

# Hunting and Trapping

## Policy

DWSP property in the Ware River Watershed, excluding the Exclusion Zone of the Ware River Intake, is open for hunting and trapping consistent with MassWildlife seasons and regulations. All hunters, however, must possess a five-year watershed hunting permit; permits are free and available to all hunters through the DWSP website ([www.mass.gov/info-details/dcr-dwsp-hunting-and-trapping-access-permits#five-year-watershed-hunting/trapping-access-permit](http://www.mass.gov/info-details/dcr-dwsp-hunting-and-trapping-access-permits#five-year-watershed-hunting/trapping-access-permit)). Commercial hunting activities on all DWSP watershed lands are prohibited. All other applicable state, local, and federal rules and regulations apply.

DWSP has issued MassWildlife a permit allowing them to manage Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) on watershed management owned land in Hubbardston (Hubbardston WMA), as well as in Rutland and Barre (Barre Falls WMA). Hunting and trapping are permitted on WMAs, but with different policies ([www.mass.gov/service-details/wildlife-management-area-regulations](http://www.mass.gov/service-details/wildlife-management-area-regulations)).

DWSP will open designated gates two weeks prior to the deer archery season until December 31 for vehicle access by licensed hunters with a valid DWSP hunting access permit for the concurrent hunting season. Hunters may access DWSP lands in the Ware River watershed system through these gates for hunting and trapping only. Vehicle access through the gates is prohibited for all other users.

Please follow these guidelines to minimize the potential risk of the spread of disease and possible water contamination:

- Do not wash your hands or animals in streams or ponds. Hand washing in streams or ponds on DWSP lands is strictly prohibited.
- No animal parts may be disposed of within 100' of wetlands, streams, brooks, ponds or other water bodies.
- Field dressing only allowed at least 100' away from wetlands, streams, brooks, ponds or other water bodies.
- Use portable toilets where provided.

## Summary

Activity	Ware River Watershed System	Intake Buffer Zone	Exclusion Zone
Hunting/Trapping	<input type="checkbox"/> <sup>1</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sup>1</sup>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

☒ Prohibited

☐ Allowed - General Restrictions

☐# Specific Restrictions

☐ 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.

<sup>1</sup> DCR Division of Water Supply Protection property in the Ware River Watershed is open for hunting and trapping consistent with MassWildlife seasons and regulations except for the Exclusion Zone of the Ware River Intake. A DCR Division of Water Supply Protection Hunting Access Permit is also required. DWSP will open additional internal roads from two weeks prior to the deer archery season until December 31 for licensed hunters with a valid DWSP hunting access permit for the concurrent hunting season.

## **Explanation**

DWSP has historically allowed recreational hunting and trapping activities within areas of the Ware River Watershed System. White-tailed deer management is necessary to limit over-browsing and facilitate the natural regeneration of the forest needed for sustainable water quality. Proper access for hunters is imperative for deer hunter success on lands as large as the DWSP properties in the Ware River Watershed System.

The Massachusetts Watershed Protection Regulation, 313 CMR 11.09(2)(a)22, states: “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.” DCR land within the Ware River watershed, excluding the Exclusion Zone of the Ware River Intake, is a designated area for hunting and trapping. Potential water quality impacts from hunting within the exclusion zone include physical and microbial water quality threats from erosion, and behavior such as illegal body/water contact, littering, or vandalism.



Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

# Authorized Hunting Access Roads

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

