



Wachusett Reservoir Watershed 2011 Public Access Plan Update



June 2011

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

Abstract

The Department of Conservation and Recreation Division of Water Supply Protection (DCR/DWSP or DCR-Watershed) owns 21,028 acres of land in the Wachusett Reservoir Watershed (including the reservoir). DCR/DWSP manages these watersheds primarily for water quality protection, drinking water supply, and environmental resource protection purposes. The *Wachusett Reservoir Watershed 2011 Public Access Plan Update* explains DCR/DWSP policies and outlines control measures to be used to mitigate impacts from public access on those lands. This plan includes policies for common recreational activities that occur on the land and water resources in the Wachusett Reservoir watershed. This update builds upon the information provided in previous public access plans and uses current regulations and legislation to outline policies for public access to DCR/DWSP property in Boylston, Clinton, Holden, Leominster, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling, and West Boylston. DCR/DWSP will begin implementation of the update to the *Wachusett Reservoir Watershed 2011 Public Access Plan Update* in July 2011.

Acknowledgements

This plan was prepared by staff of the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Water Supply Protection. Kelley Freda, Environmental Analyst is the principal author of this report with key contributions from John Scannell, Regional Director, Derek Liimatainen, Ranger Captain, and Pat Austin, Environmental Quality Supervisor. Additionally, valuable review comments and recommendations were provided by Larry Pistrang, Environmental Analyst. Final report production support provided by Joel Zimmerman, Regional Planner. All maps were produced by DCR/DWSP GIS staff Craig Fitzgerald using DCR and MassGIS data.



Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Deval L. Patrick, Governor

Timothy P. Murray, Lt. Governor

Richard K. Sullivan, Jr., Secretary, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Edward M. Lambert, Jr., Commissioner, Department of Conservation and Recreation

Jonathan L. Yeo, Director, Division of Water Supply Protection

Wachusett Reservoir Watershed 2011 Public Access Plan Update

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Wachusett Reservoir Watershed 2011 Public Access Plan Update

I. Introduction

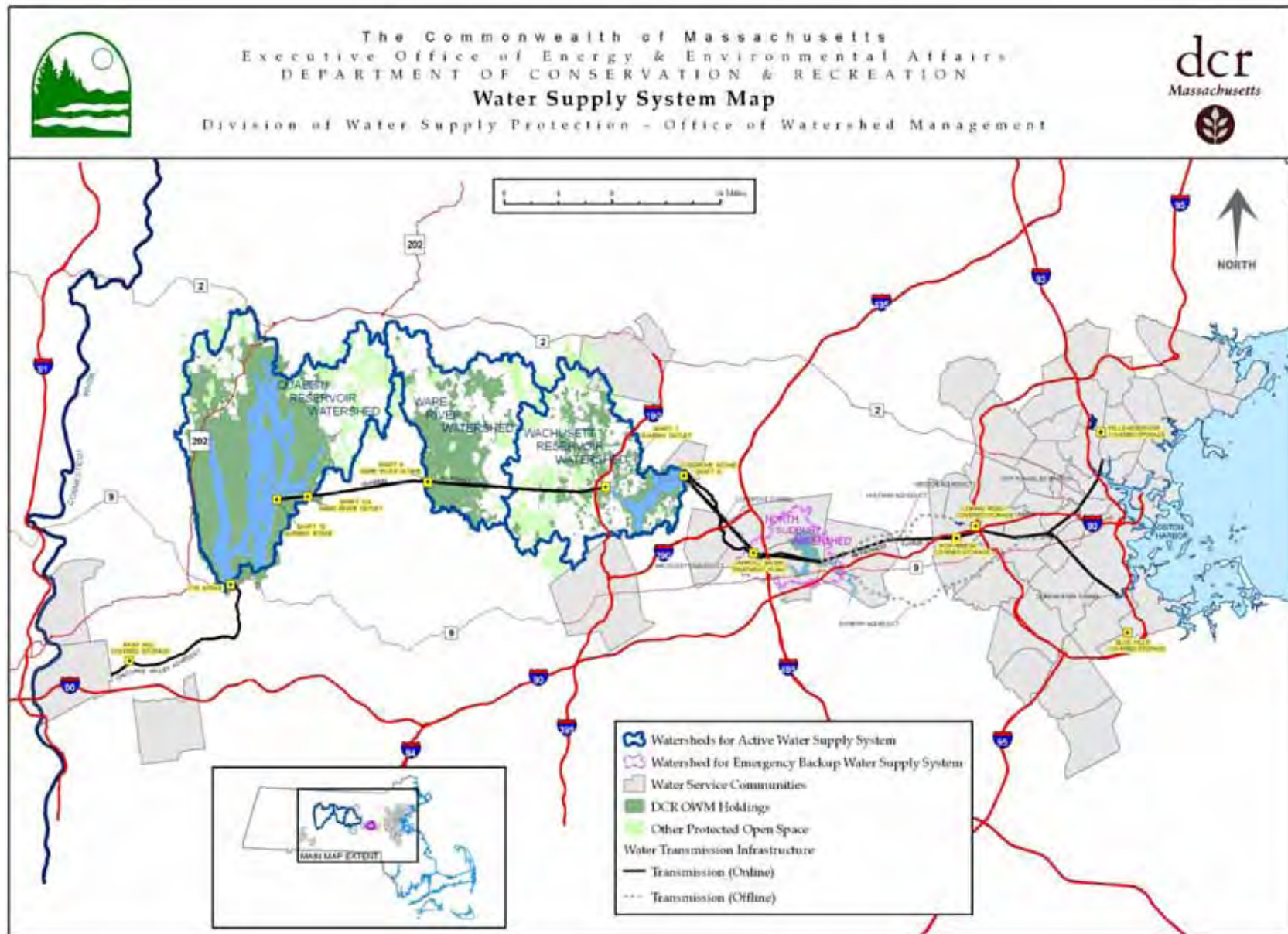
The purpose of this plan is to guide and control public access and use of lands managed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Water Supply Protection (DCR/DWSP) within the Wachusett Reservoir watershed. The 117 square mile Wachusett Reservoir watershed includes portions of Boylston, Clinton, Holden, Hubbardston, Leominster, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling, West Boylston, Westminster, and Worcester. The DCR Water Supply System provides source drinking water to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA). It is comprised of two supply reservoirs, one upstream of the other. Wachusett Reservoir, the terminal supply reservoir, receives runoff from its watershed as well as transfers from the Quabbin Reservoir through the Quabbin Aqueduct. Flow from the Ware River Watershed, located between the Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoir watersheds, can be diverted to Quabbin Reservoir by reversing flow in the Quabbin Aqueduct. Thus, Ware River flows can only be diverted to Quabbin Reservoir when the Quabbin Aqueduct is not being used to transfer flow from Quabbin to Wachusett (**Figure 1**).

Public access to and recreational use of water supply lands are complex and sometimes controversial issues. There is an inherent conflict between water supply protection and public demand for access to these lands. Any human activity on or near water supply source waters can introduce disease-causing agents to the water supply. Water supply managers must exercise caution when considering policies for public access and recreation on water supply lands. At the same time, the Division recognizes that these reservoirs and the DCR lands surrounding them are valuable environmental resources of the Commonwealth that are attractive to watershed residents and the general public. DCR/DWSP views its Public Access Plans as a blueprint for determining the levels of access that may be allowed without risking water supply safety, security, or re-directing resources of a Division whose primary responsibility is water supply protection.

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs 2006 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) was reviewed for this plan; common issues and activities were integrated when appropriate for water supply protection lands. DCR/DWSP's goals and implementation priorities in the Wachusett Reservoir watershed, however, are based on its mission to protect this drinking water supply resource from public access impacts.

The policies outlined in this plan are for land owned in fee by DCR/DWSP. DCR/DWSP also controls the development rights to 2,398 acres through deeded Watershed Preservation Restrictions (WPR, synonymous to Conservation Restriction, is the term used for these types of covenants in the DCR Watershed System encompassing the Quabbin Reservoir, Ware River, and Wachusett Reservoir watersheds). The purchase of a WPR by the DCR does not give the public any rights to access the property. ***Public access on DCR Watershed Preservation Restrictions is solely at the discretion of the landowner.***

Figure 1. DCR/MWRA Water Supply System



II. Overview of the DCR/MWRA Water Supply System

A. Brief History

The Boston area drinking water supply has grown from 18th century cisterns to two source supply reservoirs that were the largest of their kinds when constructed in the first half of the 20th century. The name of the agency responsible for these invaluable resources have changed many times over the past two centuries, but the mission of stewardship has remained constant. Shortly after the construction of the Wachusett Reservoir, Chapter 350 of the Acts of 1919, Section 123 gave control of this water supply system from the Metropolitan Water and Seward Board to the Water Division of a newly created state agency, the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC).

Over fifty years later, as part of the efforts to clean up Boston Harbor, the Massachusetts legislature, under Chapter 372 of the Acts of 1984, divided the former MDC Water Division into the MDC Division of Watershed Management and the Waterworks Division of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA). The MDC/DWM became responsible for reservoir watershed operation and management to supply a safe and sufficient supply of water to the MWRA; the MWRA became responsible for the treatment and distribution of this water.

In July 2003, Chapter 26 of the Acts of 2003, section 290 merged the MDC with the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) to create the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). The responsibilities of the former MDC Division of Watershed Management were transferred in their entirety to the Office of Watershed Management within the Division of Water Supply Protection. The mission of the Office of Watershed Management remains constant: to provide pure water through responsible land management. Together, DCR/DWSP and the MWRA provide drinking water to more than 2.2 million residents in fifty-one communities.

There is a well established working relationship between DCR and MWRA. MWRA's ratepayers entirely fund the Office of Watershed Management's annual \$30 million budget, including costs associated with land acquisition and payments in lieu of taxes. The terms of this relationship are defined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two agencies. The latest version of this MOU, developed soon after the creation of DCR, was signed into effect in April, 2004. Though DCR/DWSP is a department of the Commonwealth, it is not funded through the Massachusetts taxpayer. The entire budget, including land purchases, is paid for through MWRA ratepayers.

The legislature further enhanced the ability of the Office of Watershed Management to maintain this drinking water supply by establishing a Water Supply Protection Trust, created by Chapter 149 of the Acts of 2004, s. 27, and written into the general laws at MGL c. 10, § 73. The Trust provides a more efficient mechanism for MWRA's funding of the Office of Watershed Management. The Water Supply Protection Trust has a five person board of trustees responsible for approving the Office of Watershed Management's annual work plan and budget each spring for the following fiscal year beginning in July.

B. DCR Division of Water Supply Protection Mission

The land surrounding the Wachusett Reservoir is managed by the DCR Division of Water Supply Protection, Office of Watershed Management in order to protect the quality of the reservoir water, enhance the ecological integrity of the watershed, and ensure the future protection of these valuable natural resources from pollution, encroachment, and environmentally damaging public use.

The Division's mission is laid out in its enabling legislation and subsequent amendments, found at M.G.L. ch. 92A½, §2. The statute directs the DCR/DWSP to:

...construct, maintain and operate a system of watersheds, reservoirs, water rights and rights in sources of water supply [to] supply thereby a sufficient supply of pure water to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, and [to] utilize and conserve said water and other natural resources to protect, preserve and enhance the environment of the Commonwealth and to assure the availability of pure water for future generations.

Building on this legislatively-defined mission, DCR/DWSP's current responsibilities include:

- 9 Maintenance and operation of the source facilities (including dams) safely and efficiently.
- 9 Preservation and enhancement of the water quality of the supply sources, using education, enforcement, and cooperation to meet state and federal water quality standards and protect public health.
- 9 Watershed management activities associated with surface water protection.
- 9 Regulatory compliance with specific directives of the Legislature, such as the protection of the water supply sources, consideration of recreation opportunities, and enforcing rules and regulations for DCR/DWSP lands and water resources.
- 9 Public outreach and education to involve watershed towns, residents, and the public to increase stewardship of the water resources under the DWSP's care and control.

DCR/DWSP staff concentrates on the management, operation, and maintenance of the DCR/MWRA water supply system watersheds, reservoirs, dams, and dikes. Division staff includes professional engineers, analysts, planners, watershed rangers, foresters, aquatic biologists, natural resources specialists, geographic information specialists, wildlife biologists, and support staff with a variety of skills and training. Division staff carries out specific watershed protection programs, provide public outreach and environmental education to watershed communities and visitors, and administers and enforces specific watershed protection regulations (350 CMR 11.00). Staff activities are guided, integrated, and prioritized by the *DCR/DWSP Watershed Protection Plan Update 2008*. Public access management within land owned by or on waters controlled by the Division is an important element of the DCR/DWSP comprehensive watershed protection program.

C. *Regulatory Overview*

Public drinking water supplies are highly regulated in the United States to protect public health. Both federal and state laws (including the U.S. Safe Drinking Water Act along with its 1996 Amendments, the Surface Water Treatment Rule, and the Massachusetts State Surface Water Supply Regulations (310 CMR 22.00, a subset of the Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations) require water providers to meet rigorous water quality standards for source waters. These standards change over time based on research and testing. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) administers federal water quality regulations throughout the country. In Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MA DEP) has been given primary responsibility for assuring compliance with state and federal drinking water regulations, and consistently monitors water quality throughout the DCR/MWRA water system to ensure compliance with these regulations.

Both the DEP and EPA conduct strict oversight of DCR operations and watershed protection activities in the Wachusett Reservoir watershed. DEP conducts annual inspections of the system because DCR is a public water supplier. DEP uses four distinct criteria in its evaluation of DCR's watershed protection efforts:

- 9 Demonstration and implementation of watershed control.
- 9 On-site inspection of the water supply system.
- 9 Documented absence of waterborne disease outbreaks.
- 9 Compliance with the existing U.S. Safe Drinking Water Act's maximum contaminant levels.

Each year that DEP has inspected DCR operations, it has found that DCR had demonstrated adequate control measure for water quality protection. The implementation of watershed plans, including the Wachusett Reservoir's Watershed Protection Plan, Public Access Plan, and Land Management Plan ensures that 2.2 million people and 5,500 industrial users continue to enjoy an abundant and high-quality water supply.

III. Plan Update

A. Watershed Protection Plans

Watershed Protection Plans were prepared in 1991 for the Wachusett Reservoir and Quabbin Reservoir/Ware River watersheds. These were the first comprehensive plans written for management of the watersheds. The Wachusett Watershed Protection Plan was updated in 1998 and 2003. The *2008 Watershed Protection Plan* updated and unified protection plan documents from the Wachusett Reservoir, Quabbin Reservoir, Ware River, and Sudbury/Foss Reservoirs Watersheds. The breadth and complexity of the Watershed System and DCR's comprehensive approach to watershed management necessitated producing this plan in five volumes. The Wachusett Watershed Protection Plan can be found in Volume IIC (www.mass.gov/dcr/watersupply/watershed/documents/2008dcrwppv2cwachusett.pdf). All plan updates reflect the shift of the water supply industry and federal drinking water regulations towards concern for microbial contaminants that can cause acute illness.

B. Purpose of a Public Access Plan

The purpose of DCR/DWSP's Public Access Plan is to guide and control public access, incorporating current information, so as to minimize the risk of impacts from recreational activities on the drinking water supply and other lands managed on a watershed basis. It is also used by DCR/DWSP to determine and set policy for low impact, passive recreation that is compatible with watershed protection on water supply lands. The federal Safe Drinking Water Act and Amendments, state drinking water regulations, and the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Watershed Protection Regulations require that public access on drinking water supply lands must be managed to minimize the risk of waterborne disease and to control other impacts such as erosion and sedimentation. The primary function of these water supply lands is to protect the DCR's ability to provide high-quality drinking water for current and future generations. The DCR/DWSP's access plans detail the Division's management rationale and explain which programs and activities are used to limit and control access to these lands and waters.

Public access, in the Division's management context, is a wide-ranging concept. It includes: the physical ability to enter and use land for recreational activities; the legal restrictions or prohibitions related to access or specific land or water-based recreational activities; sign placement; mapping; user education; and inter-governmental coordination and public safety.

C. Wachusett Public Access Plans

1. 1996 Plan

DCR watershed management policy has traditionally allowed passive recreation — recreation uses are considered passive where very minimum alteration of vegetation, topography or other native feature is necessary for the enjoyment of the site amenities — in the Wachusett Reservoir watershed. The 1996 *Wachusett Watershed MDC Public Access Plan* (the 1996 Plan) was the

first written Public Access Plan for the Wachusett Reservoir watershed. The goal of this plan was to reduce the existing level of threats to water quality from public use of DCR/DWSP watershed lands and to provide management programs that afford long term protection of Wachusett Reservoir. The 1996 Plan surveyed problems resulting from existing public access to watershed lands. The problems identified included dumping, poor sanitation (evidence of people and domestic animals defecating near the reservoir and improper disposal of dirty diapers), swimming, domestic animals, damage from motorized vehicles, and shoreline erosion.

While the Division realized that most of the visiting public complied with the existing rules and regulations, it was determined that new policies were needed to provide greater control over the minority of users who disregarded or abused the privilege of access to these water supply lands. In addition, it was clear that some activities, such as snowmobiling and bicycling, that were allowed in certain areas needed to be limited or curtailed.

2. 2003 Plan Update

The Wachusett Watershed Public Access Plan was updated and modified in 2003 based upon new information and staff observations while in the field. Minor policy changes made in this plan update included: integrating the Off-Watershed Zone into the Intake Protection Zone; expanding access for hiking, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing to lands east of Gates 1 and 2 on Route 70; and the removal of the permit requirement for bicycling in designated areas. Clarification of the bicycling policy included allowing bicycling from Gate 39 to 42 (the roadway alongside of the spillway to below the dam).

Chapter VI contains a status review of the recommendations made in the 2003 plan.

D. Why Update the Access Plan?

It is important to periodically review the Access Plan to identify changes in existing conditions, evaluate the policies that have been implemented, and assess additional needs to meet the mandate of water quality and resource protection. In addition, the desire to increase recreational opportunities on DCR property, and all other Commonwealth lands, has steadily grown due to the region's population growth and the current economic downturn. The Plan Update revises implementation priorities, re-assesses the public's recreational desires, and develops a response to evaluate these demands with the Division's primary goals of water supply and resource protection. The policy review and recommendations made in this Plan Update build upon the original 1996 Plan and 2003 Plan Update.

The events of September 11, 2001 have heightened concerns regarding security and the need to protect public water supplies from possible terrorist action, as well as to reassure the public that security plans are in place. These ongoing issues must be considered as any policy and public access are addressed.

It is important that current policies and visitor impacts be assessed and modified on a regular basis, since any recreational use of watershed lands and waters is a potential cause of water supply

contamination. Since 2003, there have been several changes in recreation patterns noted by staff in the field. There has also been an increase in the range of activities that are now available (i.e., geocaching and letterboxing) and the pressure for these activities to occur on DCR/DWSP lands. Plan updates allow for new activities taking place on DCR/DWSP lands not addressed in previous reports to be reviewed and current policy to be reassessed. This update takes into account research, studies, and information that is available on each recreational activity.

E. Public Input

DCR/DWSP has found public access management on public drinking water supply lands and waters to be a complex and sometimes controversial issue. In addition, private landowners living next to water supply lands may be positively or negatively affected by public access management decisions (Bureau of Land Management, 1991, 1993, 1998). Therefore, DCR/DWSP compiled a survey in order to gain insight into the public's knowledge of DCR rules, regulations, and outreach efforts. The survey was designed to determine the most effective way to distribute information (land closures, educational, announcements, rules, etc.) to the public. A public kick-off meeting was held at DCR/DWSP Headquarters in West Boylston on October 28, 2010 where the survey was announced and the plan update process explained. The survey was made available through SurveyMonkey on the internet (www.mass.gov/dcr/watersupply.htm) from October until January 15, 2011. The survey website and link was advertised through many different outlets and printed copies were also made available. Another public meeting was held at the same location on May 3, 2011 after the draft of the plan update was complete; comments were accepted until May 20, 2011. A specific listing of survey availability and results can be found in Chapter VIII and Appendix D.

F. Public Access Plan Goals

The Division's public access management goals are used to develop the policies outlined in the Plan. These goals are:

- 9 To protect drinking water resources from public access impacts.
- 9 To properly manage a public resource used as a source supply of drinking water.
- 9 To protect historic and prehistoric sites within the watershed.
- 9 To improve and protect long-term ecosystem health and biological diversity within the watershed.
- 9 To assure that public access is safe and appropriate to DCR/DWSP's water quality goals.

IV. Existing Conditions

The Wachusett Reservoir watershed is located in east-central Massachusetts and includes approximately 117 square miles (74,919 acres) of land and water resources. Boundaries of the Wachusett Reservoir watershed lie within 12 municipalities of Worcester County; it encompasses the towns of Boylston, Clinton, Holden, Hubbardston, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling, West Boylston, Westminster, and the cities of Worcester and Leominster. The Wachusett Reservoir watershed makes up the headwaters of the Nashua River watershed. For a more detailed description of the existing natural resources of the Wachusett Reservoir Watershed, please refer to the *2001-2010 DCR Wachusett Land Management Plan* or the *2008 Wachusett Reservoir Watershed Protection Plan Update*.

A. Public Access Protection Zones

In order for the Public Access Plan and all subsequent updates to be as easy to understand as possible, the watershed has been divided into three management zones: the Intake Protection Zone, the Reservoir Protection Zone and the Tributary Headwaters Zone (**Figure 2**).

- 9 ***The Intake Protection Zone*** provides primary protection of the water supply by prohibiting public access near reservoir intake structures. The Intake Protection Zone includes four miles of reservoir shoreline, at both the North (near Gate #36 to the dam) and South Dikes, and the Reservoir's South Shore, from Hastings Cove (Gate #5) to the Cosgrove Intake on Route 70. This zone also includes approximately 680 acres of DCR/DWSP land that does not drain to the Wachusett Reservoir. Signage on DCR property within this zone consists of: North Dike Protection Zone and Intake Protection Zone.
- 9 ***The Reservoir Protection Zone (referred to in previous plans as the Reservoir and Tributary Shoreline and West Waushacum Pond Protection Zone)*** includes the watershed lands around the Reservoir and main tributaries (Quinapoxet and Stillwater Rivers) and the West Waushacum Pond. Signage on DCR property within this zone consists of: Reservoir Shoreline Zone, Quinapoxet Zone, Stillwater Zone and Waushacum Ponds Zone.
- 9 ***The Tributary Headwaters Zone*** is made up of DCR/DWSP lands located outside of the Route I-190 and Route 62 corridor. Signage on DCR property within this zone includes Tributary Headwaters Zone.

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Aerial photo of Wachusett Reservoir in 1930 at historic low-water level.

B. DCR Land Ownership

The Wachusett Reservoir watershed consists of 74,835 acres (**Figure 3**). DCR/DWSP owns 21,028 acres of this area; another 2,400 acres are protected by DCR under Watershed Preservation Restrictions where the land remains in private ownership (**Table 1**). DCR allows some form of access on 80% of its Wachusett Reservoir watershed property. Public access is not allowed on 149 acres of land (0.7% of total area) within the watershed. Public access is also not allowed on the 4,151 acre Wachusett Reservoir. These no public access lands are located within the Intake Protection Zone (**Table 2**).

Table 1. DCR/DWSP Protected Lands in the Wachusett Reservoir Watershed

	Acres	% of Watershed
Wachusett Reservoir Watershed	74,835	100
DCR/DWSP owned (in fee)	21,028*	28
Watershed Preservation Restrictions	2,398	3.2

Source: DCR/DWSP, January 2011

* Acreage includes the Reservoir. Deviation from other written sources is due to updated 2011 parcel information.

Figure 3: DCR Open Space

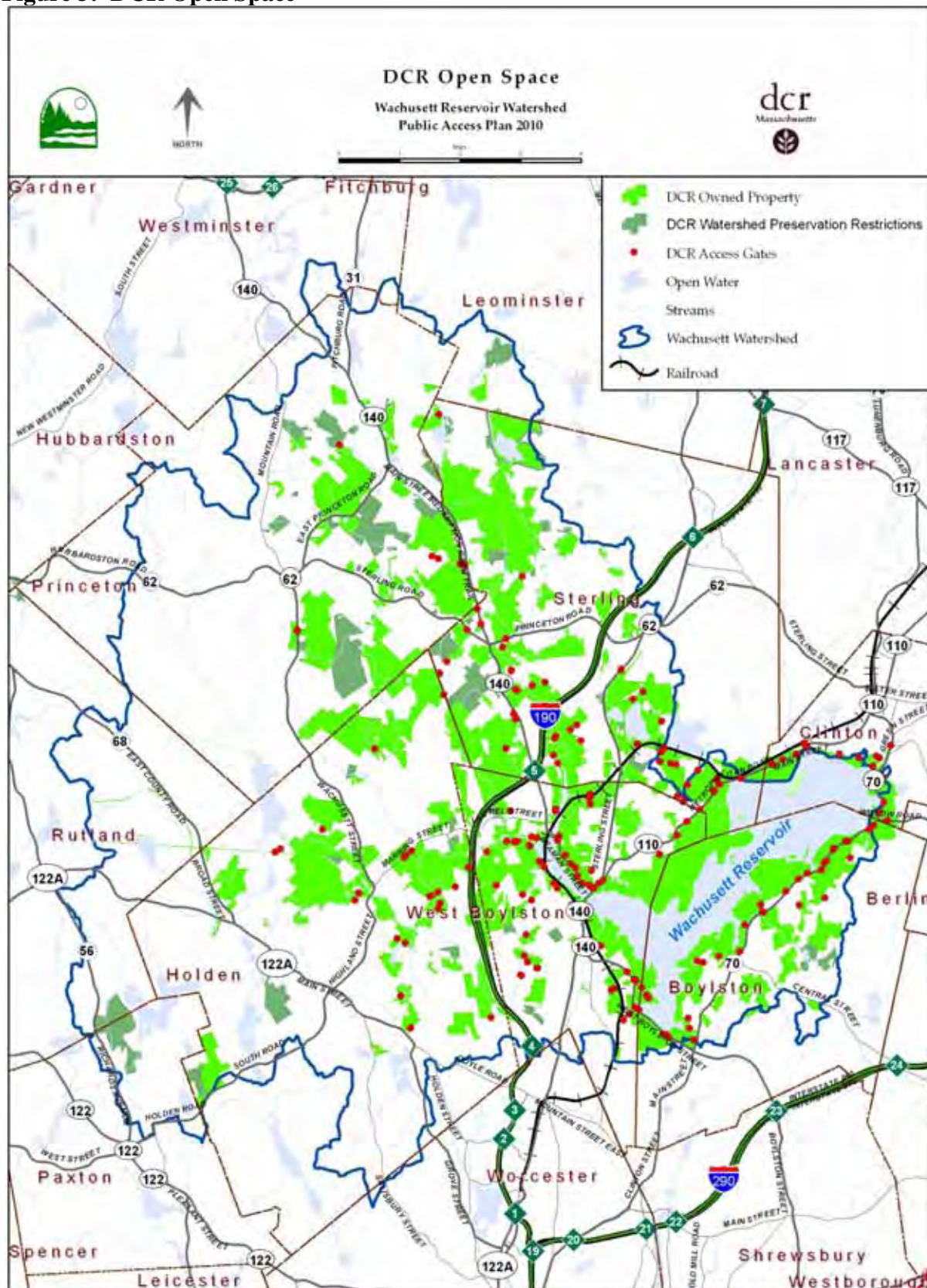


Table 2. DCR Lands Accessibility

	Acres	% of Total
DCR/DWSP Ownership	21,028	100
Wachusett Reservoir	4,151	19.7
DCR No Trespassing	149	0.7
DCR Public Access	16,728	79.6

Source: DCR/DWSP, January 2011

Table 3. DCR Owned Land by Municipality

Municipality	Acres
Boylston	4,899.5
Clinton	1,007.8
Holden	3,715.6
Leominster	44.6
Paxton	0.0
Princeton	2,681.6
Rutland	40.6
Sterling	5,213.6
West Boylston	3,424.8
Worcester	0.2
TOTAL	21,028.5*

Source: DCR/DWSP, January 2011

* Total acreage includes the Reservoir. Figure based upon 2011 parcel data.

C. Payments in Lieu of Taxes Program

The DCR-Watershed Payments in lieu of Taxes (PILOT) program is the method that DCR-Watershed compensates communities which contain the land and water bodies that comprise one of the nation's largest unfiltered water supply systems (**Figure 4**). The PILOT program guarantees regular and stable payment to the 29 communities shown below. More than \$2,945,000 was paid in Fiscal Year 2011 to Wachusett Reservoir Watershed towns (**Table 4**).

Massachusetts General Laws c.59, §5G mandates that DCR's Division of Water Supply Protection make Payments in Lieu of Taxes on the Commonwealth property managed by the Office of Watershed Management. The current law was ratified in 1984 for the Quabbin Reservoir and Ware River Watersheds and was amended in 1987 to include communities in the Wachusett and Sudbury Reservoir Watersheds.

The base information used for determining DCR PILOT, as with all other State Owned Land PILOT, is the valuation performed every four years by the Department of Revenue (DOR); the latest revaluation was completed in 2009 and was the basis of the FY2010 PILOT. It is strictly DOR's responsibility to set the value for this land.

Figure 4. Communities Receiving Payments in Lieu of Taxes



There are, however, several differences between the DCR PILOT and other State Owned Land reimbursements that are made by the Commonwealth under MGL c.58, §§13-17:

- **MWRA ratepayers pay the bill.** Funds for the DCR PILOT payments come from MWRA rate payers who use the reservoir waters; MWRA provides funding to DCR to make PILOT payments to the watershed towns. Unlike other PILOT programs for state-owned lands, which are disbursed through state aid to communities (“Cherry Sheets”) and are subject to legislative appropriation, the DCR program is paid in full directly to each community. The DCR payment does not appear on the Cherry Sheet.
- **DCR PILOT utilizes the local commercial tax rate.** The PILOT which is distributed through the “Cherry Sheet” is based on a statewide average of residential tax rates calculated by DOR. DCR PILOT is required to utilize each community’s commercial tax rate in calculating the PILOT obligation.
- **The payment can never be less than the previous year.** MGL c. 59, §5G states that DCR PILOT can never be less than the previous year’s payment. This “hold harmless” clause provides the watershed communities the security of level funding even if a drop in valuation or tax rate combines to lower the calculated PILOT. This requirement provided watershed communities close to \$1 million in FY08.

Since 1985, more than \$90 million has been distributed in DCR-Watershed PILOT payments. Fiscal Year 2011 PILOT calculated for all 29 eligible communities in the DCR/MWRA water supply system was \$7 million. For a complete listing for each watershed community, go to www.mass.gov/dcr/watersupply/watershed/pilot.htm.

Table 4. Annual Payments in Lieu of Taxes to Wachusett Reservoir Watershed Towns

Community	PILOT FY2009	PILOT FY2010	PILOT FY2011
Boylston	\$541,958	\$541,958	\$541,958
Clinton	\$128,815	\$155,959	\$174,023
Holden	\$767,553	\$767,553	\$811,635
Leominster	\$7,970	\$7,970	\$7,970
Princeton	\$172,113	\$233,179	\$240,153
Sterling	\$513,666	\$567,021	\$567,021
West Boylston	\$602,756	\$602,756	\$602,756
Total Wachusett Reservoir Watershed	\$2,734,830	\$2,876,397	\$2,945,518
Total PILOT	\$6,107,378	\$6,741,130	\$7,000,366
% of Total PILOT	45%	43%	42%

Source: DCR/DWSP

V. Recreational Activities, Water Supply Compatibility, and Current Policy

The Department of Conservation and Recreation Division of Water Supply Protection must carefully weigh the potential for impacts to the drinking water supply and other environmental resources before considering any uses on its properties. In general, any human use will cause impacts to the drinking water supply. Recreational uses of water supply lands and any infrastructure needed to support the activity can add sources of microbial, physical, and chemical contaminants to the drinking water supply. The responsibility of DCR/DWSP is to determine what uses may be allowed in certain areas while limiting the potential of water quality impacts to acceptable levels. Because the Division purchases and maintains its land for water supply protection, it must err on the side of caution in identifying any recreational use that might compromise water supply protection.

The American Water Works Association (AWWA), in its *Statement of Policy on Recreational Use of Domestic Water Supply Reservoirs* (revised January 25, 2009; Appendix C) states,

Protection of public health and drinking water quality should be the highest priority in operational decisions for reservoirs used jointly for water supply and recreation. Decisions regarding recreational use of domestic water supply reservoirs should be consistent with the intent of the source water protection program developed and implemented by the utilities and other responsible parties.

The following issues must be considered when determining whether a proposed activity has the potential to compromise water quality:

- The type and intensity of proposed public access use.
- The physical features of the area being considered for public activities.
- The potential for impacts to water quality from all visitors.
- The resource needs to properly manage any particular use on its properties, always keeping water supply protection the primary focus.

The criteria to determine whether an activity is compatible with the Division's water supply mission identifies whether the activity has the potential to degrade the quality of water in the watershed or degrade any natural resources within the watershed. DCR/DWSP must also consider the following information in making such a determination:

- Division of Water Supply Protection goals, guiding legislation, and regulations.
- Environmental impacts to water quality and land resources.
- Potential for impacts to watershed resources and waterworks infrastructure.
- Potential impacts to staffing and other resources.
- The safety of users, abutters, staff, and the general public.

The DCR Division of Water Supply Protection has general regulations (350 CMR 11.00) relating to public access promulgated to protect the metropolitan water supply. Some of the restrictions include:

- Entrance on and exit from the land of the Watershed System shall be made through gates or other designated areas.
- No person is allowed within any land of the Watershed System, except from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset, unless authorized by a written permit from the Department or its designee.
- Powered boats are prohibited within the waters of the Watershed System except in areas designated by the Department or its designee.
- All acts which pollute or may pollute the water supply are prohibited. No litter or any refuse of any sort may be thrown or left in or on any land or water within any Watershed System.
- Cooking and all fires are prohibited within the Watershed System.
- No person shall wade or swim in any Tributary or Surface Waters on or within the property of the Commonwealth except at areas designated by the Department or its designee.
- Organized sports or activities are prohibited within the Watershed System except by written permit from the Department or its designee.
- Possession or drinking of alcoholic beverages is prohibited on DCR properties.
- No person shall drive a motorized vehicle within the Watershed System except upon roads authorized for such use by the Department or its designee.

The following recreational activities (listed below as A-P) are the most common outdoor pursuits and/or those that may present the most serious harm to water quality. Any activity not identified should be presumed to be prohibited on DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed property.



Sunset over the Wachusett Reservoir

A. Water Contact

Bodily contact with the reservoir water is prohibited by regulation. Any types of contact with a drinking water source is a possible pathway for bacteria and other diseases to compromise drinking water quality. Most human activities on and near a water supply represent an added element of risk to the consumers. The only way to guarantee that pathogens do not reach the Intake is to not allow them to be introduced into a water body in the first place. According to the 2008 Maine Water Utilities Association Position Paper “Proposed Siting Criteria for State-Financed Public Boat Launches On Public Water Supplies”:

- A single person sheds an average of 200 billion fecal bacteria in a single day.
- Birds and wild animals also introduce potential pathogens to the water, but pathogens from humans are more likely to ultimately be infectious to other humans than are pathogens originating from birds or animals.

The link between direct water contact activities, such as swimming and wading, and the spread of water borne disease is well documented. Human body contact recreation adds fecal bacteria and disease causing organisms to water and these pathogens can be carried by wind and currents away from their point of introduction.

B. Boating (Motorized and Non-motorized)

All boating activities, both motorized and non-motorized, are prohibited by current regulation in the Wachusett Reservoir watershed, except in areas specifically designated by the Division. Although boating poses less of a risk to the water supply than swimming, it is still considered an unnecessary threat to the water supply due to the likelihood of water contact during boating activity.

The recent discovery and documentation of aquatic invasive species infestations, such as the zebra mussel in Laurel Lake in Lee and Lenox, MA and *Hydrilla* in Clinton, MA pose another significant threat to water quality, as private boating is one of the primary means of transport of invasive species from one body of water to another. Aquatic invasive species pose a threat to native species and have the potential to alter the balance of the natural aquatic community and can have a negative impact on water quality. Once established, invasive species can be extremely difficult or impossible to remove, as a classic invasive species is aggressive, can multiply rapidly, spread quickly, and out-compete native species. These reasons make boating in the Reservoir itself an unacceptable risk.

Car top boats (up to 14 feet in length), canoes, kayaks and electric outboard motors are, however, permitted at both West Waushacum Pond and Muddy Pond. Canoes and kayaks are also allowed on portions of both the Quinapoxet and Stillwater Rivers. All regulations related to boating must be followed, including the wearing of appropriate Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) from September 15 through May 15 and year round for children under twelve years of age. It is also a requirement to have a wearable personal flotation device for each person that is on the boat.

C. Fishing

Shoreline fishing, without water contact, in certain areas and for a limited period of time does not pose a significant threat to the water supply or other natural resources. Shoreline fishing, with a valid Massachusetts fishing license, is allowed in the Wachusett Reservoir watershed from the first Saturday in April until November 30 of each year. Depending on ice conditions of the surface waters, the shoreline fishing season could start later or end earlier at the discretion of the Division in order to protect public safety. Around the Wachusett Reservoir proper, shoreline fishing is allowed from Gate 6 on Route 70 to Gate 36 on Route 110.

Discarded fishing line and the use of lead fishing tackle, however, threatens area wildlife. Fishing line does not readily break down and persists in the environment for many years. Birds, animals, and turtles often get tangled in this line, are unable to free themselves and die because of exposure, starvation, or predation. DCR/DWSP launched a fishing line recycling program in 2007, asking fisherman to discard old and unusable fishing line in specially made canisters located at several heavily used fishing areas. In addition to protecting wildlife, this line is kept out of landfills by recycling into other products. To date over twenty four miles of fishing line has been removed and recycled from watershed lands.

Lead sinkers can harm waterfowl. In an effort to protect the Common Loon, an endangered species, the MA Fisheries and Wildlife Board prohibited the use of all lead sinkers (not including artificial lures, jigs, lead core line or weighted flies) in 2001 for the taking of fish in Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs, the loons' primary habitat in the state. The Fisheries and Wildlife Board expanded this ban in 2009 when they unanimously voted to prohibit the use of lead sinkers, lead weights, and lead fishing jigs with a mass of less than 1 ounce in all inland waters of Massachusetts. This regulatory change will take effect January 1, 2012.

Fishing with waders is allowed along streams in areas of the Wachusett Reservoir watershed where appropriate access can be gained and there are limited public safety concerns. These areas are currently located on the Quinapoxet River upstream of the accretion dam on River Road and on the Stillwater River upstream of the confluence of the Stillwater River and Waushacum Brook at Thomas Basin. Year round fishing is allowed on the Quinapoxet River upstream of the accretion dam and on the Stillwater River upstream of the rail road trestle near Waushacum Street in Sterling. It is against the law to fish from or trespass on any railroad tracks or bridge. Massachusetts law (M.G.L ch. 160, §218) specifically prohibits a person from being present, standing, walking or riding a bicycle, snow vehicle, recreational or other vehicle on the right-of-way of a railroad or other property used or controlled by that railroad except at a highway or other authorized grade crossing. Violation brings a fine and any person who violates this section can be arrested without a warrant by law enforcement authorities.

Aquatic Invasive Species (see Section B – Boating above and/or Chapter X under Public Education/Interpretive Services/Public Outreach) pose a threat when using waders and fishing gear that has been submerged in an infested lake, pond, or stream area. Therefore, while fishing is allowed in many areas around the Wachusett Reservoir, it is important that users be vigilant about cleaning any fishing equipment (including waders). Any visible mud, plants, fish or animals should be removed before transporting equipment, and any fishing equipment that comes into contact with the water should be thoroughly cleaned and dried before using at the Wachusett Reservoir or any of its tributaries.

Ice fishing is prohibited on all DCR DWSP owned lakes and ponds.

D. Off-Road Driving

Off-Road driving using Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs) or All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) has been prohibited by regulation on all DCR/DWSP lands in all of its watersheds since 1989. ORVs and ATVs have been well documented to disrupt wildlife, alter natural hydrologic patterns, and increase sediment loading into streams and wetlands, impacting water quality and aquatic plant and animal life. ATVs can also open up areas that are currently inaccessible, subjecting them to increased use. ATVs and ORVs on slopes, streambanks, and stream channels cause erosion, turbidity, and sedimentation, all of which are detrimental to surface waters and natural resources.

E. Snowmobiling

Snowmobiling has been prohibited by regulation in the Wachusett Reservoir watershed since 1996. Snowmobile use was allowed on a trial basis prior to 1996 in a small section of the Wachusett Reservoir watershed. The agency discovered considerable damage to the land and users were straying from the marked paths, thus it became a prohibited activity. In addition to damage caused to natural resources, areas where snowmobiles are allowed become compacted and any winter rain may flood surrounding areas, affecting hydrologic patterns. Hard snow is more thermally conductive and the underlying ground can freeze to a greater depth. Because of this, vegetation can be affected and lead to erosion of the soil in the spring. This can lead to increased turbidity and sedimentation in streams and wetlands.

F. Horseback Riding

Horseback riding is prohibited by regulation on DCR/DWSP Wachusett Reservoir watershed lands due to the threat of fecal coliform contamination and the potential of other pathogens such as *Cryptosporidium* associated with domestic animal manures as well as increased potential for erosion on access roads. The Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations 310 CMR 22.00 cite strict prohibitions on animals within 100 feet of a public drinking water reservoir and its tributaries.

Although horse wastes are organic, biodegradable materials, many of their biological and chemical properties can be detrimental to fish, insects, and other aquatic life if the waste gets into water bodies. Jane Frankenberger from Purdue University, in a 2006 webcast entitled “Pathogens in Animal Manure, Should We Be Concerned?” stresses the point of pathogen survivability of weeks to months in cool streams and river waters. She further states that when horses are allowed near streams, the amount of manure deposited may be small, but the pathway of contaminants to water is usually unimpeded.

Since all of the lands in the Wachusett Reservoir watershed are purchased for water supply protection, they are in close proximity to tributaries and surface waters that flow into the drinking water supply and do not allow adequate buffers between horse trails and water

resources. Additional road maintenance required to repair erosion impacts would also compromise the limited resources available to the Division for watershed protection.

Horseback riding is allowed over an extensive trail system on DCR/DWSP property in the Ware River watershed because these areas are sufficiently hydrologically distant from the Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs (see www.mass.gov/dcr/watersupply/watershed/maps/wrachorse.pdf).

G. Dogs and Other Pets

Bringing any animal, other than service assistance dogs, onto DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed lands is prohibited by regulation. Dog and other domestic animal wastes contain an enormous amount of fecal coliform bacteria (23 million fecal coliform bacteria/gram of waste). They can also be carriers of pathogens, such as *Giardia* and *Cryptosporidium*, that can be passed on to both human and wildlife populations. Parasites found in domestic animal feces can be introduced into wildlife populations and ultimately into the water supply. Waste from domestic animals can directly enter into the reservoir or tributaries that flow into the reservoir. When pet waste is left on the ground, the bacteria and parasites can survive for long periods of time. During rainfall, it can get washed into the drinking water supply via overland flow and streams. In addition to bacterial contamination, pet waste also contains Nitrogen and Phosphorus. These nutrients, when deposited in large amounts, can disrupt water chemistry and quality.

Significant outreach has been conducted by DCR/DWSP staff to educate watershed residents and watershed visitors on the dangers of pet waste. Neighborhood letters, posters, brochures, and palm cards for use by the Watershed Ranger staff have been designed and used in this effort.



There are two exceptions to the domestic pet rules. Dog walking is allowed on DCR/DWSP land below the Wachusett Dam to the top of the spillway at posted signage because this is an area that does not drain into the Wachusett Reservoir. Dogs are also allowed for active hunting purposes with the appropriate permit and during a valid hunting season on DCR/DWSP lands in the Wachusett Reservoir watershed (in authorized hunting areas only). There is historic precedent for use of hunting dogs on large tracts of land owned by the DCR. The current minor use of hunting dogs, combined with the relatively short time frame of hunting season and the ability to track users through the DCR hunting permit process, poses a limited threat to water quality. The DCR hunting permit program should be modified to require sportsmen to pick up after their dogs while on DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed lands.

People seeking to walk their dogs have other options in the watershed, including Leominster State Forest and Wachusett Mountain State Reservation. Regulations state that dogs must be on a leash of less than ten feet at these DCR State Park sites. Dog waste pick up bags are provided at Leominster State Forest in three areas.

H. Camping

Camping is prohibited on DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed lands due to many factors. It is an activity that takes people away from regular habits for clean-up, washing, and waste disposal. Camping tends to generate more trash and litter than hiking or walking, but a lack of sanitation is a larger concern with this recreation activity. There are serious water quality concerns associated with the deposition of human fecal matter close to tributaries and reservoirs.

Impacts to soil and vegetation are environmental effects of camping that been extensively examined. It is estimated that in the United States that one quarter of the population hikes and camps as a recreational activity (Cordell and Super, 2000). Recent studies have shown that environmental effects from camping are not limited to the actual campsite, but also impact surrounding trails and vegetation. Camping areas soils can become compacted over time and ground vegetation can become void, allowing for a greater erosion and sedimentation potential. Studies have also shown that trampling of vegetation occurs as campers define new pathways and trees are removed or damaged for use as firewood (open fires are also prohibited on DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed lands).

Given the environmental impacts, lack of sanitary facilities and the resources that would be needed to properly monitor, administer, and enforce this activity, DCR considers camping inappropriate for the Wachusett Reservoir watershed. There are many alternatives for this activity in the region, including several DCR state parks (www.mass.gov/dcr/recreate/camping.htm).

I. Hunting and Trapping

DCR/DWSP regulations prohibit hunting and trapping, except at times and in areas designated by the DCR. Currently, hunting is allowed on designated DCR Wachusett Reservoir Watershed Lands in the Tributary Headwaters Zone by special permit and possession of a valid

Massachusetts hunting license. Existing hunting season dates are set by MassWildlife. Hunters are required to follow all applicable state laws related to hunting and follow proper hunter ethics. No significant impacts have been noted since this activity has been allowed and continuation of the activity in these areas does not pose a significant threat to water quality. Licensed trappers can trap on DCR property with a special permit available through the Regional Director's office.

J. Hiking, Nature Study, Bird Watching, and Photography

Hiking, walking (without dogs - see G above), nature study, bird watching, and photography are all considered passive recreation activities and are allowed throughout the Wachusett Reservoir watershed with the exception of the areas within the Intake Protection Zone that are designated as "*No Public Access*." Passive recreation encompasses the less intensive range of outdoor activities compatible with preserving natural resource functions such as floodplain protection. All of these activities have relatively minor impact to water quality. Walking on the surface of the Reservoir when frozen is strictly forbidden.

K. Cross-Country Skiing and Snowshoeing

DCR policy allows cross-country skiing in all areas where hiking is allowed in the Wachusett Reservoir watershed except along the Promenade at the top of the dam. Skiing is prohibited over the reservoir's frozen surface.

Snowshoeing is also allowed throughout the Wachusett Reservoir watershed except in those areas surrounding the Intake Protection Zone where public access is prohibited. Snowshoeing is prohibited over the reservoir's frozen surface.

L. Bicycle Riding

Regulations restrict off-road bicycle riding to designated areas of DCR/DWSP property. Currently these areas are limited to portions of the Mass Central Rail Trail that cross DCR land in Holden, Sterling and Rutland. Marked bicycle trails exist in a loop off of the trail on River Street in Holden. Bicycling is also allowed from DCR Gate 39 to the road below the dam on the lower road (old rail bed) of the North Dike only. The paved road below the dam is considered off watershed because it drains to the Nashua River and not the reservoir.

The City of Baltimore, Maryland has historically allowed bicycling on access roads within watershed lands that serve over 1 million people with their drinking water. Mountain bikes had created their own set of problems, and as a result, a Mountain Bike Plan was agreed upon and adopted by both the mountain biking community and the City of Baltimore in 1998. The plan had laid out clear guidelines and responsibilities for all of the parties to follow so that mountain biking could occur without negative impacts on their water supply. In a Press Release dated December 10, 2009 related to bicycling on watershed properties, the Department of Public Works states, "the approved trails were not sufficient for many, and single tracks now

honeycomb the reservoir. Vegetation has been destroyed, trees damaged, ramps built and the resulting erosion is threatening our drinking water supply. Our watershed lands are not parks and have never been parks. They are buffers to protect our most precious natural resource.” As of the writing of this plan, the debate over mountain biking in Baltimore drinking water reservoir watersheds is ongoing.

The recent issues with the City of Baltimore bicycling policy heighten DCR’s concern with this type of activity negatively affecting the Wachusett Reservoir by allowing pollutants to enter into the water system.

As stated in the previous case, bicycle riding has the potential to cause severe erosion when trails are not properly sited or maintained on a regular basis, and therefore bicycling is limited within the Wachusett Reservoir watershed. Bicycling is allowed at several nearby Central Massachusetts State Parks, including Leominster State Forest and on paved roadways at Wachusett Mountain State Reservation (www.mass.gov/dcr/recreate/mtnbike.htm).

M. Picnicking

DCR regulations do not prohibit picnicking on Wachusett Reservoir watershed lands. Picnic, in this context, is defined as a meal eaten outdoors. Picnickers are responsible for removing all trash from the property.

It is important to note that DCR prohibits groups of 25 or more without a special permit. Special permits are issued through the Wachusett/Sudbury Regional Director. Permit applications are currently available upon request directly to the Regional Director’s office; permit applications, similar to those for Ware River and Quabbin Reservoir watersheds, should be made available online. DCR regulations also prohibit any fires, any cooking activity, and all alcoholic beverages on watershed lands under the care and control of DCR/DWSP.

N. Geocaching and Letterboxing

Geocaching and letterboxing are relatively new outdoor recreation activities. Geocaching is an outdoor activity in which participants use a Global Positioning System (GPS) to hide and seek containers, called “geocaches” or “caches”, anywhere in the world. A typical cache is a container (tupperware or similar) that contains items for trading, usually toys or trinkets of little value. Geocaching is also described as a game of high-tech hide and seek. Letterboxing is a similar activity but does not normally use the aid of GPS. Letterboxing is an outdoor hobby that combines elements of orienteering, art, and puzzle solving. Letterboxers hide small, weatherproof boxes in publicly-accessible places and distribute clues to finding the box in printed catalogs, on one of several web sites, or by word of mouth. Individual letterboxes usually contain a notebook and a rubber stamp. Finders make an imprint of the letterbox’s stamp, either on their personal notebook or on a postcard, and leave an impression of their personal stamp on the letterbox’s “visitors’ book” or “logbook” — as proof of having found the box and letting subsequent letterboxers see who have visited.

There are approximately 28 registered geocaches and 17 registered letterboxes currently placed on DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed property as listed on www.geocaching.com and www.letterboxing.org. Many of these listings remind participants that the hidden sites on DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed property have rules and regulations that must be followed, that dogs are not allowed, and a few even describe the water system. At this time, there are over 1,500 geocaches placed within a twenty mile radius of the DCR headquarters building in West Boylston, and over 400 letterboxes in Worcester County, a testament to the growing popularity of this outdoor activity.

Geocaching and letterboxing are allowed on DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed lands, however, there are several rules for this type of activity to ensure minimal impact on the natural and cultural resources. DCR drafted a statewide policy in 2007 for Geocaching and Letterboxing on all DCR lands, including the watersheds. At this time, current DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed geocaching/letterboxing guidelines (Appendix B) encompass portions of the draft statewide policy, including:

- 9 All caches to be placed on DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed property must be registered on www.geocaching.com or www.letterboxing.org, noting that DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed rules must be adhered to when on the property. Each cache must contain contact information of the owner. In the event a cache has to be removed by DCR staff, effort will be made to notify the owner.
- 9 Caches placed in no trespassing areas or areas deemed to be inappropriate by the DCR Wachusett Watershed Rangers will be removed immediately and kept at the Watershed Ranger office for thirty days. Effort will be made to notify the owner of the cache.
- 9 Caches CANNOT be placed in the following locations:
 - Areas that would encourage disturbance or dismantling of historic structures, historic buildings, rock walls or cellar hole foundations.
 - Wetland resources protected under the 310 CMR 10.00.
 - Areas that could potentially cause danger to visitors trying to locate the cache.
 - Underwater or in streams.
 - Wildlife dens.
 - Restricted access areas of the DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed.
- 9 Caches must be in transparent containers, e.g., Tupperware or Rubbermaid. Metal (ammo boxes), PVC pipes, or other non-transparent containers are prohibited.
- 9 No digging or excavation is permitted at any time in the placement or retrieval of a cache.
- 9 No defacement or alteration to DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed property, including but not limited to signs, benches, buildings, or natural features is allowed.
- 9 No removal or significant disturbance of vegetation, plant growth, or other flora is permitted at any time in the placement or operation of a cache.
- 9 Caches will not contain food, alcohol, firearms, drugs, dangerous items (e.g., fireworks or matches), or sexually explicit material. No natural materials from DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed lands shall be placed into the cache.
- 9 No monies or profits can be derived from the placement of a cache by the owner or an affiliated business or organization.
- 9 Any questions regarding geocaching or letterboxing can be directed to the DCR Wachusett Reservoir Watershed Rangers at 978-365-3800.

The geocaching guidelines should be made available through the DCR website and placed on kiosks and bulletin boards. These guidelines are subject to change based on future statewide DCR policy and/or problems with current implementation.

O. Paintball

Paintball is prohibited on DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed lands. Paintball is another relatively new outdoor recreational activity in which players compete, in teams or individually, to eliminate opponents by hitting them with capsules containing paint. Although an air gun is not considered a weapon in Massachusetts, many paintball guns are made to look like authentic weapons. Serious security concerns arise with having this type of activity near sensitive areas such as a drinking water supply. There are other factors to consider with this activity including: paintball debris and paint left behind destroys the aesthetics of natural areas; remains of paint on trees, signs, historic structures, can be considered defacing state property; and paintball markings left on trees can conflict with official DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed markings such as boundary or forestry work. The likelihood of vegetation being trampled, new trails being blazed, vegetation being cut, and litter left behind are all very high with this activity. Paintball can also be perceived as an organized activity, which is against DCR watershed regulations. Paintball activity is not compatible with other passive recreational activities and uses of the watershed lands.

P. All Other Activities

As previously stated, any activity not identified should be presumed to be prohibited on DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed property. Questions concerning an activity not cited in this plan should be directed to the Wachusett/Sudbury Watershed Rangers at 978-365-3800.

VI. Discussion and Recommendations by Management Zone

This section provides a status report and policy assessment for each of the management zones described in Chapter IV. The DCR has implemented numbered gates to access roads within the watershed. This allows a useful reference for describing access entry points for both monitoring and public safety purposes. The gates are numbered sequentially, in a clockwise order, around the Reservoir beginning at the Wachusett Dam on Rte 70. Gates 1 – 16 are located along Route 70, Gates 17-26 along Route 140, and Gates 27-42 along Route 110. Most other gates in the watershed have been numbered beginning with the letter of the town the gate is located in.

A. Intake Protection Zone

In the 2003 Public Access Plan Update, the “Off-Watershed Lands Zone” became a part of the Intake Protection Zone, although drainage from these areas flows off of the watershed to other water bodies, not the Wachusett Reservoir. These off watershed lands include the portion of the North Dike from Gate 36 to 40 away from the shoreline that is not fenced, the roadway below the Dam, including the fountain and river area, a majority of the Promenade at the top of the Route 70 side of the dam, land across from Gates 1-5 on the West Side of Route 70, a few parcels in Boylston, and a small area around Old Campground Road in Sterling. DCR is still required to protect the natural resources under its care and control but the rules differ in these specific areas (see below for specific areas and allowed activities) as recreation is not a threat to the drinking water supply.

Most of the boundary of the Intake Protection Zone is fenced and posted with DCR/DWSP signs. New “No Trespassing” signs are posted at DCR/DWSP Gates 1-5, which are north of the Fishing Limit. A four foot fence lines a majority (from the spillway to Gate 38) of the North Dike to prevent shoreline access and no public access is allowed on any rip rap of the North Dike beginning at Gate 36. The remaining portion of the North Dike is open to the public and was previously managed as Off-Watershed Lands. The North Dike is a very popular area and receives heavy use during all seasons. The most frequently used access points are Gates 36 and 39. Any public access to any of the Reservoir islands is strictly forbidden.

The “No Public Access” policy works well, greatly reducing the concerns of improper access in this zone. Nevertheless, trespassing is an ongoing problem, with the most frequent violations on the Route 70 side of the reservoir, and often shoreline fishing around Gate 5, the boundary of the “no access zone.” “No fishing beyond this point” signage on the shoreline has been replaced several times, and in an attempt to make the no trespassing area more clear, a wire fence has been placed perpendicular to the water from the hillside and is posted with a No Trespassing sign. Trespassing in the area between the Promenade of the dam and Gate 1 has been observed to be an issue as many visitors utilize this area to watch the sunset near the shoreline. Additional signage at the shoreline and/or the addition of a fence or barrier would curb any potential activity and make the limits of public access clear.

Figure 5. Wachusett Reservoir Protection Zones

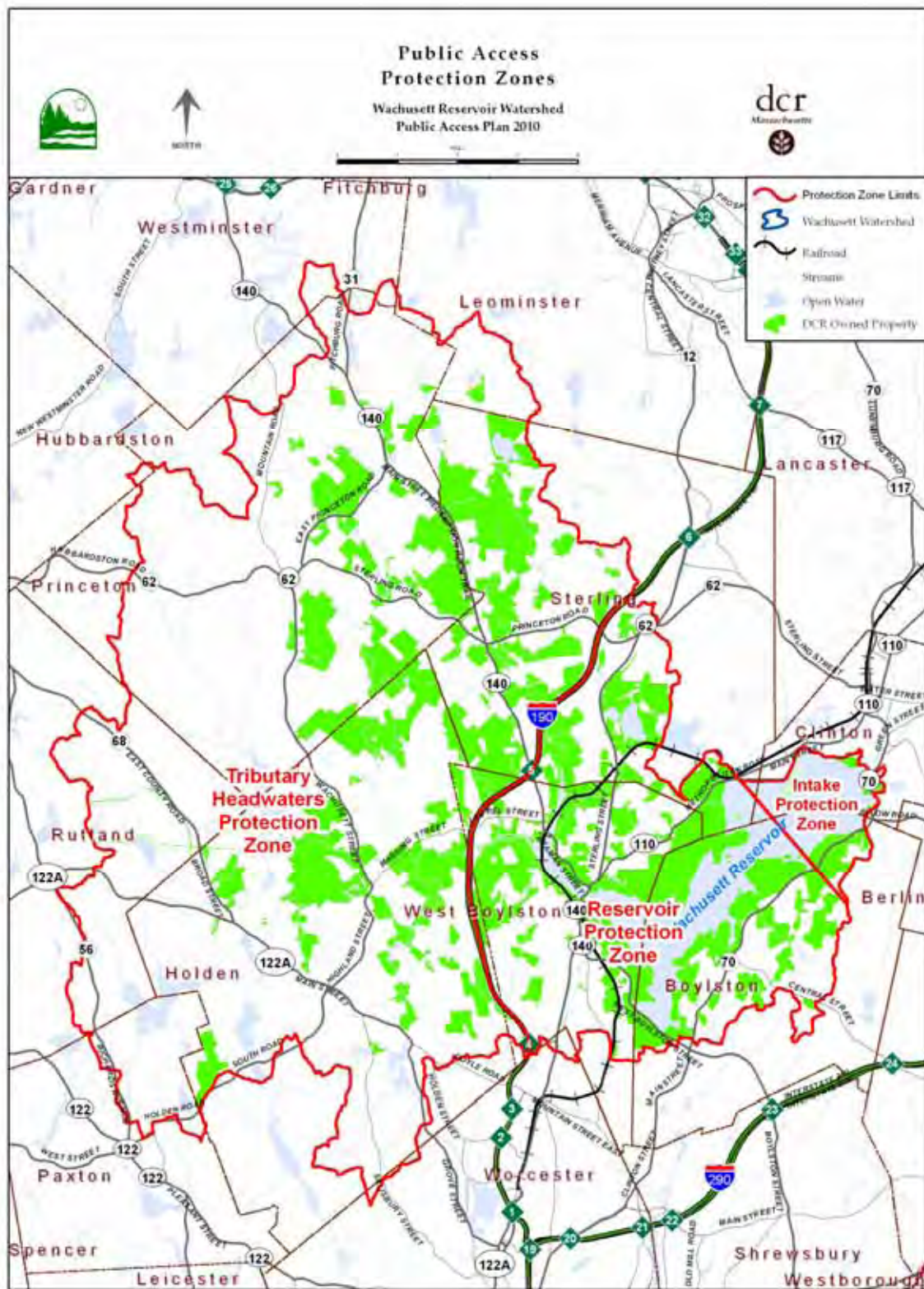
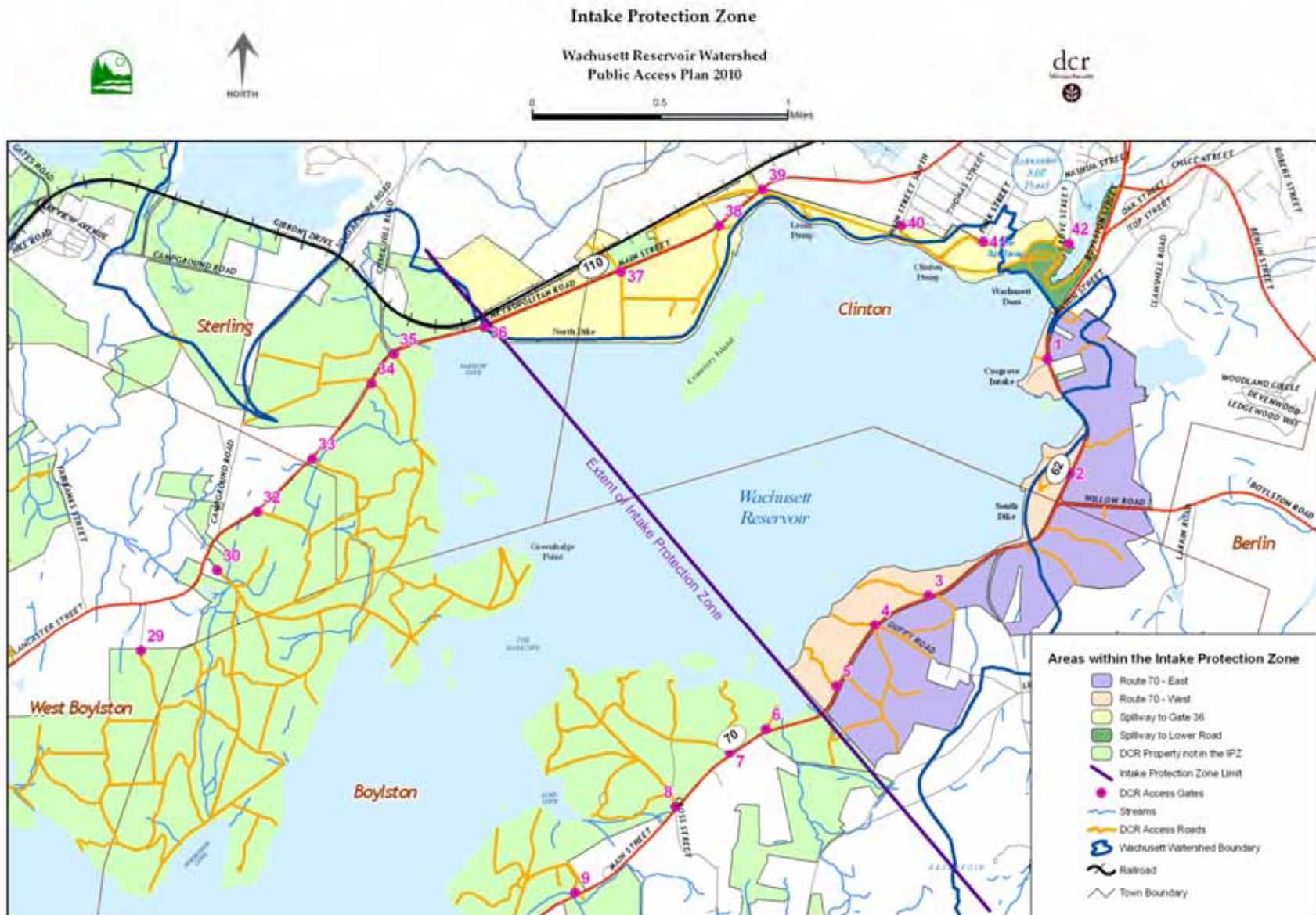


Figure 6. Wachusett Reservoir Intake Protection Zone and Gate Numbers



DCR Watershed Rangers have increased patrols and monitoring in this area since the events of September 11, 2001 and general awareness has been heightened by DCR/DWSP staff. State Police routinely patrol the watershed and pay special attention in this area.

The Intake Protection Zone has been divided into five areas to provide simplicity for discussion, enforcement and mapping purposes:

1. Spillway to Lower Road (including the spillway, fountain area, and river).
2. Promenade of the Dam Route 70.
3. Spillway to Gate 36.
4. Route 70 East (Non-reservoir side of Route 70).
5. Route 70 West (Reservoir side of Route 70).
6. Off watershed lands

1. Spillway to Lower Road

One major area where the “No Public Access” rules differ from the all other parts of the Intake Protection Zone is the area below the Wachusett Dam, including the fountain and mill pond. All drainage from this area flows into the Nashua River, not the Reservoir. Nearby residents use this area frequently for daily walks, jogging, etc. Dog walking (leashed) is allowed on the paved roadway and along the spillway. Signage has been posted at the limit of dog walking. Dog walkers are required to pick up after their pets and must have pick up bags with them while in this area. Bicycling and fishing are allowed. Fishing season begins the first Saturday in April until November 30 (both dates provided no ice is present).

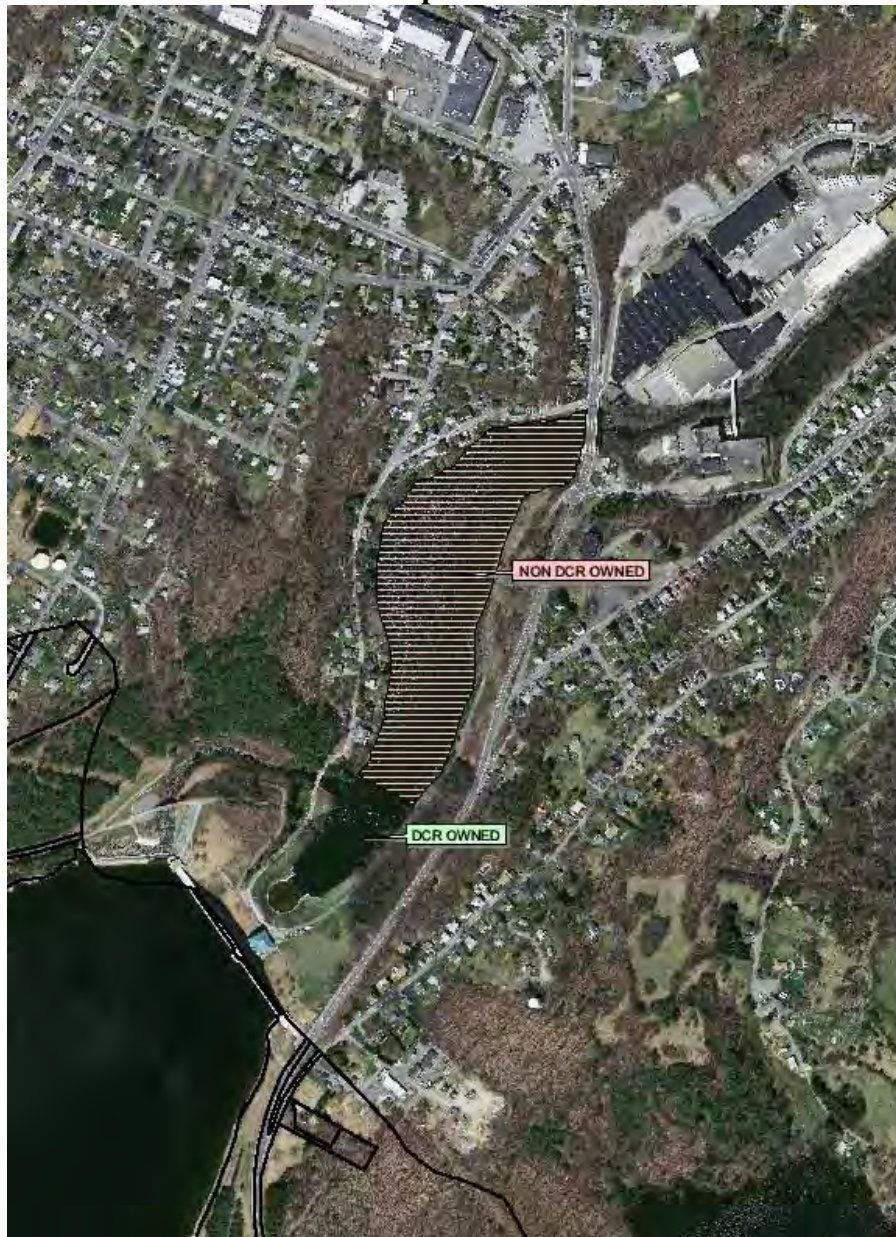
Currently, public access is limited at this location as the road leading to the Dam from Route 70 is indefinitely closed due to a road wash out. This location is posted “No Trespassing,” even for foot traffic due to the wash out and public safety risks associated with the rough surface of the roadway as well as having no guardrails or fencing in place to the river. Rangers have reported that even with proper signage, trespassing here is still an issue. Public can access the open portion of the areas below the dam from Gate 42 on Grove Street although parking is very limited.

In the past, there has been much confusion when dealing with water recreation public access issues on the Lancaster Mill Pond. With the renovation of a mill building on Green Street into over 120 condominiums, it is important that these public access issues be explained and proper signage be posted, as the use in this vicinity will most likely increase. The area once served to impound water for industrial use by mills that are no longer in operation. Much of the confusion stems from the fact that DCR does not own the pond in its entirety; in fact, only a small portion is DCR-owned, from the fountain to approximately 275 feet downstream of the remaining concrete railroad bridge abutments. It is privately owned from this point to the Route 70 Bridge (**Figure 7**).

From historical records, it appears that this pond parcel transfers with a portion of the old Lancaster Mills, most recently sold in 2008. DCR cannot grant recreation opportunities or public

access to areas that it does not own; conversely, the agency does not automatically allow its properties to be utilized in obtaining recreation access to privately owned areas.

Figure 7. Lancaster Mill Pond Ownership



Shoreline fishing is allowed downstream of the fountain impoundment to the DCR property line (just beyond the concrete blocks). Any access to the fountain or spillway is strictly prohibited. Because DCR owns such a small amount of the pond, boating and canoeing is not allowed. Swimming and ice fishing are prohibited as well on the DCR portion. This area should be considered a priority when placing additional kiosks or bulletin boards on DCR property, and should include a map of property ownership.

The Division reserves the right to limit public access in this area due to emergency situations, public safety issues, or security risks when conditions warrant. Proper signage will be posted in the event that closure is necessary.

2. Promenade of the Wachusett Dam Route 70

This is one of the busiest areas for visitors and residents as the views are spectacular, especially during sunset. This area has been posted “No Trespassing” for much of the past nine years. Initially closed due to the events of September 11, 2001, it was re-opened in 2005. It was closed again in 2007 upon the discovery of Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) in the 1950s’ era caulking in the upper walkway of the dam. Remediation was overseen by MWRA. The area was able to be re-opened to the public in December 2010.

Dogs and bicycling are not allowed in this area and sledding (of all types) is prohibited on the hillside. Access to the shoreline of the Reservoir is strictly forbidden.

3. Spillway to Gate 36

A portion of this area is managed as “No Shoreline Access” and a portion was formerly managed as Off-watershed. There is no shoreline access from the dam to approximately two miles along the North Dike (fencing or rip rap). A majority of this section is fenced with signage, and a sign is posted at the No Shoreline Access limit, near Gate 36. Public access on any rip rap along the North Dike is prohibited. Signage is needed at this location. The limit of fishing is also near this location close to Gate 36 and is also posted. The North Dike is open for walking, jogging, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. These same activities are also allowed on Division owned property on the North side of Route 110 (across Route 110 from the reservoir) within this protection zone. All other activities are prohibited.

An old rail bed remains from Gate 39 to the dam. Bicycles are allowed at this location of the North Dike only and a “no bicycles beyond this point” sign has been placed at the intersection of the rail bed and the North Dike. Bicyclists can enter at Gate 39 and follow the rail bed to the spillway of the dam. From the spillway, bicycles are allowed down to the paved lower roadway only. Signage is needed near Gate 40 alerting bicyclists that they are not allowed on the top of the dike.

4. Route 70-East (Non-reservoir side of Route 70 from Gate 5 Area to the Promenade)

These lands lie primarily along the east side of Route 70 across from Gates 1-5. Foot access only is allowed (hiking, walking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing) in these areas, with the exception of the property between Willow Road (Route 62) to Mile Hill Road due to public safety risks. This area is posted “No Trespassing.” Dog walking and bicycling is prohibited.

5. Route 70-West (Reservoir side of Route 70 from Gate 5 Area to the Promenade)

This area is no public access and is posted accordingly.

6. Off-watershed Lands

These lands include Old Campground Road in Sterling and the area primarily around South Meadow Road in Clinton. Walking, hiking, cross-country skiing, and snow shoeing are the only activities allowed on these properties.

General Recommendations

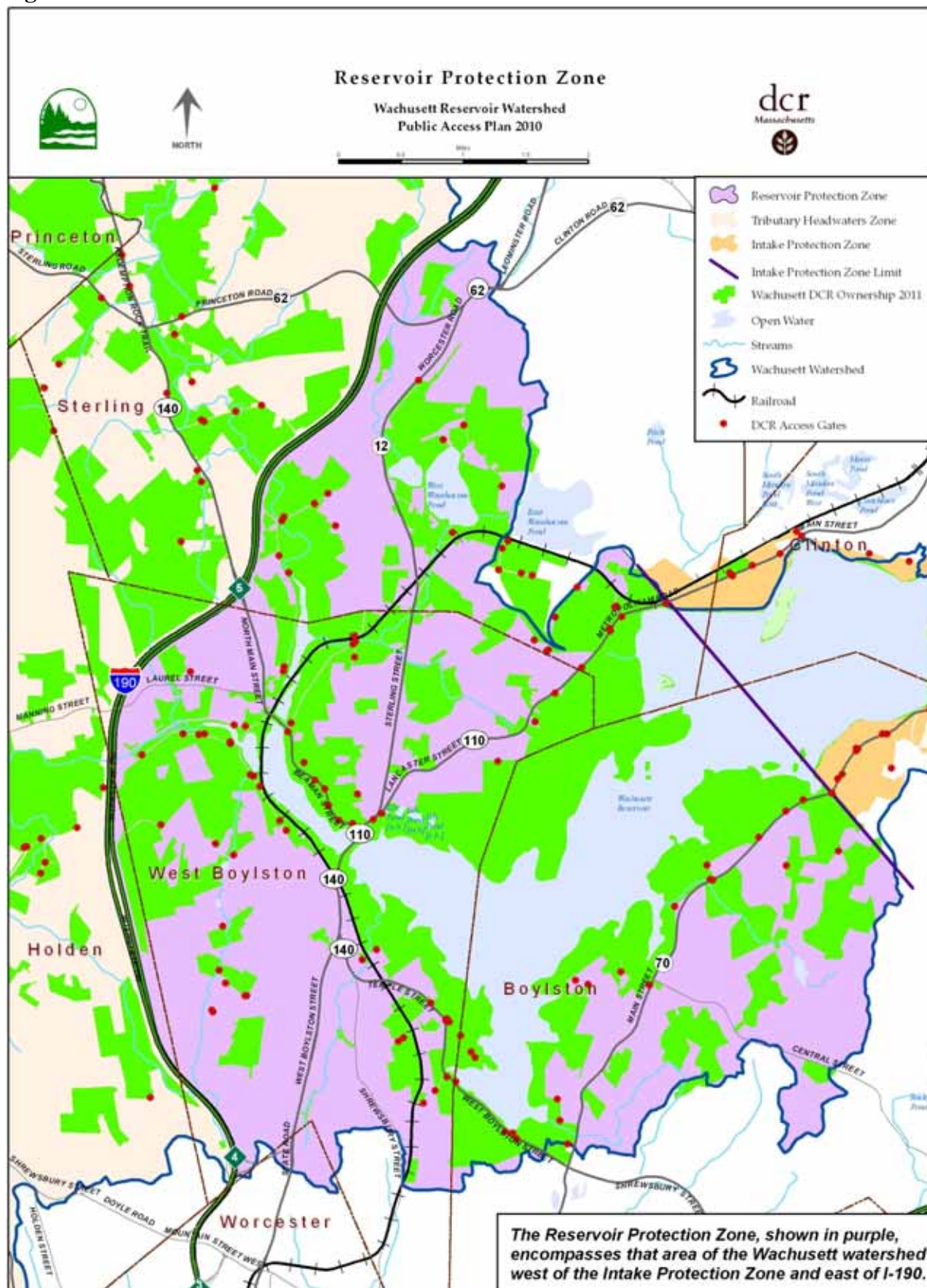
- Have Watershed Rangers continue to enforce regulations and maintain cooperative efforts with local and state police on all enforcement issues with the priority on the security of the intake structures.
- Update kiosk information with rules and regulations stressed at the promenade as this area has been off limits for an extended period of time.
- Consider installing a kiosk or bulletin board with DCR ownership maps of the mill pond at the road below Wachusett Dam.
- Add “No Trespassing After Dark” signage in the area of the Promenade.
- Verify rules signage on the east side of Route 70 in Boylston for accuracy.
- Ensure that No Trespassing boundaries are clearly marked in the area of Route 62 (Willow Road) to Mile Hill Road.
- Post “No Access On Rip Rap” signage near Gate 36.
- Post signage near Gate 40 alerting bicyclists that they are not allowed on the top of the dike.

B. Reservoir Protection Zone

The Reservoir Protection Zone includes all DCR land around the reservoir that lies beyond the four-mile Intake Protection Zone, and other DCR land adjacent to the Thomas Basin and West Waushacum Pond (**Figure 8**). Allowed uses include walking, hiking, seasonal shoreline fishing, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing.

Year-round shoreline fishing is authorized on the Quinapoxet River upstream of the accretion dam, and on the Stillwater River upstream of the railroad tracks (it is against federal law to trespass on railroad property). Fishing with waders is allowed upstream of the accretion dam on the Quinapoxet River, and upstream of the confluence with Waushacum Brook on the Stillwater River. Non-motorized boating and fishing are authorized at West Waushacum Pond from the first Saturday in April (providing no ice is present) until November 30. Canoeing is allowed on the Stillwater River upstream of the bridge on Muddy Pond Road and on the Quinapoxet River upstream of the accretion dam.

Figure 8. Reservoir Protection Zone



No bodily contact with water (i.e., swimming and wading) is allowed in this zone except for fishing with waders in the above mentioned areas. Access is from one hour before sunrise until one hour after sunset only.

General watershed regulations state that access and exit from DCR Watershed property must be through DCR gates or other DCR designated entrances. Steel closure gates and fencing restrict access to much of the DCR/DWSP lands in this management zone. These gates are important to maintain, not only for public access but also to eliminate illegal dumping and vehicular access on DCR property.

There are many heavily used sites in this management zone, including the Old Stone Church, Stillwater Farm, Thomas Basin, Mass Central Rail Trail, Bob's Hot Dog Truck, MassWildlife Headquarters and West Waushacum Pond. Previously, parking was a problem at several areas, causing erosion and parking along main roadways. Several new parking areas have been constructed, including Thomas Street, Gate 25, Gate 8, MassWildlife, and near the Mass Central Rail Trail on Gates Road. New rules signs now include universal symbols for authorized and prohibited activity. The rules signs are posted at all gates. Kiosks and bulletin boards have been added at several heavily used locations and information is updated on a regular basis by the Ranger staff.

Despite regulations being well posted, trespassing at night is an issue at several areas within this zone, most noticeably at the Old Stone Church and Rail Trail. Dog walking has also been a problem in this management zone, despite posted signage. DCR has done an extensive amount of outreach through many avenues regarding dogs on watershed property, and Rangers have been given cards to be used in the field when a dog walking violation is encountered in an attempt to curb this activity (see Appendix F).

In season, occasional swimming and wading is prevalent at many areas in this management zone. Rangers continue to patrol with emphasis on these activities during the summer. In the past, bicycling had been an issue inside Gates 25- 23 and 35-28 because of the many access roads. Bicycling has not been as much of a problem since the rail trail was constructed and trails made available further away from the reservoir.

While ATV/Snowmobile use is not allowed, there has historically been trespassing issues. While this activity has decreased around the reservoir itself, trespassing is still prevalent across from South Bay on Route 140 along the power line and railroad rights of way.

The West Boylston portion of River Road, from the Oakdale Power Station to the Route I-190 overpass is currently blocked off to vehicular access due to deteriorated road conditions. Because of the road closure, canoeing and kayaking along this section of the river has been limited as there is no vehicular access to the take out point. This road closure is currently serving as a protection for water quality in the Quinapoxet River, but has the potential to allow for illegal uses on DCR property that did not exist previously, both during the day and at night. As DCR/DWSP owns property on both sides of this currently closed portion, DCR must be more vigilant in patrolling for illegal uses and working with law enforcement to eliminate any rules violations observed. Contact is needed with the Town of West Boylston to install an access gate at either end of this road to provide emergency access for DCR as well as West Boylston Police and Fire Departments.

Changes have been made at the Oakdale softball field on Route 140 since the last Wachusett Public Access Plan update. In accordance with DEP regulations, a water supplier must be in control of activities that occur within 400 feet of a water supply. Since the lease of the fields had expired in 1992, DCR has allowed the area to return to its natural vegetated state and access is limited.

General Recommendations

- Coordinate with railroad and utility companies to limit public access by ATVs and snowmobiles on their rights-of-way.
- Continue to monitor for illegal dumping and add barriers when needed.
- Continue to monitor use of sani-cans and relocate to different areas if needed.
- Monitor use of property along closed River Road for illegal activity and work with law enforcement to curb any observed activity.
- Post additional signage listing emergency phone numbers and a reference gate number at key areas of the shoreline, where the reservoir is a long distance from the gate.
- Post the link to the Public Access Plan on kiosks and bulletin boards.
- Verify all management zone rules signage correspond with Public Access Plan management zones; replace and/or update as necessary.
- Work with appropriate authority to re-paint “No Fishing/Standing From Bridge” on Thomas Street at the Quinapoxet River.
- Maintain access trail from River Road to the handicapped platform on the Quinapoxet River.
- Consider advances in technology when making decisions related to public safety in this management zone. For example, a February 2010 study estimated that 75% of teens and 93% of adults owned a cell phone, and a majority of these owners used cell phones to access the internet on a regular basis (<http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1484/social-media-mobile-internet-use-teens-millennials-fewer-blog>). Explore the addition of emergency contact numbers in several key areas of the shoreline where the gate is a long distance from the reservoir. Gates 8, 23, 25, 30, 35, and 37 should have these postings for emergencies, such as a health related incident where a phone number is needed immediately. The sign should also reference a gate number for the fastest access that can be relayed to responders during the call.
- Place a link to the Public Access Plan on all kiosks and bulletin boards.
- Maintain the access trail leading from River Road to the handicapped fishing platform constructed in 2004 as an Eagle Scout Project near MWRA Shaft #1 on the Quinapoxet River.
- Work with the Town of West Boylston to install an access gate at either end of River Road to provide emergency access for DCR as well as West Boylston Police and Fire Departments.
- Develop monitoring program to evaluate sani-can usage.
- Post limit of fishing with waders signage at confluence of Waushacum Brook and Stillwater River.
- Post information on control of Aquatic Invasive Species.

Site Specific Recommendations

1. Old Stone Church

This area is heavily used, mainly during the warmer months. It is a priority for Ranger patrols in order to continue educating visitors about rules and regulations. This is a very popular area for wedding photography in the summer and fall, with some parties unaware of the special permit requirement for groups over 25 people. Dogs, wading, and swimming are also occasional issues at this site. Night trespassing has become a problem over the past few years.

The lack of parking at the Old Stone Church also creates significant public safety concerns. There is no dedicated parking lot at this site; cars are limited to parking alongside the public roadway. DCR does not have the ability to provide adequate parking facilities in this area for large gatherings. Groups of 25 or less people can continue to utilize this walk-in only area for wedding photographs or ceremonies on a first-come, first-served basis with no permit or pre-arrangement with DCR. DCR regulations (350 CMR 11.09(2)(a)18) require a permit from the Regional Director for any gathering of more than 25 people. Due to the array of public safety issues involving inadequate parking, staff resources and water quality impacts, DCR will no longer issue group use permits for this site.

- Add no trespassing after dark signage to both gates to allow local and state police greater enforcement ability.
- Continue dog waste education by staff and information on kiosks.



Old Stone Church

2. Bob's Hot Dogs

This area at the junction of Routes 140 and 12 was previously thought to be under the control of the MA Department of Transportation. DCR/DWSP, however, has since been found to be the owner of this parcel; therefore, DCR rules and regulations now apply in this area. The kiosk installed at this location gets very good visibility and should continue to be utilized as much as possible. Parking, especially during the summer months, continues to be a problem in this area. The road shoulder along the reservoir side of the triangle is a common place for visitors to park. DCR should discuss improving this area with the Town of West Boylston, as there is approximately an 8" drop from the edge of pavement. Improvements would eliminate the threat of a water quality issue as well as improve public safety.

It is important to note that Bob's Hot Dog truck parks on a public way with a permit from the town, and not on Division property. Visitors who purchase items from this truck utilize Division property for picnicking. Trash in this area has not been a problem, as the truck also provides a trash barrel.

- Prioritize maintenance of the brochure box and kiosk, as this area is very busy during all seasons.
- Discuss improving the road shoulder along the reservoir side of the triangle with the Town of West Boylston.

3. Stillwater Farm Interpretive Site

The Stillwater Farm Interpretive Site in Sterling is an environmental education facility managed by the Division of Water Supply Protection. This 55 acre site on the Stillwater River hosts an 18th century farmhouse and a self-guided interpretive trail. The facility provides individuals and groups an opportunity to better understand the connections between land use and community character, and between natural resource protection and land management. Stillwater Farm, through scheduled programs and events, demonstrates both past and present interactions between the working landscape and resource stewardship. Particular emphasis is given to watershed related issues and dynamics. The site is staffed regularly by Interpretive Services from Memorial Day to Labor Day, and the interpretive shed contains brochures and educational materials year round.

- Utilize kiosk for timely watershed related information.
- Consider developing a permanent multi geocache trail using relevant watershed and water quality facts.

4. Rail Trails

There are currently three rail trails on DCR/DWSP property. One begins off of River Road in Holden and extends to land owned by the Town of West Boylston. The second is the Sterling section off of Gates Road. The third is a trail off of Route 68 in Rutland. Dogs continue to be a problem in Holden and Sterling as the trails are partly owned by other entities. "No Dogs Allowed" signs have been placed at paths that lead to the Quinapoxet River off of the Oakdale

section. Rangers continue to enforce this regulation and educate the public with the use of informative palm cards (see Appendix F). Night trespassing has also become an issue, particularly at the Oakdale section. Illegal posting of inappropriate materials and stickers had been an issue along the Sterling section, but has been curbed by Ranger and law enforcement involvement. Due to the expansive size of the trail, a map is not included within this plan, but can be found online through the Wachusett Greenways website at: www.wachusettgreenways.org/Trail%20map.html.

- Continue dog education when violators cross onto DCR/DWSP property.
- Coordinate with local and state police to enforce no trespassing after dark regulations. Place signs as needed and perform occasional night patrols.
- Coordinate with Wachusett Greenways and the Town of West Boylston to place a dog waste station and odorless collection system near the beginning of the trail.
- Talk with the Town of West Boylston about posting “No Trespassing After Dark” signs on their section of the trail.
- Continue to partner with Wachusett Greenways and others, such as the Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust, regarding appropriate extensions of the rail trail and other connections on DCR land.

5. West Waushacum Pond

There are no major issues in this area, but litter and trash is an ongoing problem. Outreach, education, and modified signage should be used to address this issue. New signs have been placed that include correction of the spelling of Waushacum and also list the authorized fishing season. Electric motor boats, canoes, and kayaks are allowed on West Waushacum Pond provided that all regulations related to boating be followed, including the wearing of appropriate Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) from September 15 through May 15 and year round for children under twelve years of age. It is also a requirement to have a wearable personal flotation device for each person that is on the boat. The purchase of kayaks for Ranger staff has allowed patrol of the waters and island. Prior ATV and snowmobile use has declined due to the upgrade of the old rail line to a bicycle trail (Sterling section of Mass Central Rail Trail) and barriers that have been put in place. DCR owns a significant portion of this rail trail, allowing cross-country skiing, walking, jogging, bicycling, and snowshoeing. Dogs are not allowed, but have been observed despite signage.

- Utilize outreach, education, and modified signage to address ongoing litter and trash problems.
- Continue on-going Ranger patrols and coordination with local and state police.

C. Tributary Headwaters Zone

The Tributary Headwaters Zone is comprised of watershed lands that are most distant from the Wachusett Reservoir and its nearby tributaries, extending from Route I-190 west to the watershed boundary (**Figure 9**). All activities that are allowed in the Reservoir and Tributary Shorelines Zone are allowed in this zone - walking, hiking, cross-country skiing, and fishing. Due to the distance from the reservoir, additional activities are authorized in this zone, including hunting, bicycling and canoeing at areas designated by the Division.

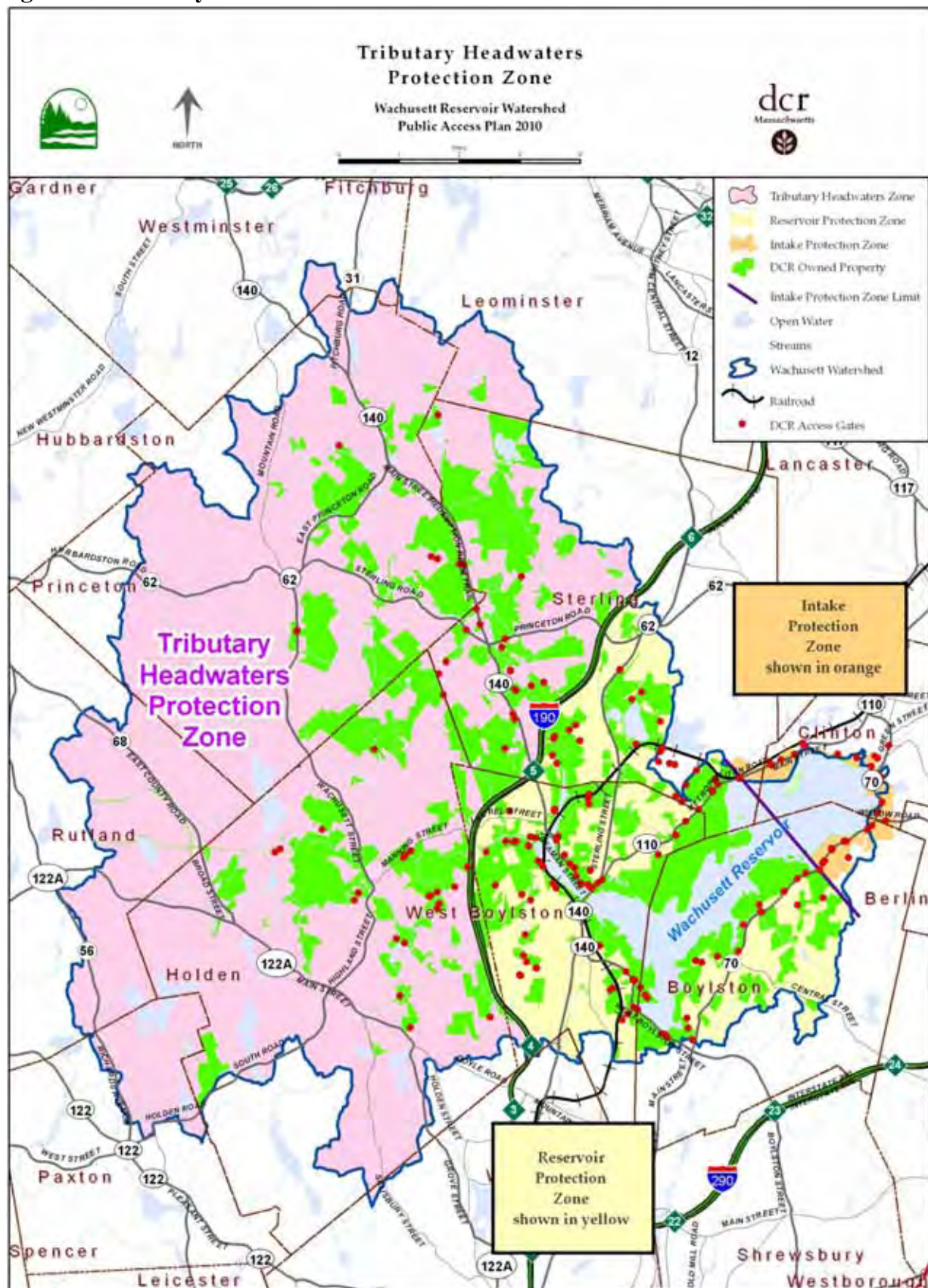
Hunting is allowed in this zone on DCR/DWSP lands west of Route I-190 and North of Route 62. All state, federal and local hunting laws apply and a free DCR Watershed Hunting Permit must be in possession at all times. The permit application is available for download from the DCR website at www.mass.gov/dcr/watersupply/watershed/documents/wachhunt.pdf, as well as at the DCR headquarters and Wachusett Reservoir Watershed Ranger Station. A map of designated hunting areas is distributed with each hunting permit. Designated hunting areas are based on state hunting regulations within the Tributary Headwaters Zone. MassWildlife regulations prohibit the “discharge of a firearm or release of an arrow upon or across any state or hard surfaced highway, within 150 feet of any such highway, or possession of a loaded firearm, discharge of a firearm or hunting on the land of another within 500 feet of any dwelling or building in use, except as authorized by the owner or occupant thereof.” This regulation limits hunting on the smaller parcels of DCR/DWSP lands in the Tributary Headwaters Zone and maps are prepared accordingly. During hunting season, notices are placed at all parcels where visitor use is high, reminding hunters that it is a multi-use area, and other users that hunting is allowed and that they should wear bright colors, such as hunter orange, while in the woods.

The Division’s designated off-road bicycling area is also in this zone. This area is on the DCR-owned section of the Mass Central Rail Trail and a few marked trails that spur off in two distinct areas in Holden (Mill Street and Manning Street to Route 31).

Hunting and bicycling were originally an allowed use in these areas on a trial basis. After finding that no impacts to the water supply or resource degradation occurred as a result of these activities, they are now both authorized by the Division.

Canoeing and kayaks are allowed on the Quinapoxet and Stillwater Rivers upstream of Thomas Basin. Canoes must be taken out of the Quinapoxet River just before the accretion dam and from the Stillwater River at the bridge located on Muddy Pond Road. Both lower limits of canoeing and kayaking fall within the Reservoir and Tributary Shoreline Zone. No special permit is required, as this is a fairly low use activity and the season is short. All state regulations related to boating must be followed, including the wearing of appropriate Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) from September 15 through May 15 and year-round for children under twelve years of age. When conditions are deemed dangerous (i.e., after intense rainfall), Ranger staff reserves the right to limit this activity and post notices accordingly. Division staff continues to monitor this activity, but no significant adverse impacts to water quality or DCR/DWSP lands have been found. As stated previously in this report, at this time, the West Boylston section of River Road has been closed to vehicular access, limiting the canoeing and kayaking along the Quinapoxet River.

Figure 9. Tributary Headwaters Protection Zone



Old signage is still observed on occasion at properties in this zone, which state that picnicking is prohibited on watershed lands. These signs should be replaced when located. Additional signage should be placed along the Quinapoxet River for canoeists and kayakers, including a warning sign leading up to the accretion dam and a permanent warning sign at Canada Mills stating that conditions can become dangerous during times of high water levels and that users are at their own risk as well as information about Aquatic Invasive Species.

General Recommendations

- Continue to monitor for illegal activities.
- Continue to monitor for illegal dumping and add barriers when needed.
- Verify all management zone rules signage correspond with Public Access Plan management zones; replace and/or update as necessary.
- Place additional signage along the Quinapoxet River for canoeists and kayakers.

Site Specific Recommendations

1. Poutwater Pond

Poutwater Pond is a designated Nature Preserve Area within the Tributary Headwaters Zone. Nature Preserves are intended to serve in perpetuity as examples of the state's natural heritage. They are dedicated for the conservation of natural communities and species of plants and animals and for scientific research and education. Nature Preserves are recognized by statute as areas to be monitored and maintained in a natural condition and should be used and managed in a manner consistent with protecting and perpetuating that condition.



Poutwater Pond

DCR (203 acres), MassWildlife (11 acres), and the Town of Holden protect an extensive area around the pond and bog; different regulations apply under each landowner. Most of the regulations on the DCR-owned portion of the preserve are the same as in the rest of the DCR lands in the Tributary Headwaters Zone. The Nature Preserve designation also brings with it general regulations on administration and general access rules, but defer to the administering agency if these rules differ. One of these differences is the group access permit. DCR requires a special permit for groups of 25 people or more on all other DCR Watershed lands, but it is required for groups of 10 or more people for Poutwater Pond lands. Access on the DCR portion of the preserve is from one hour before sunrise until one hour after sunset, and access is allowed 24 hours/day on MassWildlife property.

Main impacts to this site are from group visits to the bog and seemingly cyclical ATV and snowmobile use on trails. Rules signs have been placed at DCR gates on Holden Road and Pikes Hill Road. Several areas have been blocked by downed large trees, which have helped curb ATV activity. A boardwalk has been placed on the floating mat to protect this unique vegetation and allow safer access for educational and research purposes. DCR Wachusett Rangers continue to monitor this area for illegal activities and work with State Police to enforce DCR regulations.

- Continue to monitor for illegal activities and work with State Police to enforce DCR regulations.
- Investigate maintenance needs of bog boardwalk and repair if needed and funding allows.
- Coordinate with DCR Land Management Plan for ongoing maintenance needs of this area.

D. Public Access and Security

The events of September 11, 2001 highlighted the need for increased security throughout the watershed, particularly in the area around the Intake Zone. Since water utilities are in the forefront of ensuring that our nation's water systems are protected against terrorist threats, DCR and the MWRA have already developed several additional safeguards. For security purposes, the following access improvements are left vague.

Video surveillance has been added at multiple areas, and several gates have been replaced with more secure entrances. Guardrail along Route 70 in the area of the dam has been replaced with a higher fence to discourage any climbing over or trespassing. An additional gated entrance has been established for staff to access the boat cove without the need to enter the Cosgrove Intake Facility. Watershed Rangers, as well as all other DCR and MWRA staff, remain vigilant and observant of any activity taking place in priority areas such those as around the dam and structures.

The Department of Homeland Security has established a five-tiered Homeland Security Advisory System to provide a national framework for notification about the nature and degree of terrorist threats. In response, the Environmental Protection Agency developed a guide and recommendation document for drinking water suppliers and wastewater utilities to guard against

terrorist and security threats based upon the five-tiered system. The public access sections of this document have been reviewed for this plan.

Public access to any DCR land may be limited at any time due to potential security issues. In the event that any closure is necessary, the public will be notified through signage, the media, and any other available outlets deemed necessary.



National Guard on patrol during a temporary closure of the Wachusett Dam Promenade in 2001.

E. Status of 2003 Access Plan Objectives

The following table present the implementation objectives stated in the 2003 Plan. The right hand column provides the status of these objectives as of January 2011.

Table 5. 2003 Access Plan Objectives Status

Issue	Implementation Objectives	2011 Status
Structural and Access Controls	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Replace gates and other barriers where vehicular access can be gained illegally. 2. Install a new lock system on gates. 3. Institute a numbering system for all gates outside the main Reservoir basin. 4. Improve entry points (gates and/or parking): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Route 110 near Campground Road (Gate 30 area). b. Route 12/140 near the Railroad Bridge (Gate 25). c. Route 140 near MA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife (Gate 19). d. Route 70 near Cross Street. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ongoing. 2. Will be reevaluated and occur when funding permits if needed. 3. Completed. 4a. In process. 4b. Completed. 4c. Completed. 4d. Completed.
Signs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Install new signs where needed with updated policies, universal symbols, and encourage use of sani-cans. 2. Install kiosks or bulletin boards at major entry points. 3. Install additional kiosks at other parking areas, as resources permit. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ongoing. 2. Completed and ongoing. 3. As needed basis.
Mapping	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and distribute Public Access Map(s) that show locations for hiking, bicycling, hunting, and parking. 2. Work with outside interests to produce and distribute a fishing map. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not Completed. 2. Completed.
Enforcement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Utilize Wachusett Reservoir Watershed Ranger Staff for patrols. 2. Meet regularly with State Police, Environmental Police, and local Police to ensure and enhance coordination on enforcement issues. 3. Ensure that contact numbers of DCR and the State Police are printed on signs and brochures. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ongoing 2. Ongoing, as needed. 3. Ongoing.
Sanitation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluate moving existing toilets or providing additional toilets at sites that might receive more use. 2. Prepare feasibility study of the potential use of permanent facilities in selected areas. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Additional toilets added 2. Ongoing. Continue to evaluate need.
Encroachments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor DCR property for encroachments. 2. Coordinate with Natural Resources Section for encroachment resolution. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ongoing by all staff. Detailed property line surveys completed. 2. Ongoing, as needed.
Specific Site Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Old Stone Church: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue presence of Rangers. b. Continue to provide Trash Barrels. c. Continue to provide Sani-can. d. Consider providing more permanent toilet facilities. 2. Bob's Hot Dogs: Request MHD to evaluate safety issues at the site and make any needed pedestrian or traffic safety improvements. 3. Rail Trail: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue to support the work of Wachusett Greenways where appropriate. b. Continue participation on the Mass Central Rail Trail Task Force. c. Enter into working relationships with similar trail groups where the mission supports DCR/DWSP's overall goals. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1a. Ongoing. 1b. Ongoing. 1c. Ongoing. 1d. Determined not an appropriate option. 2. Town of West Boylston added stop and yield signs. 3a. Ongoing. 3b. Ongoing. 3c. Ongoing.

Issue	Implementation Objectives	2011 Status
	<div>4. Waushacum Ponds</div> <div><div>a. Educate users on proper trash disposal and allowed boating uses through Signs and informational materials.</div><div>b. Support Wachusett Greenways in improving the trail along the old rail bed from Gates Road to the Sterling Millworks, including restoration of pedestrian bridge shoreline erosion.</div></div> <div>5. Poutwater Pond: Limit the illegal ATV and snowmobile activity through increased enforcement and barrier placement.</div> <div>6. Quinapoxet River: Erect signs to clearly define boat take-out at River Rd. turn-off.</div>	<div>4a. Signage added.</div> <div>4b. Completed.</div> <div>5. Ongoing, additional barriers placed.</div> <div>6. Not completed.</div>
Public Education/ Interpretive Services	<div>1. Provide indirect contact with public via:</div> <div><div>a. Signs.</div><div>b. Kiosks/Bulletin Boards.</div><div>c. Pamphlets.</div><div>d. Maps (see Mapping).</div><div>e. Website.</div></div> <div>2. Provide direct contact with public via:</div> <div><div>a. Watershed Ranger Patrols.</div><div>b. Guided Hikes and Tours.</div><div>c. School Programs.</div><div>d. Public Events.</div></div>	<div>1. Ongoing.</div> <div>2. Programs and events expanded.</div>
Partnerships	<div>1. Foster partnerships with local entities to develop and maintain facilities on DCR land in keeping with DCR/DWSP policies and regulations.</div> <div><div>a. Wachusett Greenways – Rail Trail.</div><div>b. Stewardship programs.</div></div>	<div>1. Ongoing.</div>
Open Space Coordination	<div>1. Maintain communication and coordinate when possible with other owners of open space in the watershed, including: DEM, DFWELE, Non-profit and other private landowners, and watershed communities.</div> <div>2. Continue to integrate common issues raised in the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.</div>	<div>1. Ongoing. DEM now DCR Division of State Parks.</div> <div>2. Ongoing.</div>
Monitoring/ Program Evaluation	<div>1. Maintain a regular monitoring program for DCR/DWSP forest roads, access points and reservoir shorelines.</div> <div>2. Revive the Wachusett Advisory Committee as a forum to review and provide input to the DCR on all of its water protection programs in the watershed.</div> <div>3. Provide a yearly review of the plan and, if necessary, a public meeting to gather input on implementation of the plan.</div>	<div>1. Ongoing.</div> <div>2. Ongoing due to previous attempts being unsuccessful.</div> <div>3. Complete.</div>



Thomas Basin Parking Area

F. Summary of Current Recommendations

The following summarizes the recommendations produced by DCR staff in the development of updating the Wachusett Reservoir Watershed Access Plan.

1. Signage

- Add a kiosk or bulletin board with DCR ownership maps of the Mill Pond at the road below the dam.
- Add “No Trespassing After Dark” signage in the area of the Promenade.
- Verify rules signage east of Route 70 (gates 1-5) for accuracy.
- Utilize Stillwater Farm kiosk for timely watershed related information.
- Place signs as needed and talk with the Town of West Boylston to add signage along their portion of the Rail Trail.
- Replace any old rules sign with updated DCR universal symbol rules sign.
- Post EPA Drinking Water Security posters on kiosks and bulletin boards; especially at Bobs Hot Dog triangle, the Promenade and Old Stone Church.
- Provide a link to the DCR Watershed website and Public Access Plan on bulletin boards and kiosks.
- Work with watershed towns to add a link to the Public Access Plan and maps on all town websites.
- Post emergency phone numbers and gate reference number at the shoreline of the reservoir where there is a significant distance from the gate.
- Verify all management zone rules signage correspond to public access plan management zones.
- Work with appropriate parties to re-paint “No Fishing From Bridge” and add “No Standing On Bridge” at Thomas Street/Quinapoxet River.
- Update kiosk and bulletin board information more frequently and look into fade-resistant paper.
- Add screening or other way to keep bees from nesting inside kiosks.
- Explore the addition of emergency contact numbers in several key areas of the shoreline where the gate is a long distance from the reservoir.
- Place additional signage along the Quinapoxet River for canoeists and kayakers, including a warning sign leading up to the accretion dam and a permanent warning sign at Canada Mills stating that conditions can become dangerous during times of high water levels and that users are at their own risk.
- Post “No Access on Rip Rap” signage near Gate 36.
- Post signage near Gate 40 alerting bicyclists that they are not allowed on the top of the dike.
- Post limit of fishing with waders signage at confluence of Waushacum Brook and Stillwater River.

2. Monitoring and Enforcement

- Continue to monitor for illegal dumping and add barriers as needed.
- Continue to monitor use of sani-cans and relocate if needed. Create pilot program for this task.
- Coordinate with utilities to limit activities by ATVs and snowmobiles on utility corridors.
- Monitor use of property along closed portion of River Road for illegal activity and work with law enforcement to curb any activity noted.
- Continue dog waste education when violators cross onto DCR/DWSP property on the Holden section of the Mass Central Rail Trail.
- Coordinate with local and state police to enforce trespassing after dark violators.
- Ensure that “No Trespassing” boundaries are clearly marked in the area of Route 62 (Willow Road) to Mile Hill Road.
- Implement 2010 Aquatic Invasive Species Assessment and Management Plan Public Education and Outreach recommendations.

3. Access

- Consider developing a permanent geocache on existing trail on Stillwater Farm parcel, using relevant watershed and water quality facts and information.
- Coordinate with the Town of West Boylston and Wachusett Greenways to place a dog waste station and odorless collection system at the beginning of the Oakdale Section of the Mass Central Rail Trail.
- Revise hunting map, replacing stars with gate numbers and show updated DCR/DWSP ownership.
- Make group permit or request form available online at www.mass.gov/dcr/watersupply/watershed/dwmpmrmts.htm
- Explore possibility with MWRA of opening the top of the dam to the public on special occasions.
- Maintain access trail from River Road to handicapped platform on the Quinapoxet River.
- Work with IT to improve website to make it easier to navigate and find information on the watersheds.
- Compose general public access map and visitor guide.
- Re-mark and re-establish designated bicycling trails in Holden (Mill Street and Upper Loop trail on Mass Central Rail Trail). Re-blaze, re-establish, and place new DCR bicycling trail placards along trails. Create new placards.
- Explore creating a DCR Wachusett Watershed facebook page and/or Twitter account.
- Work with the Town of West Boylston to install an access gate at either end of River Road to provide emergency access for DCR as well as West Boylston Police and Fire Departments.

- Have geocaching guidelines available on the internet through the DCR website, and post on kiosks and bulletin boards.
- Curb potential trespassing and make the limits of public access clear by adding signage at the shoreline and/or a fence or barrier between the dam Promenade and Gate 1.
- Discuss improving the road shoulder along the reservoir side of the triangle at Rtes. 12/140 West Boylston (near Bob's Hot Dog Truck) with the Town of West Boylston.
- Explore options for reducing the size of hunting permits.
- Place benches near Gate 36 and Gate 39 along the North Dike.
- Look towards funding for capital improvements needed below the dam and perform regular maintenance.
- Investigate maintenance needs of Poutwater Pond bog boardwalk and repair as needed and if funding allows.
- Coordinate with Wachusett Reservoir Watershed Land Management Plan for ongoing maintenance needs of Poutwater Pond property.

VII. Public Survey and Comments

DCR/DWSP compiled a survey in order to gain insight into the public's knowledge of DCR rules, regulations and outreach efforts. The survey was designed to determine the most effective way to distribute information (land closures, educational, announcements, rules, etc.) to the public. A public kick-off meeting was advertised and held at DCR/DWSP Headquarters in West Boylston on October 28, 2010 where the survey was announced and the plan update process explained. The survey was made available through SurveyMonkey on the internet (www.mass.gov/dcr/watersupply.htm) from October 2010 through January 2011. The survey website and link was advertised through many different outlets and printed copies were also made available to the public (**Table 6**). Another public meeting was held at the same location on May 3, 2011 after the draft of the plan update was complete.

Table 6. Public Access Survey Distribution

The survey website link was available through:	Paper copies of the survey were available at:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Watershed Town Websites• DCR/DWSP <i>Downstream</i> Newsletter• Local media- Worcester Telegram & Gazette, Clinton Item, West Boylston Banner, Holden Landmark• DCR/DWSP Bulletin Board and Kiosk Notice• Ranger Hand Out	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Watershed Town Halls• All Watershed Town Libraries• DCR Headquarters• Local Bait Shop• DCR Brochure Boxes• MassWildlife Central District Office

DCR/DWSP would like to thank the public for taking the time to complete the survey and for submitting valuable input during this Public Access Plan update process. DCR would also like to thank the municipalities for making copies of the survey available at town halls and libraries and for providing a link to the online survey from their municipal websites.

A total of 320 online surveys were completed and seven paper copies were returned directly to DCR. While this survey was designed to gather information and visitor knowledge and not to be a scientific analysis, percentages will be shown where appropriate, as will graphs, charts and/or tables.

This section summarizes the responses to the survey and comments submitted directly to DCR. Complete survey results can be found in Appendix D.

Link to survey: www.mass.gov/dcr/watersupply.htm
 Click on "2011 Wachusett Public Access Plan and Survey" on left sidebar


**2011 WACHUSETT RESERVOIR
 WATERSHED PUBLIC ACCESS PLAN UPDATE**

DCR/DWSP has begun the process of updating the Wachusett Reservoir Watershed Public Access Plan and we welcome your input! Please take a few minutes to complete our online visitor use survey (link above).

SURVEY CLOSES JANUARY 15, 2011

For more information contact:
 Kelley Freda, Environmental Analyst at
 508-792-7806 ext 205
 (Kelley.freda@state.ma.us)

dcr
 Massachusetts



Public Access Survey Handout

A. Survey Result Summary

1. Demographics

A majority of users (57.6%) who completed the survey were between the ages of 40-59 who learned of the survey mainly through the local newspaper and municipalities. 69.8% of respondents consisted of watershed residents, 18.6% Non-watershed residents, 22.3% abutters to DCR lands, and 2.8% were municipal officials.

Table 7. Survey Response Affiliation

Please tell us what describes your affiliation with DCR Wachusett Watershed lands (please check all that apply):		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Watershed resident	69.8	222
Non-watershed resident	18.6	59
Abutter to DCR Wachusett watershed lands	22.3	71
Municipal official	2.8	9
<i>answered question</i>		318
<i>skipped question</i>		2

Table 8. Survey Response Age

What age group do you belong to?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
19 or under	0.0%	0
20-29	7.9%	25
30-39	18.6%	59
40-49	30.2%	96
50-59	27.4%	87
60 or over	16.0%	51
<i>answered question</i>		318
<i>skipped question</i>		2

Table 9. Survey Response Frequency of Use

On an average, how many days per season do you utilize DCR Wachusett Watershed lands?					
Answer Options	Less than 7	7 - 14	15 - 30	over 30	Response Count
Spring	72	107	73	64	316
Summer	64	76	90	80	310
Fall	65	99	86	61	311
Winter	141	80	44	35	300
<i>answered question</i>					318
<i>skipped question</i>					2

Table 10. Survey Response Time of Use

When do you mostly use DCR Wachusett Watershed lands?				
Answer Options	day	evening	both	Response Count
Weekday	116	54	76	244
Weekend	189	8	113	301
<i>answered question</i>				314
<i>skipped question</i>				6

2. Recreation Types

When asked which type of passive recreation activities were engaged in on DCR Wachusett Watershed lands, a majority of respondents listed more than one activity. Hiking and walking were the most popular activities (93.3%), while bird hunting (3.2%) was the least popular.

Table 11. Survey Response Recreation Activities

What passive recreation activities do you engage in on DCR Wachusett Watershed lands? (check all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Fishing	36.2%	114
Hunting	8.6%	27
Bird hunting with a dog	3.2%	10
Hiking/walking	93.3%	294
Bicycle riding	39.4%	124
Cross-country skiing/snowshoeing	44.4%	140
Picnicking/relaxing	41.9%	132
Geocaching/letterboxing	7.6%	24
Photography/nature study/birdwatching	47.3%	149
Other	12.4%	39
	<i>answered question</i>	315
	<i>skipped question</i>	5

3. Rules and Emergency Information

While most people were aware of what activities are allowed and those that are prohibited while on DCR Wachusett Watershed lands, a large number were not aware of whom to contact in the case of an emergency, even though this contact is also listed on the rules signage. Results show that DCR needs to modify or change the way that this emergency information is presented to the public. For example, the color on signage could be changed to differentiate it from other text, and the phone numbers could be placed in more areas around the watershed. Other options include developing a card with emergency contact numbers and bulleted rules to be handed out and placed in brochure boxes. Stickers with emergency phone numbers could be purchased for fishermen to place inside of their tackle boxes. A little more than half of the respondents have not observed a violation of DCR/DWSP rules and regulations while on our property, but of the respondents who have observed a violation of DCR rules and regulations, dog walking was the most noted.

4. Fishing and Aquatic Invasive Species

Most fishermen who returned the survey purchased their fishing licenses through town or city clerk's offices, WalMart, or online through MassWildlife. Only a few purchased their licenses at the MassWildlife Regional Office. Approximately three quarters of the respondents are aware of the types and impacts of Aquatic Invasive Species, showing that the Commonwealth, DCR, and Sportsmen's Clubs outreach and education on the dangers of AIS have been well received by the public. Less than twenty percent of respondents who fish at the Reservoir said that they belong to a sportsmen's association. While it is important to include these associations when performing outreach or getting notices out to users of DCR property, it is crucial to continue to place this type of information on kiosks and bulletin boards. DCR will work with MassWildlife to include more reservoir information, rules and regulation in their annual fishing abstracts.

5. Ranger Staff and Education

While over 90% of respondents are aware that Watershed Rangers patrol DCR Wachusett Watershed lands, about half have not had the opportunity to talk with a Ranger. A large majority (86.5%) of respondents have read the information on bulletin boards and kiosks that are maintained by DCR Watershed Rangers. Some comments noted the professionalism and friendliness of the Ranger staff and the fact that the visitors look forward to talking with them while enjoying DCR property. Responses to the types of information people would like to see on kiosks and bulletin boards varied, but recurring themes included: historical information, trail maps and emergency contact information, rules and regulations, upcoming events, and clearly advertising the DCR Watershed website.

Some replies also focused on keeping current information posted as well as the physical conditions of kiosks and bulletin boards. DCR will look into fade resistant paper options, updating information on a more frequent basis, and yearly painting.

A majority of the responses demonstrate that people are still not aware that DCR Wachusett Watershed staff conduct free public outreach and education programs, even though advertisements are placed in local newspapers and signs placed on kiosks and bulletin boards. Most respondents have not attended a program. Answers varied when asked what types of free program that they would attend, including: guided hikes, history walks and talks (most responses), plant and wildlife identification programs, general animal/nature topics, eagles, and programs geared towards children. Most program ideas could be modified through the Ranger and Interpretive staff to include the DCR/DWSP mission.

6. General

Responses were very similar in nature to the question “please tell us about one aspect of the DCR Wachusett Watershed that you would change if given the chance.” The most prevalent answers were dog walking, more areas for bicycling, and allowing boating. Although DCR recognizes the public’s desire for these activities, as discussed in previous chapters, they are not compatible with the mission of DCR’s Division of Water Supply Protection. Lands acquired for the protection of the drinking water supply within the Wachusett Reservoir watershed are purchased with MWRA ratepayer funds and not taxpayer dollars. Any expansion of current access policies or additional activity poses an unnecessary threat to water quality and the water supply. In addition, the water supply regulators believe that the current policies in place for public access provide sufficient passive recreational opportunities without any unnecessary risk to the drinking water.

Other topics mentioned included: access to the top of the dam on special occasions; ice fishing; more programs and activities at Stillwater Farm; better marked trails; the addition of a few benches along the North Dike; and horseback riding. DCR will explore several of these issues in implementing the Access Plan. Ice fishing and horseback riding, however, are not allowed by regulation and will not be considered.

There were several comments requesting the expansion of the hunting zone east of Route I-190; however, there were just as many responses that were opposed to expanding the hunting zone.

There were also a few suggestions that hunting be prohibited altogether on DCR lands. DCR Natural Resources staff has found no evidence to suggest that deer are impacting tree regeneration in these areas, and no reasons to believe that the deer herd itself is suffering. Accordingly, since there is no management reason to expand or change the hunting zone, it will remain in its current configuration.

Answers about one aspect of the DCR Wachusett Watershed that was really liked generally voiced a similar theme: the close proximity; peaceful setting; availability of trails for hiking, running and walking; the view; quietness; solitude; and wildlife. Most responses to this question highlighted the protected open space and natural setting, and the amount of land open to the public for passive recreation.

Public comments to the question, “Is there anything else you would like to tell us?” were varied, sometimes overlapping both previous questions, “What is one aspect of the DCR Wachusett Watershed really liked?” and “What is one aspect that would be changed if given the chance?” Several comments stated that dog walking should be allowed and, alternatively, some respondents did not like dogs on the property and did not feel safe while walking where owners let their dogs run unleashed. Rangers will continue to monitor and enforce and educate the no dogs rule. Other comments once again addressed hunting, ice fishing, and litter.

Finally, several people were appreciative of DCR’s willingness to allow passive recreation and hoped to maintain this privilege. Appreciation of DCR’s efforts in keeping the lands clean, property purchases for water protection, and general statements thanking DCR for good work were also mentioned.

B. Other Comments

Most comments received from the public are responded to within the context of other sections of this plan. The following are responses to issues not referred to or answered elsewhere within this document.

1. If preservation of the water is the highest priority, then the use of airplanes above the water supply should be prohibited. On most nice days in the warmer months a private airplane can be seen flying over the Clinton portion of the water in the Wachusett Reservoir. The plane is both a visual and audible nuisance. The pilot also performs stunts, such as purposely stalling the engine, and practicing aeronautical daredevil techniques. These activities should not be allowed as they pose a danger of the aircraft crashing into the water supply. The airspace above the reservoir should be restricted in some manner. The height at which the plane is flown is also very low.

The FAA regulation currently states that planes cannot fly within 500 feet of manmade structures (the dam, Cosgrove Intake, other buildings) and people (this does not include the water). DCR has worked with the proper authorities to enforce this regulation. If there is a plane that you think is operating unsafely, contact the DCR Wachusett Rangers at 978-365-3800 or State Police at 508-829-8410.

2. I would like to know where the best resource of information is located.

The best source when looking for information on rules and regulations, public access, water quality or plans for the Wachusett Reservoir Watershed can be found online at www.mass.gov/dcr/watersupply/watershed/water.htm.

3. Get rid of the paper permit to hunt in allowed areas. It gets ruined in the rain and gets lost. Regular hunting licenses should suffice.

The DCR hunting permit program allows DCR to track the users of our property for this activity. It also allows us to provide a copy of rules to permittees and to contact all of these users if needed through regular mail. DCR will look into other options such as a business card sized permit.

4. I would like to hear an explanation as to why no human can touch the water. Isn't the water treated before consumed? Isn't Quinsigamond a "secondary reservoir?" If so, why is there unrestricted use of it?

As stated in Chapter IV, any bodily contact with the water is a possible pathway for bacteria and other diseases to contaminate a drinking water supply and compromise water quality. Yes, the Wachusett Reservoir water is disinfected before it is consumed, but it is also UNFILTERED; thus removing the "multi-barrier" approach for pollutant removal. DCR and MWRA continue to meet the EPA filtration waiver requirement due to (in part) exemplary watershed management and restrictions on public access, such as bodily contact with the water.

Lake Quinsigamond in Worcester is not a surface water source used as a drinking water supply. It is a "Great Pond", and as such, restrictions on recreation are not as strict. This surface water is managed by the DCR Division of State Parks and Recreation.

5. You may wish to reduce the 1-mile fishing set back. I don't understand why that is a rule. I don't think people should fish from the dam, but they certainly should be able to fish along the dike and/or just past the pumping station on Rte 70.

The fishing limits are based upon the Public Access Protection Zones. The area around the dam, etc. falls within the Intake Protection Zone where public access is most limited due to safety and security reasons.

6. I enjoy visiting the Reservoir very much. Lately, this past summer, I have been seeing a lot more trash/littering along the paths of the Clinton portion of the Reservoir and wonder if there is anyone that is assigned the responsibility of picking up the trash. The grounds are maintained so well throughout the year, I find that it makes me pretty annoyed that some

people are so thoughtless to just leave there trash behind when visiting the Reservoir. FYI...I take a grocery size bag with me, occasionally, and have no trouble filing it by the end of my walk/run.

Thank you for your personal efforts to keep this area clean. DCR does not have anyone specifically tasked with the responsibility of picking up trash. DCR asks that what is brought in is taken out and it is against DCR rules to leave any trash on our property. Each year, the DCR Rangers host a cleanup day, usually around Earth Day in April. The public is invited to attend and help pick up litter around the Reservoir on this day. In addition, DCR will look at other possible alternatives and public education to improve sanitation by means of a pilot and monitoring program.

7. Several comments were related to the dam and lower road area, including when the flags will be put back up on the Promenade and when parking will be available again for photography.

The Promenade was reopened in December 2010 after the completion of PCB remediation and additional construction activities. Flags are now flying; DCR has also installed a light which allows the flags to fly at night. The road below the dam has never been closed, with the exception of the small area of washed out roadway beginning at the Lower Road gate across from Cumberland Farms (currently posted "No Trespassing"). This area will be reopened when and if funding allows for repair of the roadway. Access can be obtained through Gate #42 on Grove Street.

8. Allow ice skating. I was told it was a liability issue, but when I pointed out that DCR allows skating on other bodies of water under its oversight, I was told it's a water quality issue.

Ice skating and ice fishing are both safety and resource risks. As the reservoir is a drinking water supply, water levels can fluctuate year round and render the ice unsafe during the winter. In addition there are the added resources for monitoring as well as resources for emergency response should someone get injured. This also is true for other lakes and ponds in the Wachusett Watershed owned by DCR/DWSP. Added monitoring by water supply staff and the potential need for emergency response is an unnecessary drain on water supply staff resources.

The DCR Division of State Parks (a separate branch of DCR whose mission is recreation) provides ice skating opportunities at five designated ponds and lakes in state parks and forests when conditions permit (Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park, Uxbridge; D.A.R. State Forest, Goshen; Dunn Pond State Park, Gardner; Mt. Tom State Reservation, Holyoke; and Wendell State Forest, Wendell). Conditions at the five facilities are monitored daily. As stated in Chapter V, the Mill Pond below the Wachusett Dam is not owned in its entirety by DCR and DCR does not give permission for recreational activity on water that is not controlled by the Division.

9. A few benches along the spine of the dike at the Wachusett Reservoir would be great!

DCR is not opposed to this suggestion and will look into placing benches near Gate 36 and Gate 39 along the North Dike.

10. You are custodians of an important and historic landscape at the dam site- please do a better job!

DCR is aware that the level of maintenance below the dam has not been at the previous level due to years of construction. Because of the age of the entire area, capital improvements are needed. DCR will look towards funding these improvements and will once again perform regular maintenance.

11. Allow horse-back riding around the reservoir, as it will not impact water quality, especially compared to the wildlife and fishing.

DCR does not allow horse-back riding on Wachusett Reservoir watershed lands for several reasons. All domestic animals pose a very serious threat to the drinking water supply, as they have the potential to contaminate the resource with an array of pollutants, such as fecal coliform, giardia, and cryptosporidium. Therefore these domestic animals create a risk to the water supply that can be controlled by restrictions. In comparison, wildlife can also be an impact to water quality, however DCR has less ability to control the presence of wildlife on the watershed. However, DCR does work to mitigate the effects of gulls, beavers, muskrat, and any other wildlife that are present in high numbers close to the Cosgrove Intake. Finally, as mentioned in Section V, DCR's regulations do not allow horses on DCR Watershed property except in designated areas of the Ware River watershed which are the most hydrologically remote portions of the water supply watershed system.

12. Allow weddings at the Old Stone Church.

DCR recognizes the appeal of the Old Stone Church as the back-drop for a wide range of functions; however neither the grounds, the building itself, or staff resources are capable of expanding the use of this historic site. Drinking water regulations will not allow this type of expanded, intensive use of land on the banks of a source water supply. In addition, there is no dedicated parking lot at this site; cars are limited to parking alongside the public roadway and DCR does not have the ability to provide adequate parking facilities in this area for large gatherings. DCR regulations (350 CMR 11.09(2)(a)18) require a permit from the Regional Director for any gathering of more than 25 people. Due to the array of public safety issues involving inadequate parking, staff resources and water quality impacts, DCR will no longer issue group use permits for this site.

VIII. 2011 Public Access Policies

Based on research conducted and staff observations while in the field since the last update, the only minor change proposed to the public access policy is the addition of geocaching and letterboxing as allowed activities in all areas that are open to the public, and the prohibition of paintball. Bicycling and dog walking have been clarified, and the former Reservoir and Tributary Shoreline and West Waushacum Pond Protection Zone has been renamed the Reservoir Protection Zone.

Table 12. 2011 Public Access Policies

Activity	2003 Policy	2011 Policy
Shoreline Fishing	Integrate Off-Watershed Zone into Intake Protection Zone; no fishing allowed in Intake Protection Zone.	No Change
Hiking	Expand to allow access to lands east of Gates 1 and 2 Rte 70	No Change
Cross-Country Skiing	Expand to Allow access to lands east of Gates 1 and 2 Rte 70	No Change
Boating	Non-motorized boats allowed on Quinapoxet and Stillwater Rivers in the Tributary Headwaters Zone; non-motorized boats allowed on West Waushacum Pond.	No Change
Swimming	PROHIBITED	No Change
Bicycling	No permit requirement for off-road biking in designated area; clarify policy to allow biking from Gate 39 to 42 (formerly Off-Watershed Zone).	Clarified: Bicycling allowed in designated areas, rail trails, and from gate 39 to road below the dam on the old rail line bed only.
Horseback Riding	PROHIBITED	No Change
Camping	PROHIBITED	No Change
Motorized Vehicles (ATVs, ORVs, Snowmobiles)	PROHIBITED	No Change
Hunting	Hunting allowed with DCR permit. Hunting area is entire Tributary Headwaters Zone (locations must still meet DWFELE regulations).	No Change
Dog Walking	Allowed below Wachusett Dam with leash or while hunting in Tributary Headwaters Zone.	Clarified: Dogs (leashed) allowed from below the dam to posted signage at the top of the spillway or while actively hunting in Tributary Headwaters Zone.
Geocaching/ Letterboxing	None	New: Geocaching/letterboxing authorized in all areas where public is allowed. Guidelines must be followed.
Paintball	None	New: Paintball prohibited on all DCR/DWSP property.

Table 13. DCR/DWSP 2011 Public Access Policy Summary- Intake Protection Zone

Activity	Intake Protection Zone				
	East Side (Non- reservoir) Route 70 from Gate 5 to Promenade	West Side (Reservoir) Route 70 from Gate 5 to Promenade	Promenade	Road Below Dam and Spillway to Top of Dam	North Dike from Spillway to Area just before Gate 36
Off-Road Driving (ORVs, ATVs)	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Snowmobiling	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Bicycling	⊘	⊘	⊘	✓	✓ ₁
Walking/Hiking	✓ ₇	⊘	✓	✓	✓
Dog Walking	⊘	⊘	⊘	✓ ₂	⊘
Cross-Country Skiing	✓ ₇	⊘	⊘	✓	✓
Shoreline Fishing	⊘	⊘	⊘	✓ ₃	⊘
Fishing with Waders	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Horseback Riding	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Hunting	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Boating – non-motorized	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Boating – motorized (including “jet skis”)	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Swimming	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Ice Skating/Ice Fishing	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Camping	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Picnicking	✓ _{4,7}	⊘	⊘	✓ ₄	✓ ₄
Fires & Cooking	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Programs/Assemblies	✓ _{5,7}	⊘	✓ ₅	✓ ₅	✓ ₅
Trail Clearing/Trail Marking/Advertising	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Collecting/Metal Detecting	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Geocaching/Letterboxing	✓ _{6,7}	⊘	⊘	✓ ₆	✓ ₆

✓ - Public access is allowed in designated areas only

⊘ - Activity prohibited

1. Allowed on rail bed from gate 39 to spillway only. 2. Dogs only allowed to top of spillway and must stop at sign. Dog waste must be picked up and disposed of properly. 3. Fishing allowed from fountain impoundment to approximately 275 feet after concrete abutments of old railroad bridge. 4. Trash must be carried off of DCR property. 5. DCR Special permit required. 6. Geocaching Guidelines must be adhered to and all DCR rules apply. 7. Except for property between Rte 62(Willow Rd) and Mile Hill Roads.

Public access is allowed in designated areas only from one hour before sunrise until one hour after sunset. Any activity that injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. All alcoholic beverages are prohibited. Night access is prohibited. See 350 CMR 11.09(2) for a complete list of regulations. For additional information contact the Wachusett/Sudbury Rangers at 978-365-3800. In an emergency, contact the Watershed Rangers or the Massachusetts State Police at 508-829-8410 or 911.

Table 14. DCR/DWSP 2011 Public Access Policy Summary Reservoir and Tributary Protection Zones

Activity	Reservoir Protection Zone	Tributary Headwaters Zone
Off-Road Driving (ORVs, ATVs)	⊘	⊘
Snowmobiling	⊘	⊘
Bicycling	⊘	✓
Walking/Hiking	✓	✓
Dog Walking	⊘	⊘ ¹
Cross-Country Skiing	✓	✓
Shoreline Fishing	✓	✓
Fishing with Waders	✓ ²	✓
Horseback Riding	⊘	⊘
Hunting	⊘	✓ ³
Boating – non-motorized	✓ ⁴	✓
Boating – motorized (including “jet skis”)	⊘	⊘
Swimming	⊘	⊘
Ice Skating/Ice Fishing	⊘	⊘
Camping	⊘	⊘
Picnicking	✓	✓
Fires & Cooking	⊘	⊘
Programs/Assemblies	✓ ³	✓ ³
Trail Clearing/Trail Marking/Advertising	⊘	⊘
Collecting/Metal Detecting	⊘	⊘
Geocaching/Letterboxing	✓ ⁵	✓ ⁵

✓ - Public access is allowed in designated areas only ⊘- Activity prohibited

1. Dogs allowed with hunting permit only. 2. Upstream of DCR dam at Oakdale Power Station on Quinapoxet River and upstream of the Stillwater River confluence with Waushacum Brook. 3. DCR Special permit required. 4. Canoes/kayaks allowed at :West Waushacum Pond; on the Stillwater River upstream of Muddy Pond Road bridge; on the Quinapoxet River upstream of dam at Oakdale Power Station. 5. Geocaching Guidelines must be adhered to and all DCR rules apply.

Public access is allowed in designated areas only from one hour before sunrise until one hour after sunset. Any activity that injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. All alcoholic beverages are prohibited. Night access is prohibited. See 350 CMR 11.09(2) for a complete list of regulations. For additional information contact the Wachusett/Sudbury Rangers at 978-365-3800. In an emergency, contact the Watershed Rangers or the Massachusetts State Police at 508-829-8410 or 911.

Table 15. DCR/DWSP 2011 Public Access Policy - High Use Visitor Areas

ACTIVITY	Old Stone Church	West Waushacum Pond	Oakdale Rail Trail	Sterling Rail Trail	Road Below Dam
Off-Road Driving (ORVs, ATVs)	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Snowmobiling	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Bicycling	⊘	⊘	✓	✓	✓
Walking/Hiking	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dog Walking	⊘	⊘	⊘ ₁	⊘	✓
Cross-Country Skiing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Shoreline Fishing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ ₂
Fishing with Waders	⊘	⊘	✓ ₅	⊘	⊘
Horseback Riding	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Hunting	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Boating – non-motorized	⊘	✓	⊘	⊘	⊘
Boating – motorized (including “jet skis”)	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Swimming	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Ice Skating/Ice Fishing	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Camping	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Picnicking	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fires & Cooking	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Programs/Assemblies	✓ ₃	✓ ₃	✓ ₃	✓ ₃	✓ ₃
Trail Clearing/Trail Marking/Advertising	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Collecting/Metal Detecting	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘
Geocaching/Letterboxing	✓ ₄	✓ ₄	✓ ₄	✓ ₄	✓ ₄

✓ - Public access is allowed in designated areas only

⊘ - Activity prohibited

1. Dogs only allowed on West Boylston owned portion from Oakdale to Route I-190 overpass as posted. 2. From fountain impoundment to approximately 275 feet downstream of concrete railroad abutments 3. DCR Special Permit required 4. Geocaching guidelines must be followed 5. Upstream of accretion dam.

Public access is allowed in designated areas only from one hour before sunrise until one hour after sunset. Any activity that injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. All alcoholic beverages are prohibited. Night access is prohibited. See 350 CMR 11.09(2) for a complete list of regulations. For additional information contact the Wachusett/Sudbury Rangers at 978-365-3800. In an emergency, contact the Watershed Rangers or the Massachusetts State Police at 508-829-8410 or 911.

IX. Plan Implementation

The DCR/DWSP staff will implement the policies, control measures, activities and programs cited in this plan beginning in July 2011. Staffing levels and funding will control the implementation of several of the current recommendations. In general, plan implementation will include the following steps:

- 9 Maintaining, improving, and adding structural access controls and signs, as needed.
- 9 Monitoring, enforcement, and corrective actions.
- 9 Providing educational programs and opportunities to promote watershed protection.
- 9 Partnering initiatives with local groups, town entities, State Police, state agencies, and others.
- 9 Conducting Plan evaluation and modification at regular intervals and as necessary.

The *Wachusett Reservoir Watershed 2011 Public Access Plan Update* implementation focuses on the continuation of the same access policies as 2003. The implementation strategy is mindful of the extremely limited funding for activities beyond routine maintenance and patrols. The plan, however, leaves open opportunities, when appropriate, to partner with other groups and organizations. This plan continues programs that provide passive education to visitors and enforces DCR regulations and policies through Ranger patrols and police coordination.

A. Structural and Access Controls

Structural and access controls are in place on much of the DCR/DWSP lands in the Wachusett Reservoir watershed. Gates and barriers control the access to sensitive locations and provide controlled points for public access (350 CMR 11.09 (2)(a)1 states, “entrance on and exit from land of the Watershed System shall be made through gates or other designated areas.”). Many gates around the reservoir perimeter have been replaced with more secure structures to provide greater protection of the water supply from unauthorized vehicular access. Old cable gates have been replaced with “farm style” gates for safety. Several parking areas have been constructed to allow for signage and educational materials, bulletin boards and kiosks to be in one common access point and to provide better public safety. These entry points are intentionally located near public roadways so they can be easily monitored by Watershed Rangers and police. A focused entry point also allows staff to control public access and monitor uses at each location.

Controlling public access around railroad and power lines rights of ways is difficult due to private property ownership and easements. However, some form of barrier is needed in several areas around the watershed to limit motorized vehicle use, most notably ATVs. DCR will work with utility companies to attempt to limit access to DCR lands through utility corridors.

Controlling access on DCR/DWSP lands in the Tributary Headwaters Zone is more challenging than in the other protection zones because the main type of visitor use is different. In this zone, illegal access takes place mostly by motorized vehicles, including ATVs and snowmobiles. Downed trees and large boulders work well in these locations, as they still allow for foot access.

The addition of structural controls and boulders is a continuing ongoing process through the Watershed Rangers. When it is observed that access controls are needed, Rangers ensure that this work is completed. The plan update will continue the existing protocol of maintaining existing barriers and identifying additional locations as needed.

In addition to the previous recommendations, a large parking lot was also relocated near the Oakdale Rail Trail at Thomas Basin to assist the West Boylston Water District in complying with a Department of Environmental Protection directive to improve controls adjacent to their Oakdale well. Boulders have recently been placed to limit parking on the grassed area, which had become a problem. Some concern has been raised about the need for additional parking in this area; DCR will continue to review the situation and seek resolution if this becomes a problem area.

Table 16. Structural Access Control Status

Site	Recommendation	Status
Route 110 near Campground Road (gate 30 area)	Construct small parking area and realign Gate 30 roadway.	In process. Plans for new parking area and access road not across private property complete. Likely construction 2011.
Route 12/140 near the Railroad Bridge (Gate 25)	Construct small parking area at gate and move gate.	Completed at Gate 25.
Route 140 near MassWildlife (Gate 19)	Construct small parking area at gate and move gate.	Completed at Gate 19.
Route 70 near Cross Street	Construct small parking area at gate and move gate.	Completed at Gate 8.
River Rd. and Mill St.	Construct access barriers.	Guardrail and boulders have been placed on Mill Street to control illegal dumping and ATV use. All cable gates on River Road have been replaced where necessary for fire control or blocked with boulders if access no longer needed.
Newell Hill Rd. Extension	Construct access barriers.	Gate and boulders have been placed at beginning of road.



Mill Street boulder barrier



Typical DCR/DWSP gate

Implementation Recommendations

- Continue existing protocol for maintaining gates and other structural controls.
- Continue to review the need for additional parking as needed.

B. Signs

Watershed Rangers are continuously observing and addressing sign issues within the Wachusett Reservoir watershed when an activity or issue arises that needs attention. All rules signs have been replaced with new DCR universal symbol signs. Old signage is replaced when found on more remote properties. “No Trespassing After Dark” signs have been placed at the Old Stone Church gate at the request of the Watershed Rangers and West Boylston Police to curb a growing trend in nighttime trespassing at this location.

Limit of bicycling near Gate 39 and dog walking along the spillway area of the Intake Protection Zone have been posted with signage since the last plan. “No Dogs Allowed” signs have been placed along the Mass Central Rail Trail at all paths leading to the Quinapoxet River, and also at both ends of DCR property on the Sterling section of the rail trail. Other signs that have been placed at problem areas include “No Dumping,” “No Trespassing,” and “No Fishing.”

In addition to rules signs, bulletin boards and kiosks have been placed at entry points at many areas around the watershed. Bulletin boards and kiosks have generally been placed in high use areas typically near DCR parking areas.

Large bulletin boards are located at: Manning Street Rail Trail parking lot, Oakdale Rail Trail at Route I-190, River Road parking area, and the Sterling Rail Trail. Smaller bulletin boards are at Gate 8, Gate 19, Gate 25 and Gate 35. Bulletin boards allow DCR to place upcoming interpretive programs, rules and regulations, emergency contact information, historical information, watershed maps, and general information on current water quality and/or watershed outreach topics. All bulletin board information is updated on a regular basis by the Watershed Ranger staff.

Four-sided kiosks have been placed at the Promenade of the Wachusett Dam, the Old Stone Church, Gate 36/North Dike, Bob’s Hot Dogs triangle (Junction of Rtes 12 and 140), and at the Stillwater Farm. Information on kiosks also includes emergency contact information, historical information, water quality/watershed education and outreach, watershed maps and current issues. These are also updated on a regular basis by the Ranger staff.

Several brochure boxes were placed at key kiosk locations around the watershed in 2010 to distribute take home information on water quality and public access issues. They have become an integral part of the DCR’s outreach program and are monitored and filled by Ranger staff.

Both the bulletin boards and kiosks contain a lot of information for visitors; many people have been observed reading them and referring to them when asking questions of staff. Other locations for both bulletin boards and kiosks will be evaluated on an as need basis. Recommendations include investigating the use of alternative fade resistant paper or printing as

well as information should be updated on a more frequent basis. In addition, screening or other avenues to keep bees from nesting inside kiosks should be implemented.

Implementation Recommendations

- Add a kiosk or bulletin board in the vicinity of the road below the dam when access to the entire area is reopened.
- Purchase fade resistant paper for kiosk information.
- Update kiosk/bulletin board information on a more frequent basis.
- Add screening or another way to keep bees from nesting inside kiosks. Talk with State Parks to see how they deal with this problem.



Kiosk and brochure box



Typical DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed signage, kiosks and bulletin boards

C. Mapping

The DCR/DWSP reservoir fishing map has been updated to include all DCR/DWSP gate numbers for access points, fire roads, and the fishing limit. The reverse of the map has a listing of the most relevant regulations for this activity and emergency contact information. Recommendations for the next revision and reprinting include adding No Public Access Zone and parking lots to the map and information on Aquatic Invasive Species prevention in the narrative.

Wachusett Greenways has produced a Wachusett Greenways Guide that is available on-line (www.wachusettgreenways.org/wgg.html) and in print, and is also posted on Wachusett Greenways bulletin boards at both sections of the Mass Central Rail Trail. DCR/DWSP's mission, to ensure clean water, is listed, and DCR property ownership is demarcated.

DCR's Wachusett Reservoir watershed hunting map was revised in 2004. The map shows allowed hunting areas north of Route I-190 on one side, and west of Route I-190 on the reverse. Parcel data for these areas was from 2003 and 2004. Since hunting on designated areas of DCR/DWSP lands is by permit only, a hunting map is mailed with each permit issued. Allowable hunting properties are an extensive portion of the Tributary Headwaters Zone, therefore any map made to include the entire area should show the parcels as large as possible, although signage is physically present. DCR watershed property has been acquired since the last revision of the map, and gates have been numbered. A new map will be designed, replacing the stars (previously gates) with a gate number, and showing updated Wachusett DCR/DWSP ownership. A few relevant regulations can also be added to the bottom of the map.

Implementation Recommendations

- Revise fishing map, adding No Public Access Zone and parking lots to the map, and information on Aquatic Invasive Species prevention in the narrative.
- Revise hunting map, replacing stars with gate numbers and show updated Wachusett DCR/DWSP ownership.
- Compose general access map and visitor guide.

D. Enforcement

Watershed Rangers are trained educators who work to identify violations and educate the public on watershed regulations. Once a violation is observed, the Rangers will talk with the violator to explain why the rule or regulation is in effect and how it relates to water quality. For situations where additional help is needed, the Rangers rely on the State Police, the primary enforcement officials on the Division's properties, who can summons violators to court since all DCR/DWSP offenses are criminal in nature. This cooperative system of education and police enforcement has worked very effectively in the Wachusett Reservoir watershed and it is important to continue this partnership, especially with the potential security risks now faced by the agency.

Environmental Police Officers who work in the inland regions are responsible for enforcing a wide variety of environmental laws and regulations. Enforcement of the statutes regarding

hunting, fishing, trapping, boating, and ATVs are a part of these officers' job duties. They also provide invaluable assistance when dealing with these types of violations on DCR/DWSP property or when investigation is needed. Local police have also worked well with DCR/DWSP on issues of mutual concern in the watershed communities, especially when illegal activity occurs after dark. All of these relationships are critical to the enforcement of DCR/DWSP rules and regulations and security of the drinking water supply. DCR meets with all above entities as needed to enhance coordination on enforcement issues.

The public and visitors to the Wachusett Reservoir watershed are an effective tool in identifying and reporting improper, illegal and suspicious activity on DCR/DWSP property. It is important that everyone remains vigilant in ensuring that the drinking water supply remains safe. DCR encourages the public to notify the appropriate authorities when observing an illegal or suspicious activity, and to not try to intervene on their own. All contact information is available on all DCR signage, bulletin boards, kiosks, and brochures for reporting these activities. Water security of the reservoir and all infrastructures should be a priority on DCR/DWSP lands for the public to be observant. The Environmental Protection Agency has designed several drinking water security posters for use by the water supply community. Thought should be given to place these with appropriate contact phone numbers on all bulletin boards and kiosks or on gates at priority areas.

Implementation Recommendations

- Continue education and enforcement efforts of the Watershed Rangers.
- Maintain working relationships with State Police, Environmental Police, and local police.
- Place security related signs in appropriate locations.



EPA Water Security Poster

E. Public Education/Interpretive Services/Public Outreach

Watershed protection is most effective when public access management is complemented by public education. Providing information about watershed protection and water quality is a critical protection tool because so much human activity is not governed by federal or state laws related to water quality. It is important, when talking with visitors, that they be given correct information, and when dealing with rules infractions they are given a background and reasons for the regulation and why it is needed for resource protection. Rangers, who have been trained in interpretive techniques, are the front line educators when dealing with the public and public access issues on our property.

Public education can be broken down into two major categories: direct and indirect contact. Printed information, usually through signs, bulletin boards and brochures are the main avenues for indirect contact. Several brochures on water quality issues have been developed by DCR staff and have been distributed to topic relevant places within the watershed. Town halls, libraries, veterinarian offices, medical facilities and police departments have been utilized for this effort.

Direct contact information can happen in many ways. Watershed Rangers speak informally with thousands of annual visitors to the watershed lands. This is one of the most effective means of public education. Direct interactions allow staff to answer questions, identify improper activities, and immediately inform the visitor the reason why a particular use is restricted.



DCR staff lead an education program on water quality related issues.

School programs allow staff to teach students within the watershed about how their activities affect the water supply resources. School programs also provide an opportunity to distribute printed information to students and their families. DCR staff has constructed displays on drinking water and watershed protection which have been displayed at each public library during National Drinking Water Week, and also participate in other town fairs and events as time and staff allows. Printed information is also made available at the display locations. Other public

programs offered by DCR, all with a resource protection theme, include: guided hikes and tours on DCR property; watershed protection lectures; Old Stone Church historical talk; watershed geocaching event; and a learn to fish program. All events help to reinforce the need for proper resource protection and are a part of DCR's overall education strategy.

DCR has conducted a considerable amount of public outreach in regards to specific topics identified by staff as critical to water quality protection. Three of these issues are dog waste, aquatic invasive species, and fishing line recycling.

Implementation Recommendations

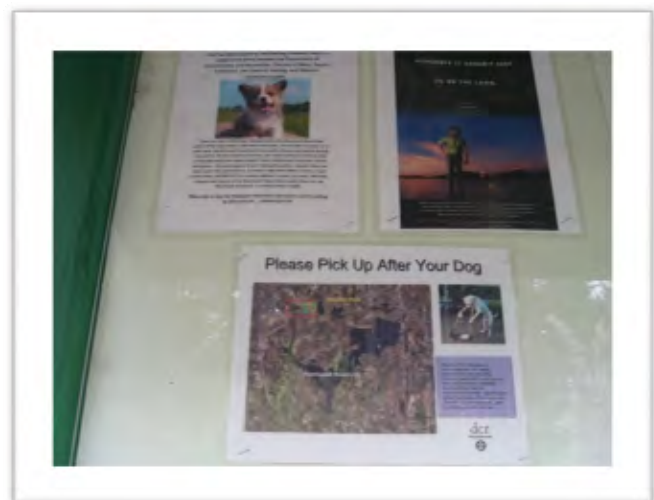
- Continue to conduct public education programs, including programs for schools in the watershed communities.
- Maintain information kiosks and bulletin boards.
- Utilize media as necessary for watershed events, programs, and public access advisories.

1. Dogs and Pet Waste

Dogs are prohibited on DCR Watershed lands, but there are over 5,500 dogs licensed within the five watershed towns. Storm drain systems can carry bacteria from pet waste to nearby wetlands, streams, and surface water bodies, negatively impacting water quality.

Public education and outreach conducted to date includes:

- Watershed Rangers have been provided with small reminder cards that can be handed out to dog owners who are observed walking their dogs on watershed lands. The cards include an explanation as to why the no dog rule is in effect for water quality protection.
- DCR has designed a brochure reminding residents to please pick up after their dogs which has been made available at all watershed town clerk offices and veterinarian offices. Holden Veterinary Clinic has also used these brochures in their "puppy packets" distributed to all new puppy owners (see Appendix F).



Dog-related public education materials.

- Information has been posted on bulletin boards and kiosks.
- A letter has been sent out to neighborhoods where dog waste is the suspected cause of higher bacteria levels in tributaries.
- An article has been published in DCR's *Downstream* newsletter.
- Information has been posted at the new Town of Sterling Greenery Park, adjacent to DCR property.
- Dog waste pick up dispensers were donated to both the Sterling Greenery Park and West Boylston Cemetery Department, where drainage flows into main tributaries and dog waste had become a problem.
- DCR also acted as an advisor to a local elementary school class that chose to find a solution to the community problem of pet waste. The students' outreach included: public service announcements; presentations to the entire student body, school committee and conservation commission; posters; brochures; and a video broadcast on community access television.

DCR will continue to conduct outreach on dog waste and identify innovative ways to educate the public on this topic.

2. Aquatic Invasive Species

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS), such as the zebra mussel and hydrilla, can pose a serious threat to water supplies. AIS, very simply, are not supposed to be here. They are transported from distant regions of North America ("native transplants") as well as from other continents ("exotics"). AIS, once introduced, have the ability to establish a viable colony and spread rapidly within native aquatic communities, threatening the health of waterways as they usually are impossible to eradicate.



DCR/DWSP Aquatic Biologist Jamie Carr investigating the presence of *Hydrilla* at South Meadow Pond in Clinton (off watershed).

AIS can have a significant impact on game fish populations, including a reduction in juvenile fish food sources resulting in less fish for sport. AIS are primarily spread among water bodies by human activities, especially boating and fishing.

While the Division controls the potential of AIS entering the Reservoir from equipment such as boats and trailers by limiting use to only official business and requiring those vessels to be thoroughly free of AIS, a greater challenge to DCR is preventing introduction of AIS to Wachusett Reservoir from anglers fishing from shore. The approach to providing public outreach on the threats from AIS must be multi-faceted to reach the general public as well as user groups. DCR has begun conducting outreach on AIS and will continue to do so through the implementation of the Aquatic Invasive Species Assessment and Management Plan (DCR 2010). DCR will utilize additional means, including the media if conditions warrant.

AIS outreach has included:

- Fact cards for the Rangers to distribute to fishermen while in the field.
- Notices placed at local bait and tackle shops and Wal-Mart sporting section.
- Advisories posted at South Meadow Pond and DCR bulletin boards and kiosks.
- Articles in the DCR *Downstream* newsletter, and through e-mail with all watershed sportsmen's clubs.

3. Fishing Line Recycling

Fishing line, when left on the ground, poses a hazard to wildlife as well as anyone who tries to pull it from tangled branches and brush. Fishing line can entangle waterfowl, such as cormorants and loons, as well as beaver and muskrat. These animals cannot break free and are left to die in the drinking water supply. In an effort to address the amount of fishing line left on the Wachusett Reservoir shoreline, DCR has placed fishing line recycling canisters and associated signs at many popular fishing gates around the reservoir and its tributaries. Several articles on this topic have been published in the DCR *Downstream* newsletter. Canisters are emptied on a regular basis and the line is sent to a company in Florida that recycles it into other items. As of December 2010, over 24 miles of line has been kept out of the reservoir and recycled. DCR will continue to promote this program that benefits water quality, public safety, and wildlife health.



Fishing line recycling canister.

F. Sanitation

DCR does not have any public restroom facilities in the watershed. Human sanitation can be an issue in all management zones, but most importantly, in the Reservoir Protection Zone as sections of shoreline are a significant distance from roadways, gates and parking areas, and fishermen spend many hours at their locations. Sani-cans are provided at the Old Stone Church, Oakdale Rail Trail, Gate 36, and Gate 23 from April until November. Ranger staff has noted that the location at Gate 23 (near the MassWildlife Central District office) has been used extensively by road bicyclists and passers-by, and not DCR visitors. DCR will develop a monitoring program to determine usage at the current locations and recommend alternative/additional locations, or relocating to different areas depending on season and/or visitor usage of the lands. The number of sani cans, identifying proper areas to locate them in, and the ability for them to be emptied must be taken into consideration and alternative options may be explored.

Implementation Recommendations

- Continue to provide sani-cans at key locations. Develop a pilot program to monitor sani-can usage within the Reservoir Protection Zone.
- Encourage and coordinate with Wachusett Greenways and the Town of West Boylston to place an odorless dog waste collection station at the Mass Central Rail Trail in Oakdale.

G. Monitoring/Public Evaluation

This Public Access Plan Update outlines any policy changes in public access management on DCR/DWSP lands and waters in the Wachusett Reservoir watershed. It is important that the Division monitor and evaluate these policies. Legislation requires the Division to update its watershed protection plans on a regular basis (5 year cycles). However, on-going monitoring and evaluation of DCR/DWSP access policies will occur in order to ensure a successful watershed protection program.

DCR will maintain a regular monitoring program for its forest roads, access points, and reservoir shorelines. This is accomplished primarily through Watershed Ranger patrols and environmental assessment activities performed by DCR/DWSP Environmental Quality staff. These programs will help identify impacts from public access, particularly illegal dumping and erosion from overuse.

Implementation Recommendations

- Maintain a regular monitoring program for forest roads, access points, and reservoir shorelines.
- Provide review of public access issues in annual work plans and other reports.

**Table 17. Wachusett Reservoir Watershed 2011 Public Access Plan Update
Implementation Summary**

Issue	Implementation Objectives
Structural Controls	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with railroad and Power Company to add barriers or signage on ROWs to stop ORVs from entering onto DCR property. 2. Continue to monitor for illegal dumping and install barriers where needed. 3. Work with the Town of West Boylston to install an access gate at either end of River Road to provide emergency access for DCR as well as West Boylston Police and Fire Departments. 4. Explore the addition of a fence or barrier between the dam Promenade and Gate 1 to curb any potential trespassing and make the limits of public access clear.
Signs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to remove old signage as observed in the field. 2. Ensure that correct contact numbers of DCR and the State Police are printed on signs. 3. Install additional signage where public access problems arise. 4. Post emergency contact phone numbers and gate reference number at key locations along the shoreline where there is a significant distance from the gate to the reservoir. 5. Add “No Trespassing After Dark” signage to the Old Stone Church and Dam Promenade. 6. Talk with the Town of West Boylston about access after dark on their portion of the Mass Central Rail Trail. 7. Verify rules signage east of Route 70 for accuracy. 8. Confirm Public Access Management Zone signage in the field corresponds to the wording in the Public Access Plan. 9. Work with the responsible party to repaint “No Fishing/Standing From Bridge” at the Thomas Street/Quinapoxet River Bridge. 10. Ensure adequate “No Trespassing” signage is in place to delineate the area between Route 62 (Willow Road) and Mile Hill Road. 11. Change color of emergency contact information on signs or consider adding separate signs at gates for this information. 12. Create new bicycle trail placards and place along trails. Re-blaze and re-establish existing trails. 13. Place signage along the Quinapoxet River for canoeists and kayakers, including a warning sign leading up to the accretion dam and a permanent warning sign at Canada Mills stating that conditions can become dangerous during times of high water levels and that users are at their own risk. 14. Post “No Access on Rip Rap” signage near Gate 36. 15. Post signage near Gate 40 alerting bicyclists that they are not allowed on the top of the dike. 16. Post “Limit of Fishing With Waders” signage at confluence of Waushacum Brook and Stillwater River. 17. Add signage between the dam Promenade and Gate 1 to curb any potential trespassing and make the limits of public access clear.

Issue	Implementation Objectives
Mapping	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and distribute Public Access Map(s) that show locations for hiking, bicycling, and parking. 2. Develop, if resources allow, Wachusett Reservoir watershed guide incorporating all maps. 3. Modify hunting map, replacing stars with gate numbers and show updated DCR/DWSP ownership. 4. Revise fishing map, adding No Public Access Zone and parking lots to the map, and information on Aquatic Invasive Species prevention in the narrative.
Enforcement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to conduct regular patrols of the Wachusett Watershed. 2. Work with local and state law enforcement on night trespassing issues. 3. Work with local and state law enforcement on ATV/snowmobile activity. 4. Monitor use of property along closed section of River Road for illegal activity and work with law enforcement to curb any activity observed.
Public Education/ Interpretive Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to use media as necessary for watershed events, programs, and public access advisories. 2. Conduct environmental programs for schools in the watershed communities. 3. Conduct public education programs. 4. Maintain information kiosks and bulletin boards. 5. Install kiosk or bulletin board at the road below the dam. 6. Continue dog waste education by staff in the field and kiosk postings. 7. Post link to Public Access Plan on all boards and kiosks. 8. Post geocaching guidelines on all kiosks and bulletin boards. 9. Consider developing a permanent, water quality/watershed themed multi-use letterbox or geocache at Stillwater Farm. 10. Post EPA Drinking Water Security Posters on kiosks and bulletin boards at the Old Stone Church, Bobs Hot Dog Triangle, the Dam Promenade, and below the Dam. 11. Change kiosk and bulletin board information more frequently and look into fade resistant paper or printing. 12. Add screening or other avenue to keep bees from nesting inside kiosks. 13. Work with the Open Space Committees in each watershed town to ensure that their plan updates are compatible with DCR's mission. 14. Work with MassWildlife to include better DCR Reservoir information, rules and regulations in annual fishing abstracts.
Sanitation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coordinate with Wachusett Greenways and the Town of West Boylston to place an odorless dog waste collection station at the Mass Central Rail Trail in Oakdale. 2. Develop a pilot program to monitor sani-can usage within the Reservoir Protection Zone.

Issue	Implementation Objectives
Technology	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore possibility of creating an official Facebook Page or Twitter for timely announcements, general information, or emergency information such as closures. 2. Provide DCR Group Permit or request form on DCR Public Access website 3. Work with watershed towns to provide a link to the Public Access Plan and maps on their town websites. 4. Work with IT to make DCR website easier to navigate for information on the watershed. 5. Have geocaching guidelines available online through the DCR website. 6. Provide bicycling map online through DCR website.
Maintenance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain access trail to handicapped platform from River Road to Quinapoxet River. 2. Discuss improving the road shoulder along the reservoir side of the triangle at Rtes 12/140 West Boylston (near Bob's Hot Dog Truck) with local and state road agencies. 3. Perform regular maintenance below the Dam. 4. Coordinate with DCR Land Management Plan for ongoing maintenance needs at Poutwater Pond. 5. Investigate maintenance needs at Poutwater Pond bog boardwalk and repair as needed and if funding allows.

X. Other Open Space and Public Access

Although recreational activities are limited on DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed lands, there are many alternatives when looking to engage in a specific activity. This section lists some of these locations. It is important that the public check with each management agency before participating in their chosen activity because all property owners have different rules and regulations, which sometimes change.

A. DCR Division of State Parks and Recreation

There are 32 DCR State Parks in Central Massachusetts. Two of the closest to Wachusett Reservoir are Leominster State Forest and Wachusett Mountain State Reservation.

Wachusett Mountain State Reservation is 3,000 acres; it contains a wealth of natural resources. The mountain access road is currently closed to motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians during the Wachusett Mountain Parkway Road System Rehabilitation. The project, which began in spring of 2010 and is expected to be completed in the summer of 2011, will repair the deteriorated roadway infrastructure and bring the roadway into compliance with current safety and functional standards. Wachusett Mountain offers many miles of hiking and walking trails, some of which lead to spectacular scenery. Dogs (on leashes) are allowed at the Reservation and bicycles are limited to the paved roadway.

Leominster State Forest is a 4,300 acre parcel of forested land that offers recreational opportunities year round, ranging from mountain biking (on multi-use trails) and swimming in the summer to cross-country skiing and snowmobiling in the winter. Dogs (on leashes) are allowed.

Some of the local options for camping include Willard Brook State Forest, Otter River State Forest, Pearl Hill, and Lake Dennison. Several properties offer swimming in the summer, including Dunn State Park and Quinsigamond State Park. There are also swimming pools operated or leased by DCR in Clinton, Leominster, Fitchburg, and Worcester.

The State Park system also offers the public several locations to ride ATVs (www.mass.gov/dcr/recreate/orv.htm), snowmobiles (www.mass.gov/dcr/recreate/snowmobile.htm), and horses (www.mass.gov/dcr/recreate/horse.htm). More information on the DCR State Park System and regulations for central Massachusetts can be found at www.mass.gov/dcr/central.htm.

B. MassWildlife

The Department of Fisheries, Wildlife and Law Enforcement (DFWELE) is the state agency responsible for managing and conserving the state's fisheries and wildlife, including rare and endangered species. The Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) works to conserve and manage the Commonwealth's wildlife heritage by offering expertise and assistance, addressing issues involving wildlife and habitat, and ensuring that people understand and comply

with laws designed to protect our populations of wild plants and animals. MassWildlife controls 102 Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) and 13 wildlife sanctuaries across the state, encompassing over 160,000 acres of land and water. All WMAs are open to hunting, fishing, trapping, and other outdoor recreation activities; sanctuaries are more restrictive.

There are two significant MassWildlife properties in the Wachusett Reservoir Watershed, Poutwater Pond WMA and Minn's Wildlife Sanctuary. There is a description of Poutwater Pond Nature Preserve (comprised of DCR and MassWildlife lands) in Section III. The 138 acre Minn's Wildlife Sanctuary in Princeton does not allow hunting; it does contain a trail that climbs to the top of Little Wachusett Mt. and connects to the MA Audubon Wachusett Meadow Sanctuary.

Additional information can be found on-line at www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw.

C. *Massachusetts Audubon Society*

Massachusetts Audubon Society is the largest conservation organization in New England, protecting more than 29,000 acres of conservation land, conducting educational programs for children and adults, and advocating for sound environmental policies at the local, state, and federal levels. Mass Audubon maintains 41 wildlife sanctuaries that are open to the public. The Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary provides eleven miles of trails over more than 1,000 acres at the base of Wachusett Mountain in Princeton. Pets, leashed or unleashed, are not allowed on this site. Motorized vehicles, bicycles, hunting, fishing, and trapping are also not permitted in the wildlife sanctuaries.

Additional information can be found on-line at www.massaudubon.org.

D. *Land Trusts*

Land Trusts are local, independent nonprofit organizations that work with landowners who want to protect open land for conservation, recreation, and other public benefit. Land trusts may acquire land through donation or purchase, or hold conservation restrictions on private property. There are several active Land Trusts in the Wachusett Reservoir watershed, including: White Oak Land Conservation Society, North County Land Trust, Princeton Land Trust, Sterling Land Trust, and West Boylston Land Trust. Some already own land, such as White Oak's 600 acres in Holden and Rutland, while others are still organizing their resources. Each Land Trust has its own access rules.

E. *Other Open Space*

Other protected open space within the watershed includes: golf courses, lands in Chapter 61 (61, 61A and 61B), DCR Watershed Preservation Restrictions, and local community ownership. It is important that DCR forms partnerships with each open space owner to preserve and protect the

natural resources and to adequately and effectively promote the mission of the DCR/ DWSP. Open Space and Recreation Plan Updates and Master Plans for the towns of West Boylston, Sterling, Clinton, Boylston, Holden, Paxton, and Princeton were reviewed for this Public Access Plan Update. Each community had similar goals listed for the future and each plan highlighted DCR/DWSP as a valuable open space owner. The towns also recognized the purpose and need of these lands for water supply protection. The watershed towns, understandably, would like a broader range of active recreation activities on DCR/DWSP lands, including bicycling and boating, activities which DCR deems inappropriate uses of watersheds lands. DCR will work with the Open Space Committees in each town to ensure that their plan updates are compatible with DCR's mission.

REFERENCES

Massachusetts Acts and Resolves

Acts of 1919, Chapter 350, Section 123 (Creation of MDC)
Acts of 1984, Chapter 372 (Creation of MWRA and MDC Division of Watershed Management)
Acts of 1992, Chapter 36 (Watershed Protection Act)
Acts of 2003, Chapter 41 (Creation of the Department of Conservation and Recreation)
Acts of 2004, Chapter 149, Section 27 (Creation of the Water Supply Protection Trust)

Massachusetts General Laws (MGL)

MGL Chapter 59, Section 5G (Watershed Payments in Lieu of Taxes)
MGL Chapter 92A½ (DCR Watershed Management)

Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR)

310 CMR 22.00 Drinking Water
350 CMR 11.00 Watershed Protection

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Town of Holden Open Space and Recreation Plan. 2009.

Town of Paxton Community Master Plan. 2008.

Town of Princeton Town Plan. 2007.

Town of Sterling 2010 Open Space and Recreation Update. 2010

Town of West Boylston Open Space and Recreation Plan. 2009 Update.

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Appendix A. Watershed Regulations

Official Disclaimer: These regulations are provided to you for your convenience. Official versions of all Massachusetts State statutes are available through the State Bookstore. When downloading from the web please be aware that the copy you receive may differ from the official version. If you need the statutes for work that may have any legal implications, make sure to get the official version from the State bookstore.

350 CMR 11.09: General Rules and Regulations for the Protection of Watersheds and the Watershed System

In order to facilitate review of all regulations promulgated by the Commission and the Division relating to Watersheds and the Watershed System, this Section includes regulations of general applicability to Waters of the Watershed System. The regulations in 350 CMR 11.09 are intended to supersede the regulations in 310 CMR 23.00, 350 CMR 8.01, 350 CMR 9.00, and 350 CMR 10.00.

(1) Waters of the Watershed System.

(a) No Person shall take or divert any Waters of the Watershed System of the Commission and no Person shall corrupt, render impure, waste or improperly use any such water.

(b) No Person shall:

1. engage in any construction activity involving filling, dredging, grubbing or altering land without adequate provisions to prevent erosion resulting in clay, silt or other turbidity laden waters from entering the Waters of the Watershed System;
2. construct, establish or maintain any agricultural facility or place where animal manure may be deposited or accumulated without adequate provision to prevent any manure or other Pollutant from flowing or being washed into the Waters of the Watershed System;
3. engage in any other activity which could degrade the quality of Waters of the Watershed System or interfere with their use as a source of water supply.

(c) No Person shall allow a condition to exist on such Person's property which could result in the direct or ultimate discharge of any Pollutant into the Waters of the Watershed System.

(d) Any records of any board of health or health agent concerning matters within the Watershed shall be open to inspection by the employees and agents of the Commission and the Department.

(e) Whenever an incident occurs, is likely to occur, or a situation exists that threatens to add Pollutants to the Waters of the Watershed System, the Person causing or contributing to the pollution or potential pollution shall notify the Commission and the Department immediately.

(2) Watershed System.

(a) General Regulations.

1. Entrance on and exit from land of the Watershed System shall be made through gates or other designated areas.
2. No Person is allowed within any land of the Watershed System, except from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset, unless authorized by a written permit from the Commission or its designee.
3. Powered boats are prohibited within the Waters of the Watershed System except in areas designated by the Commission or its designee.
4. All acts which pollute or may pollute the water supply are prohibited. No litter or refuse of any sort may be thrown or left in or on any land or water within any Watershed System. All Persons within said System shall use the sanitary facilities provided for public use.
5. All acts which injure the property of the Commonwealth are prohibited. No Person shall injure, deface, destroy, remove or carry off any property, real or personal, under the care and control of the Commission, including but not limited to, all historic artifacts and natural materials. The removal of gravel, topsoil, stones, boulders, or other earthen material is prohibited from the Watershed System except for removal for official use for land management purposes by Commission staff. No Person shall build or construct any object or structure of the property of the Commonwealth except with the written permission of the Commission or its designee.
6. Cooking and all fires are prohibited within the Watershed System.
7. No Person shall wade or swim in any reservoir except wading while using boots for the purpose of launching boats at designated boat launch areas.
8. No Person shall wade or swim in any Tributary or Surface Waters on or within the property of the Commonwealth except at areas designated by the Commission or its designee.
9. Organized sports activities, including but not limited to orienteering and baseball, are prohibited in the Watershed System except by written permit from the Commission or its designee.
10. Any violation of 350 CMR 11.09 will be deemed sufficient cause for revocation of fishing privileges for a period of time not less than one year from the time of violation. The Commission and its employees are not responsible for any damage to or loss of property sustained by fishermen, or for any injury or loss of life which may be incurred in connection with public use of the reservoirs and Watershed System.

11. Breach of peace, profanity or other disorderly conduct offensive to the general public is strictly prohibited within the Watershed system. Possession of and drinking of alcoholic beverages is prohibited within said System.
12. No Person shall drive a motorized vehicle within the Watershed System except upon roads authorized for such use by the Commission or its designee. Recreational vehicles are prohibited on all Watershed System property except the use of snowmobiles in areas designated by the Commission or its designee. Motor vehicles shall be parked only in areas designated by the Commission or its designee. Operators of motor vehicles shall obey all regulatory signs unless otherwise directed by a police officer or person in charge. No Person shall willfully obstruct the free passage of vehicles or Persons within the Watershed System. Vehicle access for official use may be granted by the Commission or its designee.
13. No Person shall bring any animal within any Watershed System property except for horses and dogs at the Ware River Watershed at areas designated by the Commission or its designee.
14. The use of bicycles, skis and other means of non-motorized transportation within the Watershed system shall be permitted only in areas designated by the Commission or its designee.
15. No Person, except in an emergency, shall bring, land or cause to descend within any Watershed System property any aircraft except with a written permit from the Commission or its designee.
16. Parades, games, fairs, carnivals, fishing derbies, bazaars, gifts or solicitations for raising or collecting funds shall not be permitted within the Watershed System without written approval of the Commission or its designee.
17. Lotteries, raffles, gambling and games of chance are prohibited; and no Person shall have possession of machinery, instruments or equipment of any kind for use of same in the Watershed System.
18. Public assemblies of more than 25 persons shall not be allowed within the Watershed System without a written permit from the Commission or its designee.
19. No Person shall engage in any business, sale or display of goods or wares within the Watershed System without a written permit from the Commission or its designee.
20. Commercial signs and advertising are prohibited in the Watershed System.
21. No Person shall have possession of or discharge any weapon, firearm, fireworks, or other explosive on or within the Watershed System except at times and areas designated by the Commission or its designee. All forms of target shooting are prohibited on or within the Watershed System.
22. No Person may hunt, shoot or trap animals on or within any Watershed System property except at times and in areas designated by the Commission or its designee.

23. All Persons within the Watershed System shall obey the lawful directions of regulatory signs, police officers or persons in charge, or of Federal or Commonwealth wardens or enforcement officers.

24. The Watershed System or parts thereof may be closed for public access at the discretion of the Commission or its designee when necessary to protect the lands and waters under the care and control of the Commission.

25. The possession of all types of metal detectors or similar devices is prohibited on all of the Watershed System property.

(b) Special Regulations for Quabbin Reservoir.

1. Persons in compliance with Commonwealth Fish and Game Laws and Regulations, will be allowed to fish from shore in areas designated by the Commission or its designee. A valid state fishing or sporting license is required by any Person renting or launching a boat at any Commission facilities subject to 350 CMR 11.09. Reasonable fees for the use of boats, for rental of outboard motors for fishing purposes, or use of Commission facilities including parking and boat ramps, may be charged by the Commission.

2. Persons permitted to fish from boats shall, at all times, be responsible for the sanitary condition of the boats. Persons under 16 years of age must be accompanied by a Person possessing a valid fishing license in order to boat on Quabbin Reservoir.

3. Only boats of a minimum length of 12 feet, and of a type considered safe by the Commission representative in charge, shall be used. No inboard motors, collapsible boats, sailboats, pontoon boats, square sterned canoes, or other similar craft will be permitted in the water, and no boats will be permitted in the water except in areas designated for boating by the Commission or its designee. Outboard motors shall have a rating of not more than one-half the BIA or OBC rated horsepower for the boat and shall not exceed 20 horsepower, except that outboard motors for Commission boats less than fourteen 14 feet six inches in length shall not exceed ten horsepower. Boats less than 14 feet six inches in length will be limited to three occupants, and boats of that length and in excess thereof may be licensed to carry four occupants. No boats shall carry more than four occupants. Canoes and jon boats of a minimum length of 12 feet, and of a type considered safe by the Commission representative in charge, shall be used and only in areas designated for boating by the Commission on Pottapaug Pond above the regulating dam and at Gate 31 above the regulating dam. Canoes less than 16 feet and jon boats less than 14 feet six inches in length will be limited to two occupants, and canoes and jon boats in excess thereof may be licensed to carry three occupants. All boats must be in compliance with current Commonwealth Boating Laws. All boats must be clean and contain no refuse of any kind. Commission personnel shall have the right to inspect all private boats launched at Commonwealth facilities and may deny access in order to protect water quality or the safety of occupants. Chock blocks must be used on vehicles when removing boats from the Reservoir.

4. No Person shall operate a motor boat at a speed other than reasonable and proper or in such a manner as to annoy or endanger the occupants of other boats.

5. Fishing from the shorelines of the Quabbin Reservoir and its Tributaries within the Watershed System or from boats shall be allowed only during a season designated by the Commission or its designee. All privately-owned boats, motors and other equipment must be removed from the property of the Commission each day.

6. Boats shall not leave the mooring areas before dawn, and must return at the time posted at each mooring area. The beaching of boats at any point except at the designated mooring and landing areas is strictly prohibited, except in cases of extreme emergency.

(c) Special Regulations for Ware River.

1. Persons in compliance with Commonwealth Fish and Game Laws and Regulations will be allowed to fish in the Ware River in areas designated by the Commission or its designee.

2. Powered boats and powered canoes are prohibited within the Ware River Watershed Reservation.

(d) Special Regulations for Wachusett Reservoir.

1. Persons in compliance with Commonwealth Fish and Game Laws and Regulations will be allowed to fish from the shore of Wachusett Reservoir in areas designated by the Commission or its designee.

2. Boating is prohibited in Wachusett Reservoir.

3. Fishing from the shoreline of the Reservoir shall be allowed only during a season designated by the Commission or its designee.

(e) Special Regulations for Sudbury Reservoir.

1. Persons in compliance with Commonwealth Fish and Game Laws and Regulations will be allowed to fish from the shore of Sudbury Reservoir in areas designated by the Commission or its designee.

2. Boating is prohibited on Sudbury Reservoir except in areas designated by the Commission or its designee.

11.10: Enforcement

Any Person who, without lawful authority, takes or diverts any Waters of the Watershed System or corrupts or defiles any such Waters or any source of such Waters or who violates and refuses to comply with any rule, regulation or order of the Commission shall be subject to the fines set forth in M.G.L. c. 92, ‘ 111. The provisions of 350 CMR 11.00 shall be enforced upon petition of the Commission or of any town or Person interested by the Supreme Judicial Court or Superior Court or any justice of either court as provided in M.G.L. c. 92, ‘ 112. In addition, upon written request by the Division, the Department shall have the authority to enforce the provisions of St.

1992 c. 36 and 350 CMR 11.00 by all legally permitted enforcement mechanisms including, but not limited to: issuing notices of noncompliance; convening pre-enforcement conferences; issuing water supply orders pursuant to M.G.L. c. 111, ‘ 160; and imposing administrative penalties pursuant to M.G.L. c. 21A, ‘ 16 and 310 CMR 5.00. Such written request by the Division to the Department may seek enforcement for a specified type of violation or area, for a designated group of cases or for an individual matter.

REGULATORY AUTHORITY

350 CMR 11.00: St. 1992, c. 36.

Appendix B. Geocaching Guidelines

Wachusett Reservoir Watershed Geocaching/Letterboxing Guidelines



Geocaching and letterboxing are allowed on DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed lands. There are, however, several rules for this type of activity to ensure minimal impact on the natural and cultural resources.

- 9 All caches to be placed on DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed property must be registered on www.geocaching.com or www.letterboxing.org , noting that DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed rules must be adhered to when on the property. Each cache must contain contact information of the owner. In the event a cache has to be removed by DCR staff, effort will be made to notify the owner.
- 9 Caches placed in no trespassing areas or areas deemed to be inappropriate by the DCR Wachusett Watershed Rangers will be removed immediately and kept at the Watershed Ranger office for thirty days. Effort will be made to notify the owner of the cache removal.
- 9 Caches CANNOT be placed in the following locations:
 - o Areas that would encourage disturbance or dismantling of historic structures, historic buildings, rock walls or cellar hole foundations
 - o Wetland resources protected under the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (310 CMR 10)
 - o Areas that could potentially cause danger to visitors trying to locate the cache
 - o Underwater or in streams
 - o Wildlife dens
 - o Restricted access areas of the DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed
- 9 Caches must be in transparent containers, e.g., Tupperware or Rubbermaid. Metal (ammo boxes), PVC pipes, or other non-transparent containers are prohibited.
- 9 No digging or excavation is permitted at any time in the placement or retrieval of a cache.
- 9 No defacement or alteration to DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed property, including but not limited to signs, benches, buildings, or natural features is allowed.
- 9 No removal or significant disturbance of vegetation, plant growth, or other flora is permitted at any time in the placement or operation of a cache.
- 9 Caches will not contain food, alcohol, firearms, drugs, dangerous items (e.g., fireworks or matches), or sexually explicit material. No natural materials from DCR Wachusett Reservoir watershed lands shall be placed into the cache.
- 9 No monies or profits can be derived from the placement of a cache by the owner or an affiliated business or organization.
- 9 Any questions regarding geocaching or letterboxing can be directed to the DCR Wachusett Reservoir Watershed Rangers at 978-365-3800.

Appendix C. AWWA Policy on Recreational Use of Domestic Water Supply Reservoirs



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F 303.794.7310
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Statement of Policy on Public Water Supply Matters

Recreational Use of Domestic Water Supply Reservoirs

The American Water Works Association (AWWA) supports the principle that water of the highest quality should be used as the source of supply for public water systems. Accordingly, the risks and potential mitigation requirements of any recreational activity on water supply reservoirs should be identified and publicly evaluated. In the evaluation, utility- and customer-determined acceptable levels of risk should be given the highest consideration. No recreation should be permitted on finished-water reservoirs under any circumstances.

Protection of public health and drinking water quality should be the highest priority in operational decisions for reservoirs used jointly for water supply and recreation. Decisions regarding recreational use of domestic water supply reservoirs should be consistent with the intent of the source water protection program developed and implemented by the utilities and other responsible parties.

Recreational uses of domestic water supply reservoirs and the land-based infrastructure necessary to support such uses can add sources of microbial, physical, and chemical contaminants to the drinking water produced from the reservoirs. Water utility decisions on permitting recreational uses of water supply reservoirs should consider the following issues: (1) the potential for water quality degradation, (2) the public health risk, (3) the acceptance of such health risk by the customers, (4) the current required level of treatment, and (5) additional treatment requirements, uncertainties, and costs that may be incurred. Recreational uses should be prohibited in those instances where a scientifically-based risk assessment, or, in the absence of a risk assessment, the best available scientific data demonstrates a probable or imminent degradation of water quality or hazard to public health that cannot be controlled or mitigated in a cost effective manner.

Continued . . .

Adopted by the Board of Directors June 13, 1971, reaffirmed Jan. 28, 1979, and Jan. 25, 1987, revised June 23, 1996, June 13, 2004, and January 25, 2009.

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When considering proposals for recreational use of domestic water supply reservoirs, the water utility should work with stakeholders to develop an integrated reservoir management plan, including appropriate water quality monitoring, to evaluate and, if necessary, mitigate water quality impacts, and to minimize increased risks. Body-contact recreation (e.g., swimming, water skiing, wind surfing) and use of two-cycle gasoline engines on boats should be discouraged or prohibited. In addition, boat inspection/washing stations and restrictive use of live bait should be considered to prevent the introduction of foreign and invasive species (such as zebra mussels or non-native algal species) that could potentially destabilize a reservoir's ecology and water quality. Where feasible, costs for monitoring, evaluations, and mitigation should be borne by those proposing or benefiting from the recreational activity, not by the utility or its customers.

If recreation already exists on a reservoir, the water utility should work or continue to work with stakeholders to develop an integrated reservoir management plan and associated implementation actions to mitigate water quality impacts and to minimize increased risks.

Recreational Use of Domestic Water Supply Reservoirs

Adopted by the Board of Directors June 13, 1971, reaffirmed Jan. 28, 1979, and Jan. 25, 1987, revised June 23, 1996, June 13, 2004, and January 25, 2009

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Appendix D. Public Access Survey and Results

Water Supply Protection Wachusett Watershed Public Access Survey

1. Please tell us where you live:

2. Please tell us what describes your affiliation with DCR Wachusett Watershed lands (please check all that apply):

- ☐ Watershed resident
- ☐ Non-watershed resident
- ☐ Abutter to DCR Wachusett watershed lands
- ☐ Municipal official

3. What age group do you belong to?

- ☐ 19 or under
- ☐ 20-29
- ☐ 30-39
- ☐ 40-49
- ☐ 50-59
- ☐ 60 or over

4. How did you learn about this survey?

- ☐ DCR website
- ☐ DCR Kiosk/bulletin board
- ☐ Direct mailing
- ☐ DCR Watershed Downstream newsletter
- ☐ Local Newspaper
- ☐ DCR Watershed Rangers/Staff
- ☐ DCR press release
- ☐ Town Hall

Other (please specify)

5. On a average, how many days per season do you utilize DCR Wachusett Watershed lands?

	Less than 7	7 - 14	15 - 30	over 30
Spring	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Summer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fall	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Winter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

6. When do you mostly use DCR Wachusett Watershed lands?

	day	evening	both
Weekday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Weekend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. What passive recreation activities do you engage in on DCR Wachusett Watershed lands? (check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> Cross-country skiing/snowshoeing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hunting | <input type="checkbox"/> Picnicking/relaxing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bird hunting with a dog | <input type="checkbox"/> Geocaching/letterboxing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking/walking | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography/nature study/birdwatching |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle riding | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

8. Of the above, what is the PRIMARY type of passive recreation you engage in on DCR Wachusett Watershed lands?

9. While on DCR Wachusett Watershed lands, would you know who to contact in case of an emergency or water/environmental issue?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, who is this contact?

10. While on DCR Wachusett Watershed lands, is it clear to you what activities are allowed and those that are prohibited?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

11. When looking for information on DCR Wachusett Watershed rules, regulations, or general reservoir information, where do you try to find the answers?

12. Have you observed a violation of DCR Wachusett Watershed rules and regulations while on our property?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

13. While on DCR Wachusett Watershed lands, how often have you encountered the following:

	often	occasionally	rarely	never
Dog walking:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Swimming or wading:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feeding ducks and geese:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Horseback riding:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Snowmobiling/ATVs:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visitor consuming alcohol/drugs:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. Do you fish at the Wachusett Reservoir?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

15. If yes, do you belong to a sportsmen's association?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

16. How do you usually purchase your fishing license?

- ☐ City/town clerk
- ☐ MassWildlife office
- ☐ WalMart
- ☐ Online through MassWildlife
- ☐ Other

17. As a fisherman, are you aware of the types and impacts of Aquatic Invasive Species?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

18. Are you aware that DCR Watershed Rangers patrol DCR Wachusett Watershed lands?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

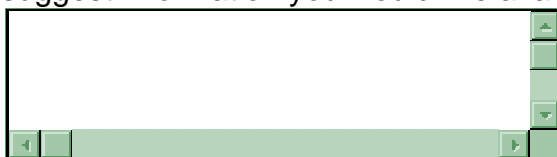
19. If yes, have you had the opportunity to talk with a ranger?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

20. Have you read the information provided on DCR Wachusett Watershed kiosks and bulletin boards?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Please suggest information you would like available on kiosks and bulletin boards



21. Are you aware that DCR Wachusett Watershed staff offer free education programs?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

22. If yes, have you attended a program?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Type of free program that you would attend

23. Once through DCR Wachusett gates, is our trail system easy to follow?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

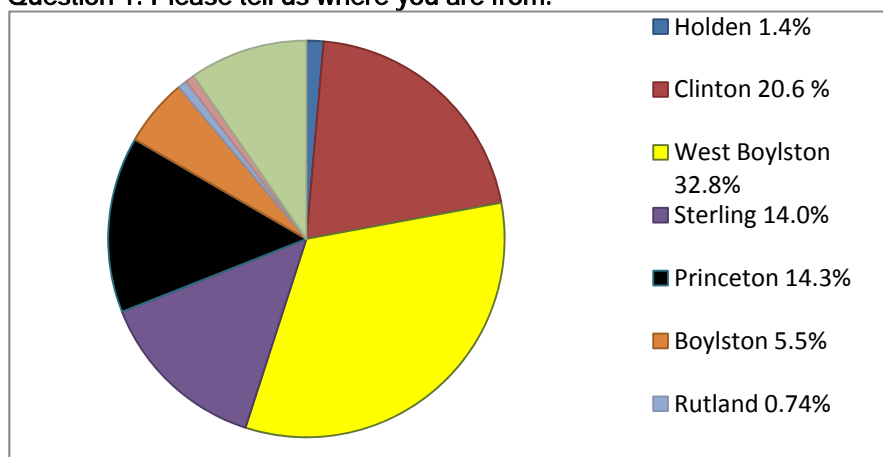
24. Please tell us about one aspect of the DCR Wachusett Watershed that you really like.

25. Please tell us about one aspect of the DCR Wachusett Watershed that you would change if given the chance.

26. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

DCR/DWSP Wachusett Watershed 2011 Public Access Survey Results

Question 1: Please tell us where you are from:



Question 2: Please tell us what describes your affiliation with DCR Wachusett Watershed lands (please check all that apply):

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Watershed resident	69.8%	222
Non-watershed resident	18.6%	59
Abutter to DCR Wachusett watershed lands	22.3%	71
Municipal official	2.8%	9
<i>answered question</i>		318
<i>skipped question</i>		2

Question 3: What age group do you belong to?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
19 or under	0.0%	0
20-29	7.9%	25
30-39	18.6%	59
40-49	30.2%	96
50-59	27.4%	87
60 or over	16.0%	51
<i>answered question</i>		318
<i>skipped question</i>		2

Question 4: How did you learn about this survey?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
DCR website	5.0%	10
DCR Kiosk/bulletin board	3.5%	7
Direct mailing	3.5%	7
DCR Watershed Downstream newsletter	0.0%	0
Local Newspaper	44.6%	90
DCR Watershed Rangers/Staff	4.5%	9
DCR press release	5.0%	10
Town Hall	34.2%	69
Other (please specify)		135
<i>answered question</i>		202
<i>skipped question</i>		118

Responses to "other":

- Email from DCR representative
- Clinton Mass web site
- www.ClintonMass.com
- Local website
- ClintonMass.com
- www.clintonmass.com discussion forum
- Clintonmass.com discussion forum
- Web site
- Clintonmass.com
- Clintonmass.com discussion site
- Eight Point Sportsmen's Club Web Site
- Clinton online discussion
- Clintonmass.com
- Town of Sterling email notices
- Sterling News & Notices Email
- Sterling News & Notices email
- Clinton, MA. web site
- Email from town
- Town of Sterling email
- Town email updates
- Direct email through town
- Sterling Town News Email
- Sterling town email notification
- Town email notification
- Sportsmen's club 8pt
- 8 Point
- Sportsmen's club
- Town of Sterling News and Notices Email
- Family member
- Clinton blog
- Clintonmass.com
- Clinton mass web site
- Email from resident at Ridgefield Condo
- E-mail from town
- Clintonmass.com
- Clintonmass.com
- Brother in law
- Co-worker
- Newspaper
- Forwarded by a friend
-
- Town email
- Town Hall email list serve sent it to residents :)
- Town Website Notices
- Town hall blog
- Email
- Clintonmass.com/forum
- Email from town of West Boylston
- Town of Princeton Email
- Princeton town Web mail
- Email
- Princeton town hall email to residents on email lists
- E-mail from Town of West Boylston
- Town email
- Town E-Mail message
- Town of West Boylston email
- E-mail from town administrator
- Town West Boylston website
- Princeton internet email
- Town Administrator Email
- Town administrator
- Press release forwarded to my email by the town
- Local E-mail
- Resident
- Friend
- From a neighbor
- Friend
- Email
- Town News email
- Princeton news emailing
- Town website
- Friend
- Sent e-mail
- Friend forwarded it
- Town email
- E-mail from town
- Nonprofit meeting discussing access
- Town email
- http://www.clintonmass.com/forum/
- Town News email
- West Boylston town events email
- Email
- Town email system
- www.clintonmass.com
- Clinton Fish & Game
- Received from Clinton Fish and Game
- Sportsmen's Club (Kelley)
- Town email
- Clinton Fish & Game Protective Assoc.
- Eight Point Sportsman's Club meeting
- Town of WB email
- Other concerned parties
- A friend informed me
- West Boylston Town Manager E-mail Blog
- Administrator's blog - e-mail
- Email sent from town administrator
- The Banner - West Boylston news
- 8pt. Sportsman's club website
- Town e mail
- Club
- Princeton mass email
- Forwarded from an individual
- Notified by other watershed abutters
- Friend
- Town email
- Clintonmass.com
- Word of mouth

- 8pt sportsmen club
- Neighbors
- Local website
- 8 point sportsman club
- Referred by friend
- Email from Town of Sterling Town government
- Clintonmass.com
- www.clintonmass.com
- More than one above.
- Various committees
- Town Website
- Email
- Family
- West Boylston town website
- Also town website
- Town Website

- Clintonmass.com
- Sportsmen's club
- Officer left on car
- Monthly Town Newsletter
- Little postcard on my vehicle
- West Boylston town website
- www.clintonmass.com
- Eight Point Sportsman's Club
- Rail Trail
- Cable Channel Notice
- Holden Library
- DCR Rangers/Staff
- Newspaper
- DCR Website/ Fish and Game Office
- Library

Question 5: On average, how many days do you utilize DCR Wachusett Watershed lands?

Answer options	<7	7-14	15-30	>30	Response Count
Spring	72	107	73	64	316
Summer	64	76	90	80	310
Fall	65	99	86	61	311
Winter	141	80	44	35	300
<i>answered question</i>					318
<i>skipped question</i>					2

Question 6: When do you mostly use DCR Wachusett Watershed lands?

Answer Options	day	evening	both	Response Count
Weekday	116	54	76	244
Weekend	189	8	113	301
<i>answered question</i>				314
<i>skipped question</i>				6

Question 7: What passive recreation activities do you engage in on DCR Wachusett Watershed lands? (check all that apply)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Fishing	36.2%	114
Hunting	8.6%	27
Bird hunting with a dog	3.2%	10
Hiking/walking	93.3%	294
Bicycle riding	39.4%	124
Cross-country skiing/snowshoeing	44.4%	140
Picnicking/relaxing	41.9%	132
Geocaching/letterboxing	7.6%	24
Photography/nature study/birdwatching	47.3%	149
Other	12.4%	39
<i>answered question</i>		315
<i>skipped question</i>		5

Question 8: Of the above, what is the PRIMARY type of passive recreation you engage in on DCR Wachusett Watershed lands?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Hiking/walking	64%	192
Fishing	15%	44
Bicycle riding	8%	23
Photography/nature study/birdwatching	5%	15
Hunting	5%	14
Cross-country skiing/snowshoeing	2%	7
Picnicking/relaxing	2%	5
Geocaching/letterboxing	0%	1
<i>answered question</i>		301

Additional comments*:

- Hiking and walking. I was also under the impression that some of West Boylston's roads are technically DCR watershed property, and I use those on a daily basis. We only fished for the first year we were here in West Boylston. We stopped picnicking after someone called the State Police, accusing my wife of letting my son swim in the reservoir (he was just playing barefoot near the bank, and at three, hadn't even learned to swim yet). We still use the rail trail, but we haven't been back for a picnic since.
- Bike Riding - Even though it is prohibited. This exclusion needs to be removed.
- Physically unable to access DCR Land

* While the majority of comments are listed, comments that were irrelevant and/or did not relate to public access on DCR property were eliminated.

Question 9: While on DCR Wachusett Watershed land, would you know who to contact in case of an emergency or water/environmental issue?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	35.8%	112
No	64.2%	201
<i>answered question</i>		313
<i>skipped question</i>		7

Question 10: While on DCR Wachusett Watershed lands, is it clear to you what activities are allowed and those that are prohibited?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	89.5%	280
No	10.5%	33
<i>answered question</i>		313
<i>skipped question</i>		7

Question 11: When looking for information on DCR Wachusett Watershed rules, regulations or general reservoir information, where do you try to find the answers?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Internet	53%	145
Signage, bulletin boards, and kiosks	47%	128
Contact DCR or MassWildlife	4%	11
<i>answered question</i>		272
<i>skipped question</i>		48

Other responses: Local newspaper, bait shop, fishing regulations handout, pamphlets, and watershed plan. Responses could choose more than one answer option.

Question 12: Have you observed a violation of DCR Wachusett Watershed rules and regulations while on our property?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	39.0%	119
No	61.0%	186
<i>answered question</i>		305
<i>skipped question</i>		15

Question 13: While on DCR Wachusett Watershed lands, how often have you encountered the following:

Answer Options	often	occasionally	rarely	never	Response Count
Dog walking:	76	129	67	37	309
Swimming or wading:	6	23	73	202	304
Feeding ducks and geese:	6	34	56	203	299
Horseback riding:	2	30	39	228	299
Snowmobiling/ATVs:	6	42	55	198	301
Visitor consuming alcohol/drugs	4	26	44	229	303
<i>answered question</i>					313
<i>skipped question</i>					7

Question 14: Do you fish at the Wachusett Reservoir?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	36.8%	116
No	63.2%	199
<i>answered question</i>		315
<i>skipped question</i>		5

Question 15: If yes, do you belong to a sportsmen's association?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	18.9%	38
No	81.1%	163
<i>answered question</i>		201
<i>skipped question</i>		119

Question 16: How do you usually purchase your fishing license?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
City/town clerk	23.9%	38
MassWildlife office	5.7%	9
WalMart	27.7%	44
Online through MassWildlife	27.7%	44
Other	15.1%	24
<i>answered question</i>		159
<i>skipped question</i>		161

Question 17: As a fisherman, are you aware of the types and impacts of Aquatic Invasive Species?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	76.7%	122
No	23.3%	37
<i>answered question</i>		159
<i>skipped question</i>		161

Question 18: Are you aware that DCR Watershed Rangers patrol DCR Wachusett Watershed lands?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	92.0%	286
No	8.0%	25
<i>answered question</i>		311
<i>skipped question</i>		9

Question 19: If yes, have you had the opportunity to talk with a ranger?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	49.8%	147
No	50.2%	148
<i>answered question</i>		295
<i>skipped question</i>		25

Question 20: Have you read the information provided on DCR Wachusett Watershed kiosks and bulletin boards?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	86.5%	270
No	13.5%	42
<i>answered question</i>		312
<i>skipped question</i>		8

Please suggest types of information you would like available on kiosks and bulletin boards:

- Daily water temperatures
- More relevant information about the locations within the watershed- history, natural history, etc. The current information is generally pretty arbitrary and vague, if there is any at all. For example, at the dam, it would be nice to know about the dam. At other gates, it would be nice to know what makes that place important and what you might expect to see on the trail.
- Volunteer/friends group opportunities. Trail Maps
- I think the kiosks need to be freshened up a bit, they are looking a little weathered.
- Reasons why dogs aren't permitted if the owners are responsible and clean up after them.
- What is in season.
- Local education about the areas such as native species.
- I would like the amount of kiosks and bulletins strictly limited so that it does not detract from the beautiful nature.
- We believe more signs against dog walking should be put up. Whenever we have told someone they shouldn't walk their dog we have been called names.
- Info on ticks and lyme disease
- Info on ALB
- Hunting schedules for type of arms.
- Marked trail guides
- The kiosks themselves look old and tired, need some tlc. No suggestions though on additional info that should be posted.
- Where you can go to do what
- How about the effect of fishing lead on loons and other water birds
- Brief rules and scope
- Trail maps for cross-country skiing, hiking, etc.
- information on what activities are permitted, when access is allowed, whether mountain biking / snowshoeing / cross country skiing is allowed)
- A sign directing show shoers to keep off cross country ski trails
- Summer/winter usage trail maps
- Trail maps, rules (abbreviated), emergency contact
- I would like to see that the penalties for breaking the law be posted. I would like to see a range around the kiosk because there is never dcr around when I'm near the stone church or near the rail trails.
- Separate trails for bicycles. They are a pain.
- Maps, regulations
- Upcoming events ways to help ensure safety of watershed and surrounding lands
- Bicycling, geography
- 1. Reporting of issues
- 2. Invasive species to watch out for (with photos in various seasons)
- 3. List w/photos of local flora/fauna identification guide
- 4. Wachusett Dam construction/engineering details/schematic of structure
- 5. Comprehensive watershed map w/labels of rivers, brooks, ponds, islands, buildings, power stations (former and current), bridges, streets, location of Cosgrove intake, Quabbin Aqueduct, points of interest, bike trails, etc.
- Rules & Regs; short/general information such as history, statistics, etc.
- Trail maps would be nice. Maybe a sign warning us that police will threaten to arrest small children for being too close to the water would be nice, too.
- Wildlife identification
- Same as now. Rules & Regs, statistics & information, history
- Advertise the website more clearly. As a board member of a sportsmen's club many people didn't know it.
- Website information
- Information about local species
- Information about new DCR areas open to hiking, nature observation, and/or hunting.
- What you have, I like history, flora and fauna to look for, trails, rules, regulations and upcoming events. Change them more often to keep it interesting.
- Simple summary of do's and don'ts.
- I enjoy historical information as well as info about native plants and wildlife.
- Rules and contact info
- They're fine as is
- Emergency info and upcoming events
- Trail maps / weather forecast / heads up on poison ivy etc.
- Trail info, programs
- Information on protecting wildlife and the watershed
- Make aware to others that hunting is allowed and safety oranges should be worn.
- More notification about drinking alcohol and smashing your bottles (at least take your trash out!)"
- fines for littering
- I would like information about the history of the dam and the reservoir and about the free programs you mention
- Where the hunting is
- Fishing Permit Required for all ages 15 and up
- Historical information and natural history
- Information about programs and use of the property. Information on the Mass Central Rail Trail.
- More hiking maps
- I'd like a more detailed map with miles/distance, so I know how many miles I am walking on the trails
- The info provided is ample. maybe some more "please don't litter" signs, but sadly that probably won't keep the jerks from doing it.
- Emphasis on prohibitions(dogs,bikes,picnics,etc)as well as points of interest
- Seasons, Fishing info, Ranger Interaction opportunities
- Post that all dogs must be leashed.
- Please increase the fines for littering. There are a few visitors that tend to have a large trash footprint (usually the fishermen) making it difficult for all sportsmen.
- That during the hunting season all persons and animals (dogs & horses) should wear hunter orange.
- Descriptive maps.
- Better/more detailed trail maps.
- Historical, wildlife and native species. Current information on drinking water (water in general) current issues or threats/issues

Question 21: Are you aware that DCR Wachusett Watershed staff offer free education programs?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	39.1%	122
No	60.9%	190
<i>answered question</i>		312
<i>skipped question</i>		8

Question 22: If yes, have you attended a program?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	14.4%	31
No	85.6%	184
<i>answered question</i>		215
<i>skipped question</i>		105

Type of free program you would attend:

- Weather program
- History of watershed & surrounding area
- History walks, nature walks, programs for young kids
- Old stone church talk
- Identification programs: birds/trees/flowers,
- overview of trail interconnectivity networks, history of the area
- Bird watching, history, invasive species, fish/water species
- Bald eagle observation, fishing instruction - especially fly fishing.
- Informational hike to learn the history behind the Reservoir.
- Historic
- History and tours
- Hiking
- Ranger Hike
- Most any.
- Historical and engineering information on the creation of the water space, spillway, and dam.
- History of the reservoir
- I missed the last one, Oct. 2010, which offered a walk/hike along the Reservoir that provided some history of the Reservoir. I prefer outdoor, informational hikes.
- Wildlife talks
- Animal-related programs
- I like the nature presentations
- Bird identification
- Children's programs at Mount Wachusett
- Wildlife
- Wildlife identification
- Bird watching
- Just became aware of them through the website
- Informational
- Bird talks
- Plant ID
- History of reservoir, towns before res, rare wildlife, geology/geography, water supply (aqueducts, early equipment, plans etc),
- History tours; nature walks.
- More education about the local flora and fauna.
- There is a nice program at Quabbin. Kiosks are sufficient at Wachusett watershed.
- I would like to see more history programs and if there is a DVD of how the reservoir was built.
- History /function of the dam & tour
- Environmental
- Wildlife
- Wildlife Information
- Rail trail days
- All of the programs already offered appeared interesting to me but I was not available to attend on the days they were planned.
- History of the mills, anything about fishing especially if you can tell me about some of those secret places no one is willing to tell me about
- Town history.
- We have attended walks at Quabbin. Hoping to attend Wachusett Watershed programs when we retire.
- Very interested in programs related to the eagles that have been living at the reservoir.
- Nothing comes to mind now
- Information about the building of the reservoir
- Any nature watch or instructional fishing
- Educational programs for kids (nature walks) in conjunction with local elementary schools,
- Historical; education about native species
- History of res
- Children's Fishing Program
- I would attend any free programs that interested me or my kids.
- Environmental protection topics, land conservation topics, topics that support the
- Goals and objectives of local Open Space and Recreation Plans, topics that affect local land owners.
- Historical
- Advanced Fishing Techniques/ Tips
- Hiking tours with historical and nature
- I don't fish, but the fishing programs seemed very appealing.
- Invasive plant species
- Fishing
- Bird identification
- Habitat that call the Reservoir their home. I see deer regularly, sometimes a fox or coyote. would enjoy learning more of wildlife at the Reservoir.
- Creation of the Wachusett Reservoir
- Eagle nesting on the reservoir

- The history of the reservoir and the history of the fish species that live there [i.e. how/when did the lake trout get in there?]
- Bird watching.
- Program with a birder's format
- Ecology/environmental/wildlife watching/hikes/snowshoeing/
- Wildlife
- Watershed ecology
- I want your resources built into the Clinton Public School Curriculum
- Touring facilities like Dam, water testing process, etc.
- Historical documentary and timeline of watershed creation.
- Resource protection and security.
- Local ecology, issues with watershed protection and development, what homeowners can do to
- Protect the watershed (avoid using pesticides, etc.)
- Anything on hiking.
- How to protect of our natural resources
- The Rangers have presented to my class at Major Edwards School on a number of occasions, I have also taken Project Wild and Project Wet courses.
- Bird watching, fishing, hunter safety, bald eagle, deer, history, wildlife,

Question 23: Once through DCR Wachusett gates, is our trail system easy to follow?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	85.6%	255
No	14.4%	43
<i>answered question</i>		298
<i>skipped question</i>		22

Question 24: Please tell us about one aspect of the DCR Wachusett Watershed that you really like*.

- Proximity and easy access
- Water
- Good brush clearing
- That you allow bicycling on the Rail Trail
- The land is beautiful.
- The availability of hunting lands
- I really enjoy my days fishing on the property and anticipate many more years of fishing.
- I like the aspect that these lands are open to the public.
- We like it that no boats or motorized vehicles are allowed in these areas.
- It's sheer beauty, all year round.
- The secluded atmosphere
- I enjoy walking and enjoying the beauty of the reservoir.
- So close to towns but allows an escape
- It is a very relaxing place to walk & enjoy as a family for free.
- Very close to my home.
- Quiet!
- Hunting opportunities in certain areas (would like to see expanded)
- My family loves the West Boylston rail trail
- The Trails
- Trails
- Like it all
- Quiet, solitude, wildlife.
- Trails.
- Safe, clean
- The vastness of the trail system.
- The serenity it has to offer. Walking the trails is a great stress reliever.
- Kept clear of storm debris
- Gateway into nature
- It's protected natural space
- The quiet and clean lands
- Natural beauty.
- Fishing
- It is not overly congested with visitors.
- Availability of trout
- The fact that we can use the property for recreational activities.
- So well maintained - always clean and beautiful to look at!
- We enjoy the opportunity to take a nice, quiet country walk.
- Cleanliness of trails and upkeep
- Clean
- Open space/conservation of forests.
- Quiet and trails
- Privacy and isolation
- Ability to use the area for exercise
- Access to non city like area
- The observation of wildlife while snowshoeing.
- Excellent fishing opportunities
- I enjoy walking down paths around the reservoir that you have maintained.
- Unspoiled area
- The great amount of areas to explore.
- Hiking trails and pathways
- Peaceful place to be
- Clean and peaceful
- Land conservation and limited use.
- The beauty and ability to get out and enjoy nature
- Stillwater Farm
- it's nearby
- Not a lot of people there
- Peace
- The water!
- Protection from development
- Beautiful and well kept trails
- Large area of open & forested space to hike - good trails.
- Beauty and retained land
- Its accessibility
- Trails
- Rail trails, fishing access, opportunity to observe wildlife.
- Rail trail and river
- Open multi-use access
- Rail trail
- Large tracts of open space
- That the Watershed is patrolled.
- Protected land that will never be developed
- Accessibility
- The upkeep of the trails.
- Rail trail
- Trails
- Chance to connect with nature.
- Quiet
- The availability of public land in general
- Variety of terrain, access
- Lots of trails
- The trails are kept wide and groomed. There is a wide variety of walking trails to take advantage of.
- Easy access / parking / upkeep
- I like the stairs by the dam. I wish the route 62 side of the stairs would open soon.
- Wildlife
- Love the open trails.
- The good trail system.
- It's beautiful, relaxing, nature close to home
- Walking trails
- Well maintained open trails
- Accessibility for children
- Rail trails
- Wild state.
- Rarely crowded
- Hiking trails

- Rail trail
- Peacefulness
- Quiet and spare
- Do not utilize the land
- The bike trail!
- I like the access available to me.
- Beauty. Engineering. Quiet and peaceful.
- Utilization of previously unusable land
- It's a beautiful spot to take long walks with the camera.
- It's quiet.
- The rail trail.
- Beautiful, clean trails
- Fishing
- Hiking and snowshoeing and it is a great place to do that
- Trails
- It's a great area to hike/snowshoe/bird watch and unwind.
- Peaceful /serene
- Trails
- Natural beauty
- It's beauty
- Walking
- Love having the Rail Trail available in our town
- The scenery
- The open space close to home
- The bike trail is great.
- The beauty of the scenery
- The preservation of open space.
- Walking trails
- The rail trail
- It's free
- Access to the trails
- Quiet
- The land is generally very clean and free of litter.
- The wildlife!!! oh, & the peace & quiet
- clean
- I like the amount of access available and the well defined trails.
- Access
- Appears well maintained
- DCR classes
- The views and peacefulness
- Clean and preserved nature!
- It's down the road from my house
- Not much, the rail trail is pleasant, but boring.
- I like the trails for walking and cross country skiing
- Peaceful setting.
- Availability of trails to run on
- The openness
- Scenic value.
- The land will not be built on.
- Tranquility
- Enjoy close access to nature and recreation
- Local access
- Lack of motorized vehicles.
- The view
- Local convenience
- Beauty and cleanliness
- Generally uncrowded.
- Scenery
- Greenways partnership
- Hiking
- Having close access to nature; the people that are mostly there are there to enjoy it
- Quiet environment
- The natural setting
- Hunting, fishing
- I particularly appreciate that things are left in as close to a natural state as is feasible
- Not too many restrictions
- The quiet!
- I really like that it is so clean and natural
- Scenic beauty
- The scenery and quiet.
- I like that I can just walk to some of the trails
- The accessibility
- Fairly Clean
- Easy walking trails
- I love the peace and quiet
- Central Mass Rail Trail
- Land is protected from development
- Peaceful, fresh air, relaxing
- Access to the public.
- Cleanliness of property.
- Access to toilet facilities
- Unspoiled large bodies of water
- The way things are run
- Well maintained trails!
- Accessibility to hike, walk, and x-c ski in the woods and along the water edge
- It's beautiful, clean, safe and a fun place to walk for exercise
- Being out in the environment and seeing people enjoying it.
- Peaceful
- It's readily accessible and it's free
- Fishing access and informative/ friendly rangers on patrol.
- The tranquility and pristine beauty
- Most of the areas that I fish are clean of most trash.
- Wildlife and environmental management and protection
- Trail system
- I enjoy being able to hunt the land.
- That its available to everyone to enjoy
- It attracts wildlife that are easily viewed (eagles)
- Very well managed and maintained
- That leashed dogs are allowed on the trail in West Boylston.
- Gates 8 and 9
- The ability to walk dogs on leash.
- Walking in the Spillway area of the Wachusett Reservoir
- That it's there.
- Open space with natural looking landscapes.
- Large tracts of land accessible from the Worcester urban area
- That it is open and available to use.
- The fact there is so much protected property from development
- That it is open to the public.....
- It is clean and comfortable to walk
- There is nothing better than running along the Wachusett Reservoir.
- Great trail system.
- The tranquility and beauty.
- That it's always clean and organized.
- The trails are pretty extensive, but not well maintained.
- Quietness, limited recreation available to preserve the resources
- The isolation from urban surroundings.
- Rail trails- great spots for young families, senior citizen walking groups, plenty of shade in summer and benches for rest spots
- Wide open space DCR has provided by trimming and cutting brush along reservoir walking trails and grass along shore, etc.
- Safe and secure, parking lot at gate 8
- No houses, no boats

- The main aspect that I Appreciate Very Much is the fact that the public is allowed as much access to the Reservoir that we currently have. I would be very upset if public access becomes limited in the future, or worse yet, non-existent.. That would be a tragedy in my opinion
- I enjoy the peaceful tranquility that is found along the paths of the Reservoir. I enjoy the Reservoir almost daily, except in the winter months, and am always surprised that more people do not utilize such a beautiful part of our town, and bordering towns.
- Offers many areas to walk-around and/or fish at. Very beautiful lands and waters to enjoy and relax at.
- Fishing and hiking is easily accessible and the nature is so beautiful just moments from my home
- Thank you for putting up some signs about bicycling being allowed from dam to Rte 110, but few people know that.
- I like talking with DCR rangers and showing them the pictures of all the giant small mouth bass and lake trout that my brother and I have caught!
- The fact that the water is kept pure - that is no boats, motorized or otherwise.
- Rangers are helpful. trails are mowed.
- Wonderful place for walking, hiking, and biking. as a consumer, I really appreciate the clean water.
- Once you are past the gates at any entrance, the cleanliness of the trail system and the shorelines.
- DCR presence has been exponentially stepped up in recent years which is good to see. I think more immediate person to person contact between the rangers and the public are required for education/implementation of rules etc.
- How open the trails are, and well kept up the trails are. Down Scar Hill Road we like to sit in the sand and watch the sunset/sunrise.
- The solitude, the ability to follow the seasons, the cyclic nature of the flora and fauna, bird watching, esp. eagle watch
- I love being able to hike the trails and water's edge of the reservoir, viewing and hiking near the dam and spillway areas.

* While the majority of comments are listed, comments that were irrelevant and/or did not relate to public access on DCR property were eliminated.

Question 25: Please tell us about one aspect of the DCR Wachusett Watershed that you would change if given the chance*.

- Allow bicycles
- Bike riding
- The South end of the basin between Malden Brook and the railroad track is heavily silted in with mud, brush, debris, weeds, rubbish, and dead animals (fish, birds, amphibians, etc.). It needs to be dredged out from shore using a large excavator each year because the water currents bring all that debris into the shore area repeatedly.
- More bicycling allowed on trails round Wachusett Reservoir, North Dike, etc.
- Better information on trails around Wachusett Reservoir
- I would like the story of the reservoir told better, including more and better access to the Dam. The reservoir, its infrastructure, and its watershed are incredible resources and people around here are generally ignorant about them. I think public engagement either personally (rangers) or through better signs/kiosks would help a lot.
- Allowing more sportsman opportunities.
- My best friend and fishing buddy is severely handicapped (Hip and both knees replaced). I know some gates can be opened but there are several (35 and the one to Andrews point) that he likes to fish and can't because of the long walk. Please reconsider which gates can be opened so he and others like him have access to these and similar places.
- I would like to have more access to the Watershed lands.
- I'd like to see trails blazed or otherwise clearly indicated with directions and destinations.
- The trails need to be cleaned and the invasive species of plants need to be better controlled
- Please allow access to the Wachusett dam. It is beautiful and walking it offers a very unique perspective of the reservoir and the town of Clinton. I used to walk it as a child and would be eternally grateful if it were opened again!!!!
- I'd love to see the Dam reopened for the public. Such a beautiful part of town that no one can enjoy.
- Allow access to the stairs and the lower road in Clinton. allow parking near the reservoir
- Opening the dam to foot traffic. I used to love walking on the dam and taking in the view as a kid/young adult.
- Allowing non-motorized boats on the water.
- Better shoreline access at the reservoir, because much vegetation has taken hold on old shoreline trails.
- More access from Clinton
- Expanded Hunting and possible use of kayak/canoeing
- Better access to the Wachusett reservoir area.
- Dogs not allowed in some areas (Wachusett Res) and Rail trail. Totally unfair.
- You need to allow people to walk their dogs there - I use it infrequently because you do not.
- No snowmobiles!
- I can't think of anything off the top of my head. In the past couple of years 2007 - 2009 there was a lot of construction going on in the Clinton part of the Reservoir.. I was very unhappy that such large portions of the Reservoir were off limits to the public during construction. If anything, I think trying to find a way to allow the public to visit all of the Reservoir during these times of construction would be my thought. There were large portions of the walking paths closed off to the public but in my opinion there could have been a better way to keep the public safe while getting the job at the same time.
- Removing the bicycling exclusion. There a beautiful trails for bikes and I feel the public would enjoy riding there.
- Allow mountain biking in wooded areas. We are avid bikers who follow regulations. We are often thrown into the ATV category which is not a correct comparison. Many mountain bikers are interested preserving the area we ride in and many trails become impossible to ride once riding by ATV and dirt bikes. Please consider allowing mountain biking as part of a healthy activity.
- A clearly communicated website whereby one could get one or more maps of all the trails.
- Better Trail guides - get rid of the litter bugs
- Better trail maintenance. The trails I walk are being taken over by weeds.
- Dogs (with responsible owners)
- I would open the fishing at Wachusett to boating , permit dogs for hunting, be able to swim/wade in water
- More accessible to hunters, fishermen, swimming, biking.

- Access to cross over the dam. This is a marvelous man made dam that a generation of young people is not getting the chance to appreciate.
- Being able to fish from a boat on Wachusett Reservoir
- Allow ice skating.
- I'd like to be able to walk a dog as long as I remove waste. I'd like to prohibit planes from flying over the watershed. I'd love to be able to walk over the dam again, and also kayak on the water.
- We would like more patrolling to insure rules are complied with. Also all rangers should enforce the rules.
- More availability to bike through the trails
- Dogs allowed
- Prohibit access to the public to all areas..
- Add more fish and allow canoes!
- Allow dogs
- Ugly fences
- Access to the reservoir with canoes for fishing
- Allow dogs
- Allow bicycles on the fire roads
- Allow picnicking
- Allow access on and near the dam like the good old days
- Tours of the dam
- Allow people to collect firewood
- Allow access after dark for star gazing
- Increased Hunting and connection of bike trails into Clinton
- Would like a limited ice fishing season
- Add bicycle use in certain areas.
- Mountain biking in more areas would be nice.
- I would like to be able to walk my dog on the properties.
- Separate areas for different types of recreational activities. Biking only, dogs only, hiking only, etc.
- Better care/upkeep taken @ promenade area/lower road.
- Would love to swim
- Ticks
- Abolish any and all hunting that is currently allowed on the DCR Wachusett Watershed.
- I would revisit some of the areas where hunting is allowed. The population has grown in the area and with more people and houses there is a greater chance of accidents. Hunting and hiking don't seem to be a good mix. While I do continue to hike during hunting season I do not feel comfortable doing so and find that I limit my activity.
- I would like to see more programming and activities at Stillwater Farm- I see that the local garden club has been doing more there..that is great but more can be done with that site. School buses bring students there at times as well- there should be more of that if possible.
- Dogs. I like to walk with my dog on a leash. I don't care for owners that don't leash their pet
- A few benches along the spine of the dike at Wachusett Reservoir would be great!
- Publicity about active partnerships with other like-minded entities: land trust, Audubon, scouts, other state agencies, TTR, etc
- Allow mountain biking
- Would allow dogs.
- Portapotties at parking lots. I only know of 2.
- limited access points (unclear which gates are ok for parking, not ok for any access, ok for walk-in-access)
- Would love to be able to sail, kayak or canoe!
- Trail improvements
- Allow ice fishing
- Allow dog walking
- Better marked trails other than the rail trail and trail map
- Resume more activities. e.g., pre 9/11 access to space; dogs permitted on land (on leash), etc....
- Non-motorized boating in reservoir
- Horseback riding
- I would allow people to walk with their pets as long as they pick up after them. I would allow people to snowmobile around the fire roads. I would allow non motorized row boats and sailboat to access the water for fishing and leisure
- I would allow swimming
- Restricting dogs altogether.
- Less signs that begin with the word no
- More areas for dogs, and separate areas for bicycles. Many bikers travel too fast and are a hazard.
- Beavers are becoming invasive and destroying a lot of treed land
- Allow canoeing on the Wachusett Reservoir
- More boating
- I would like to see more rangers/security on some of the major trails. I don't like to take my children on walks without another adult with me.
- Open the top of the dam once a year for a special town day.
- Trash
- I would allow non-motorized boating on the reservoir as is allowed on the Quabbin Reservoir.
- It would be nice to have more access to the water - swimming/wading or motorless boats.
- I would love to see kayaking and canoeing allowed.
- Allow dogs -- after all there are deer, coyotes, fishers and all manner of animals.
- More info about not littering....like if you bring it with you take back with you. Respecting the area so everyone can enjoy it with little or no impact on the wildlife.
- I would permit the local schools to row/crew on the water.
- More information on programs
- Access to water with non motorized boats like canoes
- Less litter along rte 140/70 access areas
- Allow sailing on Quabbin
- Absurd levels of regs.
- More recreational use of land, reservoir
- Continue to clear the woods from the ice storm damage
- Dog walking
- Allow dog walking - we have loads of lands and it is a shame dogs are prohibited - we don't use the land as much as we would and go elsewhere since we cannot bring our dog
- Trail maps
- Would love to be able to swim, but I know that since it's a drinking water source, that's not possible
- I would love to be able to put a canoe on the Wachusett Reservoir --.
- Bicycling around lower road should be allowed (intake area B2).
- Limitations on dog walking along the rail trails
- I would like a place to park - there's only a few parking spots here and there.
- You have signs disallowing dogs outside the watershed (old RR grade & road behind Clinton Reservoir Cemetery) and upstream of reservoir (Wachusett Greenways trails and nearby land) even though 1) dogs are allowed on land on/next to reservoir itself (towns, roads, WG trail), 2) you don't chase birds from that far up reservoir (e coli breaks down before intakes); 3) there are towns, roads, and RRs on the edge of the reservoir and running right over it with all sorts of pollutants much closer to the intakes than dogs well upstream of the reservoir; 4) you allow motorboats in the Quabbin which spew toxins that break down far, far slower than e coli and will soon bring invasive species into the Quabbin, then the aqueducts, and then the Wachusett.

- Access to top of dam. That is a one-of-a-kind view. I was told by a ranger that the dam is no longer closed due to security issues (safety of structure and/or water supply), but a safety issue with the fence. Please replace fence as part of standard maintenance. Historical or not...it needs to be maintained/improved and brought up to code. Can sell pieces of it as a fundraiser and the Clinton/Boylston/W Boylston Historical Societies, etc. would probably love to display a section (possibly even the Museum of Russian Icons).
- Allow dogs, kayaking, canoeing, camping, and ATV's.
- You should allow swimming and non-powered boating (canoes, paddleboats, rowboats) on the reservoir. This type of activity has a low impact on the potability of the water and is allowed in plenty of other reservoirs in this state and in other states and would have a tremendous positive economic impact on the watershed communities in the summer months. Furthermore, that water is treated before it comes out of a tap in Boston, isn't it? What difference would a canoe make, anyway?
- More trails would also be nice. .
- It may be a little too restrictive
- Less restricted fishing.
- Allowing dogs. I know all the places around that allow dogs and it would be a great safe env. to walk a pet. Most pet owners are very responsible and clean up after their dogs.
- Reopen the walk across the dam in Clinton.
- I would like to see an area for canoes. This could be run by the state so that people would have to rent canoes and then they could go fishing on the water. The Quabbin has that and so should the Wachusett.
- No fishing. The litter that I've seen has been bait containers left on shoreline
- Allow access with dogs
- Open the spillway / fountain area
- Allow dogs on leash
- More maintained trails
- Non motorized boating. It would be great to Kayak
- Allow more hunting areas
- Non-motorized small boats for fishing and pleasure, small sail boats, kayaking. a program for kids/adults in boat safety,
- Expanding fishing boundaries at Wachusett Reservoir! Allow mountain biking!!!!!!
- Possibility of designated camping areas?
- Provide maps of trails and a system to know where you are out in the woods. Allow mountain bike access.
- Update identification of where DCR property overlaps private property.
- Passive boating
- Allow kayaking/canoeing on the reservoir. I come from Maine and the water supply for Portland is Sebago Lake where all water sports are allowed.
- Public access to the water. I would like to be able to take my kayak out on the reservoir.
- I am a quadriplegic, confined to a wheelchair and have found no access point to the watershed wide enough for my wheelchair to pass through.
- Make the Quinapoxet and the Stillwater catch & release in the streams - clear more trails to fishing locations, picnic tables, do more with the Springdale Mills - more parking - a covered pavilion
- Reevaluate limited controlled water access. California allows canoes and kayaks on their primary reservoirs. Why can't Massachusetts?
- Would like to have light boating (no engines). I think this would be a huge boon to the local economy if we could do this. I personally would get a kayak immediately.
- Allow canoeing
- More bicycle access, particularly on the DCR trails in West Boylston that run along the reservoir east of 140, as well as the trails east of 110 leading up towards the dam.
- Become dog friendlier. Not all dog owners are irresponsible.
- Access for non-motorized boating
- More Public access, Hunting, Horseback riding
- Allow non powered boating, canoes, kayaks
- I wish that hunting access would be allowed on more of the watershed. Specifically, land abutting the reservoir. Even if on a limited basis such as archery only.
- Expand access
- Allow non-motorized boating on Wachusett
- Remove the shooting range on the West Boylston trail
- Access to water with nonmotorized boats!!!!
- Keeping dogs on their leashes
- Non motor boating and a monitored swimming area for residents only.
- I would like to see non motorized boats allowed on the reservoir
- Better parking
- Probably out of your control but lack of respect for regulations a/b leashing dogs and keeping them out of areas they shouldn't be.
- I would like t see non-motorized vehicles on the reservoir
- Open the water access to boating.
- Allowed to ice fish West Waushacum pond
- Allow dogs (on leash) up to 50 ft from shore
- It would be nice to have canoe/kayak usage nearer the dam. Basically allow non-motorized access all but within 1000 ft of dam.
- I would love to canoe on the reservoir. I can't see how that would have a negative impact on water quality. (I own a canoe but have to go out of town to use it.)
- Allow ice fishing
- Wading, swimming and motorless boating should be allowed to towns abutting the Watershed.
- It would be nice to have non-motorized access to the upper Wachusett Reservoir near the Old Stone Church. Kayaking/ Canoeing would be a great activity to have access to.
- Allow snowmobiles at the Wachusett reservoir again. Allow public access to the entire Wachusett Dam area (including opening the gates to the top of the dam) again.
- None - I believe increased access will not benefit the town, only cause additional issues that will require monitoring.
- I would like to be able to use man-powered watercraft on the water. i would like to be able to have a dog on a leash while hiking there. i would like to see signage identifying natural landmarks and species.
- More information on where hunting is allowed and where it is ok to enter.
- Non-motorized access to the water
- I would like to see non-motorized boats able to use the reservoir for fishing
- Motorless boating, canoeing
- I would definitely allow horseback riding to at least abutters - its too beautiful back there to not allow this.
- I would like you to try allowing snowmobiling in certain areas again
- Open some of the trails up to mountain biking
- Would like to see the Clinton Dam open for weekends and holidays again
- Allowing non-motorizes boats.
- Expanded hunting opportunities. Areas in the past we once could hunt for over 50 years are now closed to us, for example the West Boylston power lines.
- I would love to see non motorized boating. It would bring attention to the area and would make the town more attractive to possible new homeowners.

- More trash containers for fishermen
- Boating Regulations
- I would make it more accessible to the public by repairing the access road near the dam in Clinton
- Create an upland area where you permit people to walk their dogs, complete with resources for managing their pet waste
- Please allow public access to the promenade at the top of the dam. This is probably Clinton's most valuable scenic asset.
- Allow dogs & biking on more of the trails.
- The grass should be mowed around the walking paths.
- Allow Mountain Bikes w/ Permit (\$125 - 250)
- No access in some areas
- Clearer signage to get to the parking area for the Sterling rail trail entrance in town. Also, may not be environmentally feasible, but a porta-potty on the WB/Holden rail trail would be nice.
- Bicycling on the North Dike.
- I would expand the fishing access areas to where they were pre 1980.
- Allow dogs and picnicking...provide access to trash/dog waste bins or barrels
- More toilet facilities. I am aware of facilities at Comet Pond and Oakdale Rail Trail. Please add one in Rutland somewhere along the rail trail.
- I would like to have the "Main Trails" have Gate numbering on the trees, so people would have a better understanding on what trails they came in on. A lot of people get turned around in some areas where there are numerous feeder trails.
- Relax usage and access rules, to pre 9/11, e.g. for dogs to be with an owner.
- As quality land for outdoor recreation becomes scarcer, more demand for multi-use is placed on large tracts of state owned land. the Army Corp of Engineer managed lands are not ideal due to their questionable water quality for certain tracts, as alternative outdoor recreational use areas....plus the use of atvs and skimobiles on some tracts detracts from the natural state of tract.
- Allow kayaks in the Wachusett!
- Leave fishing open until the end of the year
- Dog walking. I would love to walk my leashed dogs in the watershed area.
- Passive recreation should include ice fishing, ice skating, sail boating and canoeing
- More k9 access and boat access
- Boating or kayaking
- Ice fishing on the DCR ponds, access for canoes and non internal combustion powered small boats on the reservoir. snowmobile access on DCR lands, increased hunting areas
- Abusive use of lands ex: trash dumping, drinking, fires, usage of land after hours, by the public whether intentional or not. Recommend charging for usage/ obtaining license to utilize some of the rail trails or areas of the watershed for recreation to offset costs/ fix infrastructure and eliminate unsavory characters. Some type of security at rail trails or emergency call boxes.
- The opportunity to use a metal detector on the beaches. Perhaps by permit and DCR regulation.
- Keeping the reservoir open to fishing for the first 2 weeks of December.
- Allow dogs and horses. Most dog owners would pooper scoop if asked to.
- I think all the land should be open to hunting.
- More land opened to hunting, if there's concern about too many people on certain properties, make it a lottery.
- More frequent rounds by rangers to enforce rules re:dogs,bikes,picnics on North Dike
- Allow kayaking
- Litter near shoreline
- Allow deer hunting on all public watershed lands.
- Inclusion of dog walking on DCR trails...as a blanket rule it doesn't make sense...perhaps an exclusion from the water or within 100 feet of shore would make more sense and garner more support and use of the DCR trails.
- Allow leashed dogs on more trails.
- Open the dam and lower area to the public
- Reduce restrictions on dog walking at some locations. Particularly, Sterling. Enforce waste pick-up. Most dogs owners are more responsible than littering kids or adults.
- Open the gates to the Clinton Dam more frequently
- Activities on reservation land within Clinton are entirely too restricted-no bikes?
- Water open to swimming and/or non-motorized boating.
- Forestry management--don't let non-science be the major factor guiding forest policy decisions for the lands.
- Open up more lands to hunting, the land directly attached to the Wachusett, rt. 70 and rt. 110
- Trash containers
- Open up more land for hunting.
- I'd open the dam area up again and the road along the Nashua River for walkers & runners.
- An earlier trees and branches cleanup.
- Better maintain the trails.
- Nothing. DCR is doing a great job
- More parking near the spillway/dam area.
- Access to photos/negatives of the History of the Wachusett Reservoir where my family has lived in West Boylston for generations, prior to the reservoir being built.
- I think that some supervised/controlled use of ATV's &/or snowmobiles could be introduced in select locations with either permitting or user fees which could subsidize education/enforcement efforts.
- Open up the reservoir to non motorized activity
- More dog walking access, more mountain bike access, more passive water access
- Swimming should be allowed in certain areas
- Ice often doesn't form until late January, please extend fishing season to December 20 or until Christmas
- Fishing through December or close reservoir second or third week in December
- Hunting of nasty geese- limited season, hunting on all DCR property, nonmotorized boating on reservoir

* While the majority of comments are listed, comments that were irrelevant and/or did not relate to public access on DCR property were eliminated.

Question 26: Is there anything else you would like to tell us*?

- You need to improve the mowing along the fences and remove the poison ivy that is getting out into the walking paths/access openings.
- The dam should be reopened to pedestrian traffic and fishing.
- I wish we could walk dogs (and clean up), but understand that will never happen!
- I know public access is secondary to protecting the water, but I think many more uses are compatible than are allowed in some areas. It's hard to understand what policies are what they are without better information.

- Please consider opening up the access gates to bike riding and opening up more areas to hunting and fishing
- Your Ranger staff is well trained and is professional yet very friendly in their approach to the gents fishing. Also, I read that you were considering the parking situation (particularly on 110). If you restrict parking on the highway, then you need to accommodate the users, particularly where the reservoir nears the road at the beginning of the dike on the 110 shore.
- I don't like it when people take their dogs on the lands and let them run free.
- You may wish to reduce the 1 mile fishing set back. I don't understand why that is a rule. I don't think people should fish from the dam, but they certainly should be able to fish along the dyke and or just past the pumping station on Rte 70.
- Signage is sometimes removed from areas and it is unclear if access is allowed or not
- Open the reservoir top for walking across.
- Wish you had more programs, more often, and publicized them better.
- When women specifically walk and don't have a partner they need to be able to walk their dogs!
- I enjoy visiting the Reservoir very much. Lately, this past summer, I have been seeing a lot more trash/littering along the paths of the Clinton portion of the Reservoir and wonder if there is anyone that is assigned the responsibility of picking up the trash. The grounds are maintained so well throughout the year, I find that it makes pretty annoyed that some people are so thoughtless to just leave there trash behind when visiting the Reservoir. FYI... I take a grocery size bag with me, occasionally, and have no trouble filing it by the end of my walk/run..
- Keep up the good work!
- I love that this resource is available to me and enjoy it's beauty and well kept trails
- It would be nice if you could designate some of the land to off-road riding.
- You should open up the reservoirs for ice fishing.
- Allow mtn. bikes on trails
- If preservation of the water is the highest priority, then the use of airplanes above the water supply should be prohibited. On most nice days in the warmer months a private airplane can be seen flying over the Clinton portion of the water in the Wachusett Reservoir. The plane is both a visual and audible nuisance. The pilot also performs stunts, such as purposely stalling the engine, and practicing aeronautical daredevil techniques. These activities should not be allowed as they pose a danger of the aircraft crashing into the water supply. The airspace above the reservoir should be restricted in some manner. The height at which the plane is flown is also very low.
- It would be nice to utilize non power boats in the water. And also walk dogs in the area as long as the waste is removed from the watershed area.
- Thank you for keeping it so beautiful.
- We love walking here, but at times have felt very unsafe due to loose dogs and irate owners
- I always walk my dog it is unfair to not allow it
- Access to the Dam area should be allowed. People that go there are not terrorist and pose no threat.
- More fish and Access to different locations and parking
- I think that tree cutting is an important part of watershed management
- Stand-by for ALB clear cuts.
- I think your usage policies are too restrictive.
- Mountain bikes, not motorbikes. would be a great way to explore more.
- Would like to know where the best resource of information is located.
- I have heard/read that there is a possibility that the allowed areas of hunting would be expanded in the near future. I am very much against this idea. No hunting!!!!
- Keep buying up land to protect the water supply!
- Thank you!
- It would be great if there were an online location that I could go to find out all information and that URL was posted on signs at the reservoir.
- Would like less logging
- I appreciate the access to the lands for walking and fishing!
- I have written to DCR in the past but got no response.
- Would like to see minor alterations in the RTs140/110/12 intersection to facilitate increase passive recreation and parking
- as more and more rules are applied, and other open space becomes private/no longer available for use, the remaining public space needs to serve a wider range of uses; DCR land needs to evolve to too.
- Some, not many, people fishing leave trash behind.
- If you are so worried about pollution and silt how come you never seem to trim all the trees along the edge of the water? The river basin near river road used to be deep and a wonderful play to fish now you're lucky if its 5 feet deep. It's all full or silt. How come you don't dredge it out?
- Thank you!
- Please open the top entrance to the dam that leads to the stairs that go down into the park
- A better trail map of the trails/fire roads.
- Allow more access especially on the land opposite the water supply on Rt. 70 in Boylston/Clinton. I don't see why the land on the other side of the street cannot be used by the hiking public.
- Very much enjoy taking hikes with the family to enjoy the fresh air and nature
- I support more access, including use of non-motorized boats on the water and motorized vehicles such as ATV's and snowmobiles on the trails.
- Thank you
- Yes...every time I fish or hike I bring a bag and collect trash...I bet if you asked folks to do the same thing and maybe provide bags like some places do with doggy waste the litter would be a lot less
- Kayaking/canoeing would be awesome
- I'd love to see tours of the aqueducts and intakes, and trails on aqueduct land.
- Please open River St. to dam for pedestrians and bikes, and the open area between the top of the dam and Rte 70 for pedestrians.
- I've heard locals with environmental and terror concerns; we drink that water and live just below the dam and north dike. Because of the EPA lawsuit, the state bought lots of watershed land; mostly way upstream. Meanwhile, we have towns, fertilizers and commerce right on/next to the reservoir. The north dike collapsed when built; it might again. You keep e coli 1 1/2 miles from the intakes, but some could drive tractor trailers into the reservoir or tributaries, or cut locks and drive tractors or truck bombs to the north dike. Even if diluted, if there was contamination from

environment or terror, would 2 1/2 million people still drink that water? We need to start moving roads and vehicle access away from the reservoirs.

- Would be lovely to have some groomed x-country ski trails.
- Can't wait for the flags to start flying again at the top of the dam!
- I have missed being able to take sunset photos from Rt. 70 at the top of the dam because parking has been eliminated.
- Seriously, giving the people in our communities the same kind of recreational options that people living around other reservoirs have would have a big impact on our towns. Please consider it
- Please don't make it any more restrictive than it already is!
- Don't harass photographers.
- Maybe have a couple of rental shops for mountain biking through the trails. I would also like to see the DCR release some of the land for renewable energy. It doesn't have to be right at the water edge but there is so much land that could be utilized for either housing wind farm solar farm something. The town doesn't receive much from the state so if a wind farm or solar farm was built maybe the town could get a cheaper rate on electricity from the farm.
- I do not access the property thru a gated area. Therefore, I don't have chance to read info/rules posted from DCR. Now I will definitely stop/read your bulletins for further information/sessions regarding your possible access changes.
- As a young child my family used to swim there. I had my wedding photos taken there. As a young adult I use to jog the stairs both sides As a middle age adult -- none of that is available
- Please don't close it down :(
- Allow non-motorized boats
- Get rid of the paper permit to hunt in allowed areas. It gets ruined in the rain and gets lost. Regular hunting license should suffice.
- Leave the dog issue alone; people need a place to walk pets. they're no more messy than the wildlife & birds in the surrounding woods
- During prime time spring and early summer fishing I go fishing from gate 6-11(lots of walking) every day. I think it would be great if the DCR would allow mountain biking, the trails are awesome, and you guys drive your trucks down there all the time, so how would a mountain bike damage the land any more than the trucks do? The long walk to the rook would be shortened to 10 minutes on a mountain bike! :-) (think, more state records!)
- Please keep this open to the public :)
- Allow rental/limited boat use on the reservoir.
- It's nice to have the expanded areas of use. Opening additional areas seldom used by people to hunting would be nice if it also protects the environment, but it's also nice to have some areas reserved for no hunting and hiking without concern of hunters. Thank you.
- I wish we could take kayaks & canoes out into the reservoir.
- I believe that the recreational restrictions could be eased to make the property more "human" friendly. It never made sense to me that you can't walk your dog on the property yet wild animals are everywhere. What am I missing?
- I have been on many of the watershed rail trails and think that they all have different feels and are well maintained. The section in West Boylston is my favorite and is consistently the cleanest.
- We are residents that greatly appreciate the efforts made by DCR.
- Please keep up the good work.
- Many of us are interested in seeing recreational boating here, much like the Quabbin.
- Please keep motorized vehicles banned
- It would greatly increase quality of life and community to allow non motorized boating on water. At least a trial of use would not hurt.
- We moved here believing there was public access to our lovely environs. Instead the hostility we have encountered from DCR personally and as a municipality has severely limited our desire to interact. We go to Mass Audubon trails instead.
- I would love to see limited access for bicycles.
- Just today, I passed two women with a dog off leash on the West Boylston section. When I turned around to run back towards Holden, I finally passed them again on the Holden section. Felt like saying, "Are you going to let your dog go in the water too?? You've disregarded the other rules"
- Support passive water use
- As a Clinton resident, I like to see as few restrictions on town resident usage of the watershed as possible. I feel it is in the spirit of the original agreement
- I feel that people from West Boylston should be allowed to more widely use the land by walking dogs (and picking up after them) on the land, kayaking, and snowmobiling, particularly if your land abuts DCR land and you are responsible regarding the use. We could simply carry our licenses so that we can identify ourselves as residents. Definitely not enough perks for West Boylston residents.
- Would like information as to when the dam will reopen. It appears to me all the construction has been completed for many months
- I recently heard a story of a boater urinating 10" from a loon's nest on Quabbin. I'd hate to increase the chances of such behavior at occurring at Wachusett. Boating and drinking are often related activities.
- I would like to hear an explanation as to why no human can touch the water. isn't the water treated before consumed? Isn't Quinsigamond a "secondary reservoir?" if so, why is there unrestricted use of it?
- Please allow dogs on leashes and require owners to clean up after them; I find it hard to believe that dogs cause more damage to the watershed than the non biodegradable rubbish and detritus that fishermen leave behind (old, tangled line, Dunkin Donuts cups, food and fishing equipment plastic wrapping, empty cans and bottles)
- I think people would truly appreciate it if the baseball field that was closed could be re-opened at a different location. Everyone understands why it was closed, but it seems that there must be land somewhere else that could be used for that purpose
- Horses would have much less impact on DCR Land than Fisherman with all of their trash. Please consider limited passes during specific times of the year for horseback riding!
- I think allowing certain privileges to watershed residents should be considered i.e. kayaking, snowmobiling, resident only fishing.
- Open the waters to non-motorized boats from the causeway to the railroad bridge - I would gladly pay a small fee for a permit which would generate revenue. As in Quabbin, a maximum boat count could be maintained.
- Great job- keep up the good work!!!!

- Wachusett is a untapped resource that could be better utilized. Citizens from the sponsoring communities deserve to have more access to this amazing area!
- DCR does a good job of posting its trail access rules and defining its lands for the casual visitor. Wish that local communities had the resources to do so on their conservation lands.
- There are so many trails where dogs wouldn't affect the quality of the water. I'm sure that not all hunters police their brass & how many fishermen lose their lead based tackle in the water. I also really don't understand why so many trails are closed to biking as well.
- I've seen more bikers than dogs around.
- Allow Canoes w/ Permit (\$500 - 750)
- We love being able to walk thru the areas and take photographs! It's beautiful. It's nice to know this is available to us.
- Thank you for providing and maintaining these recreational areas
- Continuation of the Mass Central Rail trail through the DCR property. Allowing cycling on the north Dike is a logical and safe path. It keeps the bicycles off of the road and puts additional eyes on the reservoir to protect it.
- Thank you for this valuable resource.
- Please have more clean up days at gate entrances and some parking areas. They collect to much trash for one person to consistently clean up after other inconsiderate people.
- I have a lot of very good pre 9/11 memories, that cannot be repeated due to the restrictions. One can question our news and public scare tactics for the sake of water purity, while at the same time, there is unmanaged ever-growing wildlife populations that foul the same body of water worse than humans can.
- This was the year I fished there and I loved it
- I feel that a system could be set up to allow responsible dog walking, with "doggy do-do" bags and disposal cans available. Tufts Farm Field does this very well. I also feel that a little dog urine is insignificant compared to what other animals are depositing in the watershed. We walk at the W. Boylston Rail Trail and would love to be able to walk the whole trail. Thanks!
- The #1 reason I enjoy living in West Boylston is my close access to the Wachusett Reservoir and its surrounding watershed woods and network of roads.
- I think you've done a great job on allowing bike and hiking but, need to open more areas for a wider range of activities.
- I think the present direction of DCR plan for utilization of lands to be of great quality but I worry that not enough monies will be give to the DCR for further personnel and or improvements of the valued land. An even greater presence of the DCR in high use times will hopefully eliminate/educate the public so further issues described above do not continue to happen. Unfortunately I think some type of fines/ticketing is going to be needed to eliminate many of the issues.
- Responsible metal detector use on the beach areas could help remove pounds of old lead sinkers. Lead is easily detectable along with coins, lures, cans and metal trash. Good clean fun.
- The place is truly a treasure and must be cherished, and while there are some people who don't properly respect the privilege by breaking the rules [littering especially] they are far overshadowed by the ones who leave nothing but footprints. please keep public access open!
- Having licensed sportsmen obtain an additional permit to utilize public land is redundant and unnecessary.
- Good job to DCR!
- Never, never allow snowmobiles, ATVs skateboards on the North Dike in spite of pressure from various interests
- Non motorized watercraft would also be reasonable use of the Wachusett Reservoir...watercraft are allowed on the Quabbin but not the Wachusett.
- Please continue to have a dog friendly walking trail, there are very few places to walk dogs safely and there are no dog parks in central MA.
- Please open the dam area in Clinton to the public. I grew up with this opportunity and would like to share it with my kids.
- Allow more on leash dog walking at more DCR locations. There are limited local choices which are clogged with walkers, strollers and bikers which become to o congested. And unsafe for walking dogs.
- You are custodians of an important and historic landscape at the dam site-please do a better job!
- Need to fix the access road to the Clinton Dam off of Rte. 70. Don't forget to fight for funding it. Rte. 70 is starting to erode and sag down towards Lancaster Mill Pond. Need to bite the bullet on that.
- Is it really necessary to provide permits for hunters? Didn't this occur with fishing years ago and finally it was given up? I suggest that you be more customer friendly to hunters applying for permits--to do this only by postal mail seems a bit much in this day and age.
- I run the dike area and believe all of us runners serve as eyes and ears for the DCR, helping keep the area as the stewards we intend to be of this treasure.
- Keep up the good work and please do not consider limiting or expanding recreation as it exists now- I think you do a great job of balancing open space, protecting the water supply and recreational opportunities as is
- I sincerely hope that people will be able to continue to enjoy the beauty and nature that surrounds the Wachusett Watershed Area and to be able to access more of its history.
- Keep in mind that true sportsmen preserve the environment- just like the true recyclers who use your facility rather than illegally dumping in the watershed.
- Beavers in the watershed are not good, especially on Quinapoxet and Stillwater Rivers. Too many dams that hold back water which seems to kill a lot of trees, creating a swamp like atmosphere which inhabits mosquitoes especially on Stillwater River
- Fishing season should be ice out to ice in (mid/late March through December)
- Please put trash barrels at each gate. This would cut down the amount of trash I see around the reservoir.
- We really enjoy the reservoir rail/bike trail and hiking paths
- Open the reservoir area to reasonable human activity such as non motorized craft, ice skating/boating
- Stop wasting money ie: fence building in areas that should be open to the public
- Have rangers pick up trash at gates
- The erection of fences making it difficult to access the bluffs above the railway cut just beyond the dam. There was no problem before the fence was installed.

* While the majority of comments are listed, comments that were irrelevant and/or did not relate to public access on DCR property were eliminated.

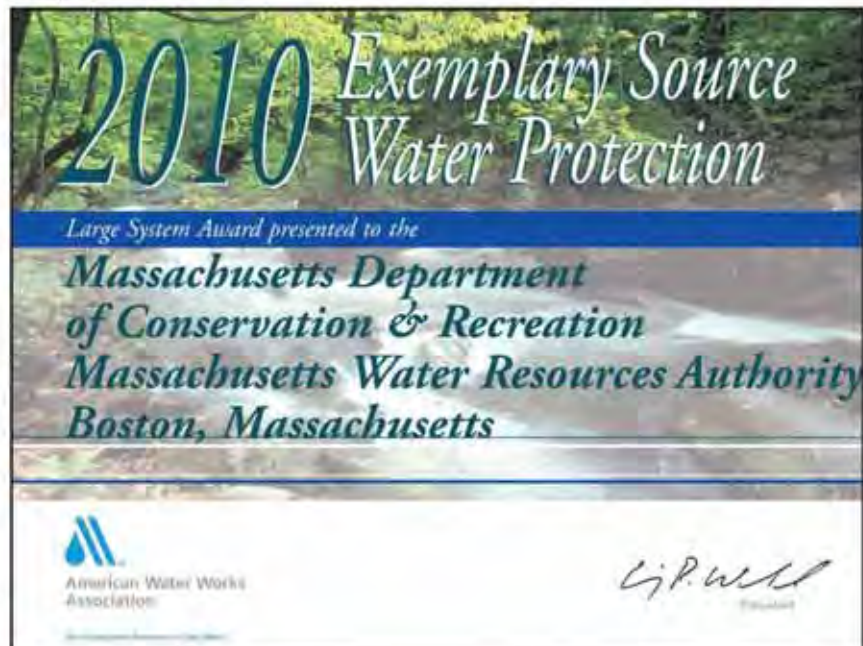
Appendix E. AWWA Award Newsletter

DCR Wins National Clean Drinking Water Award

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation's Division of Water Supply Protection (DCR/DWSP) has received the American Water Works Association (AWWA) 2010 Exemplary Source Water Protection Award for Large Systems. The Division's Office of Watershed Management has a long-standing reputation for successfully providing pure water to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) for treatment and distribution to more than 2 million people. This award certifies DCR as an international role model for drinking water quality protection.

AWWA, an international nonprofit and educational society, is the largest and oldest organization of water professionals in the world, with membership of more than 60,000 people and 4,600 utilities that supply water to roughly 180 million people in North America. Members represent treatment plant operators and managers, scientists, environmentalists, manufacturers, academicians, regulators, and others who hold genuine interest in water supply and public health. AWWA is the authoritative resource on safe water.

The significance of this award is magnified by the fact that DCR's advocate was its regulating agency, the MA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). DEP's detailed nomination to the award committee was based on its intimate knowledge of DCR's work, derived from DEP's annual inspections and on-going program review, which are required for DCR's source water to maintain MWRA's federal filtration waiver. DEP's recommendation was supported by the New England chapter of the AWWA, which subsequently submitted the nomination material to be considered with other applicants from around the country.



The water at Quabbin Reservoir is crystal clear.



A tranquil day on the Ware River.

The nominations were judged on how well a water system meets six components of AWWA's Source Water Protection Standard: 1) program vision; 2) source water characterization; 3) explicit protection goals; 4) development of an Action Plan; 5) implementation of the Action Plan; and 6) periodic evaluation and revision of the entire program. The award was also based on three additional factors: the 1) documented effectiveness of the program; 2) innovativeness of the approach; and 3) the difficulties overcome by the organization.



Quabbin Reservoir, frozen over in winter.

DCR's watershed management programs excel in all of these areas. DEP explicitly noted DCR's extensive planning processes, water quality monitoring, natural and cultural resource stewardship activities, and community outreach through advisory committees, interpretive services, technical assistance, ranger patrols, and publications. All of these elements are unified into an annual Work Plan and corresponding budget that is reviewed and approved by the Water Supply Protection Trust. The following are factors that contributed to AWWA's recognition of DCR's efforts.

Effective. The source water provided by DCR to MWRA continuously meets the federal standard for unfiltered source water fecal coliform. Components to this success include:

- A bird harassment program at both reservoirs that is a major element in DCR's ability to meet critical water quality parameters.
- A strong understanding of water quality issues throughout the watersheds and reservoirs.
- An excellent track record of planning, entailing periodic updates to the Watershed Protection Plans, Public Access Plans, and Land Management Plans, with appropriate public involvement integrated into the process.
- The ability to control harmful land uses across the watershed system provided by the targeted expenditures of the Land Acquisition Program and implementation of the Watershed Protection Act regulations.
- A team of scientists, labor and craftsmen, planners, engineers, rangers, foresters, educators, and managers who work together to accomplish the 100+ programs and projects identified in each annual Work Plan.

Innovative. DCR's professional staff draws upon the resources of experts and academic institutions to bring the most advanced strategies into its watershed protection programs, such as:

- Research tracking the migratory habits of gulls that will advise components of the bird harassment program.
- Microbial tracking on tributaries to the Wachusett Reservoir that identified the need for educational programs focusing on dog waste.
- Multi-jurisdictional emergency planning, training, and equipment deployment, performed in association with MWRA, state, and local officials.





- Ongoing water quality related education programs at the Quabbin Visitors Center, in watershed community classrooms, out in the field, and on-line.
- Community infrastructure developments that address long-term waste issues, such as the Wachusett Earthday recycling site.
- The Quabbin boat decontamination program, rapidly developed and implemented, which minimizes the threat from invasive aquatic species while allowing private fishing boats on the reservoir.

Perseverance. DCR has a long history of addressing myriad political and logistical challenges.

- Creating a source water protection program that encompasses four watersheds and close to 500 square miles, coordinating with dozens of individual community governments, legislators, and stakeholder groups.
- Working with the citizens of the watersheds, who do not consume the water from either the Quabbin or Wachusett Reservoirs. DCR identifies projects that promote protection of both the locally utilized natural resources as well as the drinking supply for people close to 100 miles away.
- Respecting and honoring the sacrifices made by previous generations that had their communities transformed into a drinking water supply.

At a ceremony in the Division's field headquarters in West Boylston, DCR Commissioner Rick Sullivan heralded the daily efforts of the 150 staff dedicated to Watershed Protection. Division Director Jonathan Yeo recognized the men and women who have worked for the agency as it has evolved over the past century. The Director also praised the support and team efforts of the MWRA, whose ratepayers provide the money for operations, land acquisition, payments in lieu of taxes, and long-term capital

investments. The Water Supply Protection Trust's five trustees – MWRA Executive Director Fred Laskey, Katherine Haynes Dunphy, Judith Eisman, William Meehan, and Kathy Baskin (EEA Secretary Ian Bowles' representative) – were also acknowledged for their effective oversight and support of the Division.



The AWWA award would not have been possible without the commitment and expertise of the Division of Water Supply Protection staff. Commissioner Sullivan and Director Yeo thanked the current employees in the Office of Watershed Management for all of their contributions that help protect some of the best drinking water in the world.

For more information:

www.mass.gov/dcr/watersupply.htm

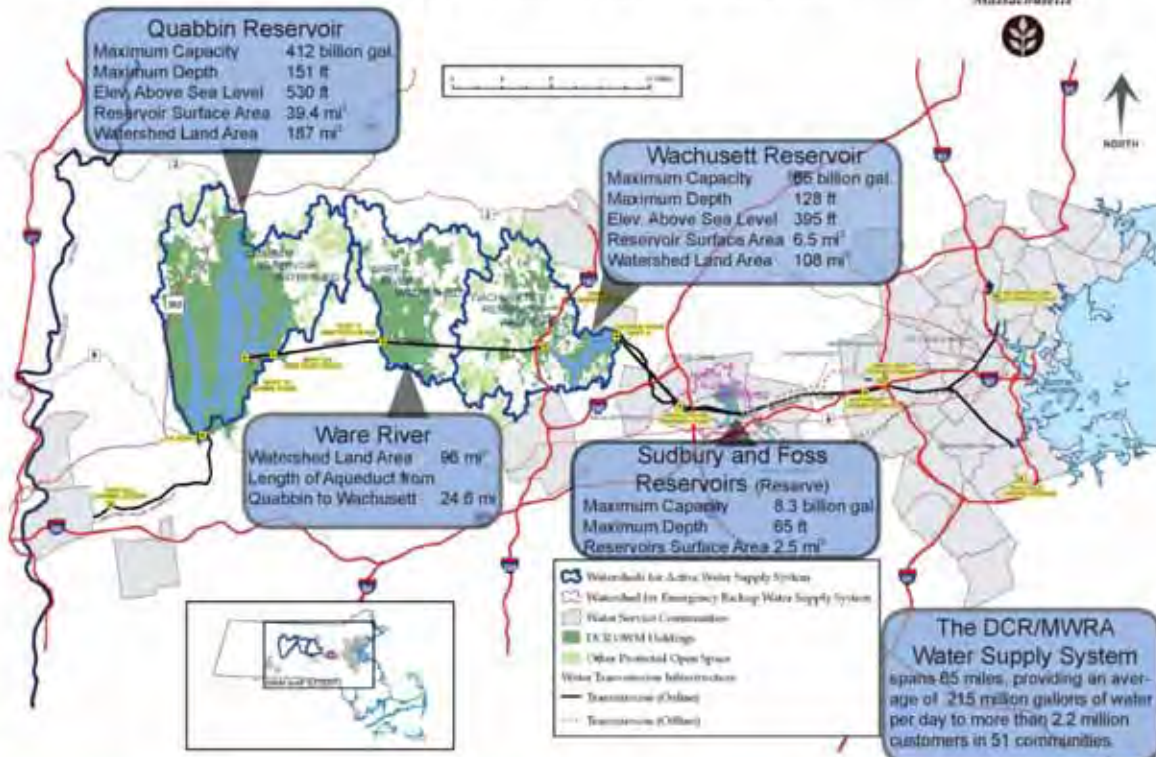


Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Water Supply Protection
Office of Watershed Management
251 Causeway Street
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 626-1250

Wachusett Reservoir on a crisp fall morning.

The DCR Watershed System at a Glance

dcr
Massachusetts



Congratulations and Special Thanks to the DCR Division of Water Supply Protection, Office of Watershed Management 2010 Staff!

Director: Jonathan Yeo **Regional Directors:** Quabbin – Bill Pula, Wachusett – John Scannell
Assistant Regional Directors: Quabbin – Dave Small, Wachusett – Scott Murphy
Natural Resource Director: Dan Clark **Budget Manager:** Eileen Honen
Environmental Quality: Quabbin – Bob Bishop, Rebecca Budaj, Peter Deslauriers, Lisa Gustavaen, Yuehlin Lee, Paul Reyes, Bernadetta Sustanti-Kubik, Wachusett – Pat Austin, Kelley Freda, David Getman, Tristan Lundgren, Paula Packard, Larry Pistrang, Steve Sulprizio, Vincent Vignaly, Dave Worden
Natural Resources: Steve Anderson, Jim French, Kiana Koenen, Thom Kyker-Snowman, Ken MacKenzie, Jillian Pereira, Caroline Rausler, Jim Taylor
Forestry: Quabbin – Herm Eck, Derek Beard, Dennis Morin, Randall Stone, Steven Ward, Steve Wood, Wachusett – Greg Buzzell, Brian Kevan
Watershed Protection Act: Quabbin – Jeff Lacy, Wachusett – Nancy McGrath, Allan Rantala; Boston – Joel Zimmerman
Watershed Engineering: Quabbin – Scott Campbell, Peter Izyk, Douglas Williams, Steve Mansfield, Wachusett – Bill Moulton, Ed Connor, Paula Davison, Ross Goodale
Administrative and Technical Support: Quabbin – Paul Lyons, Linda Boulette, Sandra Conkey, Philip Lamothe, Kimberly Turek, Jennifer Peterkin, Wachusett – Marybeth Bonin, Craig Fitzgerald, Christine Muir, Christy Power; Boston – Ashley Chan, Joanne Driggs-Williams, Flora Martinez, Paul Penner, Mulunesh Sisay, Cynthia Smith
Watershed Rangers: Quabbin – Dave Zaganiacz, Peter Baldracchi, Gerard Houle, Jamie Hogan, Tiffany Leclair, John Maslon, Sean McQuard; Wachusett – Rick Mathews, Derek Liimatamen, Rebecca Baronoski, Bruce Fant, Thomas Gonzales, Tim O'Connor, Benjamin Pollini, Nathan Tobey, Keith Vicari, Dave Wright
Interpretive Services: Quabbin – Cliff Read, Maria Beiter-Tucker, Dale Monette, Wachusett – Jim Latley, Roger Clifford
Watershed Maintenance & Operations: Quabbin – Al Walsh, Jeffrey Adams, Bruce Andrew, Steven Buran, Michael Barnes, Ray Cusson, Al Detour, Camille Domina, Randall Florence, Gary Gaines, Laurie Gauvin, Jason Holden, Gordon Humphrey, Allyn Hurlburt, Stephen Jarvis Jr, David Kenyon, John Krasnecky, Chet Krol, Paul Lapierre, Lars Larson, Conrad Letourneau, Thomas Peloquin, Ronald Peters, Frederick Provost, Andrew Ohlson, Donald Sorrenho, Craig Stoddard, Michael Strzeminski, Michael Wisnoski, Wachusett – Mike Tomaiolo, Ronald Anderson, John Buckley, Albert Bull, Robert Carlson, Glenn Cheries, Wayne Chestna, Zack Costa, Brian Dziokonski, Terry Fellowes, Paul Gosselin, Francis Guy, Terance Kearney, Sean Lovejoy, Fred Mellor, George Nelson, Tim O'Connor, Robert Parker, Vincent Pasquale, Ray Pelletier, John Pingetion, Michael Ponyta, Ed Power, Pete Rarnig, Paul Silvestri, Dave Simmons, Chris Tuff, Dan Valerio, John Vento, Dan Wolski, Ted Zdonczyk

Appendix F. Pet Waste Outreach

What's the Problem With Pet Waste?

Pet waste left in our yards and communities can have many adverse effects on the environment, as it is full of harmful bacteria and excess nutrients. Besides the fact pet waste is a neighborhood nuisance, it can make people sick, especially children who are more likely to come into contact with it while playing. Pet waste left on lawns can also kill or damage grass and other plants.



When pet waste is washed into lakes or streams, the waste decays, uses up oxygen and sometimes releases ammonia. This can kill fish!

Pet waste also contains nutrients that encourage weed and algae growth. Overly fertile water becomes cloudy and green...imagine this in your backyard pond or stream!

Managing pet waste properly is something easy that everyone can do to make a difference in the quality of our surface waters.



Individual actions can result in a significant water quality improvement when carried out by a majority of people. Unlike some forms of stormwater pollutants, individuals in our watershed can easily and economically manage pet waste and help to keep your waters safe and aesthetically pleasing.

WACHUSETT WATERSHED
department of Conservation and Recreation
180 Beaman Street
West Boylston, MA. 01583
508-792-7806
www.mass.gov/dcr



**DOG WASTE
AND
SURFACE
WATER
QUALITY**

DID YOU KNOW?

There are over 5,500 licensed dogs in the Wachusett Reservoir Watershed?



Each one of these dogs produces about $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs of solid waste and 7.8 billion bacteria per day!



Rainfall and snowmelt in the Wachusett Watershed goes directly into our streams, rivers and lakes untreated. Along its way it picks up contaminants in its path. That's why it is important to insure that pollutants such as pet waste do not end up in our storm drains.

WHY AREN'T DOGS ALLOWED ON DCR WATERSHED LANDS?*

DCR's Watershed lands serve as protection for a sensitive drinking water supply for 2.2 million Massachusetts residents, the Wachusett Reservoir.

Waste from dogs can enter directly into the reservoir or into the tributaries that then flow into the reservoir.

Bacteria and other parasites, such as Giardia and Cryptosporidium can survive for long periods when left on the ground. During the next rainfall, these can get washed into the drinking water supply, compromising water quality which is regulated by state and federal laws.

*** Dogs are ONLY ALLOWED on the portion of the Oakdale Rail Trail not owned by DCR (Thomas Street to the I190 overpass). Please pick up after your pet.**

How you can help



- **BRING IT-** Always bring a plastic bag when you walk your dog.
- **BAG IT-** Use the bag as a glove to pick up the pet waste. Scoop up the waste and turn the bag inside out around the waste.
- **DISPOSE IT-** Properly dispose the waste by placing it in a trash can or flushing it unbagged down the toilet. **NEVER THROW WASTE DOWN A STORM DRAIN!**
- Pick up after your pet in your yard.

Side 1

Dog Waste and the Wachusett Watershed

In the Wachusett Watershed, there are over 5,500 licensed dogs, and they are estimated to produce about 2,750 pounds of dog waste and 5.2 million fecal coliform PER DAY!

Scientists from the U.S. Geological Survey estimate that pet waste contributes between 20 to 30 percent of the water pollution in America.



It is important that dogs be kept away from the reservoir and more importantly, that their fecal material, or waste, is not allowed to enter the water.

Side 2

Rainfall and snowmelt in the Wachusett Watershed flows directly into our streams, rivers, lakes and reservoirs, picking up contaminants along the way.

Pet waste left on the ground can have many adverse effects on the environment, as it is full of harmful bacteria and excess nutrients.

When pet waste is washed into surface waters, such as the streams flowing into the Wachusett Reservoir (and the reservoir itself) the waste decays, using up oxygen and sometimes releasing ammonia. This can kill fish. Pet waste also contains nutrients that encourage weed and algae growth.

Waste from mammals also has the potential to carry disease-causing organisms, which can contaminate a drinking water supply.

Watershed Ranger Dog Waste Card Hand-out

Appendix G. AIS Outreach



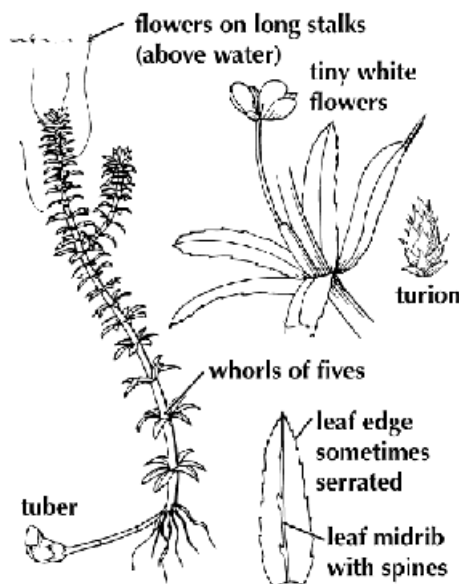
ATTENTION FISHERMEN:

HYDRILLA, an invasive aquatic plant
has been found in nearby South Meadow Pond in Clinton.

WE DO NOT WANT IT TO SPREAD TO OTHER WATERS!

Small pieces of this plant can resprout and grow into new plants. Once established, it can replace native vegetation and
AFFECT FISH POPULATIONS!

Please use extra caution by inspecting and cleaning all fishing equipment, including bait buckets and any other means of transport **BEFORE** fishing here.



If you think you have seen this plant, please contact:
Jamie Carr, DCR Aquatic Biologist at 508-792-7806 ext. 241

Side 1

ALERT!

We need your help keeping Aquatic Invasive Species out of DCR waters!

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) are a group of plants and animals that are not native to Massachusetts and don't belong here. Those threatening DCR waters have been transported from distant regions of North America as well as from other continents. Once introduced, they have the ability to become established and spread rapidly within native aquatic communities. Invasions by these species threaten the health of our waters and are usually **IMPOSSIBLE TO GET RID OF!**

Many AIS are harmful to game fish populations. Negative impacts to game fish include loss of spawning habitat and disruption of the food chain that supports adult fish.

The spread of AIS among water bodies is mainly caused by human activities; especially boating and fishing. Many AIS have life-cycle stages that are small to microscopic in size and can survive out of water for some time. Please guard against moving plant fragments, mud, or debris from one water body to another by making sure your boat, trailer, and fishing gear are **CLEAN** and **DRY** after visiting **ANY** water body. More specific recommendations are given on the back of this card.

Side 2

Complete this checklist after visiting any water body:

- **Inspect** – boat, trailer, and fishing gear
- **Remove** – plant fragments, mud, debris (hot wash or pressure wash boat/trailer if possible; clean fishing gear)
- **Drain** – any standing water (bilge, etc.)
- **Dry** – allow at least 5 days of complete dryness (longer if possible) before visiting a different water body

Avoid using felt-soled waders in rivers and streams because they can harbor the invasive alga known as Didymo or “rock snot.”

Never dump aquarium organisms or release exotic pets (turtles, frogs, etc.) into natural waters.

Use of bait sold commercially is permissible in DCR waters, but do not transfer privately harvested bait organisms between water bodies.

More information on AIS is available at <http://www.mass.gov/dcr/watersupply.htm>

Watershed Ranger AIS Card Hand-out

Appendix H. Public Meeting Minutes and Comments

DCR Public Meeting Minutes
Wachusett Public Access Plan Update
Tuesday, May 3, 2011 7:00
DCR Water Supply Headquarters
180 Beaman Street, West Boylston

Regional Director John Scannell opened the public meeting at 7:05 p.m. with 9 people in attendance.

The meeting began with introductions and an explanation of the purpose of the public meeting; to present the draft of the updated Wachusett Public Access Plan. RD Scannell explained that the meeting would consist of a short powerpoint presentation and then public comments on the plan would be accepted.

The powerpoint presentation included a brief overview of the agency, public access planning, the timeline of the update process, survey results, and minor changes proposed for the plan.

JS then opened the meeting for public comment. He explained that there would be no debating of the issues but comments would be recorded and reviewed.

Public Comments:

JS first asked Susan Templeton (representing Representative Naughton's office) if she had any comments. She had none at this time.

- Winthrop Handy, 53 Central Street, West Boylston. Resident who has lived in West Boylston since 1973. WB has an industrial area, chemicals in the ground along the Quinapoxet River, landfills, and hazardous waste cleanup sites and does not understand how dog waste can contaminate the river (in relation to no dogs allowed on the DCR portion of the Mass Central Rail Trail). DCR has decimated the tax base. He had always hoped to use a boat on the reservoir. West Boylston has the DCR, the jail and private entities consuming the tax base and the town deserves a little more than what it is getting in return. The town cannot afford to pay DPW workers or fix the town hall. A meeting was scheduled with Representative McGovern to discuss these issues at a time when the town was suing DCR over the recycling center. The town needs more money from DCR and MWRA.
- Cheryl Lekstrom. Representing the Mass Farm Bureau Federation (consisting of 6500 farm families in the Commonwealth), and liaison to the equine committee. Has been a West Boylston resident since 1981 and has offered public comment at many past DCR meetings. The federation believes that horses should be allowed in areas not as prone to erosion issues and does not agree with DCR reasoning on not allowing domestic

animals and horses. Feels DCR has taken on a draconian approach to horseback riders who provide eyes and ears for water quality and security. Feels that horses could be allowed in specific areas.

- Thomas Berube, Barre. Quabbin Watershed Advisory Council and Mass. Sportsmen's Council. Does not understand the rationale of the dog issue on the rail trail beyond West Boylston. Some of the trail is owned by private entities and Mass Wildlife but is posted no dogs allowed.
- Barbara Wyatt, Sterling Street, West Boylston. West Boylston Open Space Committee and Economic Development Committee. Would like DCR to consider the addition of "scenic overlooks" or pull off parking areas, especially in the area of the Old Stone Church as she always sees photographers in this area. She would like to see a pull off area with interpretive signage or a plaque. She would also like DCR to consider additional parking areas around the watershed and parking spaces at gates, and new maps showing DCRs trails on them. She also feels that a visitor's center is needed.
- Tom Burke, Clinton. Concerned with the downstream flooding of the Nashua River and who is responsible for cleaning up the mess left behind after the floods last year. (JS addressed this comment as it was not specifically related to the public access update. He stated that he had met with Representative Naughton and Susan Templeton from his office last week and that together they will work to find a solution to improving the situation and solving the problem. Significant effort will be needed as there are many blockages that are causing the river to rise and this is not only causing downstream problems but it is also limiting our availability to control the reservoir levels.)

There were no other public comments.

JS reminded all in attendance that written comments on the plan would be accepted until May 20, 2011 by e-mail and regular mail. The mailing and e-mail addresses were displayed.

The meeting ended at 7:50 p.m.

Comments Received on the 2011 Wachusett Reservoir Access Plan Update

From: Diana Engelbart [<mailto:engelbrt@rcn.com>]

Sent: Friday, May 20, 2011 5:38 PM

To: Updates, DCR (DCR)

Subject: Wachusett Reservoir access plan

To my understanding, people who commented on the access plan had these priorities:

- public access for dog walking,
- bicycle riding,
- geocaching (GPS hide & seek)
- parking.
- establishing a visitors center,
- scenic overlook parking,
- maps of trails and access gates,
- weddings at the Old Stone Church
- hunting

I'd like to add my support for the above items. I'd also like to work with the DCR to provide downloadable trail maps to the West Boylston website. I would also like to explore the idea of the rangers taking elementary school children on nature/plant identification walks.

Sincerely,

Diana Engelbart

West Boylston Open Space Committee

West Boylston Town Wide Planning

From: Fallavollita, Lynn [<mailto:Lynn.Fallavollita@umassmemorial.org>]

Sent: Wednesday, May 18, 2011 10:07 AM

To: Updates, DCR (DCR)

Cc: Erin Palumbo; Pat Pepi; Sighle Philbin; Fallavollita, Lynn; Frank Perla; Margaret Rotti

Subject: DCR PUBLIC ACCESS PLAN

The West Boylston Agriculture Commission would like to offer the following response to the DCR Public Access Plan:

- We support open access for all equine recreational activity.
- We believe equine activity would have no impact to the watershed.
- There would not be an overabundance of equine activity in this area due to lack of available parking for horse trailers.
- So much of West Boylston is DCR Land yet the residents of the town have very limited use of this land.
- The best way to protect the watershed is with education. We should not keep people away but rather allow them to use, enjoy and learn to care for it. Let's teach our children to respect and protect their environment.

The West Boylston Agricultural Commission wishes to thank you for reconsidering equine activity on DCR Land.

Respectfully submitted,

West Boylston Agricultural Commission
Pat Pepi
Sighle Philbin
Erin Palumbo
Frank Perla
Peggy Rotti
Lynn Fallavollita

From: Kevin O'Loughlin [<mailto:oloughlink@clinton.k12.ma.us>]
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2011 10:55 AM
To: Updates, DCR (DCR)
Subject: "Wachusett Reservoir Access Plan"

The Wachsett Dam is a beautiful site. Built by immigrants, hard working people. Each shovel full of dirt that was removed from the site was an act of pride. The building of roads, dikes, removal of bodies from a cemetery was a testament to the strength of our country. Many towns like Clinton, Boylston West Boylston and Sterling had to give up part of their land. There were homes and businesses abandoned for this cause to give water to Boston. I feel that the people affected by this act would want their heirs to be able to appreciate the beauty of the area. I propose that the citizens be allowed to have access to the Wachsett Dam area. To be able to walk across, down and around the dam structure. It would foster an appreciation for the esthetic beauty of the grounds, teach the young about the sacrifices our fore fathers made, become a learning tool for the students of Clinton to learn about the importance of water and water conservation and for all to appreciate how we are intertwined with our ecology of our watershed. Thank you very much for your consideration,
Kevin O'Loughlin
May 17, 2011

From: Philip Philbin [<mailto:tiseyes@gmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2011 10:59 AM
To: Updates, DCR (DCR)
Subject: Access by horse

To whom it may concern,

I believe it is very wrong to restrict the use of access by horse to lands of the taxpayers of mass. By the mass D C R.

Responsible use of these lands should be reinstated first to all abutters of these properties The very people that walk it and oversee it.

Ultimately a permitting process to all citizens interested.

I believe a small amount of people would be interested.

Be aware many people that live in the area are descendants of the very people that built this reservoir and have strong feeling about protecting it including me. I had an great uncle that was killed in that process of building the wachusett reservoir also many others that worked it that did

not die in the process but went on to enjoy the lands by walking and riding it on horseback. To me it's hallowed grounds And always needs protection, who better than the people that use it daily.

We would definitely like to be free again to use it responsibly

Sincerely,
Philip Philbin
French Hill Farm
West Boylston

From: Fallavollita, Lynn [<mailto:Lynn.Fallavollita@umassmemorial.org>]
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2011 3:36 PM
To: Updates, DCR (DCR)
Subject: Wachusett Reservoir Access Plan

I am a 25 year resident of West Boylston and am an abutter to the Wachusett Reservoir - in fact you can walk thru by back year and enter the Reservoir from there. My daughter at an early age became familiar with the many trails from behind our house. I have often felt it was a shame not to allow horseback riding in this area. I am a horse person and it would be magnificant to be able to ride thru the 100s of acres the Reservoir provides.

Below are a list of my reasons why horseback riding would be ok to do in these woods:

- o Horseback riding would no more effect watershed than the current deer/other wildlife population.
- o Fisherman create much more damage to DCR Land than horseback riders would - they leave their trash behind like styrofoam coolers, beer cans, fishing line to name a few.
- o Horseback riders could be the eyes and ears for the DCR and would be able to travel to more areas than DCR Vehicles.
- o DCR Vehicles - trucks/atvs - create road damage and threaten to pollute with fuel.
- o There are hundreds of acres of beautiful land ideal for horseback riding.
- o Could open it up on a trial bases.
- o If not for public - at least to town residents and/or abbutters.
- o Could create revenue by requiring license to ride.
- o Riding would be limited anyway because of lack of parking.

thank you.

Lynn Fallavollita
272 Lancaster St
West Boylston, Ma

From: peggy rotti [<mailto:pegrotti2000@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, May 11, 2011 11:21 AM
To: Updates, DCR (DCR)
Subject: Wachusett Reservoir Access Plan

In regards to the Public Access Plan:

As a long time resident of West Boylston and long time user of the Wachusett Reservoir property I have a few comments.

Horseback riding does not effect the watershed anymore then the thousands of deer / wildlife population. The state could collect revenue through licensing for permits for use age of the trails. In the Forty years I have used the trails for hiking, cross country skiing, fishing, and many years ago horseback riding I have never ran into anyone on horseback that there properties did not abut the Reservoir. Because of the lack of parking there would not be a problem of too many horses. Horse owners could be required to wear manure bags to prevent them from leaving any manure on the trails. Strict rules could be put in affect against horses being near the shore lines. There are hundreds of acres of beautiful land ideal for horseback riding. If not open for public-at least to town residents and/or abutters.

In the years since horseback riding has not been allowed the damages that had been done to the trails by the DCR vehicles -trucks/atvs and the vehicles in there cutting trees is a disgrace. The fuel that is spilled by the tree service is more of a pollutant then any horse. I can't ride a pedal bike because I will erode the trails and the the DCR vehicles have done so much damage.

Fisherman pay for a license to fish and leave Styrofoam cooler, coffee cups, beer cans, fishing line to name a few. Myself and my friends that us the Reservoir has NEVER so much a left a tissue on the ground.

Best Regards:
Peggy Rotti

From: Erin Palumbo [<mailto:eafitz@gmail.com>]
Sent: Monday, May 09, 2011 11:49 AM
To: Updates, DCR (DCR)
Subject: comments regarding the watershed

I fully support increased access for the public. The quality of water in the watershed should be a top priority. However, the more people are restricted from using the land surrounding the watershed, the less respect and understanding they will have for the water. We must work to educate and use people as a resource rather than simply restrict them from going on the land. If horses, dogs, mountain bikes were allowed, these groups would likely help maintain the trails and provide fundraisers to support the area. When all access is denied, it simply builds

resentment toward the DCR. People must, as with all fragile environmental systems, work to cohabitate. There is a better answer than what we currently have.

From: Pat Pepi [\[mailto:patpepi@charter.net\]](mailto:patpepi@charter.net)
Sent: Monday, May 09, 2011 9:49 AM
To: Updates, DCR (DCR)
Subject: Wachusett Reservoir Access Plan

As a resident of West Boylston for over 50 years, I think it is appropriate to open the Wachusett watershed to horseback riding and driving in the watershed area.

Regards,

Patricia Pepi
181 Fairbanks Street
West Boylston, Ma 01583



Clinton Greenway

February 5, 2011

John Scannell, Regional Director
180 Beaman St.
West Boylston, MA 01583

Dear John,

The Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust (CGCT) is very interested in supporting your efforts to update the Wachusett Public Access Plan. Several of our members participated in the kickoff meeting on October 28, 2010. Since that initial meeting we have discussed a few ideas for inclusion in your plan.

The included document describes our ideas.

We reviewed the format of the Wachusett Reservoir Public Access Plan 2003 and have tried to mimic that format in our suggestions for the plan. We used a format that defines the goal and then lists specific actions to accomplish the goal.

We would be very happy to meet with DCR to discuss this so that any ideas that are not in line with DCR's overall goals and objectives can be refined.

We noticed that the 2003 plan describes your partnership with Wachusett Greenways. We would like to setup a similar partnership with the Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust.

Please let me know if there is a convenient time for you or your designate to meet with the CGCT.

Kind regards,

Frannie Hodge
Member, Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust Board of Directors

cc: Dianne Mather, President, Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust

PO Box 683 • Clinton, MA 01510 • 978.365.9377

www.clintongreenway.org

Wachusett Reservoir Watershed Public Access Plan Update 2011 Input to Draft Plan from Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust

Overview of Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust (CGCT) and interest in Wachusett Reservoir Watershed Public Access Plan Update

The Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust is a land trust based in Clinton, Massachusetts, that is dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of open space. The charter of the CGCT is to provide protection for, awareness of, and access to the open spaces in Clinton. The Wachusett Reservoir area represents the largest parcel of open space in Clinton. We are very interested in the continued protection of this precious resource balanced with public access to this beautiful parcel as appropriate.

Our current projects include the implementation of the Town of Clinton Open Space and Recreation Plan including development of trails and providing for the ongoing maintenance and protection of Rauscher Farm. Short term goals include developing trails on existing rail beds and other open areas.

One of our trail projects is the continuation of the Mass Central Rail Trail (MCRT) through Clinton. The Wachusett Reservoir is one of the unique and appealing features of the MCRT. The section of the MCRT through the Wachusett Reservoir area provides the critical connection to the MCRT sections that have already been developed by Wachusett Greenways with the MCRT sections that the CGCT plans to develop. Continuing the MCRT through the DCR property seems to be the best and safest option. Users of the MCRT will be protected from vehicle traffic. The additional "eyes" on the reservoir provides protection for the water.

Trail sections immediately to the east of the Wachusett Reservoir will be developed by the CGCT and the Berlin Conservation Commission. Trail sections from Berlin and continuing to the East are currently controlled by the MBTA with a planned transfer to DCR. Trail sections west of the reservoir are under development by Wachusett Greenways. The section of the MCRT from South Meadow Road to Campground Road continues to be an active rail line.

We would like for you to consider a few goals and objectives for the update to the Wachusett Reservoir Public Access Plan that are aimed at continued development of the Mass Central Rail Trail.

- I. Goal – Continue the development of the Mass Central Rail Trail
 - a. Actions to accomplish goal
 - i. Continue the partnership that DCR has developed with Wachusett Greenways.
 - ii. Initiate a partnership with the Clinton Greenway Conservation Trust for the Clinton sections of the trail.
 - iii. Improve the trail surface between Gates 39 and 42 to better accommodate bicycle traffic
 - iv. Determine options for extending bicycle traffic from gate 39 to Gate 33. Options may include:
 1. *Modify trail on the North Dike so that it slopes and drains away from the reservoir (to prevent dirt that kicks up from rolling toward the water).*
 2. *Develop a trail parallel to route 110 on the grassy section*
 3. *Build boardwalk or other protected access where the reservoir meets route 110. Gate 36 – Gate 35*
 4. *Determine best trail surface to protect the water.*
 - v. Add Mass Central Rail Trail signs along this trail to make it clear to users that this is part of the larger MCRT trail.
 - vi. Investigate Potential paths for multi-use between Gates 35 and 26
- II. Goal – Additional multi-use recreational trail
 - a. Actions to accomplish Goal
 - i. Investigate possibilities for a recreational trail that circles the reservoir
 1. *Complete a feasibility study on the potential path. This study would itemize the requirements to improve existing trail or create new trail that provides access while continuing to protect the water supply, wildlife, and any other sensitive areas. (Idea is to use the existing trails from Gate 42 to Gate 39, continue from Gate 39 to Gate 36 on the north dike if developed to an acceptable standard or on new trail from gate 39 to gate 36. Develop trail between Gate 36 and Gate 35. Use existing trail or develop new trail from Gate 35 to Gate 26. Follow road to Gate 25. Use existing trail or develop new trail from Gate 25 to Gate 18. Develop trail between gate 18 and 17. Continue trail from Gate 17 to Gate 1 and then around the base of the dam to gate 42 to complete the circle).*
 2. *Work with DCR Greenways and Trails program for funding of studies*
 3. *Work with DCR Greenways and Trails program for funding of trail development.*
 4. *Work with open space committees of Wachusett communities (Clinton, Sterling, West Boylston, and Boylston) and local land trusts, including CGCT on planning, development, and funding.*

Appendix I. Public Information Contact List

DCR Division of Water Supply Protection Office of Watershed Management Wachusett/Sudbury Section January 2011		
Visitor Information		
Wachusett Watershed Rangers		978-365-3800
Regulation and Public Access Policy		
Wachusett Watershed Rangers		978-365-3800
Security Concerns		
Emergency		911
Wachusett Watershed Rangers		978-365-3800
State Police-Holden		508-829-8410
Geocache/ Letterbox Questions		
Wachusett Watershed Rangers		978-365-3800
Group Access Permit Request		
DCR Wachusett Headquarters		508-792-7806
Hunting Permit		
Request:		
DCR Headquarters		508-792-7806
Hunting Access Questions:		
Wachusett Watershed Rangers		978-365-3800
Water Quality Concerns		
Patricia Austin		508-792-7806
Wachusett/Sudbury Regional Director		
John Scannell		508-792-7806
DCR website		www.mass.gov/dcr
Division of Water Supply Protection		www.mass.gov/dcr/watersupply.htm