

Stewardship Forest

Another area the Visitor Center Loop Trail passes through is known as the Stewardship Forest. It is located a half mile behind the Visitor Center on a tract of land that was selectively logged back in the 2007 and 2008 seasons. This was done to open up the forest canopy and allow additional sunlight to penetrate down to the ground level, which helps promote additional age and species diversity throughout the forest. Since then, vigorous regeneration has taken over much of the trail and made it increasingly difficult to navigate. A timber frame was constructed by volunteers which houses a detailed forestry display.

During the 2012 season the SCA spent nine days at Quabbin improving and reestablishing the section of trails that pass through the Stewardship Forest. Their first job was to flag sections of the trail that needed to be rerouted. One slope in particular was fairly steep so a series of switchbacks were created to make the pitch more moderate, and in turn, make the trail safer and more user friendly.



Additionally, hand tools were used to remove vegetation from sections of the trail that had become overgrown.

A positive benefit of widening and clearing the trail will be the reduction in contact with ticks, as there will be less vegetation to brush up against while hiking.



Ridge Section

The ridge trail can be found behind the Visitor Center and provides a conclusion to the Swift River Loop Trail. The path runs along the top of a steep ridge and has two viewing areas along the way.

The SCA worked on this section during the 2006 and 2012 seasons. Along with clearing the path of excess vegetation, a set of wooden benches were constructed at each of the two overlooks located along the trail. The trail passes through a power line corridor opening, and had to be cleared of woody debris and is now much easier to navigate.

Oriental Bittersweet, an invasive plant species, had also overtaken portions of the trail and needed to be eradicated. The plants were pulled by hand, very carefully, to get as much of the root system out of the ground as possible since any roots left behind are able to spread via root suckering. This makes the mechanical control of Oriental Bittersweet more of a long-term project with additional monitoring and management required for the future.

QUABBIN RULES AND REGULATIONS

ALLOWED IN DESIGNATED AREAS

- Fishing
- Bicycling
- Hiking
- Picnicking (without fire or grills)

ACCESS IS RESTRICTED TO HOURS POSTED AT GATES AND ENTRANCES

PROHIBITED

- Feeding wildlife
- Disposal of human waste, refuse, or litter anywhere except where appropriate receptacles are provided
- Alcoholic beverages
- Swimming and wading
- All fires
- Horses, dogs, and other domestic animals
- Camping, skiing, hunting, trapping, and firearms
- Trespassing in restricted areas and on the ice
- Removal of historic artifacts or natural resources
- Drones

Please report violators to:

Watershed Rangers – 413-323-0191

State Police (Quabbin) – 413-323-7561

QUABBIN RESERVOIR

Department of Conservation and Recreation
100 Winsor Dam Road, Belchertown, MA 01007
413-323-7221

www.mass.gov/locations/quabbin-reservoir

www.mass.gov/dcr/watershed

Quabbin Park and Reservoir

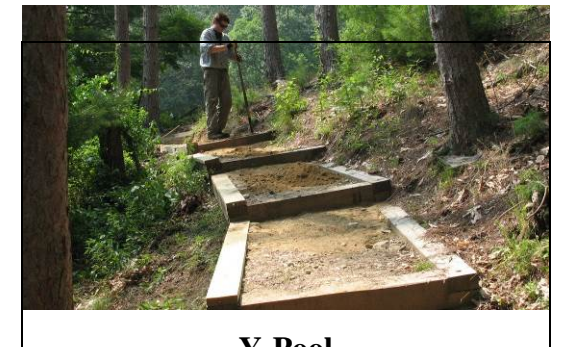
Visitor Center Loop Trail



Map and Guide

Background

The Visitor Center Loop Trail was established to provide a light to moderate grade nature hike that is easily accessible from the Quabbin Visitor Center. The complete loop is two miles long and was created by linking together a number of shorter trails in the immediate area. Trees along the loop have been marked with yellow blazing to denote the trail. The Student Conservation Association (SCA) regularly sends a crew to Quabbin for roughly nine days each summer to help improve and enhance various sections of trail throughout Quabbin Park.



Y-Pool

The section of trail known as the Y-Pool is located just below the Winsor Dam and travels along the bank of the Swift River. This area was extensively worked on by the SCA, with supplemental help from Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) staff. The bridge that carries visitors across the Swift River channel was retrofitted to make it universally accessible. Also, the trail leading from the rotary at the base of the dam down to the Swift River was reworked with a series of terraces added to make a more gentle slope. Lastly, retaining walls were constructed at points where the riverbank had been eroded and wood chips were spread along the trail bed to buffer the root systems of trees along the riparian zone.

