

Vehicle Access

Policy

Vehicles may only use Coldbrook Road, Intervale Road, Prison Camp/Brigham Road north from the intersection with Intervale Road to where it intersects with the East Branch Ware River, Brigham Road south from Route 62 to where it intersects with West Branch Ware River, and Gilbert Road north of Route 62 to where it intersects with Rice/Fisher Roads within the Ware River Watershed System from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset (Map 7). These roads may be closed at DWSP’s discretion due to roadwork, road conditions (e.g., mud season), forest management, public safety, or security reasons.

Vehicle access on additional DWSP roads is permitted for hunters with a DWSP hunting permit, through open gates, two weeks prior to the start of the deer archery season through December 31 for hunting only. Vehicles are not permitted in the Exclusion and Intake Buffer Zones.

Any unauthorized Vehicle Access is prohibited on DWSP lands and internal roads without a DWSP permit.

Summary

<i>Activity</i>	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Vehicle Access	☐ ¹	⊘ ¹	⊘

⊘ Prohibited

☐ General public access within the Ware River Watershed System is allowed from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Night Access is prohibited on DWSP owned lands in the Ware River Watershed System. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited. Littering is strictly prohibited. Carry in/Carry out. Do not feed wildlife. Groups of 25 or more are required to obtain a group access permit from the Quabbin Visitor Center prior to access.

¹ Vehicle access is allowed during daylight hours only on Coldbrook Road, Intervale Road, Prison Camp/Brigham Road north from the intersection with Intervale Road to where it intersects with the East Branch Ware River, Brigham Road south from Route 62 to where it intersects with West Branch Ware River, and Gilbert Road north of Route 62 to where it intersects with Rice/Fisher Roads. All other roads are closed to vehicle access unless authorized with a DWSP permit. Additional roads may be opened during hunting season to allow hunter access. DWSP roads may be closed at any time due to road conditions, weather, or public safety. Travel on existing town and state roads are not included in this policy.

Explanation

Vehicles may leave toxic chemicals (e.g., motor oil, engine coolant) on the road surface. These chemicals can concentrate in parking areas and may be transported to the system’s tributaries through stream or overland flow. In addition, the introduction of exhaust compounds, erosion, disturbance of wilderness character, and behavior such as dumping is associated with this activity.

Limitations on vehicle access is consistent with access policies on all other state land, including DCR State Parks and MassWildlife properties. Unrestricted public motor vehicle access has presented several water quality and security issues, including vehicles in unauthorized areas (including wetlands), illegal dumping, deteriorating road conditions, vehicles breaking down, and vehicles requiring maintenance or towing on public lands. Unrestricted vehicle access directly contradicts DWSP’s efforts to manage lands for water protection purposes. MassDEP, which regulates drinking water supplies in the Commonwealth, has told DCR that unrestricted vehicle access in the Ware River watershed is an unacceptable risk to the DCR/MWRA water supply system.



Roads Open To Vehicles During Daylight Hours

Department of Conservation & Recreation
Division of Water Supply Protection - Office of Watershed Management
Ware River Public Access Management Plan 2023

