

Named for the Nipmuc Indian word meaning “meeting of many waters,” Quabbin is one of the largest human-made drinking water reservoirs in the United States. Created in the 1930s by the construction of Winsor Dam and Goodnough Dike, the reservoir is still one of the largest unfiltered water supplies in the world and remains a remarkable feat of engineering.

Once the site of the towns of Dana, Prescott, Enfield, and Greenwich, the Swift River Valley was stripped of homes and businesses, a state highway, railroad line, and 34 cemeteries during reservoir construction. Ultimately, 2,500 people were removed from the valley to make way for the reservoir.

Today about two-thirds of the Swift River watershed is owned by the Commonwealth and managed by DCR’s Division of Water Supply Protection (DCR/DWSP). Fed by the three branches of the Swift, and seasonally by the Ware River, the reservoir is 18 miles long with 181 miles of shoreline, a capacity of 412 billion gallons and covers 25,000 acres when full. In order to meet the mandate to *“utilize and conserve said water and other natural resources...and to assure the availability of pure water for future generations,”* DCR/DWSP manages 56,000 acres of protected watershed land surrounding the reservoir for drinking water quality protection purposes by maintaining a healthy and diverse forest cover. On average, the reservoir collects one-half of the water that falls as rain or snow in the watershed area. Besides providing the principal supply of pure drinking water for 51 communities and 3 million residents of Massachusetts, Quabbin also offers a unique site for important scientific research on water quality, forestry, and wildlife topics.

For more information, please visit the DCR Quabbin Visitor Center at Winsor Dam in Belchertown, open Sunday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or call (413) 323-7221.

#### **QUABBIN RESERVOIR**

Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Division of Water Supply Protection  
485 Ware Road, Belchertown, MA 01007  
413-323-7221

[www.mass.gov/dcr/watershed](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/watershed)

Revised March 2020

# Fishing Guide 2020

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## Quabbin Reservoir

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dcr  
Massachusetts



2020

## Quabbin Reservoir Fishing Guide

Welcome to Quabbin Reservoir, the principal drinking water supply for 3 million Massachusetts residents. Since 1946, shore fishing has been allowed at the reservoir, and since 1952 a limited boat fishing program has been in existence. Please help preserve your fishing privileges and protect Quabbin's resources by following all rules and regulations.

All private boats launched on the reservoir must now have an intact Quabbin Boat Seal that certifies the craft has gone through a DCR approved decontamination process. Seals must be intact when the boats are inspected by Boat Launch Area attendants prior to launching. For the schedule of boat inspections/cleanings, visit [www.mass.gov/dcr/quabbinfish](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/quabbinfish). Call the Quabbin Visitor Center at (413) 323-7221 to make an appointment.

The 2020 Quabbin Fishing Season runs from April 18 to October 17, conditions permitting. Boat Launch Areas are open for the public's use seven days a week from 6:00 a.m. until closing. Closing times vary throughout the season as sunset times change and are listed under "Hours of Operation" in the "Boating Information" section. The closing and boats off the water times are prominently posted at the Boat Launch Areas as well. Daytime shore fishing is open seven days a week for the season.

### Fishing Licenses

- All persons over 15 years of age must have a valid MA Fishing/Sporting License or a Quabbin Fishing License.
- One-day Quabbin Fishing Licenses are available for purchase at the boat launch areas and the MassWildlife website for \$5.00.
- Quabbin Fishing Licenses are limited to the designated shore and boat fishing areas on Quabbin Reservoir during the Quabbin Fishing Season.

### Security Issues

- Notify officials if anything seems out of the ordinary.
- Report violations of DCR Regulations, suspicious activities or abnormal environmental conditions to DCR Watershed Rangers or the MA State Police.
- Boat Launch Area attendants monitor Marine Band Radio Channel 16 on a routine basis.
- National security conditions may require the temporary closure of the watershed to all public access.
- Notices will be posted at all access points if closure is necessary.

**Quabbin Watershed Rangers - (617) 828-2452** (mobile phone)  
**MA State Police-Quabbin- (413) 323-7561**  
**Quabbin Visitor Center- (413) 323-7221**

### Fishing Facts

Quabbin's fishery is comprised of both coldwater species (*trout and salmon*) and warm water species (*bass, pickerel, perch, and bullhead*). Most of the deep coldwater species occur on Quabbin's west arm, accessible from Gate #8 (Boat Launch Area #1). Deep water fishing is also available on the main part of the reservoir, but Gate #31 (Area #2) and Gate #43 (Area #3) also provide access to shallower waters which are better for warm water fishing.

Species	Creel Number	Minimum Size	State Record
Lake Trout	2	18"	25 lbs. 7 oz. <b>2016</b>
Brown Trout*	3	None	19 lbs. 10 oz. <b>1966</b>
Rainbow Trout*	3	None	13 lbs. 13 oz. <b>1999</b>
Brook Trout*	3	None	10 lbs. 0 oz. <b>2008</b>
Landlocked Salmon	2	15"	10 lbs 2 oz. <b>1985</b>
Chain Pickerel	5	15"	9 lbs. 5 oz. <b>1954</b>
Largemouth Bass**	5	12"	15 lbs. 8 oz. <b>1975</b>
Smallmouth Bass**	5	12"	8 lbs. 2 oz. <b>1991</b>
All others	None	None	

\* Total daily creel is three trout for this group.

\*\* Total daily creel is five bass for this group.

**Bait & Tackle:** Shops are located near the Boat Launch Areas in Pelham, Belchertown, and Orange..

**Camping & Picnicking:** For information on state park camping call (617) 626-3180 or visit [www.mass.gov/dcr](http://www.mass.gov/dcr). For information on private campgrounds call (617) 727-3201 or visit [www.campmass.com](http://www.campmass.com).

**Accommodations:** Available near the three Boat Launch Areas in Orange, Athol, Ware, and Amherst and near the turnpike access in Chicopee.

## Quabbin Loons & Eagles

Quabbin Reservoir is one of the few places in Massachusetts where Common Loons and Bald Eagles are known to consistently nest. These birds can easily be disturbed during the nesting season and many abandon their nests if approached too closely. Loons as well as eagles can become entangled in monofilament fishing line and wire leaders. Line and leaders have been found in Quabbin Bald Eagle nests and could kill young eagles. To protect these special birds, please obey the following:

- Dispose of fishing line properly. There is a **Fishing Line Recycling** receptacle at each boat launch area as well as in many locations around the reservoir.
- **The use of any lead fishing sinkers and lead jigs weighing less than 1 ounce is now prohibited in all Massachusetts inland waters (freshwater).** There is a **Lead Recycling Receptacle** at each boat launch area as well as in many locations around the reservoir. We encourage the use of non-toxic weights, sinkers and jigs instead of lead.
- Boat beaching is for rest room facility use only. Ten-minute limit per boat.
- Stay well away from eagle nest sites and steer boats away from swimming loons or perched eagles.
- Stay at least 150 feet away from loons, loon nesting sites, and loons with chicks.
- Respect “Wildlife Research Areas” posted with signs or marked with red buoys.
- Read and obey notices posted at Boat Launch Areas.
- State and federal laws protecting loons and eagles are strictly enforced.

For further information on Fishing Sinker, Weight and Jig Regulations, please refer to the notices posted at Boat Launch Areas information boards or the Massachusetts freshwater fishing regulations website: [www.mass.gov/guides/massachusetts-freshwater-fishing-regulations](http://www.mass.gov/guides/massachusetts-freshwater-fishing-regulations).

## Preserve your privilege to use this unique resource

- Know and obey DCR DWSP rules and regulations
- Violations of DCR/DWSP Regulations are punishable by fines up to \$50,000 or by imprisonment for not more than one year. Rule violations may result in loss of fishing privileges (MGL Ch. 92A½, Section 9.)
- **Damage to or littering in rental boats/motors may result in either loss of fishing privileges, damage charge, or both.**

Report violators to:

- Watershed Rangers at (413) 323-0191 (office)
- Watershed Rangers at (617) 828-2452 (field cell phone)
- State Police - Quabbin at (413) 323-7561
- BLA attendants

## Boating Information – 2020

### Hours of Operation for Public Use

- April 18 – April 27.....6:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
- April 28 – July 27 .....6:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.
- July 28– August 17 .....6:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
- August 18 - September 7 .....6:00 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.
- September 8 – October 17 .....6:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.
- **Boats must be off the water 1½ hours before the end of the posted Hours of Operation for Public Use.** “Boats Off the Water Time” is posted at each boat launch area throughout the season.
- Oars, gas, life preservers are supplied with each boat rental.
- All Boat Launch Areas are open seven days a week for the season.

### To Rent a Boat

- **Rental boat capacity is restricted to a maximum of three adults or two adults and two children under the age of 16.**
- You must be 16 years or older.
- Photo ID is required
- You must have a valid MA Fishing/Sporting License or a Quabbin Fishing License in your possession and also have fishing tackle (rods, reels, etc.).
- Boats are rented First Come-**First** Serve.
- Credit card or cash payments accepted.
- **NO bills larger than \$50.**
- Rentals before 12:30 p.m. pay full day rate.

### Required for Private Boats

- **Intact DCR Quabbin Boat Seal.**
- You must have a valid MA Fishing/Sporting License or a Quabbin Fishing License in your possession and also have fishing tackle (rods, reels, etc.).
- Chock blocks on vehicles when launching or removing boat from the reservoir.
- Rubber boots when launching and removing boat from reservoir.
- Safety equipment in compliance with U.S. Coast Guard Regulations.
- **Private boats are restricted to no more than 4 individuals per boat.**

### Quabbin Boat Seal Program

All private boats must have an intact Quabbin Boat Seal (QBS) to be eligible for launching on the reservoir. Seals can be obtained through a DCR approved decontamination and inspection process. For a schedule of boat inspections/washings and additional information about the Quabbin Boat Seal Program, call the Quabbin Visitor Center at (413) 323-7221 or visit [www.mass.gov/dcr/quabbinfish](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/quabbinfish).

- Seals must be intact when arriving at the boat launch area.
- DCR personnel will inspect the QBS, then break it before launching.
- As a boat is removed from the reservoir, it will be resealed to the trailer by the attendant.
- Tampering with QBS is a violation of DCR Rules and Regulations and will result in loss of Quabbin fishing privileges and possible fines.

## Canoe and Kayak Access

Private canoe and kayak access to the regulating ponds of Quabbin Reservoir is no longer allowed due to concerns with the introduction of aquatic invasive species. However, DCR has a limited number of canoes and kayaks available to rent for fishing on a first come-first serve basis at Boat Launch Areas #2 and #3 for use on the regulating ponds at these areas. Fishing/ Sporting Licenses or Quabbin Fishing Licenses are required for renting boats. All MA boating regulations for Quabbin Reservoir apply to these crafts. Each person on board a canoe or kayak from September 15-May 15 must wear a USCG approved PFD at all times.

## Boat Launch Fees – 2020

### Parking and Fishing Access

Vehicle ..... \$6.00  
Vehicle and Trailer\* ..... \$8.00

### Seasonal Parking pass

\$50.00

### Boat Only, Kayak/Canoe Rental

Full day ..... \$14.00  
Afternoon\*\* ..... \$10.00

### Boat and Motor Rental

Full day ..... \$40.00  
Afternoon\*\* ..... \$30.00

## Senior Citizens (62 and older)

Parking and Season Pass.....Half Price

Boat Rental.....Half Price on weekdays\*\*\*

## Handicapped (with placard)

Parking and Season Pass.....Half Price

Boat Rental.....Half Price

\* *Parking for vehicle and trailer includes launch fees*

\*\**Afternoon rentals start at 12:30 p.m.*

\*\*\**Excludes holidays and weekend days*

***No bills larger than \$50 will be accepted.***

## Outboard Motor Size Limits

- DCR Rental Boats are limited to 10 horsepower (hp) maximum.
- Private motors must have an intact Quabbin Boat Seal before use.
- ***Two-stroke engines:*** Private boats with 2-stroke engines are limited to ½ the Boating Industries of America (BIA) or Outboard Boating Council (OBC) hp rating of the boat up to a maximum of 20 hp.
- ***Four-stroke engines:*** Private boats with 4-stroke engines are limited to ½ the BIA or OBC hp rating. Private boats with 4-stroke engines 40 hp or larger are limited to a maximum of 25 hp.
- Private boats may use two motors provided the total does not exceed the hp limits. If hp exceeds the limits the propeller on larger motor needs to be removed.

## Restroom Facilities

- Portable toilet location are marked with white buoys and are identified on map.
- ***Beaching is allowed at designated sites for restroom facility use ONLY.***
- Ten minute limit per boat.

## Pond Fishing

- Carry-in boat access and use is allowed on South Spectacle and Bassett ponds only.
- Boat fishing is allowed on Pepper's Mill Pond with non-motorized, carry-in boats.
- Allowed on certain ponds on DCR land outside Routes 202, 122, 32A, and 9 with restrictions. Contact the Quabbin Visitor Center for further information.
- All Quabbin rules and regulations apply.

## Bait

- Live bait may be used.
- Chumming is ***PROHIBITED***.
- Smelt bait is legal only ***AFTER*** May 15.

## Fish Advisory

- The DCR and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health have issued a health advisory for persons consuming Quabbin fish.
- The advisory recommends limiting or eliminating consumption of certain species of fish due to elevated levels of mercury found in fish samples.
- Water test results indicate that mercury has not affected the drinking water and levels are well below federal drinking water standards.

Consult the complete fishing advisory posted on the bulletin boards at the boat launch areas, ask the attendant for further information, or visit [www.mass.gov/dph/fishadvisories](http://www.mass.gov/dph/fishadvisories).

## Prevent the Spread of Aquatic Invasive Species

Aquatic invasive species can be spread from one water body to another in boats and trailers, and on fishing equipment. These aggressive invasive species displace local plants and animals, negatively impacting local ecosystems, water quality, and fishing. To minimize the spread of these species please take these precautionary steps:

- Do not dump bait worms or the dirt onto the ground or in the water.
- Clean your equipment of any plant fragments or mud or debris before transporting.
- Dispose of material far away from water bodies.
- Eliminate water from equipment before transporting.
- Never release plants, fish or animals into a body of water unless they came from that water body.
- All boats launched at Quabbin Reservoir must have an intact Quabbin Boat Seal upon arrival. The boat is resealed to the trailer by the Boat Launch Attendant upon removal from the reservoir.

For more information, visit [www.mass.gov/lakesandponds](http://www.mass.gov/lakesandponds) or [www.stopaquaticinvasive.org](http://www.stopaquaticinvasive.org).

### **Boat Launching Area #1 - Gate 8**

**William E. Pula Fishing Area**-Located in Pelham off Route 202, 4½ miles north of the intersection with Route 9. This area is considered prime for coldwater fish such as trout and salmon. (lat = 42.3504, lon = -72.4004)

### **Boat Launching Area #2 - Gate 31**

**Robert D. Wetmore Fishing Area** - Located in New Salem off Route 122, just south of the intersection with Route 202. This area provides a great variety of warm water fish in addition to trout and salmon.  
(lat = 42.5236, lon = -72.2874)

### **Boat Launching Area #3 - Gate 43**

**Stephen M. Brewer Fishing Area** - Located in Hardwick off Greenwich Road, west of Route 32A. This area offers excellent warm water fishing, in addition to trout and salmon.  
(lat = 42.3736, lon = -72.2340)

### **Shore Fishing**

- Access is allowed during daylight hours along designated shorelines from Gates 8 to 16A, and from Gates 22 to 44.
- Vehicles parked in front of gates will be towed at the owner's expense.
- Bicycle access is allowed only on designated roads between Gates 29 and 35, and at Gates 40, 43, and 44. Bike access to Gate 8 is open only April 18- October 17, 2020.
- Parking fees apply to shore fishing at Boat Launch Areas.
- No fires are permitted at any time.
- Night access is allowed with a valid permit at Gates 16, 31, 33, 35, 41 and 43 during the Quabbin Fishing Season. Permit applications are available at the Quabbin Visitor Center and the DCR web site [www.mass.gov/service-details/watershed-permits](http://www.mass.gov/service-details/watershed-permits)
- Call the Quabbin Visitor Center for further details - (413) 323-7221.

### **Stream Fishing**

#### **Quabbin Reservation - DCR land within Rts. 202, 122, 32A & 9:**

- Allowed during the Quabbin Fishing Season on tributaries which enter the reservoir within legal shore fishing areas.

#### **DCR land outside Rts. 202, 122, 32A & 9:**

- Allowed during the regular State Fishing Season.

### **Swift River below Winsor Dam**

- Open year-round between 4 a.m. and 9 p.m. without a permit from the Winsor Dam "Y Pool" to Route 9 for fly fishing only on a catch and release basis. Waders must be worn. A "No Trespassing Zone" has been established around the Power Station where all public access is prohibited.

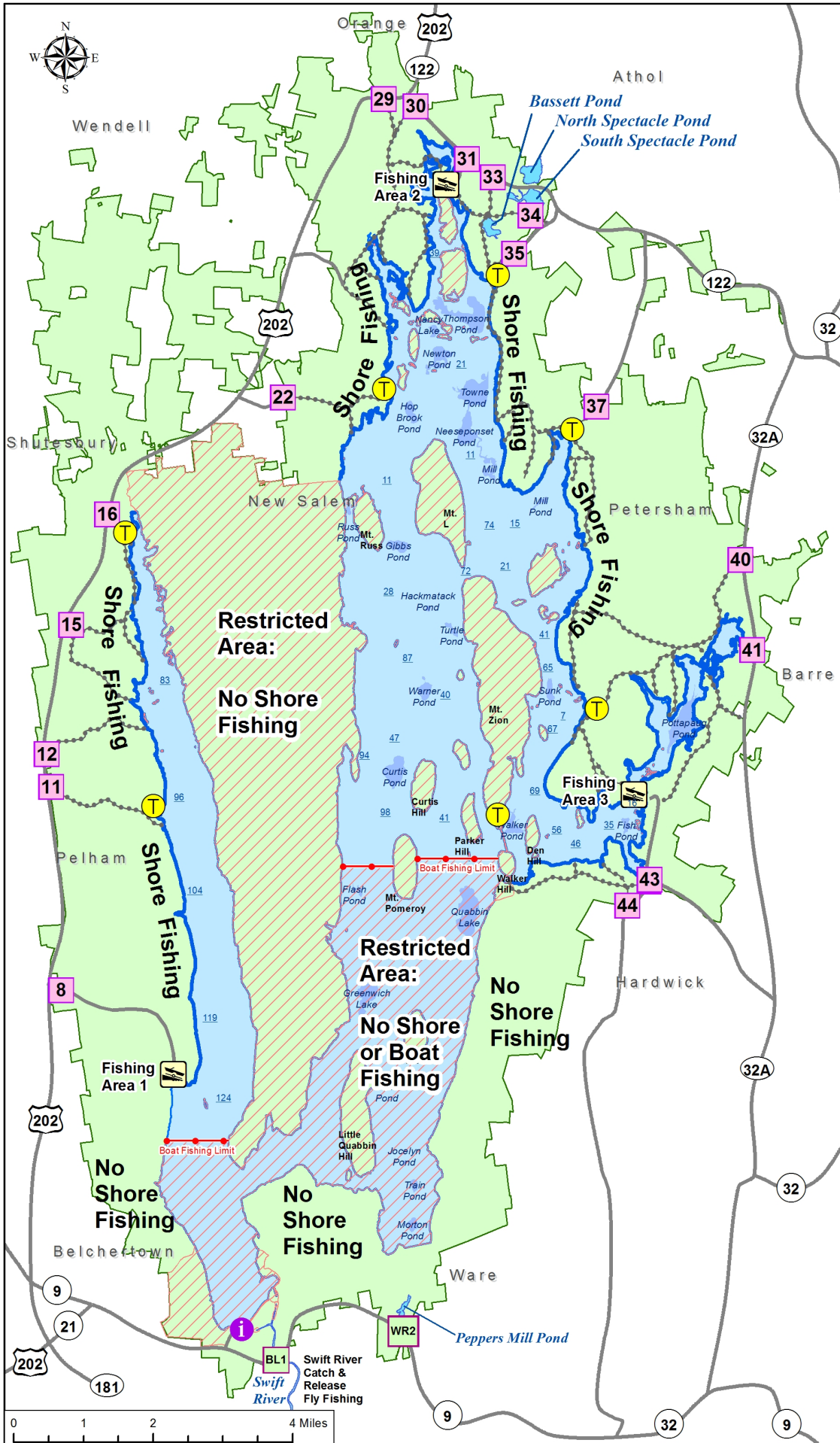
### **Boating Regulations**

- ***Boat beaching is for rest room facility use or emergencies only. Ten-minute limit per boat.***
- All private boats must have an intact Quabbin Boat Seal sealing the boat to the trailer.
- The Quabbin Boat Seal will be broken by the Boat Launch Area Attendant before the boat is launched. The boat will be resealed to the trailer upon exit from the boat launch area.
- Private motors used on DCR Rental Boats must have an intact Quabbin Boat Seal.
- Rented boats may carry a maximum of three people (or two adults and two children). Private buoys may carry a maximum of four people.
- All boats must be at least 12 feet long and in compliance with MA boating laws.
- Jon boats are restricted to the Regulating Ponds above the Horseshoe Dams at Gates 31 and 43.
- Jon boats larger than 14' 6" in length are limited to 3 persons; between 12' and 14' 6" are limited to 2 persons.
- DCR Rental Boats are limited to 10 horsepower (hp) maximum.
- Boats must return to launch area by posted times.
- Canoes are limited to 2 persons; kayaks are limited to 1 person.
- No boats may be launched within 2 hours of the posted "Boats Off the Water" time.
- Boats must be operated at a safe and reasonable speed.
- Persons under 16 years **MUST** be accompanied by an adult.
- Flashlights or a cyalume chemical stick are recommended in the event you need to be rescued.

### **PROHIBITED**

- ***NO landing of boats on shoreline or islands except at designated sites for restroom facility use or emergencies***
- ***NO alcoholic beverages***
- NO dogs or other animals
- NO swimming or wading
- NO pontoon boats, inflatable boats, or sailboats
- NO boat fishing beyond barrel lines (see map)
- NO feeding or harassing wildlife
- NO camping
- NO fires
- NO drones
- NO disposal of materials in the reservoir or reservation
- NO acts that pollute the water supply





The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION & RECREATION  
Division of Water Supply Protection  
Office of Watershed Management



# Quabbin Reservoir Fishing Map



- Visitor Center
- Fishing Area (Boat Launch)
- Portable Toilet
- Gate: Day Access Only
- Feet Below 530 Elevation
- Shoreline Fishing
- Boat Fishing Limit
- Road
- Access Route
- Restricted Area
- Quabbin Land Boundary
- Quabbin Reservoir
- Fishing Pond
- Submerged Pond

**DCR Contact Information:**  
Visitor Center: (413) 323-7221  
Ranger Station: (413) 323-0191  
Ranger Mobile: (617) 828-2452

This map is composed of geographic data provided by MassGIS and DCR, agencies within the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA).

