



Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Water Supply Protection
Office of Watershed Management

Draft Watershed Management Principles for Public Access in the Ware River Watershed

Below is a list of *guidepost principles and constraints* that inform decisions related to the management of land and water owned in the Ware River watershed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Division of Water Supply Protection (DCR/DWSP) for drinking water supply protection. This drinking water supply is treated and distributed to 2.5 million people by the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA). The watershed property was acquired by the State using ratepayer funding specifically to protect water quality. These principles should be understood as general guidelines rather than strict criteria. They are articulated here to help frame discussions with stakeholders through the Public Access Management Plan update and beyond. This is a living document, and it may be updated as necessary.

DCR/DWSP Ware River Watershed 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 the Roger H. Lonergan Intake (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.**