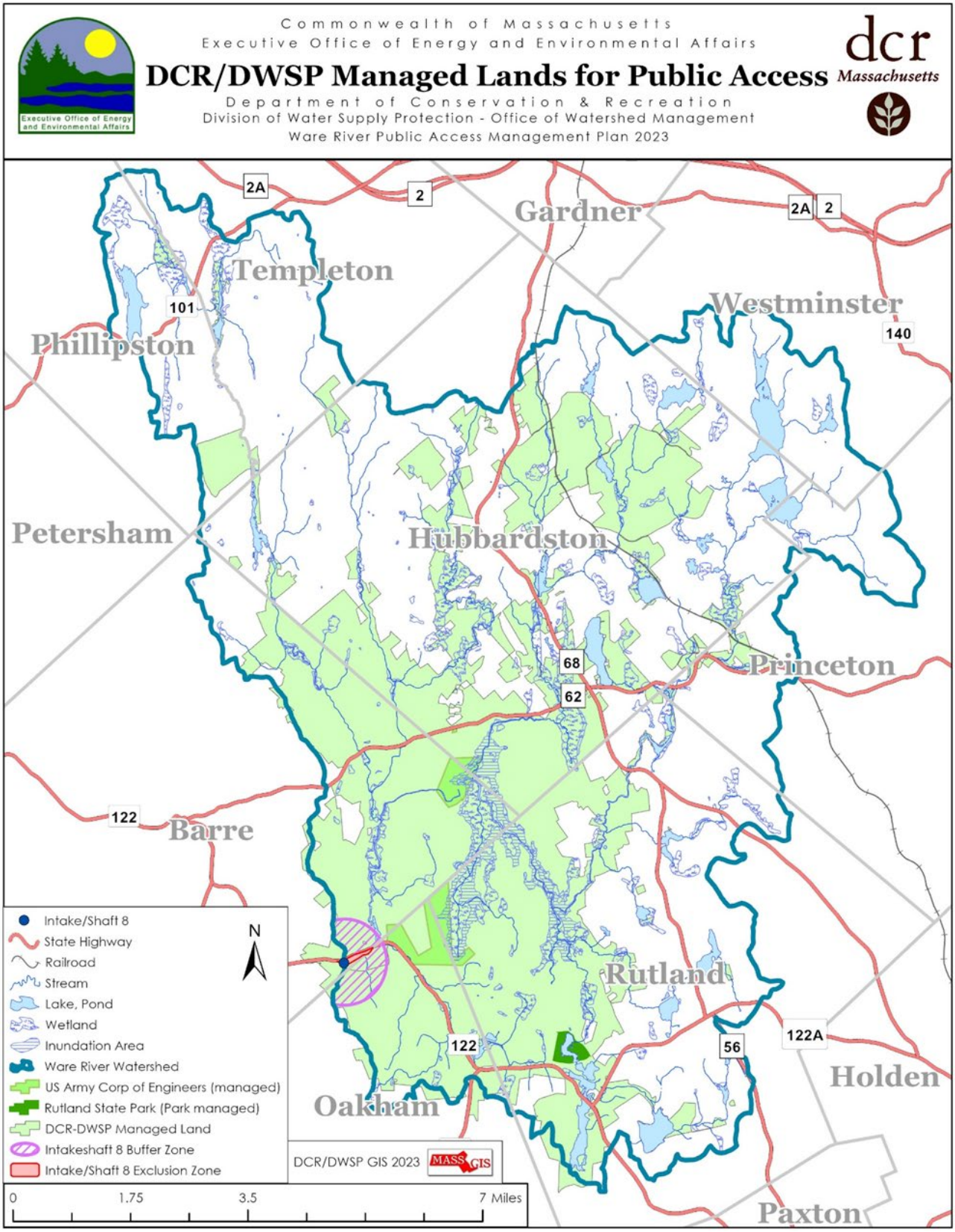
Ware River Watershed Specific Access Policies



Ware River Watershed Public Access Policies 2023

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

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).