



**For immediate release
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DCR CREWS BEGIN LAYING ELECTRIC CABLE UNDER MT. WACHUSETT ROAD

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is laying an electric cable under the road that runs to the top of Mt. Wachusett in Princeton. During the work, expected to finish in July, the road will remain closed.

A severe ice storm last December toppled the above-ground power line that runs the length of the road. In the interest of public safety, DCR is replacing the cable under the roadbed rather than overhead.

“Laying this cable underground will ensure it is not damaged again in a storm,” said DCR Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr. “Public safety also will be greatly enhanced when the cable is not hanging overhead.”

Work on the cable began Monday, May 11. Normally, the Mt. Wachusett road opens for the season on Memorial Day. Due to the cable project, the opening is expected to be in July.

During the work, all trails in the Wachusett Mountain State Reservation will remain open.

The cable project will start at the top of Mt. Wachusett. Crews will dig a trench from the summit down the middle of what is called the Down Mountain road, and then along the two-way road to the entrance gate. As the trench is dug, the steel-encased cable will be buried and covered as the project moves down the mountain.

Burying the cable under the roadbed, rather than alongside the road, is designed to avoid negative impacts on wildlife. Laying the cable under the road will prevent even tree roots from being damaged. Although the project did not require formal Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) review, DCR discussed the plans with MEPA and Natural Heritage Program officials.

In addition to the electric cable, two additional conduits will be buried under the road for future electrical and communications use.

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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, and dams, in addition to 278 bridges and miles of roadways. Led by Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr., the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.