked access to trails
- Blocked trails
- boat ramp use /courtesy
- Boats bringing in invasive plants
- Boats bringing in Weeds to Demond Pond
- Breached dam on williamsville pond
- Campfires and loud music blasting.
- Clearcutting of trees
- closed bicycle trails, dirt bikes and 4 wheelers
- Closed Trails (3 times)
- Closed trails, inaccurate signage
- Closed trails, lack of access
- Closed trails. They are of value for hikers and they are not maintained
- Closure of key mtb trails in Oakham which have zero impact on water quality
- Confrontational personell
- Confronted someone dumping tv's from his vehicle on Whitehall Rd
- Constant use of ATV/dirt bikes in hubbardston despite it being posted not to
- Cops searched our tent once, didn't find anything
- Couches, tires, mattresses, appliances, needles and so many town bags full of trash over the years. Lackey lane was recently picked up and it doesn't look like the place I found needles and trash any more (thank you!).I also found needles at the 122 end of granger road. People don't need their vehicles on lackey lane or the rail trail - it just gets misused and rutted...
- Cross contamination of weeds from non resident boaters
- DCR limiting public access!!!
- DCR's refusal to allow the Demond Pond Watershed Association to open the dam spillway lower the level of the pond by some 5 feet to allow property owners the ability to clean and clear of debris and unwanted material their waterfront areas.
- Dirt bikes mountain bikes and four wheelers
- Dirt road indicated on a map but a bridge not being installed or the road flooded.
- dogs
- dogs not leashed
- Dogs off leash
- Enforcement of prohibitions where mountain biking and other access had previously been tolerated. I had looked forward to teaching my kids to ride off-road in this area since it offered some of the most beginner-friendly terrain in central Mass but have not been able to. I have obeyed the posted notices, but am certain that with good management and planning increased recreational access is possible without compromising water quality priorities.
- Environmental Police can be unfriendly
- Erosion, trash, dumping of large items.
- Exclusion of mountain bikers from trails
- Failure for DCR to respond back to emails addressing trail closures as well as trail maintenance and timeframes of construction projects
- Failure to pay town taxes
- Fear of hunters when walking trails
- Fishermen and illegal swimmers throw cigarette butts and other trash in the water
- Flooded areas due to beavers
- Folks making fires, leaving trash, comping
- four wheeler damage.
- Frisbee golfers feel they are entitled for exclusive rights- they are rude and arrogant when i walk my dog where they play and request me to leave the area- i constantly pick up their trash and garbage
- Garbage, including used needles and getting someone's attention to remove them
- Gates closed
- got lost, cell service out. found myself, all okay. mixed

- use areas, I catalog old cemeteries, hunters right there.
- Had a terrible experience horseback riding at Rutland state park as there were no trail maps, indicators of where to park or even on-line guidance.
- have not been able to mountain bike
- Horses, ATV's, mountain bikers
- Hostile law enforcement
- Hubbardston--Trash dumping, ATV/dirt bike use, shooting for non-hunting
- Hunters shooting near streets and dwellings
- Hunters. They don't respect the rights of other people using these lands, they litter, they drive their vehicles fast, which is a danger to hikers/walkers, and some of them shoot at anything that moves, which includes me and others who are hiking and walking.
- I am not allowed to use them any longer
- I continue to be frustrated that Rutland's middle school cannot be given a special permit for mountain bike training within accessible distance to their school. The science teacher who runs this program has a deep knowledge and care for the land, and would be an amazing ambassador, steward, and example for these students, encouraging them to become responsible bikers themselves. It is a travesty that visiting adults ruined this opportunity for them.
- I had an extreme accident because of gates along the trail not being opened during the riding season this is a big problem with the lack of interdepartmental communication. Army Core, Park authority's , DCR do not seem to communicate on the issue and it's been the cause of many injuries and or deaths due to this lack of communication.
- I have been told that riding my bicycle on the trails is prohibited and when I asked why I was told that it damages the water quality. These are the same trails that horses and I some cases snowmobiles use. I don't believe this claim. As there is no evidence to support this.
- I have had no issues
- I have seen people using ATVs
- I participate in the geocaching hobby and live in Barre MA. The Ware River Watershed & Quabbin Reservoir lands make up a major portion of open land in town and the surrounding communities. At this time geocaching is limited/illegal on DCR land. This restricted access keeps a large number of environmentally aware people off of DCR land. Numerous times I have read users state they never would have visited an area if not for a cache placement. Geocaching practices an unobtrusive policy towards the forests and land used. If anyone were to research what this community is about I'm sure it will be apparent the geocaching community is one which can be beneficial to DCR's needs.
- I was scare by 2 men with guns, who told me I should not be there.
- I wish it were more clear where I *could* mountain bike, since there are clearly places where high-impact activity is happening (and yet mountain biking doesn't seem to be allowed).
- if trails are open to horses, they should be open to mountain biking
- Illegal ATV use
- Illegal dumping
- Illegal fires around Comet pond
- Increase in drug and alcohol usage
- Indiscriminate closing of trails
- Intolerance to mountain biking.... they are NOT vehicles
- Irresponsible tree harvesting creating soil erosion and land pollution by equipment leaking oil
- It's taken too long to allow more access to areas that have been used for years with no damage. A single track mountain bike trail does not have run off to hurt water quality.
- I've been greatly dismayed by the ban on mountain biking on established single-track trails within Rutland SP. I completely understand the need to shut down any illegal trail-making or trail-altering activities, but the responsible use of the miles of beautiful trails does not impact the watershed in a manner more harmful than many of the allowed activities. In fact, many in the mountain bike community, myself included, are responsible citizens who are appreciative of the DCR and DWSP and its mission and protective of these lands.
- I've had hunters fire weapons into the air while being very close to my home.
- I've had tree strands stolen.
- jet skies excessive motor boat speeds
- just harassment by mountain bikers and snowmobilers-arrogant SOBs that are trying to cause bodily harm by running over you
- Just that some are so restrictive of ATVs
- Just the DCR trying to post signs and restrict access to land that we deserve a right to use!! We want our children to appreciate nature and enjoy the outdoors. Calling the water "unfiltered" is misleading! It doesn't go straight from the rivers into people's homes?!
- Just the problems with the Public respecting Demond Pond.
- lack of access especially in late fall and winter
- Lack of access to previously open single track trails
- Lack of any DCR presence at public boat ramp at Comet Pond. Boaters/fishermen polluting woods/pond with lines, lures, trash. People illegally using "pool" inflatables and swimming in busy boat ramp area.
- Lack of trails being cleared
- Like most in lands in the system some antiquated signage (maps) could be improved.. we don't all have or like to use tech in the forests.
- Limitations on swim use
- Limited access to trails
- Litter, erosion of shore, and introduction of invasive water plants
- Litter: Bottles, Cans, Paint cans, automobile parts
- Littering at public Access locations
- littering by abutting property owners tossing their trash in the woods...
- Locked gates should be no reason to keep People out
- Logging
- Midstate Trail, Central Mass Rail Trail
- Mismanagement of public land by DCR
- Motorized vehicles racing down the rail trail
- Motorized vehicles, strong smell of dog waste near trail ends
- Mountain bikers on illegal trails, destroying cultural resources
- mountain bikes banned from trails
- Mountain biking access blocked or restricted to trails that used to be open with no evidence of harm or conflict
- Mountain biking became restricted without good reasoning when biking was kept to trails
- Mountain biking has mostly disappeared
- Mountain biking not permitted
- Mtn. biking restrictions
- N/A (57 times)
- Never had a problem
- No (23 times)
- No mountain bikes allowed in many areas.
- No off road bike access roads/trails.
- no problem
- No problems in the last 35 years of use for me
- No problems, only a good thing to report. A ranger slowed down near me as I was walking my dog. I got a

big smile from him and a thank you. A thank you for following the rules was very much appreciated, It made me smile, It also made me feel better knowing that the rangers are on top of people letting their dogs run off leash.

- No sign problems other than having access restricted
- None (87 times)
- None - occasionally a loose dog
- None personally but have heard of some confrontation with personnel of watershed in the past
- None significant. Just a few times where I had dirt bikes and atvs speed by. Had people look at me with distaste while using the trails to walk into and out of hunting.
- none, though I do worry about hunters during hunting season.
- None. Everyone enjoys the land together.
- Nope
- Not accessible for mountain biking
- Not allowing atv
- Not applicable
- Nothing significant, but there are definitely trails that need attention of trail stewards like NEMBA.
- obnoxious hunters
- Off-road vehicles
- On the rail trail from River road to Wachusett Reservoir area I have encountered some Males engaging in odd behaviors, that should not be for public viewing. Therefore, I stay away from that portion of the Rail Trail.
- one bike rider who had two large dogs on leash
- ORVs, vandalism, dumping
- Other than missing the mountain bike opportunities, none.
- Overpopulation of beavers are destroying woodland, destroying water quality, endangering roadways and endangering access to historical areas
- overzealous rangers
- Parking
- Parking issues as noted in #9, and trash, beer cans, etc discarded from boats
- past harassment by rangers
- People parking their cars without any courtesy for others
- People with unleashed dogs
- Poorly marked launch/water access points for kayakers, beaver dams limiting access to parts of the body of water
- Porcupines can be difficult on unleashed dogs. Need to be careful to de-tick myself
- Presently, closed trails and limited recreational access.
- Pretty much everything i have stated above has been a concern. The speeding vehicles over the bridge have caused the most anxiety.
- Proliferation of Beaver dams warming the water and negatively impacting the water quality for trout habitat, and abutters' septic systems and wells.
- Random people creating unsanctioned trails.
- Rangers not knowing trails and rules
- Rangers not opening gates
- recently trails we frequent have been closed and this makes it difficult to travel and enjoy the area on horseback. I do see a lot of trail changes due to bikes as they have become 'deep' and eroded also they have gone 'off trail' in areas and caused more 'trails' which is unfortunate. I have seen this only in Rutland State Park in a certain area. They have not been following the specific paths set. Horses have had very little impact on the trail system in general as they tread lightly and on a more wide base I suppose causing no erosion
- Restricted access
- Restricted access to mountain bikes with lack of factual evidence to prove they are a danger to the watershed
- Restricted access to public lands by DCR.
- Restricted bike use
- restrictions on trails and areas that were in existence for years-T3 for example
- Road issues my jefferson
- Roads at the Barre Falls Water shed could be graded out, to many ruts!
- Rubbish and gated roads
- Rutland schools denied access to trails for science and biking
- Rutland State Forest is closed to mountain biking. This is a significant problem.
- Rutland state park had been mountain bike friendly, then without explanation, mountain bikes were considered taboo.
- Rutted trails disregard for waterways
- See 9 above - four wheelers, dirt bikes, and illegal trash dumping
- See above
- See above-people cutting trees,bushes,making fires along shoreline of Comet Pond
- Seriously? There is not enough space here. Asnacomet Pond: land erosion, water pollution, invasive species, boating law violations: motorized and non motorized, people trespassing, lack of animal population control to the detriment of the area, loss of habitat for wild fowl, outrageous/illegal (fires for example) behavior with ZERO recourse (There are NOT enough Rangers.) We on the pond have wondered WHEN someone will DIE, and IF that will move the State to enforce the laws it has on the books. A REVISION of the Ware watershed. This entity is TRUST FUNDED. It's economic support base NEEDS to be broadened. Asnacomet Pond as DECLINED at an ALARMING rate over the last 5 years! OVERUSE by people. Dogs/ People urinating in the water. Trash left everywhere. Trees cut and bushes ripped up to make "Day" campsites! Owners have MANY pictures of what the pond and Environs USED to look like! Register the kayaks if you need revenue to fund the Rangers!!!! They are the WORST OFFENDERS!!!!
- Single track trails blocked by large logs/trees
- Snow mobiles and arcs not slowing down when walking on trails. People on machines throwing their garbage in the woods. Snowmobilers pissing in my back yard
- snowmobiles damage the environment, litter garbage, make noise
- Snowmobiles on X-C ski trails, and unleashed dogs.
- snowmobiles operating on trails at high speed, we don't even go into the woods during hunting season.
- snowmobiles,atv's,trash
- So much trash, unleashed dogs
- Some gates locked sometimes, limiting access.
- Some improvements to snowmobiling trail network would be great.
- Some trail erosion, some rogue trails, but mostly manageable.
- Some trash where the teenagers party by the prison grounds. Hunters that think they own the land.
- Sometimes motorized dirtbikes are on trails.
- Swimmers using dcr land to access Comet Pond and erosion
- Swimming at the boat ramp despite signage
- Swimming from East bank of Comet pond. Swimmers in middle of pond with no protection from boats. Campfires on East bank of Comet. Land erosion on East Bank of Comet. Milfoil growth on Comet. Lack of enforcement of regulations at Comet.
- The aforementioned swimmers from the boat ramp who swim in the middle of the pond or from blow-up floats made into rafts. They are in danger of being hit by boats.

- The closing of the mountain biking trails.
- The disallowing of bicycles
- The gates can be hard to find. It would be nice if the gate numbers were more prominently displayed.
- The invasive weed infiltration and sometimes the number of boats on the pond
- The main problem has to do with the unauthorized swimming. People are swimming from the boat launch and shore on the east side of the pond. This has always been prohibited in the past. There is tremendous soil erosion on the east side from the swimmers. We are seeing camp fires at night on the same bank. Recently we have seen milfoil introduction on the same shoreline. There seems to be a lack of enforcement and poor signage to discourage illegal swimming. It is a serious safety concern.
- The main problem was the closure of the trails to mountain bikes and other users. It's become increasingly difficult to find places to ride closer to home.
- The Milfoil is slowly taking over the pond since you don't actively restrict usage for unclean boats like you do a Asnacomet pond up the road.
- The state's restrictions on use
- There is a lot of vandalism to the Rutland Prison Camps
- To many gates
- Too many larger motors on the pond and swimmers not staying to the restricted areas
- Too many parcels, corridors being eliminated from public recreational use.
- Too many trails have been closed to the public.
- Trail closers
- Trail access shut off for connecting trail, horses forced on roads
- Trail access, trails blocked w no reason why
- trail closer , road closer in winter
- Trail closings. Some trails are open on one end but closed on the other, so I have to climb over/through brush. Also, some of my favorite trails have been closed.
- Trail closure and limited access for horse riding
- Trail closures (3 times)
- Trail closures for trails used for years and years closed without notice
- Trails being unexpectedly closed
- trails closed to all users
- Trails have been shut down by DCR to mountain biking and hiking citing environmental destruction. Hikers and mountain bikers are for conservation and have many of the same values DCR has, but are being restricted from using and enjoying their favorite trails.
- Trails open at one end and closed/blocked at the other end
- Trails poorly marked
- Trash (including condoms and rubber gloves) in parking lots in Rutland and Oakham and Oakham. Speeding snowmobilers on legal and illegal dirt roads and Rail Trail, passing skiers and fatbikers unsafely.
- trash people throwing alcohol cans into forest
- Trashing dumping. ATV trail erosion
- trees cut down blocking hiking trails
- Unanticipated trail closing
- unauthorized forms of access in remote areas
- Unfair limitation of use of trails, long used (with respect and care) in Rutland state forest
- unjustified trail closures
- Unleashed dogs
- Unmonitored boat ramps to check for invasive species on boats and trailers
- Unnecessary trail closures and no parking signs.
- Unnecessary trail closures, anti-public behaviors and attitudes
- Use restrictions
- Verbally abused while on rail trail coming home from hunting
- Very concerned about contamination of Comet Pond by invasive species borne by unwashed boats.
- Very poor road conditions
- Waite Pond is becoming over grown with weeds.
- Walking and mountain bike trails intentionally blocked by fallen trees
- Walking thru an area in Kingston, usgs employee using profane language and inappropriate gestures.
- Weeds and "weed control enthusiasts!" Extremely LARGE motors on a 25 hp max waterway
- What I find to be a constant source of frustration is the increasing restricted access to land North of the Rail trail. There used to be nice trail systems for hiking, running, cross-country skiing, and mountain biking. Over the last several years, these have all been shut down, even with logs dragged into them. I used to use these trails a lot until they got shut down like this. It means that suddenly the area is not a good place to go to do these low-impact activities. For example, now cross-country skiing, running, and hiking are relegated to the rail trail or roads, which is relatively boring. In the winter, it means that these activities are mainly restricted to places accessible to snow-mobiles, resulting in an unpleasant experience for users doing activities that don't produce noise and engine smell. While I don't mountain bike much, I've talked to friends that do and that are equally frustrated with trails just getting shut down. This means that the area is no longer appealing to mountain bikers or anyone that wants something more technical than a flat road. This is a beautiful area with lots of public land, but the public increasingly doesn't have access to it. When the trails were open and I used them, I never saw signs of environmental damage in the form of trash, erosion, or feces. Surely maintaining a public education campaign, along with a trash can at parking lots would help ensure that people use the land respectfully without having to shut it down. Additionally, I find it extremely frustrating and hypocritical when these restrictions to land use by low impact users are made, while the DCR authorizes the logging of these same lands. How does that protect the watershed? Also seems counter to all the land uses listed in question 10.
- Williamsville dam issues
- Worst experience was being chased off the beach at Leominster State Forest by yellowjackets.
- Yes I enjoy swimming at Comet Pond ,as do many others and am ready to start to contact our congress person and state rep .to change this rule about not being able to swim there
- Yes, excess beavers creating dams and flooding areas. Also these dams just like manmade inhibit flow of fish.
- yes, logging was done that ruined some trails from walking on easily
- Yes, mountain bike ban for no reason
- Yes, unable to use mtb trails I have known and loved for most of my life
- Yes, unauthorized ATV riders
- Yes. We have been kicked off of public land for mountain biking by DCR
- You guys at the State have created all the problems. In the past our lives and recreational usage was simple and normal. Your huge State Overreach going on now must end.
- You have closed down the best trails. Give us back our trails.
- Your refusal to allow metal detectorists use the land as well

14. If you think there are any activities or locations of activities in the Ware River Watershed that are detrimental to 1) water quality, 2) wildlife/natural resources, 3) public enjoyment, or 4) abutters, please describe them.

- 4 wheel ATVS People use them illegally
- 4 wheelers (2 times)
- 4x4's and motorcycles
- access to trails is important
- Aggressive mechanical logging is always a danger to water quality. Your State motorized vehicles are in there too much also
- All along the rail trail and lackey lane, mainly between 62 and covered bridge rd, people dump/leave trash. Bottom of lackey lane and the end of covered bridge road are loaded with broken bottles and burned trees.
- Allow Geocaching
- Any motorized recreational activities
- Any motorized use is detrimental
- Any motorized vehicle.
- Any motorized vehicles, anything that makes light or sound
- Any new housing development or commercial lots should be kept far away from the protected forests of the watershed, including solar field development
- Anything gas-powered certainly can present an issue if done immediately close to the water. But done responsibly there aren't too many activities that should pose an issue to any of those.
- Areas that don't allow mountain biking for myself and my children
- As noted, off-leash dogs are a detriment to public enjoyment. My kids liked to bike through on their mountain bikes (not part of a formal group) and have been harassed by officers. Hasn't happened in a while because they have moved away.
- As stated above, the vehicle traffic along Evergreen Road is horrible for safety and wildlife, especially from right before the bridge heading toward Brigham St. The rate of speed is over 40 mph and i do not walk along the road much due to fear of being hit. Turning into our driveway has been difficult when people are speeding and do not want to slow down when we try and turn. I worry when people throw their trash out along the bridge area and into the pond.
- Asnacomet pond shores
- ATV activity (15 times)
- ATV and horses
- ATV and off road vehicle abuse
- ATV and snowmobile driving
- ATV illegally using trails
- ATV traffic everywhere!
- ATV use in Hubbardston forest
- ATV use in Hubbardston Wildlife areas is a detriment.
- ATV use is too high
- ATV use, dirt bikes (destructive, polluting, noisy); disrespectful riders or users in general
- Atvs constantly use the property by the prison camps and they know they will not be caught or prosecuted
- Atvs in streams, too many trails in some spots
- ATV's tearing up the trails on Rice Ledges
- ATVs, logging certainly leaves a mess
- ATVs, Loose dogs, Littering trash, speeding vehicles on dirt roads
- Beaver damns causing excessive damage to forests and paths/roadways
- beaver population
- Beavers
- Beavers and illegal use of ATV's
- Below barre falls dam
- Benches placed on rail trail behind abutters property causes people to congregate and disturb the peaceful use of my property. They are not commonly used for walkers to sit rest and reflect, teens hang out here. Miles of wilderness and stone benches placed behind my house at Moulton pond
- Blocking access
- Boat activity should be monitored for compliance with horsepower regulations and invasive species
- Boaters and walking swimming from shore on Comet pond
- Boaters launching at Comet pond with milfoil
- Boating with high speed motors, jet skis, Snow mobiles, and vehicles on the ice in the winter on Demond Pond
- Boats not cleaning off and moving weeds from pond to pond
- breathing
- Building more properties -with the number of new homes being built, I would be worried about the potential for flooding. Also, if the land gets sold off to developers, the quality of life would decrease for those people whose homes about the Ware River Watershed. I live where I do because the land around me is protected.
- Canesto Brook area in the Hubbardston Barre area. Recent Forestry on tax protected land that has left debris in the waterway.
- certainly meth-lab activities, uncontrolled waste disposal
- Clearcutting
- Clearing of forest land and over-construction of homes close to water, allowing silt and soil waste to fill ponds and lakes.
- Comet Pond: unwashed watercraft affecting water quality and algae
- Constant use of ATV/dirt bikes in hubbardston on land surrounding old Westminster road
- construction. road salt.
- dcr has over reached and cost land owner tons of money
- DCR trying to prevent recreational use of the watershed lands
- development
- dirt bike, ATV, motor vehicle, snowmobile
- dirt bikes (2 times)
- Dirt bikes and ATV joy riding
- Dog waste and litter
- Dogs
- Dogs in the water, dogs defecating on the shore
- dogs off lead
- dogs; horses
- domestic Animal Feces (Horses/Dogs)
- Encountered Snowmobiles on Rail Trail while x-c skiing between White Hall Rd. and Oakham. + Other hikers letting their dogs run loose on the rail trail.
- equestrian use
- fracking
- Gas powered boats and bikes.
- gasoline powered vehicles
- Have only encountered land abuse on a few occasions, but nothing large scale
- Hiking and hunting t
- Horse and dog droppings could affect the water quality
- Horse back
- horseback riding allows dumping of untreated excrement into the watershed. Also walkers, hikers, and cyclists have to avoid this.
- Horseback riding on mtb trails
- horses are not detrimental to the water quality, wildlife or public enjoyment

- Horses leaving manure on the trails is detrimental to public enjoyment
- Horses, mountain bikes and ATV's. Destroy and pollutants to water supply
- Hunters close to my property
- hunters, I have not encountered one thus far but it is a worry of mine.
- Hunting (2 times)
- Hunting and off-leash dogs impact safety of wildlife.
- Hunting should not be allowed. Nor should car or 4x4 access.
- I actually don't have a problem sharing the woods with hunters and horseback riders, and understand the need for intermittent logging to manage the forest, but cannot understand how mountain biking is considered to have a more negative impact on trails, flora and fauna than these activities.
- I believe that there should be no motorized vehicles allowed. Anything gas powered
- I can't think of any right now.
- I did find leftover fireworks while walking along a trail once
- I don't think so
- I encourage all use including off road vehicles, as long as its done safely.
- I feel reasonable access to all user groups is imp
- I find it frustrating that activities that have relatively little impact on water quality or wildlife are disallowed or highly restricted in certain areas (like cross country skiing and mountain biking), whereas snowmobiles are allowed. It seems to me that snowmobiles have the potential to introduce pollutants (oil/gas leaks and exhaust particles) directly into snow and thus snowmelt.
- I have encountered horse riders on several occasions and have always wondered if horse droppings could affect the water quality negatively
- I have notice an uptick of dirt bike and ORV activity in the years since mountain bikes have been excluded. Motorized offroad vehicles are clearly dangerous to the watershed.
- I hope and pray that all these trails stay open for all to enjoy
- I only worry about the old dump that's on the bank of the river..
- i see a lot of beaver in the rutland park
- I think all the graffiti at the prison camps should be cleaned up or tear down the buildings, they serve absolutely no purpose!
- I think there is great irony that widespread logging, which has been shown to have negative environmental impacts elsewhere (see the DCR logging snafu in Northbridge), occurs on these lands yet grave concerns about water quality impacts are raised for low-impact passive recreation by mountain bikers on singletrack trails. It is very important that we recognize both logging and trail-based recreation (and other uses) can be balanced sustainably on these lands.
- I think we all do okay sharing the land.
- I used to live in Hubbardston & saw trash-dumping, ATV/dirt bike use, shooting at glass/beer cans/clay skeet (Templeton & Hubbardston, esp. areas off rail trail & area behind former Calico & Creme on Williamsville Rd.
- I would say all of the new houses popping up that seem quite close to water and wetlands.
- I've noticed clear cutting on DCR land. I can't imagine this practice is beneficial to the land
- If it's labeled for public access than let the public use

the land. Labeling the land usage as "take in take out" should be sufficient. That way the responsibility is held to user. I have picked up many yards of fishing twine and beer cans and fishing bait bags on my hikes.

- Illegal ATV use
- Illegal ATV use around the barre, hubbardston and Rutland areas
- Illegal dumping
- illegal dumping, and fast food containers, styrofoam cups, drink containers, beer cans and nip bottles
- Illegal trash dumping
- in general, pollution from humans
- In the past 10 years Waite Pond has become infested with multiple forms of water weeds which have been brought in by boats. This has affected wild life, access and availability to swimming, and the natural beauty of the pond.
- introduction of invasive species Demond Pond . Severe run off of silt from public roads to the pond
- Invasive grass chocking flow, road gets flooded every year.
- irresponsible cutting, use of pesticides instead of mechanical means in electrical rights of way and in all other areas; illegal hunting practices
- irresponsible logging
- Irresponsible tree harvesting
- It is not happening, but cutting trees would be detrimental to these.
- It would be great if we could ride side by sides on state land
- It's all a balance that should be frequently evaluated.
- I've heard there may be outdated leaking septic tanks in old homes on the pond. Maybe there should be some sort of inspections - every 10 years or so.
- Jet skis/ personal watercraft
- Just as stated above litter.
- Just did. "Day kayakers/paddle boarders/'floatie' floaters/ boaters who come in for the day, destroy habitat to make their 'day site'...party all day using the woods for their and their pet's bathroom. Ripping up and cutting down trees and bushes to make their sites or feed their fires. ICE FISHERMEN leaving their TRASH and 'waste' on the ice. LACK of ENFORCEMENT for BOATING laws which has led to invasive specie CONTAMINATION of this PRISTINE pond! Illegal fires and 'partying' (WITH alcohol) in the woods. People swimming from ANY shore line! Cars parked illegally with in the 400' set back protective zone guarding the 'edge' of the pond. PLEASE do not talk about 'signage'. Until STEEP FINES are handed out, the public will not change their DESTRUCTIVE behavior! The public hauling themselves out on PRIVATE PROPERTY and REFUSING to move and NO HELP from local PD to move them. People TRESPASSING on private property and acting like they have a RIGHT to. People completely uneducated about the 20' stand off from rafts and docks protecting abutters privacy. SOMETHING NEEDS to be DONE!!!!!!
- Just the druggies. They litter. Typically people out there mtn biking or riding horses are extremely clean and polite
- know of none
- Lack of checking that boats entering the pond are clean of invasive weeds
- Lackey Rd off Granger near rte 62 in Barre, the rd ends at the stream and people like to drive down it to the stream bank the road is eroding and it is a dumping place for used furniture and needles and more. A gate would be a huge help

- Large housing developments, solar fields
- Large motorboats - demand has a 25 hp max FIREWORKS jet skis
- Lead shots, motorized vehicles
- Limited access in certain areas
- Littering (2 times)
- Littering, her skis, fertilizers and algae blooms, invasive weeds like milfoil
- Littering, noisy parties at the homes of abutters
- Littering, unrestricted/illegal camping
- Logging (4 times)
- Logging to close to abutters land
- Logging trucks have left pools of oil to the detriment of water quality and wildlife and trashed trails; and during hunting season when 4-wheel trucks are let in to use otherwise little used roads trash the roads
- Logging, adjacent development
- Logging, commercial uses, motorized vehicles.
- Logging, forest management, sandpits
- Logging, motorized vehicle use
- Logging, ORV's
- logging; illegal motorized use;
- Loud and fast forms of access, over-use of forestry roads, especially in mud season.
- Many hunters parked alongside watershed, and concerns with Sunday hunting. Significant amount of litter along Charnock Hill Road, some of which enters the surface waters along the roadway. We walk to clear it periodically, but there is just too much.
- Many people walk into the woods and picnic on the shoreline. Some make campfires. They swim from the shoreline and have caused significant erosion in many areas around the pond. Many also have dogs who swim with them from their picnic areas on shore. Not all boaters self check their boat. For the first time, Milfoil was found this past fall. This is a serious invasive plant. Comet Pond is known for its pristine water. We need to keep it clean!
- Milfoil has been found in the pond for the first time this past fall. The land (coastline) around the pond is being compromised by people swimming around the southeastern edge of the pond (accessed from the boat ramp) and pulling their boats up along the edge of the pond (further up the eastern side which is not visible from the boat ramp) to picnic and swim from the edge. The erosion where people are swimming has increased exponentially killing much of the mountain laurel that once bloomed in those areas as well as wild blueberries and other native wildlife. We have seen alcohol loaded on the boats and carried in in coolers. Because of our location on the pond, we can see that many of these people are not taking advantage of the Port-a-Potties at the boat ramp even though they are along the edge for hours at a time. We assume that they are relieving themselves in the woods or water. Campfires have been lit along the coastline and there is evidence of trees being removed for the campfires. In addition to the severe erosion happening to the pond, the safety of these swimmers is also a concern as some of these swimmers appear to be consuming alcohol while swimming along the edge. Rope swings are tied to limbs of trees along the edge of the pond, which compromises the health of the trees, the shoreline and also presents safety concerns for the swimmers. Boaters are bringing flotation devices and parking their boats at locations around the pond. They bring in large coolers and spend the day picnicking in undesignated areas. Boaters are also swimming, tubing and waterskiing from their boats. Although the signage at the ramp states "No Dogs", it's not uncommon to see multiple dogs at one time swimming at the boat ramp. Swimmers off the ramp who swim down the middle of the pond to the far end are a danger to themselves and legal boaters. They make it difficult at times for legal boaters to navigate the pond. Self-certification forms available at the boat ramp are not used consistently.
- Motor bikes
- motor boat/jetski access at Demand pond contributes to physical (gas/oil/invasive species) pollution and noise pollution negatively impacting solitude/wilderness/wildlife/pond health/water quality/enjoyment and land abutters that dump trash in DCR woods (e.g., end of Finn Park Rd)
- motor boats
- motor boats with gas - detrimental to water quality, wildlife; residents setting off fireworks above the lake - detrimental to water quality, quiet, wildlife
- Motor sports
- motor vehicle access
- motor vehicles and dog poop.
- Motorcross Bikes and ATV's
- Motorcycles and ATVs (2 times)
- Motorized access poses the largest threat to water quality. I do believe a proper land management plan can provide opportunities for all user groups though.
- motorized activities
- Motorized activities can be detrimental.
- Motorized all terrain vehicles. All other activities in my estimation have no discernible effect on 1-4.
- Motorized ATV's damage trails!
- Motorized bikes (2 times)
- Motorized boats
- Motorized boats (Oil and gasoline leakage)
- motorized boats in the reservoir.
- Motorized boats, unauthorized use of DCR land
- Motorized Dirt bikes/off road vehicles
- Motorized orv's
- motorized public access is detrimental. you should only allow non-motorized activities- hiking, snowshoeing, skiing, bird watching
- Motorized use of the land.
- Motorized vehicle access (8 times)
- Motorized vehicles on the trails
- Motorized vehicles on this land
- Motorized vehicles only
- Motorized vehicles should continue to be banned.
- Motorized vehicles such as snowmobiles & ATVs are noisy & smelly and tear up the trails. Not sure if they harm water quality or wildlife. Sometimes snowmobiles pack down the snow in a way that's good for XC skiing, sometimes not. I don't mind snowmobiles on wider trails.
- Motorized vehicles, (exception of snowmobiles)
- Motorized vehicles, especially dirt bikes.
- Motorized vehicles, General disrespect for wildlife and nature
- Motorized vehicles, horses
- Mountain Bikers, ATV's and Horses
- mountain biking off designated trails
- My land is across the street from DCR land and there is a surprising amount of litter; I'm not sure what you could do about it.
- N/A (46 times)
- New house development filling in wet lands and now peepers have no home
- No (19 times)
- No enforcement of unauthorized shire access by day boaters on Comet shoreline
- No opinion (2 times)

- Noise for excessively loud ATV and dirt bikes
- noise pollution sometimes natural areas should be peaceful
- none - need to balance all 4
- None (50 times)
- none known
- None that are allowed just illegal users
- None that I have seen
- None, water quality is world class with all the activity groups working together.
- Non-hunting shooting/target practice along the Ware river Oakham side off Coldbrook road
- Nope
- not at this time
- not sure
- Noted in answer to question 13
- observation of some trail erosion due to tires. Perhaps more trails can be created specific for bicycles? I would not want to see them loose the privilege of enjoying the watershed. I assume the erosion can affect the water quality. I am ignorant of cyclists needs. As an avid horse rider I have never seen a snowmobile on the trails but am well aware that they help upkeep the trails
- Obviously illegal dumping, make an effort to punish the dumpers not the user community
- Occasionally see trash dumped in the woods
- off road atv dirt bikes
- Off road vehicles unfortunately seem to cause the most headaches when not ridden properly
- Officials arbitrarily making access changes without consulting existing user groups.
- offload vehicle usage on DCR land in Hubbardston
- off-road dirt bikes or 4 wheel off-road vehicles
- on the south shore, across from the swimming beach, people are cutting and burning trees for campfires
- Open water swimming at Comet pond
- ORV use, horses fouling streams
- ORVs.
- Other than seeing random patches of trash from time to time, I have not noticed anything.
- Our pond on Cloverdale Lane and Sassawanna Road is frequented by individuals who trespass, fish, and poach turtles on the pond. Our biggest concern is that they come with canoes that have been in other waters and as of lately we are experiencing excessive weed populations including milfoil, which we have never previous had.
- Over building with in the watershed. Use of pesticides in local agriculture. over fertilization. Keeping some open lands would be nice ..look at what Wrentham and Plainville have accomplished with tax incentives.. Value of open land is critical.
- Overdevelopment of areas that abutt
- paintball
- Park off church street in Ware. Lots of drug activity in that park
- Parties leaving beer cans and bottles
- Passive trail recreation has the same impacts mostly regardless of type. Proper trail planning, design, and construction (recommend professionals) will mitigate these issues better than enforcement ever will.
- People bringing in invasive plants on boats
- People dirt biking, fireworks
- people do not stay off private land
- Proper boat access is limited to smaller ponds and boaters dump oil accidentally from motorized boats.
- Public boat access to Demond Pond is via the dam off Pleasantdale Rd. The only parking is on the road

which can be a hazard and I am also concerned with what effect the frequent loading and unloading of boats from the dam is having on that structure

- Rail trail and snowmobile access is too close to the Intake Valve on Route 122. In the area of the old Prison Camp, trash and graffiti have degraded the historic value and integrity of the prison camp and hospital.
- Recreational vehicles, littering
- Regulations by MDC to preserve 1,2 and 4 are harming #3.
- Relying on boaters to self-inspect for invasive aquatic vegetation on their boats at Comet Pond. If there were (even if only occasionally) an enforcement presence to encourage compliance -- this would really help ensure water quality.
- remote areas with road access which encourage dumping w/o apprehension
- Roadside Littering by Autos!!!!
- safety for all groups
- See #13 (6 times)
- should allow dogs
- Should designate areas some areas as strictly hiking or backpacking trails (no motorized vehicles).
- snow mobile activity is harsh to the environment,
- Snowmobile (4 times)
- Snowmobilers are loud and they tear up the trails; hunters pose a danger to hikers/walkers, parking at access points to resources is limited (for example, at Asnacomet Pond.
- Snowmobiles all terrain vehicles
- Snowmobiles and 4 wheelers, dirt bikes.
- snowmobiles and motorcycles operating at high speed on the trails
- Snowmobiles destroy the solitude. I also hate seeing piles of horse poop.
- Snowmobiles going where they are prohibited.
- Snowmobiles, atv's and trucks or cars
- Snowmobiles, powerboats
- Snowmobiling and hunters not recognizing private land boundaries
- Some trails for horse riding have been closed. We see no reason for that.
- The allowance of motor boating is more damaging than the prohibited human powered small craft
- The dam not being fixed affects our land value and enjoyment
- The deforestation of the lake Dennison and otter river state forest land and trails as well as blocking of many trails
- the law about swimming at Comet Pond I have personally many people that use the pond and not one is happy with it .If your going to stop people from swimming then stop the motor boats and water skiers there doing a lot more damage than swimmers.
- The litter left by hunters is completely awful
- The only notable item would actually be the illegal use of motorized vehicles - 4 wheelers and off road bikes
- The Public boat launch area at Comet Pond should be closed
- The State Highway operation near the intersection of 122 and 122A
- The states restrictions that drive common sense use away
- There are some people who like to make fires, leave trash, and trample the brush on the East shore of Asnacomet Pond.
- Too many deer hunters between Rt.62 & Railroad tracks

- Too much vehicle access.
- trail building
- Trash dumping
- Trash left behind
- Tree cutting by loggers!!!!
- Unauthorized ATV use causing erosion, noise pollution
- unauthorized ATV, dirt bike, and snowmobile use
- Unauthorized ATVs
- Unaware (2 times)
- Unclean boats bringing in Milfoil, Big engine boats spreading it around.
- Unclear if ATV access is allowed on Rail Trail along Burnshirt River
- Unknown
- Un-supervised motor vehicles.
- Unsure
- Use of power boats, ensuring all boats are washed down before entering and after exiting the water
- Use of snowmobiles and motorized vehicles.
- use off private property
- !
- using recreational motorized vehicles
- vehicle access of speed/drinking and driving
- waste management at 72 Barre Depot Rd, Barre, MA 01005
- Water skiers on Asnacomet Pond
- We as trail riders respect all aspects of the watershed.
- weed control on Demond Pond
- weed infiltration
- When bicyclers and snowmobilers leave pallets and cut new trails
- Wherever hunters violate the law
- Wheeler Road Rutland MA
- While I've found snowmobilers to be generally respectful, the activity is noisy, produces bad smells, and pollutes. If you maintain access for snowmobiles, you should provide single track trails for lower-impact users to be able to enjoy the area as well.
- Yes the road salt and non point pollution from vehicular traffic dose more damage than mountain bikers, hikers and horseback riders

15. DCR-DWSP would like to better understand the nature of unauthorized activities on its lands in the Ware River Watershed. This survey is completely anonymous. If you are willing to say, please tell us what illegal or unauthorized activities you are aware of people engaging in on DCR-DWSP lands in the Ware River Watershed.

- "on it's lands" Ware River Watershed is public land
- 4 wheelers destroying the land
- 4 wheeling
- 4wheelers and snow mobiles
- 4x4s and motorcycles
- Abutters to DCR land at the end of Finn Park Road in Rutland (e.g., #54) dump trash and yard waste in the woods (including from other properties owned at other locations not abutting DCR property). Among other things, a toilet and broken lawn chairs were found littered in the woods this past summer :(Also, hunting equipment (traps, etc.) is left in the woods.
- Alcohol and drugs.
- alcohol
- "Area used with off road vehicles. A bar to prevent this has not worked.
- "
- as above. If there HAS to be road access, let it be dead ended, so that the motorist must leave by the entrance he used
- As above. Also, swimming from the public boat ramp
- As noted above - the only ones that I have encountered are 4 wheelers and motorbikes. These are bad for every reason - noise, dangerous to wildlife, human, dog, horse.
- as per usual through generation after generation folks are always looking for places to 'party' I am certain that younger folks are out there drinking/smoking as I do pick up trash where they have congregated on occasion. I don't think this is ever going to go away as long as there are people lol chalk it up to young and unaware, with age they will improve. We did ;) I have heard of 'issues' a few years back in West Boylston Rail trail with men seeking men for sexual favors. This was on River Road. I avoided that area because of this for a while. But it appears they have relocated, thanks to the police. We are back to hiking both sides now... We did stop going for awhile especially as a family to that area.
- "At Comet Pond:
- Boats launching with no inspection of trailers/hulls/bilge for invasive vegetation.
- Swimming at boat ramps.
- Fishing at boat ramp.
- Motor boats with horsepower exceeding max limits.
- ATV - This is troublesome to me as I feel people move to this area to have direct access through a short undeveloped private parcel to get to MDC land. Snowmobiling is the same. The poaching bothers me as well. There are several permanent hunting perches up.
- ATV / dirt bike usage on unauthorized trails
- ATV activity and marking trees for there trails
- ATV and dirt bikes
- ATV and off road vehicles, campfires/tree destruction
- atv and snowmobiling off trail are some of the biggest culprits. Irresponsible hunting (off season or in season without care/ following of the rules) is a significant danger to all in the lands.
- ATV Riders - coming in from Grimes Road and riding onto Adams Road in Hubbardston. They enter the area again near 36 Adams Road and ride all through the area
- ATV use (15 times)
- ATV use in Hubbardston forest
- Atv use should be allowed!
- ATV, dirt bike use and littering (beer cans etc)
- ATV, dirt bike, and snow mobile use
- ATV, off trail mountain bikers
- ATV's 4 wheelers/ ruin the trails for others
- ATV'S & AUTOS RUNNING OVER MY LAND
- Atvs and snow mobile use
- "ATV's are an issue - noisy, tear up the wetlands....
- I don't mind mountain bikes as long as there are areas set aside for the them. We should be able to get along with a variety of land uses in appropriate locations"
- Atvs by prison camps evenings in summer or warmer weather- juveniles drinking and partying off the trails by the camps- very little law enforcement activity. Also i observe fishermen keeping way over legal limit right after stocking from Mass fisheries
- Atvs dirtbikes , trash dumping
- ATV's on gilbert rd/across the Burnshirts/on trails surrounding Rice leges

- ATV's, mountain bikes, snowmobiles, horses outside designated trails, trail building.
- Baiting wildlife, unauthorized motor vehicle trespassing.
- Bicycle riding. Unauthorized trail building. Which could be stopped by have a legitimate maintained and managed, mapped, and marked trail system.
- Building fires on the ice, dogs in the water, swimming in a non-swimming area
- Camping, hunting out of season, ATV & Motorcycle use
- camping/living
- Catching and keeping too many or under size fish.
- Certain areas are posted, No Snowmobiles, but there are always tracks visible there. Other users would like to walk/ski there, but it is dangerous, as they drive too fast sometimes.
- Comet Pond: Accessing water in unauthorized areas. Leaving trash in those areas.
- Currently unaware of any illegal/ unauthorized activities
- dcr has taken and restricted to much land they control half of Rutland
- Despite the resistance from DCR I have never considered or seen ATV's as degrading to the watershed resource. In contrary they have done a service keeping hiking trails from growing in and maintaining the old historic roads that are a historic treasure. If kids are not allowed to interact with nature in an engaging way they never come to appreciate and see value in it.
- Destroying steel gates meant to limit access, littering, building fires, cutting trees
- Did not see any
- Dirt bike usage which is a rare occurrence. Mt. Biking which is tightly restricted has no negative environmental impact, as many out of state studies have shown, yet unauthorized.
- Dirt bikes (3 times)
- Dirt bikes and ATVs (3 times)
- Dirt bikes and atvs. Lots of people leaving trash on the ground.
- Dirt bikes, mostly near rutland state forest
- Dirt biking, mountain biking, hiking on illegal trails, skiing on illegal trails, horse back riding on illegal trails. Last winter, a hunter shot a porcupine out of a tree and dragged the carcass up the embankment on Whitehall Rd.; litter in parking lots. Suspicious behavior of some individuals in vehicles also leads me to believe drug exchanges and sex encounters are occurring in parking lots and along the dirt roads.
- Docking on dcr land, building camp fires, altering the shoreline
- Dog walkers not picking up after their dogs (dog beach in Eastham has a doggie bag dispenser on the trail to the beach and a can for depositing the bags after the walk.)Evidence of young people drinking and leaving some trash, but that's not unusual. My generation did it (cornfields in Framingham, now Callahan State Park).
- dogs off lease; horses, snowmobiles where they don't belong, ATVs
- Dogs off leash
- "dogs off leash
- the remnants of fireworks mentioned above (we were lucky the whole place didn't burn down) "
- Don't know (3 times)
- drinking dumping trash
- Drinking, off road vehicles, fires
- Drug and alcohol use
- Drugs
- Drugs, and sexual activities. Described in answer to question 13.
- dumping
- Dumping garbage
- Dumping of paint and similar waste. I have encountered piles of six or more paint cans at a time in the area on a few occasions. Some miscellaneous litter ends up in the water drainage areas as well. I have tried to clean what I find, but there are apparently many people littering.
- Dumping of Trash
- East branch of the Ware River near Lumbard Road in Hubbardston/Princeton
- Every user group has people who bend/break rules. The important thing is recognizing the public can/should be treated as an ally, granted opportunities for responsible use, and punishing the offenders, not the overall user group(s) for behaviors of a few.
- Everything I stated above is a concern, especially for those of us living on Evergreen Rd. One thing I just thought of which might be legal, I sometimes see pool water trucks or lawn seeding companies pulled up near the waters edge at the pond. They may be taking water. I hope they are not dumping anything.
- Everything is illegal in Massachusetts.
- Fires and illegal swimming from shore on Comet pond
- Fireworks, oversized motors, building too close to the shoreline and not to the Cohen watershed setbacks,
- fishing
- Fortunately, I don't recall encountering such activities.
- Four wheeling
- fourwheelers, snowmobiles, etc. These people speed through the trails, damage the environment, scare away wildlife, leave garbage everywhere, and many of them do so while drinking alcohol
- Garbage dumping
- have not observed
- have not seen any illegal activity
- Have not witnessed anything.
- Have observed trash dumps
- Have seen people shooting up in parking lots and getting high smoking pot on trails
- Haven't encountered any that I'm aware of.
- hear say only-----drugs
- High horsepower motors on Comet Pond
- Hiking on restricted property
- Hiking, hunting and fishing along waters edge.
- Historically there were a lot of teenage drinking parties near where the new Midstate Trail footbridge is, leading to lots of litter. I think the cause of this was ready vehicular access and the fairly secluded area.

- Horse back riding. For the trails only.
- hunter/ fishing harassment
- Hunters have moved from watershed land to private property. I have caught hunters dragging a deer from my property to the street in front of my house. Hunters also hunt animals out of season and animals that should be protected. Also, I have driven to a parking lot at Barre Falls Dam to find a couple having sex in the middle of the parking lot. This last might not be illegal, but it isn't something I like seeing.
- Hunters shooting willy nilly
- Hunting and release birds
- hunting in middle of night--POACHING
- Hunting on Sundays.
- Hunting too close to residences & buildings
- Hunting. Horses
- I am aware of atv/ dirt bike users. I am for them because they naturally keep the trails open and maintained. Every time a trail is blocked they simply go around causing damage to the surrounding woods. When those trailheads are blocked they continue to get wider. There would be much less disruption to the habitat and blazing of new trails if the trails that have been there for a long time were just left be and accessible. Blocking the trails does not solve anything
- I am aware that some mountain bikers blazed an unauthorized trail to the east of the Prison Camp Rd. in Rutland SP. This behavior was very irresponsible and does not represent the overwhelming majority of mountain bikers who abide by the rules. We would like the DCR/DWSP to re-open the long-established single track trails that we loved so much about Rutland SP; they are unique in Central MA and were a source of great enjoyment for us for many years.
- I am not aware of any at this time (4 times)
- I am not aware of any. I have never witnessed any. I have only seen the remains of camp fires.
- I am not aware of such activities taking place
- I am out there a lot and really don't see any shenanigans (and I am grateful I also don't see a lot of litter).
- I believe mountain bikes and 4-wheelers ATVs should be allowed under certain conditions in certain areas.
- I don't know of any
- I don't know
- I have been using this watershed for recreation for 30 years. The only unauthorized activities I have ever seen are dirtbikes/atv's. Which they stay on the roads and trails anyway so it's not a problem!!!
- I have bikes on unauthorized trails and left no mark. I have seen more fishing trails around the reservoir, from people snapping branches and wearing down unauthorized paths that will never be used again. I walk around the reservoir's a lot. There is a plethora of fishing gear that is left behind, beer bottles, liquor bottles, fishing twine and plastic bags. Hikers and bikers are more concerned with keeping the land beautiful and pick up after themselves.
- I have not seen any.
- I have observed illegal trail building. Lack of oversight and collaboration with stewardship organizations such as NEMBA has contributed to illegal trail building.
- I have seen drug based interactions as I hike around the park.
- I haven't observed any unauthorized activities, but would be more than happy to report them if witnessed
- I haven't observed any, other than once finding myself on a trail that I had used before that was suddenly shut down. While I'm sure logging the land was "authorized", I feel that it should be illegal.
- I regularly see 4-wheelers, dirt bikes, trucks, jeeps, cars, and snowmobiles. There is a snowmobile trail but often they go off trail.
- I report what I see to the EPO's, when I know something isn't right, assholes ruining it for the rest of us who are trying to have fun!
- I saw someone walking their dog on a leash at the Quabbin Reservoir. Pretty sure dogs are still not allowed there.
- I see trash and fire pits along the Ware River. I've seen people off road driving on trails I'm pretty sure they shouldn't have been on. I've been off trail before (climbing onto trails that were once open and are now closed).
- I see trash that people dump.
- I think that most if not all illegal use has stopped due to stringent enforcement
- I would love to help but only see evidence of ATVs and vehicles are moving too fast to get IDs
- I've frequently encountered ATVs and evidence of ATVs. Evidence of parties in the woods.
- Illegal access to my property for hunting and off road bike/snowmobiles
- Illegal ATV use - would be nice if they had authorized access. Fat tire mtn bikers creating new trails where they shouldn't be
- Illegal building of trails, atvs/dirtbikes, drinking/drugs, dumping
- illegal drinking
- Illegal dumping (2 times)
- illegal dumping; ATV
- Illegal trail building. There are plenty of trails that should be open and maintained.
- Illegal trails cut by individuals instead of organizations who could work proactively with the DCR.
- I'm not personally aware of anything. I know there used to be some unauthorized trails that were closed. It would be really great if some of these could become official trails and be re-opened for use.
- "In November and December during deer season the amount of human waste in parts of the Watershed is alarming
- I have come upon places that are obvious designated "bathroom" areas"
- I've seen people harvesting large amounts of mushrooms in the Mount Jefferson Conservation area. Not sure if that's illegal or harmful though.
- I've seen trash dumped in areas, but haven't witnessed anyone in the act.
- Just dumping. 4 wheelers I don't really mind and mass should follow nh and maines example and embrace and work w the user community for the benefit of family recreation and revenue for the state
- just graffiti on the prison camp structures.
- Leaving behind dog feces
- "Limited monitoring of the boat ramp allows for people to ignore the rules and has contributed to the discovery of milfoil. (Which was only discovered because of the working relationship the Pond Association has with a DCR plant biologist.)
- Swimming along the edge is ruing the pond. Erosion is becoming a major problem in many spots along the coastline. Trees are falling into the pond because of the erosion. Small trees are cut down for firewood for campfires along the edge.
- Drinking, picnicking etc. along the edge is a safety issue for illegal swimmers and boaters. Town police will ask offenders to leave, but only after being called by pond residents. A final note: Comet Pond is

one of the most clean, pure ponds in the state. The residents of the pond work diligently to respect the water and surrounding lands. Some residents have enjoyed the pond for generations. It is heartbreaking to see this beautiful resource be compromised because of lack of management."

- Littering (3 times)
- Littering and possible ATV use.
- Littering in Demond Pond
- LITTERING IS AWFUL!
- logging
- Many DCR employees thwart the will of the majority trail users
- Maybe we should let people play in nature their own way with out being controlled or told how to do it correctly. The only bad thing I see is the trash left behind by the lazy disrespectful humans.
- minor littering
- Mostly all the people I've encountered are Awesome . Only on a rare occasion do you find problem individuals
- Motor bikes (2 times)
- Motor bikes/4 wheelers
- Motor vehicle use.
- Motorcross bikes and ATV's
- Motorized vehicle use
- Motorized vehicles and alcohol
- Mountain Bike trails need to be marked better.
- Mountain bikers riding their bikes in unauthorized areas. Destroying cultural resources. Horses in unauthorized areas. ATV's
- Mountain Bikes cutting new trails
- Mountain biking (2 times)
- mountain biking on particular trails
- Mountain biking on secondary trails, which is largely "unauthorized" because of policy. The policy seems unduly restrictive given impact of responsible biking. Some new trails too close to wetlands have been cut, but rather than punish all, allow active, managed maintenance and effective enforcement.
- Mtb riding, which is absolutely ridiculous. There is no way MTB riding should be illegal, it is non-detrimental and enforcement is a complete waste of taxpayers \$
- N/A (37 times)
- Never came across
- night waterskiing
- Nkne
- None (63 times)
- None. Snowmobiling is allowed and often observed. Never noticed ATVs or dirt bikes.
- None.but hear stories of mountain bikers having issues.
- Not aware of any unauthorized activities (9 times)
- Not aware of any, but would be in favor of stopping these types of activities if they are occurring.
- Not aware of any. I've heard from others of motorized vehicles there though.
- Not aware. Gov Baker stated he would open trails to ATVs and this is a promise I haven't heard anything or any progress on yet. It's clear if you can pave a bike trail you can allow some ATVs for a few months a year.
- Not sure
- Nothing here, no need to shut down access after so many years
- Nothing illegal
- occasional 4 wheelers and motorcycles on back trails
- Occasional ATV use on Oakham side of Rutland state park
- occasional dirt bike or atv use
- occasional dirt bike use but for the most part they seem to be respectful
- Occasional dirt bikes on trails market not to use for this
- Occasionally come across dump sites, clearly from a car load
- Occasionally I have seen dumping of trash, very rarely drugs/alcohol.
- occasionally see atv's and dirt bikes, they need a place too, so far all have been courteous
- Off-road vehicle use
- off-trail biking
- Once in a while I bump into an atv user on state land.
- ORV and dirt bike use. Probably a small amount of mountain biking on trails (most has stopped). Unauthorized trail building has definitely stopped.
- ORVs, vandalism, dumping
- Other than DCR unreasonably restricting the public from enjoying tax-payer land, I have not encountered any illegal activity
- "Oversized motors on the lake
- Campfires on public lands
- Camping on public land
- Swimming in restricted areas"
- Parking and entering the pond on private property.
- People picnicking and having fires on DCR land. People not washing boats before launching.
- People riding 4 wheelers and dirt bikes on this land. Not a big deal but it can be a slight annoyance
- People walk in and swim illegally , camping on DCR property. Also boats with oversized engines use the pond illegally. And they don't wash the bottom of the boats before using the pond
- Personally not aware if any.
- Poaching, especially mushrooms.
- Probably a lot because you don't offer modern high quality recreational activities. It is much easier to get support from citizens when you allow reasonable access. A professionally planned and designed trail system would offer the experiences people seek so they don't try to create them on their own. It was also ensure the protection of natural resources.
- prostitution, underage drinking, partying, dumping of trash etc, jacking deer, bear baiting, pot growing, public recreation in areas not allowed
- Public Drinking
- Quad and dirt bike activity on Hubbardston WMA near Cunningham pond, behind Greenwood cemetery, and at the through the gate on High Bridge Road.
- R.V. and Ski Doo's
- Read previous entry. Along with people driving ATVs etc over the land and eroding it!
- See 9 above. Four wheeler, dirt bikes, and illegal dumping
- seems to be some target shooting off of trail/fire road at Crawford Road Rutland (close to 122). About once or twice a year ATVs attempt to use the trail. Otherwise nothing I know of.
- Smoking Pot and drinking While riding snowmobiles.
- Snowmobile riding, loud and fast!
- Snowmobiles
- Snowmobiling, ATV's
- some boaters possibly bringing invasive weeds to pond
- sometimes hear gunfire on a Sunday
- Stocked bird hunters intentionally shooting at/over non-hunters. Other intimidation from same.
- Swimming illegally. Litter.
- Swimming off of dcr property along shoreline of Comet Pond. Creates erosion and unstable shoreline

- Swimming off of floats and kayaks. Swimming off East bank shore. Fishing off of boat ramp. Picnicking on East bank of Comet and leaving trash. Going to the bathroom in the woods near water and in water.
- Swimming should only take place at the town beach on the west side of the pond or from home owners property. On summer weekends, at times dozens of people swim from the boat ramp, leaning on the "No Swimming" sign as they jump in the water. People sunbath and swim along the access road, lawn chairs blocking the road which is our driveway. They are not always agreeable about moving their chairs and blankets so we can drive by. None of these people should be there. I have read all the DCR regulations that clearly state swimming from the state boat ramp, water crafts and the shore line is forbidden.
- Target shooting, ATVs, I come across fire pits with beer empties, Sunday hunting, speeding trucks.
- The above concerns are what I witnessed in the past & do not know if problem activities continue. Worst was unauthorized use of ATV/dirt bikes on all DCR-owned properties in Hubbardston & DCR-owned properties abutting rail trail in Templeton & Hubbardston.
- The four wheelers on the trail
- The graffiti on the prison camps.
- The management of Asnacomet Pond in Hubbardston. Too many boats, Kayak's, & swimming off the boat ramp has increased to make it undesirable for locals to enjoy. A once beautiful area is now taken over by outsiders who do not follow the rules. The DCR has not done its job to protect this body of water.
- The old horse trails were closed off. (Oakham) I don't understand why it is harmful to the land to walk along them.
- The only thing I've seen that I know is illegal is ATV usage....And people dragging sleds (with kids on them) behind snowmobiles.
- There are some people who like to make fires, leave trash, and trample the brush on the East shore of Asnacomet Pond.
- There have been illegally cut trails but the DCR has provided evidence of damage that is their own actions. Logging is a much more likely source of run off than mountain biking.
- There is a small dump of plastic containers filled with oil off of High Bridge Rd in a field. Can contact me for exact area Keith Tetreault 508-596-1119
- There is evidence of campfires, often with trash left behind. Illegal dumping of household items: tires, appliances, etc.
- There was some random trail cutting at one time, it appeared to be isolated cutting of small obstacles primarily performed by one person, it was stopped..
- Though it may or may not be illegal, motorized vehicles should be limited, not banned.
- Trail building without authorization has been isolated to a few unaffiliated persons and this is now history. Let's work together as groups for continued enjoyment of the land and great water.
- trail building, dog feces, horse fences, metal detecting, camping
- trail building...not as much as DCR thinks tho...it is hard to determine what is unauthorized trail building versus use of legacy trails and cart roads. What DCR considers an unauthorized trail, users consider them to be simply "trails that were there". What DCR thinks was an unauthorized trail may simply be a trail they did not know about.
- Trails, woods and streams dug up by ATVs
- Trash dumping (4 times)
- Trash dumping. I have heard (thirdhand) of illegal trail cutting in the past but don't think all mountain biking should be restricted because of it. Go after the perpetrators, not all cyclists.
- Trash/junk dumping and atv use.
- Trucks and atv use everywhere. Nothing is done to stop it
- Un supervised 2, 3, and 4 wheeled vehicles
- Unauthorized and excessive cutting of new trails by mountain bikers causing erosion
- Unauthorized ATV use on the Ware river rail trail in the Williamsville Pond area in Hubbardston.
- Unauthorized trail building, motorized ATV
- unaware of any unauthorized activities at this time (2 times)
- Unknown (8 times)
- Unlicensed snowmobiles and 4x4's in restricted areas.
- Use of 4 wheelers and motorbikes
- Use of any motorized vehicles... 4 wheelers and dirt motorcycles
- USGS drug usage, poor driving, acting inappropriate, and littering.
- Using drugs in the woods
- Utilizing the shoreline areas on the east side of Comet Pond for day and evening use.
- We have seen evidence of illegal logging operations. We have seen hunting on Sunday. We hear occasional late night parties in the area. Illegal dumping in the area.
- We have spoken with canoers on many occasions with our concerns, but are told that they don't care and have a right to be there. We pay taxes on our pond and feel that we should have some control over its use and protection of water quality and cleanliness not only for our farm use but also for its contribution to the Ware river water quality.
- We need to open it up to atv and side by side riders we have to pay sales tax but can't ride any where so we take our money out of state it would be great if we all could enjoy riding and being out in nature
- "We often hear gunshots during the spring/winter (like target practice) that we don't appreciate.
- We hear cars coming out during all hours of the night during the summer (mostly weekends, but sometimes weeknights). It doesn't bother us, kids being kids, but it is going on.
- Don't appreciate that my children going for a bike ride were threatened and harassed by officers."
- We used to see suspicious vehicles parked in the woods. Not so much now
- We walk the area around Barre Falls Dam almost daily. There is a lot of drinking in the recreational area. We pick up beer cans, bottles and nips off the road on a regular basis, trying to keep the area clean.
- We've seen what appear to be (teen?) party sites just off trails, with signs of fires and bottles/cans left behind. We've also seen dumping of tires and mechanical equipment.
- While hunting, it is not uncommon to come across small fire pits with beer cans and bottles strewn about

17. If DCR-DWSP were to offer programing in the Ware River Watershed, what type of program would you likely attend in the future?

- Activities promoting health. Group trail run or ride, youth mountain bike rides, perhaps fishing lessons for kids etc...
- all of the above
- All of the above for kids too
- Aquatic Invertebrates of pristine riparian habitat
- Atv group rides and trail side luncheon
- Better enforcement of environmental laws and protections for the water, animals, fish and birds.
- Bike tours..and kayak rentals.
- Biking (3 times)
- Bird watching
- bird/wildlife tracking
- Birding and owl walks
- Branch outside the normal
- clean up day
- Cycling
- DCR/NEMBA cooperation to re-open trails, maintain teas and get the public involved in building sustainable multi use trails
- dog park
- Educatuonal programs geared toward kids. And why hunting is important.
- Equine trail rides
- Family activities with young children.
- flora & fauna ID
- Forest yoga, meditation
- Forestry tours (these are already done but not well publicized); Trail sustainability tour (show good trails and why, show bad trails and why they're closed)
- Geocaching 101, to help everyone understand that geocaching is not detrimental to the environment!
- Geocaching event
- Group dog walk
- group kayak
- Group mountain bike rides
- Guest speaker at Comet Pond Association summer meeting
- Guide mountain bike rides
- Guided bike ride. Hiking isn't an option for older people with knee problems.
- guided bike tours
- Guided birdwatching walks
- Guided mountain biking (15 times)
- Horse rides
- Horses
- Hunting
- Hunting rules
- I run a afterschool and summer camp program for the Quabbin Regional School district and we are heavy on outdoor curriculum. I would love to see more guided hikes and education to help kids understand why conserving these areas is important.
- I would be interested in any program offered!
- Joint training with NEMBA
- Kayak tour, kayak training for beginner and intermediate (not white water) paddlers, history hike to tell about significant features/use of the land, how to spot wildlife
- Like email news to read
- Litter pick-up / trail and land maintenance outings
- Lots of history on those old roads . Cellar holes tell a great story
- Low impact use workshop (camping, hiking etc.)
- More mountain bike trails
- Mountain bike trail maintenance for sustainability
- Mountain biking fun rides to introduce more people to the area.
- Mountain biking use/maintenance & OHV use/maintenance
- Mushroom Education
- N/A (8 times)
- Nature item of any and all sorts - wildlife walks, owl prowls, etc
- None (10 times)
- Not interested
- Opening closed unauthorized trails to MTB use
- Opportunity for service projects for local area organizations such as the cub and boy scouts; film productions for public Access TV stations
- Organized trail maintenance (above and beyond Wachusett Greenways work on the MCRT) and litter cleanup (Litter cleanup is already offered). A formal trail maintenance program may help to discourage individuals from taking it upon themselves to perform trail maintenance and trail building.
- Organized trail ride on horses
- Organized trail rides (2 times)
- Please educate that the land was taken from the original homeowners for water quality. They had outhouses and farm animals, that was it for pollutants of groundwater.
- Prevention -Danger of and identification of invasive water plants
- Proibly not unless it interested me
- programming offered to specific resident groups for towns within the watershed; guided OTB to show what responsible mountain biking looks like (I am not a mountain biker)
- Programming with local schools, such as mountain bike trips
- Programs for land owner abutters.
- Programs for my son with Down Syndrome. More walks with organized groups for him; also educational programs maybe clearing trails, etc.
- Ranger's visits to area historical societies, civic groups, senior centers (comparable to Barre Senior Center's "Meet a Cop" sessions
- Recreational "How To" ofr the variety of activities folks would use the forest for. Major component to these educational experiences is to provide stewardship training.
- Sanctioned mountain bike ride in Rutland State Forest
- Scout programs
- Service project opportunities for scouts or other groups
- Should have same programs as other reservoirs. (no programs
- Similar to books about Dana, there are lots of cellar holes around and it would be fascinating to me to know what was where.
- Snowmobile safety course
- Something free and kid friendly
- Studied and researched affective mountain biking on watershed land
- support of pond associations
- swimming programs
- teach about, stay on the trail, for preservation !
- Trail building/ maintenance
- Trail clean up days, trail building classes
- Trail maintenance groups (3 times)
- trail maintenance workshops, Muli-user interaction educational classes
- Trail maintenance, building, and cleanup days
- Trail maintenance, forest management
- Trail maps

- Trail planning and building
- Trail removal projects
- Trail rides
- Trail signage
- Trail user/ access education
- Trails for atv
- use courtesy
- watershed forestry guided hike
- Why not a guided 4wheeler, side by side, 4x4 ride give participants a Walkie talkie and make it a history/ enviro edu opportunity
- Wild Life
- wildlife tracking, plant ID.....
- wildlife, plant life author Peter Wolenben
- Work with Pond Associations to control Weeds
- Youth Mountain Biking with NEHSCA
- Youth programs

18. While you are on DCR-DWSP lands in the Ware River watershed, is it clear to you what public access activities are allowed where and which are prohibited? What source of information was most clear to you?

- Aggressive signage
- All too clear!
- Although some trails now marked with "Closed to all users signs" for no apparent reason, which is unfair.
- As it relates to Demond Pond in Rutland
- Both
- Both website and signage
- But Mountain bikers don't obey signs
- Closed
- Clubs provide us info when we attend
- DCR signage (38 times)
- DCR trail maps
- DCR Website (5 times)
- DCR website and signage
- DCR websites & signage as well as word of mouth
- DCR, signs on trails,
- Direct signage
- Don't nail signs to trees, don't cut trees down if you want to claim protection of land
- Don't understand the question?
- Everything is well marked
- Felled trees by DCR rangers. Signs nailed to living trees
- For website
- Gates and "no motorized vehicles" signs
- Have asked for new signage to inform public on what is and is not allowed. But without enforcement, it makes no difference.
- History of being there. Overall signage not great.
- I am involved in the current debates over access.
- I do not understand why certain trails are closed, even when they aren't near a water source
- I have not been in some time, so not sure if new rules have been implemented
- I know what's prohibited but only have a sense of where
- I like the biking and no biking signs
- I think more clear markings on trails with signs so I know what activities are allowed. Horse sign, hiker sign, a sign that says no horse access, etc..
- I think the area needs better signage.
- I'm an abutter to DWSP land, but not knowledgeable
- In the past 3-5 years, more signs and cameras have gone up.
- Instruction from riding club
- It is clear to me that swimming is not authorized at the boat ramp.
- It is mostly clear, but sometimes some details are left out, giving violators the "green light".
- Kiosk at parking
- Living on the Pond I have spoken with the rangers.
- Lots of signs posted for horse riders, snowmobiles, and bikes. Also plenty of signs regarding hunting/fishing areas.
- Maps (2 times)
- MGL
- More Signage would great to clarify and direct the best routes. Some areas are a bit confusing in recent years related to whether a trail is open or not.
- More signs needed
- Most of the signs around Asnacomet Pond are ripped down, obliterated or COMPLETELY ignored!
- most trails are signed at the entry but after that it can be unclear
- Mostly signage and common knowledge from the MA hunting abstracts
- Mostly signage, but there could be more signage
- Need updated map
- no motorized vehicles
- No swimming signs at boat ramp
- No, because the law states that bikes are vehicles, but the word connotes motorized conveyance/ transport.
- not all the time can we find the signs
- Not always - I feel that signage could be improved to help people know and follow the rules.
- Not always clear.
- Not always proper signage, and website can be painful.
- On site signage
- On-site signage is essential
- Onsite signage, website information.
- People come on private property looking for the public beach
- Public meetings
- Rules are clear to residents of the pond, but it's unclear whether visitors understand the rules or just choose to not follow them because there is no-one from DCR monitoring the pond
- Rutland Rail trail. Green sign for DCR is right next to a no trespassing sign. a little confusing as to where you can and cannot go.
- Signage (107 times)
- Signage and conversation with dcr reps.
- Signage and local snowmobile clubs
- Signage and Rangers.
- Signage and website (4 times)
- signage at entrance to trails, NA to other areas
- signage at Public Access Boat ramp
- signage at the sight
- Signage has been damaged, especially those notifying the prohibition of the use of motorized vehicles.
- signage if present
- Signage indicating camera use to prosecute illegal use of trails by cyclists
- Signage is abundant and clear
- Signage is clear however consistent ATV and dirt bike use
- Signage is extremely lacking. The few signs we have are ignored and there is no enforcement of the regulations that are already in place.
- Signage is the only thing "on" DCR lands.

- Signage is very clear
- Signage was recently made more apparent
- signage would be better if color coding were used along with the universal symbols for horseback riding, etc...
- signage, and I'm on the WRWAC!
- signage, maps
- Signage, website, legend keys on trail maps
- Signage. Example, video cameras in use. No bikes.
- Signage...clear to me because I've studied it for so long....not clear to the first time visitor
- Signage/website
- Signs along roads and trails.
- Signs and website
- Signs are very clear
- Signs at trailhead
- Signs on gates
- Signs on the trails
- Signs posted in immediate area
- Signs posted with pictograms
- Signs everywhere there's signs
- Some trails are only clearly marked at formal trailheads, but are accessible from other trails or off other access points on roads that aren't posted with usage rules.
- sometimes the signage can be confusing. horse trails will just appear off of a main trail, how would a horse get to the trail with out access to the main trail? lol though I have never had an issue with walkers while on horseback, most folks are excited to meet a horse there. I would also say as I am a walker, have dogs and small children in my life when I am a horse rider and my horse drops stool on the main road I ALWAYS get off and kick it to the side as it is unsightly and distracts from the beauty especially to non horse people. In fact I have been known to dismount and kick poop off the trail that was there prior to me going there. I do not remove poop on the trail in the woods though as it just decomposes due to the natural make up of horse manure. Just grass/hay..

19. How did you learn about this survey?

- 3Cross Fermentation Coop Facebook post
- A neighbor
- a representative of the WRWAC informed me through an email
- abutter letter
- Also Town email listserv
- And emailed to me
- Asnacomet Pond Assn. (2 times)
- Barre Riding and Driving Club (5 times)
- Barre community Facebook page
- Coldbrook Snowmobile Club (5 times)
- Comet Pond association (2 times)
- Concerned people who pay taxes to enjoy the outdoor activities
- Cycling group
- cycling community communication
- DCR employee
- Demond Pond Watershed Association (8 times)
- email (15 times)
- email from bicycling organization
- Email from Rutland MA news and announcements
- Email from town
- Email from town of Hubbardston
- email from town of Rutland (2 times)
- emails from friends (4 times)
- Facebook (117 times)
- Forwarded by Seven Hilo's Wheelmen
- Friend on Hubbardston open space com.
- Friends of the Ware River Watershed (10 times)
- Friends of the Ware River Watershed and Fritz's Bicycle Shop

- Sometimes there is no signage
- Surveillance cameras in use lol get a grip
- the BRDC is very specific about informing where riding is allowed
- The reason for mountain bike ban is unclear
- The signage is confusing at some locations. For example all roads are open to biking but signage requires a bike medallion to be posted but no medallions are posted. This applies to horse back riding and snowmobiling as well. Put up the medallions or get rid of the confusing signs.
- The signage is there but the public pays no attention to it
- There are signs visible and easy to understand
- There is a sign regarding hunting but not about ATV, snowmobile use etc.
- There is no signage at the Rutland River Road Fishing Turn off.
- There need to be more signs telling people it is illegal to swim from the boat launch and shoreline. Swimming must be from the town beach.
- too much signage
- Trail signs.
- typically, signage
- we could use more rigorous signage on Demond Pond
- We need signage on Adams road at the entry point across the street from 36 Adams road
- Web and signage . The info is out there just need to look for it
- Web and signs
- Website (10 times)
- Website and signage (2 times)
- Website but signage also helped.
- website, signage/kiosk (2 times)
- Website, signage
- when you destroyed all the bicycling trails
- Yes only looking, the public is not allowed (with limited exceptions) to enjoy the land

- Geocacher on Facebook
- Geocaching
- google
(https://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2016/09/survey_seeks_input_on_public_a.html)
- Horse clubs
- Hubbardston's Facebook Page (2 times)
- I knew it was coming from the WRWAC meeting, but a FB friend just shared the link.
- Internet
- It was shared on a Facebook hunting page
- Lake Association announcement
- Letter to land abutter (6 times)
- Link from New England Mountain Bike Association
- Local town official
- My cellphone
- Neeca
- NEMBA (33 times)
- Other social media site
- Post on FB in Massachusetts Horse People group
- Reddington Rock Riding Club
- Rutland Town Email
- Seven Hills Wheelman (3 times)
- Shared by the Seven Hills wheelmen
- Shared on a FB geocaching page.
- Snowmobile Club (3 times)
- Social media (4 times)
- Town email & Facebook (26 times)
- Town Website
- Various land use advocacy organizations
- Worcester County Conservation District

Appendix D – Watershed Management Principles for Public Access in the Ware River Watershed (issued September 2018)

Below is a list of *guidepost principles and constraints* that inform decisions related to the management of lands/waters owned by DCR for drinking water supply protection. This watershed land was acquired by the State using water rate payer funding to protect water quality. These principles should be understood as general guidelines rather than strict criteria. They were articulated during the Ware River Public Access Management Plan update process to help frame discussions with stakeholders and for future use by DWSP. This is a living document, and it may be updated as necessary.

DCR/DWSP Public Access Management Principles:

1. Ensure DCR/MWRA's eligibility for an ongoing waiver from water filtration requirements by maintaining high water quality in the Ware River and its tributaries:
 - Protect tributaries from potential contaminants such as bacteria and turbidity.
 - Avoid expansion of activities including significant increase in total number of trail miles relative to current conditions.
 - Reduce unauthorized access.
 - Use effective barriers, where necessary.
 - Provide appropriate surveillance to assure compliance with rules.
2. Ensure safety and security of public drinking water supply watershed lands and waters – especially near Shaft 8.
3. Support public enjoyment of watershed land through multiple modalities to the extent possible while meeting all the other management principles herein.
4. Avoid having trails cross streams (i.e., use constructed roads for stream crossing).
5. Avoid concentrating use in erosive locations, considering factors such as slope, soils, vegetative cover-land cover classification, proposed uses, etc.
6. Protect sensitive/protected environmental resources and areas of concern (e.g., Natural Heritage species zones, rare species habitats and populations, unique natural communities or landscape features).
7. Ensure public access accommodates necessary forest management and infrastructure maintenance activities.
8. Prevent unintended impacts on adjacent public and private properties due to DCR access policies.
9. Protect cultural resources on watershed lands.
10. Ensure well-coordinated and defined maintenance and upkeep of approved trails, signage and points of access with groups and DCR-Parks.

Appendix E – DCR-DWSP’s Public Engagement Plan for the Update of the Ware River Watershed Public Access Management Plan (Issued September 2018)

The 2010 Ware River Watershed Public Access Management Plan will be updated by the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) beginning in the fall of 2018, with a completion target date of Dec. 2019. The anticipated process for engaging with key stakeholders and user groups as part of this plan update is outlined below.

Kickoff Meeting

Meeting with Ware River Watershed Advisory Committee (WRWAC) and public, April 12, 2018

Purpose:

- Review DCR’s watershed management priorities and the context for the plan revision
- Establish common understanding of geographic references and trail names
- Capture the initial range of concerns and interests from the WRWAC and user groups

Communicating Decision Criteria and Approach to Public Engagement

Meeting with WRWAC and public, Sept. 13, 2018

Purpose:

- Present DCR’s Watershed Management Principles for the Ware River, so all stakeholders have a common understanding of DCR’s goals and constraints governing public access
- Propose a Public Engagement Plan for discussion, to ensure effective ongoing communication and collaboration with stakeholders

In-Depth Issue Identification

From September through December 2018, DCR will work with all stakeholders to identify the key issues to be addressed by the plan update, guided by the Watershed Management Principles. Public sources of input during this phase will include:

- Surveys of watershed users conducted by field staff
- Targeted outreach to abutters/landowners in the watershed
- DCR “office hours” in Belchertown or Oakham to meet with user group representatives, by appointment (user groups are invited to select up to three representatives for these appointments)
- Online comment portal, posted at town halls, on town websites, and disseminated through the WRWAC

During this phase, DCR will also reach out to internal staff and other stakeholders, such as the MWRA, MassDEP, MassWildlife, the Army Corps of Engineers, etc.

Solution Analysis

Over the winter and spring of 2019, DCR will engage in focused, solution-oriented discussions to address the key public access management issues identified over the fall.

- Key stakeholders (e.g. user groups, land holders, partner organizations/agencies) will be invited to participate in the appropriate collaborative sessions.
- DCR's Watershed Management Principles will direct the search for solutions. Outcomes will not necessarily be consensus decisions, although consensus will be sought, where possible.
- The WRWAC will be regularly updated.

Solution Proposals

In the summer or fall of 2019, plan elements representing the proposed solutions to the identified issues will be presented to the WRWAC and the public in written form, for review and feedback.

- These plan elements will include maps, written descriptions, tables etc.
- If the review and feedback process bring to light misunderstandings from the collaborative sessions or critical new information, additional collaborative meetings may be scheduled to finalize the plan elements.

Draft Plan

A complete draft Ware River Watershed Public Access Management Plan will be presented to the WRWAC and at a public meeting, followed by a 30-day public comment period.

Public Comment Consideration

DCR will review, consider, and respond as appropriate to public comments.

Final Plan

The final plan is anticipated to be released in December 2019.

Appendix F – Public Comment and Agency Response: Summary Report

- WARE RIVER WATERSHED PUBLIC ACCESS MANAGEMENT PLAN -

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS ON 2022 DRAFT PLAN AND AGENCY RESPONSE

September 2023

This is a high-level summary of the public comments received by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Division of Water Supply Protection (DWSP) on its 2022 draft update to the Ware River Watershed Public Access Management Plan (WRWPAMP) and DWSP's actions in response to the comments. Note, more detailed descriptions of these public comments as well as summaries of the public engagement process that led to the 2022 draft are captured in other documents. DWSP would like to thank all commenters on the 2022 draft for sharing their concerns, questions, and comments.

1. A public meeting was held on November 29, 2022. At the meeting, DWSP presented an overview of the draft Public Access Management Plan to an audience of approximately 200 people. Verbal comments were recorded at the meeting and information about how to submit written comments was provided.
2. A comment portal on DCR's website was active from November 29, 2022, until February 28, 2023. The public could submit written comments through this portal.
3. DWSP staff attended meetings of the Ware River Watershed Advisory Committee (WRWAC) on November 17, 2022, February 9, 2023, February 23, 2023, and May 18, 2023. Feedback from the Committee was provided to DWSP at these meetings, and DWSP informed all participants about the comment portal.
4. Staff from DWSP met with the WRWAC Trails Subcommittee on January 11, 2023. Verbal feedback was provided to DWSP at the meeting.
5. Staff from DWSP met with representatives from the hunting and fishing community on January 26, 2023. Written and verbal feedback was provided to DWSP at the meeting.
6. Staff from DWSP met with representatives from the historical resource community on February 16, 2023. Written and verbal feedback was provided to DWSP at the meeting.
7. Written comments were directly handed to DWSP staff at various meetings.

Through the above channels of communication, DWSP:

- Recorded comments from the 47 individuals who spoke at the November 29th meeting.
- Received 211 written comments through its website portal, including comments from former Senator Gobi, and Representatives Ferguson and Berthiaume.
- Received written comment letters from two individuals, the select boards of Barre, Hubbardston, Oakham, and Rutland, the Historical Commissions of Barre and Rutland, the Barre Historical Society, and 11 sportsperson's clubs.
- Received a petition with 488 signatures.

What Were the Comments About?

General

- Most commenters expressed support or opposition to specific elements of the plan.
- The Ware River Watershed lands were frequently praised for providing high-quality access to nature, with many commenters expressing that this access is critical to their mental health and quality of life.
- Recreational users frequently commented that they are the “eyes and ears on the ground” of what is happening within the watershed and should be viewed as a resource for water quality protection.
- There was a commonly stated request that proof of water quality impacts or public safety problems precede any additional restrictions.
- There was a vocal contingent that opposed DCR’s control of access to watershed lands.

DWSP Response

- DWSP worked with regulators at the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), the DCR Commissioner’s Office, the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA), legislative representatives, and stakeholder groups to explore ways to address substantive points of public feedback (more detail below).
- DWSP is developing additional communication channels to stay in touch with users and provide information in a timely way.
- DWSP improved the WRWPAMP’s list of literature and data citations, providing references to current American Water Works Association watershed management and water supply guidance documents. References to existing DWSP reports were also expanded, which contain further bibliographies on watershed management topics, including forestry, wildlife, and water quality.
- DWSP is working to expand explanations of its management goals and statutory authority.

Areas of Substantive Support

The following plan elements, when mentioned, were generally viewed positively:

- New single-track mountain biking access
- The proposed intake protection buffer zone
- The proposed annual trail review policy
- The proposed shift to a multi-use trail network
- The proposed physical barriers to prevent driving directly into the Ware River.

DWSP Response

- DWSP intends to retain these elements in the plan.

Areas of Substantive Concern

1. Large group horse ride permits

Summary

The draft WRWPAMP eliminated large (>25) group horse ride permits, which would impact organized trail rides on DWSP property. Approximately 40 commenters indicated their disagreement with this policy change. In addition, written letters from the Bay State Trail Riders Association, Inc. and the Town of Hubbardston also objected to the proposed change.

DWSP Response

- DWSP staff asked concerned stakeholders for more detailed information about their prior large group rides and reviewed an email, letter, and map submitted with the requested information.
- DWSP staff met with MassDEP regulators to discuss these comments, review detailed material submitted by stakeholder groups, and explore options to balance:
 - Stakeholder comments
 - Concerns about trail erosion affecting maintenance and water quality
 - Concerns about horse waste affecting user experience and water quality
 - Concerns about direct animal contact with water affecting streambank integrity and water quality.
- DWSP met with the DCR Commissioner's Office, MassDEP Commissioner's Office, and EEA to further review options.
- DWSP amended the final plan: ***Up to two large group horse ride permits will be issued per year. Permit will allow DCR to review and approve/deny the route, require manure pick-up, and will have pre-and post-ride inspections by Watershed Rangers.***

2. Eliminating large motors on Long Pond

Summary

The draft WRWPAMP eliminated the large motor permit program for Long Pond, which would prevent water skiing and tubing on the pond. Motor boating would still be permitted on Long Pond, but motor size would be restricted to 20 hp two-stroke or 25 hp four-stroke motors, per DCR regulations. One commenter was in favor of this change, while 15 commenters expressed opposition.

DWSP Response

- DWSP staff met internally to explore options to balance:
 - Stakeholder comments
 - Concerns about shoreline erosion affecting habitat and water quality
 - Concerns about sediment resuspension affecting water quality
 - Concerns about spills of oil and gas
 - Concerns about human contact with water affecting water quality.

- DWSP met with the DCR Commissioner's Office, MassDEP Commissioner's Office, and EEA to review options.
- DWSP amended the final plan: *In 2024, 50 permits will be issued by lottery (if necessary). Permit applicants will be asked to identify anticipated use of pond (fishing, water skiing, or both). Pond usage studies will be undertaken throughout the season (e.g., boat motor size, usage, follow-up user survey). Based on these studies, DCR will determine if further restriction of permits or boat size is warranted.*

3. Open water swimming

Summary

The draft WRWPAMP eliminated open water (distance) swimming in Comet Pond per recent DCR agency-wide policy. One person expressed support for this change, while approximately 60 commenters expressed opposition. Additionally, many attendees at the November 29, 2022, meeting held signs opposing the new restriction.

DWSP Response

- DWSP staff met several times with DCR leadership, including the new Commissioner's office, to explore options to balance:
 - Stakeholder comments
 - Adherence to agency-wide policy based on concerns about public safety related to open water swimming.
- DWSP met with the DCR Commissioner's Office, MassDEP Commissioner's Office, and EEA to review options. The policy of no open water swimming throughout DCR (except Walden Pond) was revisited.
- DWSP amended the final plan: *An open water swimming entry point will be identified east of the boat ramp; distance swimming will not be restricted. Signage similar to DCR's Walden Pond State Reservation will be installed at the entry point.*

4. Night access

Summary

The draft WRWPAMP eliminated general access to DWSP's properties in the Ware River Watershed at night. The public would be able to access areas from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset. Approximately 30 commenters expressed opposition to this change. Additionally, at WRWAC meetings on several occasions and at a meeting with the WRWAC Trails Subcommittee, representatives of mountain bikers, snowmobilers, and the sporting community expressed objection to the nighttime restrictions, particularly in winter. Written letters from the Town of Hubbardston and Barre Sportsman's Club also expressed objection to the change.

DWSP Response

- DWSP staff met with sporting community representative groups to review the impact of the proposed policy on hunting for night-time game.
- DCR held internal meetings on night access, exploring options to balance:
 - Stakeholder comments
 - Public safety concerns
 - Concerns about the impact on water quality of illicit dumping, camping, and other nighttime activity
 - Consistency with DCR regulations and night access policies across most state-owned lands.
- DWSP met with the DCR Commissioner's Office, MassDEP Commissioner's Office, and EEA to review options.
- DWSP slightly amended the final plan: *DWSP Ware River watershed lands will be open for public access one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset, mirroring other watershed lands and DCR Parks. Snowmobile clubs may request group ride permits for night access. Hunters of specific species, per MassWildlife regulations, can request a permit for night access.*

5. Road closures to unauthorized vehicles

Summary

The draft WRWPAMP prohibited unauthorized vehicles from driving on most Division of Water Supply Protection internal and gated roads. Non-vehicular access is still allowed on these roads in accordance with relevant rules and restrictions. Based on comments received on earlier drafts of the plan, several roads were proposed to be kept open to vehicles for the general public, as conditions allowed, and other roads would be opened during the fall for licensed deer hunters. Three people expressed support of the 2022 proposal, while approximately 40 expressed opposition. In addition, written letters opposing the policy were received from the Select Boards of Barre and Rutland, the Barre Historical Society, the Historical Commissions of Rutland and Barre, and 11 Sportsman's clubs. Finally, a petition opposed to the proposal was signed by approximately 488 people. Many comments focused on the impacts to hunting and fishing activities.

DWSP Response

- DWSP staff met with sporting community representatives to review their proposal for additional internal road access and discuss specific location targets.
- DWSP staff met with representatives from the historic preservation community to review their additional internal road access requests and discuss their specific location targets.
- DWSP met internally to explore options to balance:
 - Access to important fishing, hunting, and historical/cultural destinations
 - Concerns about safety of non-vehicular recreational users caused by vehicles

- Concerns about vehicular access enabling dumping and other illegal activity that threatens water quality
- Concerns about overall numbers of vehicles throughout sensitive watershed lands
- Compliance with regulatory guidance provided by MassDEP.
- DWSP met with the DCR Commissioner's Office, MassDEP Commissioner's Office, and EEA to review options.
- DWSP amended the final plan: *Over seven miles of internal roads will be open to vehicles from dawn to dusk (an additional 2.5 miles relative to the draft plan), prioritizing access to points requested for hunting, fishing, and historical value. Additional roads will be opened in the fall to licensed, permitted deer hunters. DWSP will periodically review the internal road network to evaluate if it meets the desired access goals. Adjustments (without expansion) will be considered during these reviews.*

Other Comments

A few additional comments related to more minor plan elements or asked for specific information.

DWSP Response

- DWSP has worked through additional comment to address errors and improve clarity. Where appropriate, staff are working to provide explanations or answers directly to commenters.