



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Blackstone River Valley
National Historical Park

67 Roosevelt Ave
Pawtucket, RI 02860

Superintendent's Compendium
Of Designations, Closures, Permit
Requirements and Other
Restrictions Imposed Under
Discretionary Authority.

401-725-8638

Approved:

"Signature on File" Date: 01/12/2026
Eric Breitreutz, Superintendent

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Superintendent's Compendium Described

The Superintendent's Compendium is a summary of park-specific rules implemented under Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations (36 CFR). It serves as public notice, identifies areas closed for public use, provides a list of activities requiring either a special use permit or reservation, and elaborates on public use and resource protection regulations pertaining specifically to the administration of the park. The Superintendent's Compendium does not repeat regulations found in 36 CFR or other Titles of the United States Code and Code of Federal Regulations, which are enforced without further elaboration at the park level.

The regulations contained in 36 CFR, Parts 1-7, are the basic mechanism used by the National Park Service (NPS) to preserve and protect the natural and cultural resources of the park and to protect visitors and property within the park. Parts 1 through 6 are general regulations applicable to all areas of the National Park System, and Part 7 contains special regulations specific to individual parks. Each of these Parts has many sections and subsections articulating specific provisions. Within some of these Part 1-7 sections and subsections, the Superintendent is granted discretionary authority to develop local rules to be responsive to the needs of a specific park resource or activity, park plan, program, and/or special needs of the general public.

As an example, 36 CFR § 1.5(a), *Closures and Public Use Limits* provides the Superintendent certain discretion in allowing or disallowing certain activities. The authority granted by the Section, however, requires the Superintendent to comply with the Administrative Procedures Act (5 USC Section 551), which requires public notice on actions with major impact on visitor use patterns, park resources or those that are highly controversial in nature.

Another example is 36 CFR § 1.6, *Permits*, which allows the Superintendent to require a permit for certain uses and activities in the park. This Section, however, requires that a list of activities needing a permit (and a fee schedule for the various types of permits) be maintained by the park.

A final example is 36 CFR § 2.1(c)(1), *Preservation of Natural, Cultural and Archeological Resources*, which provides the Superintendent the authority to designate certain fruits, nuts, berries or unoccupied seashells which may be gathered by hand for personal use or consumption. This activity can occur, however, only if a written determination shows that the

allowed activity does not adversely affect park wildlife, the reproductive potential of a plant species, or otherwise adversely affect park resources.

This Compendium should be used in conjunction with Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Parts 1-7, to more fully understand the regulations governing the use and enjoyment of all areas of the National Park System.

A copy of [Title 36, CFR](#), can be purchased from the U.S. Government Printing Office at: <https://bookstore.gpo.gov/catalog/cfr-title-36-parks-forests-public-property>

OR

Superintendent of Documents
P.O. Box 371954
Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954

The CFR is also available on the Internet at: ecfr.gov.

2. Laws and Policies Allowing the Superintendent to Develop This Compendium

The National Park Service (NPS) is granted broad statutory authority under Title 54 of the United States Code (U.S.C.) § 100101(a) (formerly 16 U.S.C. § 1a-1, "Organic Act") to:

"...regulate the use of the National Park System by means and measures that conform to the fundamental purpose of the System units, which purpose is to conserve the scenery, natural and historic objects, and wild life in the System units and to provide for the enjoyment of the scenery, natural and historic objects, and wild life in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

In addition, 54 U.S.C. § 100751(a) allows the NPS, through the Secretary of the Interior, to:

"prescribe such regulations as the Secretary considers necessary or proper for the use and management of System units."

In 1970, Congress amended the NPS Organic Act to clarify its intentions as to the overall mission of the NPS. Through the General Authorities Act of 1970, Congress brought all areas administered by the NPS into one National Park System and directed the NPS to manage all areas under its administration consistent with the Organic Act of 1916.

In 1978, Congress amended the General Authorities Act of 1970 and reasserted a System-wide high standard of protection as defined in the original Organic Act by stating:

"Congress further reaffirms, declares, and directs that the promotion and regulation of the various areas of the National Park System, as defined by Section 1 of this Title, shall be consistent with and founded in the purpose established by Section 1 of this Title, to the common benefit of all people of the United States."

Additionally, 16 U.S.C. § 1c defines the National Park System as:

"...any areas of land and water now or hereafter administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the National Park Service for park, monument, historic, parkway, recreational, or other purposes."

In addition to the above statutory authority, the Superintendent is guided by established NPS policy as found in the *NPS Management Policies* (2006). The Superintendent is also guided by more specific policies promulgated by the Director, National Park Service, in the form of Director's Orders.

As stated in the Management Policies, the primary responsibility of the NPS is to protect and preserve our national natural and cultural resources while providing for the enjoyment of these resources by visitor and other users, as long as use does not impair specific park resources or overall visitor experience. The appropriateness of any particular visitor use or recreational experience is resource-based and will vary from park to park; therefore, a use or activity that is appropriate in one park area may not be appropriate in another.

The Superintendent is directed to analyze overall park use and determine if any particular use is appropriate. Where conflict arises between use and resource protection, where the Superintendent has a reasonable basis to believe a resource is or would become impaired, then that Superintendent is obliged to place limitations on public use.

3. Consistency of This Compendium with Applicable Federal Law and Requirements

The Superintendent's Compendium is not considered a significant rule requiring review by the Office of Management and Budget under Executive Order 12866. In addition, this Compendium will not have a significant economic effect on a number of small entities nor impose a significant cost on any local, state or tribal government or private organization, and therefore does not fall under the requirements of either the Regulatory Flexibility Act or the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

4. Development of the Requirements of the Superintendent's Compendium

As outlined above, the NPS has broad authority and responsibility to determine what types of uses and activities are appropriate in any particular National Park System area. The requirements of the Superintendent's Compendium are developed through an analysis and determination process. The decision criteria used during this process are:

- Is there use or activity consistent with the NPS Organic Act and NPS policy?
- Is the use or activity consistent and compatible with the park's enabling legislation, management objectives, and corresponding management plans?
- Will the use or activity damage the park's protected natural and cultural resources and other protected values?
- Will the use or activity disturb or be in conflict with wildlife, vegetation, and environmental protection actions and values?
- Will the use or activity conflict with or be incompatible with traditional park uses and activities?
- Will the use or activity compromise employee or public safety?

5. Applicability of the Compendium

The rules contained in this Compendium apply to all persons entering, using, visiting or otherwise present on Federally owned lands, including submerged lands, and waters administered by the NPS within the legislative boundaries of the park. This includes all waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, including all navigable waters.

6. Enforcement of Compendium Requirements

NPS Law Enforcement Park Rangers enforce the requirements of the United State Code, 36 CFR, and this Superintendent's Compendium.

7. Penalties for Not Adhering to the Compendium Requirements

A person who violates any provision of the regulations found in 36 CFR, Parts 1-7, or provisions of this Compendium, is subject to a fine as provided by law (18 U.S.C. 3571) up to \$5,000 for individuals and \$10,000 for organizations, or by imprisonment not exceeding six months (18 U.S.C. 3559), or both, and shall be adjudged to pay all court costs associated with any court proceedings. You may receive a list of fines associated with any particular provision by contacting the Administrative Officer at Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, 67 Roosevelt Ave. Pawtucket, RI 02860.

8. Comments on the Compendium

The Compendium is reviewed annually and revised as necessary. The park welcomes comments about its program and activities at any time.

Written comments on the Compendium may be submitted to:

Superintendent
Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park
67 Roosevelt Ave.
Pawtucket, RI 02860

9. Effective Date of the Superintendent Compendium

The Superintendent's Compendium is effective on the approval date listed on the first page of this document and remains in effect until revised for a period up to one year.

10. Additional Information

Some of the terms used in this Compendium may have specific meaning defined in 36 CFR 1.4 *Definitions*.

11. Availability

Copies of the Compendium are available at Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park 67 Roosevelt Ave. Pawtucket, RI 02860. It may also be found at nps.gov/blrv/learn/management/compendium.

B. SUPERINTENDENT'S COMPENDIUM

In accordance with applicable law and policy, and pursuant to the delegated authorities provided in Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1 ("36 CFR"), the following compendium actions apply to all lands and waters administered by the National Park Service (NPS) within the boundaries of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park. This document is the written compilation of designations, closures, permit requirements and other restrictions imposed under the discretionary authority of the Superintendent, as required by 36 CFR 1.7(b). Violating any provision in this Compendium may result in criminal penalties under 36 CFR 1.3.

The compendium actions in this document apply in addition to all other laws that apply to the lands and waters administered by the NPS within the boundaries of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park. These include:

- Regulations in 36 CFR and other CFR titles such as Title 43, which contains regulations that apply on public lands administered by the Department of the Interior. The current version of the CFR can be found www.ecfr.gov. Click on "Title 36" and then "Chapter 1" to access 36 CFR.

- Status codified in U.S. Code, in particular provisions in Titles 16 and 54.

This Compendium is organized by the sections in 36 CFR that give the Superintendent discretionary authority to take the compendium action. Written determinations that explain why each compendium action is necessary appear in this document in *italicized* print.

Please contact Superintendent's Office if you have any questions or comments about the Superintendent's Compendium.

C. DEFINITIONS

National Park Service regulations in 36 CFR 1.4 define certain terms that are used in 36 CFR. Other sections in 36 CFR may define terms that are used in those sections. To the extent any terms defined in the CFR are used in this Compendium, those definitions apply. In addition to terms defined in the CFR, the following terms used in this Compendium are defined as follows:

Ashton Village: Located within the park's boundary but not owned by the NPS, this mill village is a great example of the Rhode Island System of Manufacturing.

Blackstone River State Park: A Rhode Island state park located along the Blackstone River. This state park is within the park's boundary but not owned by the NPS. It offers recreational and historical activities.

Boundary: means the limits of lands or waters administered by the National Park Service as specified by Congress, or denoted by presidential proclamation, or recorded in the records of a state or political subdivision in accordance with applicable law, or published pursuant to law, or otherwise published or posted by the National Park Service.

Demonstrations: The term "demonstrations" includes demonstrations, picketing, speechmaking, marching, holding vigils or religious services, and all other like forms of conduct that involve the communication or expression of views or grievances, engaged in by one or more persons, the conduct of which is reasonably likely to attract a crowd or onlookers. This term does not include casual park use by visitors or tourists that is not reasonably likely to attract a crowd or onlookers.

Electronic Nicotine Delivery System: Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) such as e-cigarettes, vape pens, and similar devices, regardless of the substance being consumed

e-Bikes: The term "e-bike" means a two- or three-wheeled cycle with fully operable pedals and an electric motor of less than 750 watts (1 h.p.).

Hopedale Mill Village: Located within the Park but not owned by the NPS, this mill village hosts the home of the Draper Corporation. Self-guided tours available, as well as the occasional Ranger led tours.

National Park System (Park area): means any area of land and water now or hereafter administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the National Park Service for park, monument, historic, parkway, recreational, or other purposes.

Permit: means a written authorization to engage in uses or activities that are otherwise prohibited, restricted, or regulated.

Public Use Limit: means the number of persons; number and type of animals; amount, size and type of equipment, vessels, mechanical modes of conveyance, or food/beverage containers allowed to enter, be brought into, remain in, or be used within a designated geographic area or facility; or the length of time a designated geographic area or facility may be occupied.

Raceways: A water channel carrying water to and from a mill.

Refuse: means trash, garbage, rubbish, waste papers, bottles or cans, debris, litter, oil, solvents, liquid waste, or other discarded materials.

Service Animal: means any dog or miniature horse that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.

Slatersville Mill Village: Located within the Park but not owned by the NPS, this mill village is America's first planned mill village. Self-guided tours available, as well as the occasional Ranger led tours.

Sylvanus Brown House: Building located within the park's Old Slater Mill complex. Hosting the park's facility area.

Uncrewed Aircraft: means a device that is used or intended to be used for flight without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the device, and the associated operational elements and components that are required for the pilot or system operator in command to operate or control the device (such as cameras, sensors, communication links). This term includes all types of devices that meet this definition (e.g., model airplanes, quadcopters, and drones) that are used for any purpose, including for recreation or commerce.

Visitor Contact Station: Known as Old Slater Mill, this building hosts exhibit space and park visitor contact area.

Walkway: means sidewalks, paths, trails, or hard-surfaced areas that are closed to the use of bicycles and motorized vehicles.

Whitinsville Mill Village: Located within the Park but not owned by the NPS, this mill village several eras of mill housing, each built to support Whitin Machine Works. Self-guided tours available, as well as the occasional Ranger led tours.

Wilkinson Mill: Building located within the park's Old Slater Mill complex. Hosting the park's administrative offices.

36 CFR Part 1 - General Provisions

36 CFR § 1.5 Closures and Public Use Limits.

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5, and under the authority provided by 54 U.S.C. §§ 100101, 100751, and 320102, the Superintendent of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park establishes the following visiting hours, public use limits, closures, and area designations for specific use or activity. These actions are necessary to ensure public safety, protect environmental and cultural resources, and provide for equitable use and high-quality visitor experiences.

(a)(1) Visiting Hours:

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1), visiting hours for park facilities are as follows:

- **Visitor Center:**
 - End of April - Middle of May: Fridays and Saturdays, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
 - Middle of May – End of October: Thursday- Sunday, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

- Beginning of November - End of November: Fridays and Saturdays, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
- End of November – End of April: CLOSED
- **Please visit Park’s website for specific dates of seasonal openings and closings.**
- **Park Grounds:**
 - Open daily from dawn to dusk.
- **Temporary Closures:**
 - Severe weather or emergency situations may necessitate temporary closure of park facilities until conditions are safe.
 - The park may occasionally alter days and hours of operation, or may close the park, or portions thereof at any time for weather, emergency purposes, public health, construction, or security reasons to protect staff, visitors, and resources.
 - The park, or portions thereof, may close at any time for emergency, public health, or security reasons to protect staff, visitors, and resources.
 - Temporary closures will be announced via the park’s website alert section, social media pages, phone greeting, and postings at key park locations.
 - All permanent closures will be in accordance with the rulemaking procedures in the Federal Register.

Note: Operating hours for national park service owned facilities may differ from those of external organizations, businesses, and our other buildings located within the park boundaries.

Determination: *Establishing specific visiting hours and acknowledging holiday and temporary closures ensures safety, security, protection of park resources, and a quality visitor experience.*

(a)(1) Public Use Limits:

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1), the following public use limits have been established for visitor safety, resource protection, and quality visitor experiences:

- **Visitor Center: Old Slater Mill**
 - Visitor Contact Station:
 - Maximum capacity of 40 persons.
 - Maximum occupancy of 80 persons when open to public at one time.
 - Maximum capacity of 40 persons on 1st Floor and maximum capacity of 40 persons on 2nd Floor at one time.
 - Maximum occupancy of 120 persons at one time when open during non-public events.
- **Wilkinson Mill:**

- Maximum occupancy of 30 persons at one time.
- **Sylvanus Brown House:**
 - Maximum occupancy of 15 persons at one time.
- **Park Grounds:**
 - **Hodgson-Rotary Park:**
 - Maximum occupancy of 120 persons at one time.
 - Maximum occupancy of 1,250 persons during special events (coming and going).
 - **Slater Mill Core Historic Area** (grass area between park buildings and next to Old Slater Mill):
 - Maximum occupancy of 65 persons at one time.
 - Maximum occupancy of 200 persons during special events (coming and going).
 - **Slater Mill Parking Lot:**
 - Maximum occupancy of 240 persons at one time.
 - Maximum occupancy of 300 persons during special events (coming and going).
The Park parking lot is limited to 2 hours per vehicle in designated non-City of Pawtucket Police Department vehicle areas. Vehicles left unattended for over 2 hours, when the operator/owner is not on park grounds, in the visitor contact station, or on National Park Service business, may be towed away at the owner's expense.

***Determination:** Public use limits and regulations are necessary to ensure visitor safety, protect sensitive historical and cultural resources from undue stress or damage, and maintain a high-quality visitor experience. The historic building interiors at Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park have limited space and narrow hallways; exceeding occupancy limits could threaten public safety and park resources. These measures are consistent with relevant federal, state, and local occupancy standards, including compliance with the ADA, and are supported by regular safety and resource impact assessments.*

(a)(1) Closures:

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1), the following areas are closed to public access:

- **Administrative offices and maintenance spaces are closed to the public.**
- **The visitor center driveway is closed for public use.**
- **Glass containers, prohibited at all times**
- **Fires or any other combustibles, prohibited at all times See 36 CFR § 2.13.**

- **Grills, barbecues, prohibited at all times See 36 CFR § 2.13.**
- **Power Generators or inverters, prohibited at all times, except by permit. See 36 CFR § 2.12.**
- **Swimming or accessing Blackstone River from park property is prohibited. See 36 CFR § 2.16.**
- **Entering tail races and headraces is prohibited.**
- **Unless otherwise identified, all structures, buildings, houses and remnants are closed to the public.**
 - *Some non-public structures are only for park administrative purposes while other structures and remnants may be unsafe. These historic structures are in various conditions of repair, some may be hazardous*
- **The following roads and areas are closed to public motorized vehicle use:**
 - **Slater Avenue**
 - **Hodgson Rotary Park**
 - **All landscaped and grassed areas of the park**
- **Parking Restrictions:**
 - **Parking is only allowed in designated parking spaces; Parking on sidewalks, grassed areas, natural areas prohibited.**
 - **All Roadsides (shoulders) are closed to parking and stopping**
 - **Parking after park hours requires permit**
 - **Passenger buses may not idle in the park when not underway.**
- **Balloons are prohibited from use.**
- **Golfing, including the use of whiffle golf balls is prohibited.**
- **Geocaching - Activities such as geocaching that involve hiding and/or hunting physical containers are prohibited with the exception of containers placed by park personnel for educational purposes.**
- **All forms of camping on or near the park grounds are prohibited unless done as part of an historical/educational interpretive program sponsored by the National Park Service.**
- **All skateboards, in-line skates, roller skates, scooters and bicycles to include “E-Bikes” are not allowed on the park sidewalks or walkways, except those clearly marked as part of the Blackstone River Bikeway/City of Pawtucket bike path**
- **Pollinator Gardens are closed to public access. Harvesting of any fruits, plants, and/or flowers within or harassment of pollinators is prohibited.**

Determination: *These closures are implemented to ensure public safety, protect sensitive equipment, secure government property, and maintain operational efficiency. Restricting access prevents unauthorized entry, minimizes safety hazards, and allows staff to perform duties without disruption.*

(a)(2) Area Designations for specific use or activities

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(2), the Superintendent of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park designates the following areas for specific use and imposes conditions and restrictions on activities as needed to protect visitor safety, park resources, and operational effectiveness.

- **Slater Mill Core Historic Picnic Area:**
 - Picnic area is limited to first come first serve.
 - Special uses and activities are managed under the Special Use Permit process. When applying for a permit, the applicant must specify what area of the park they would like to use for the intended special use. Each application will be handled individually. In the instance that two separate applicants are requesting use of the same area on the same day, they will be handled on a “first come, first served” basis. See section 36 CFR § 1.6

(a)(2) Conditions or Restrictions on a Use or Activity:

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(2), the Superintendent may impose conditions on a use or activity to ensure visitor safety, protect park resources, maintain operational effectiveness, and implement management responsibilities. The following conditions apply to specified uses or activities within Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park:

Unmanned Aircraft (Drones) Prohibited

- Launching, landing, or operating an uncrewed or remotely piloted aircraft from or on lands and waters administered by the National Park Service within the boundaries of Blackstone River Valley National Historic Park is prohibited except as approved in writing by the superintendent.

Determination: *This restriction is necessary to prevent unacceptable impacts to park resources and values from the use of uncrewed aircraft. Potential impacts include harming visitors, interfering with rescue operations, causing excessive noise, impacting viewsheds, and disturbing wildlife. This restriction is required by NPS Reference Manual #60: Aviation Management, Chapter 12 – Uncrewed Aircraft Systems. Park Ground Use Conditions*

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(2), the following conditions apply to park grounds:

- No stakes, poles, or ground-penetrating objects are allowed.
- Use is weather-dependent and subject to resource protection needs.

Determination: *These guidelines prevent damage to infrastructure and ensure the park grounds remains clean and welcoming for all visitors.*

Restriction on Food and Drink

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(2), food and drink are not permitted in Old Slater Mill, except for water in a closed container.

Determination: This restriction protects audiovisual equipment, furnishings, and sanitation.

Filming, Still Photography, and Audio Recording

36 CFR 1.5(a)(2) - Designate areas for a specific use or activity or impose conditions or restrictions on a use or activity.

- **Filming, still photography, and audio recording activity may require a permit, consistent with 54 U.S.C. 100905.**
 - Filming, still photography, and audio recording activity that occurs in closed areas, requires exclusive use of a site or area, or involves a set or staging equipment other than handheld equipment (such as a tripod, monopod, and handheld lighting equipment) requires a permit, unless the activity is affiliated with an activity or event that has been allowed under a written authorization, such as a special use permit.
 - Filming, still photography, and audio recording that involves more than eight individuals requires a permit, unless the NPS has specifically notified an individual or group that a permit is not required, or if the activity is affiliated with an activity or event that has been allowed under a written authorization, such as a special use permit.
 - If a permit is required for the reasons stated above, or if the NPS otherwise determines and then notifies an individual or group that a permit is required for a filming, still photography, or audio recording activity, then engaging in that activity without a permit is prohibited. Violating a term or condition of a permit issued by the NPS for a filming, still photography, or audio recording activity is prohibited, and may result in the suspension or revocation of the permit, in addition to any penalties that may apply under 36 CFR 1.3.

Determination: Federal law at 54 U.S.C. 100905 states that permits and fees are not required for filming, still photography, or audio recording in park areas if certain requirements are met. These requirements address various topics, including, but not limited to, group size, location, equipment, potential impacts to resources and visitors, and the likelihood that the NPS will incur related administrative costs. If any of these requirements are not met, the law allows the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the NPS, to require a permit for the subject activity. Permit requirements are imposed by the superintendent under discretionary authority provided by 36 CFR 1.5(a)(2), which allows the superintendent to impose conditions or restrictions on a use or activity, consistent with applicable legislation, to implement management responsibilities. The general regulations for permits in 36 CFR 1.6 do not apply to permits issued for filming, still photography, and audio recording, which instead are governed by the statutory provisions in 54 U.S.C. 100905. The imposition of permit requirements, on a case-by-case basis, for filming, still photography, or audio recording does not require rulemaking under 36 CFR 1.5(b). Requiring a permit with reasonable terms and conditions in accordance with statutory requirements at 54 U.S.C. 100905 is not highly controversial, will not result in a significant alteration in the public use pattern of the System unit, will not adversely affect the System unit's natural, aesthetic, scenic or cultural values, or require a long-term or significant modification in the resource management objectives of the System unit, because the permit requirement is limited in time and scope to the specific activities authorized by the permit, which contain terms and conditions that protect the values, resources, and visitors of the System unit, and implements federal law.

36 CFR § 1.6 – ACTIVITIES THAT REQUIRE A PERMIT

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.69(f), the following activities are prohibited unless a permit has been issued by the Superintendent. The criteria for issuing permits are established by applicable law (statutes and regulations) and National Park Service policy. Permitted activities are subject to appropriate terms and conditions to protect park resources, values, and visitor safety.

Permits may be requested by contacting the park's **Permitting Office** or visiting the [Permit Page](#).

Note: Some activities listed below may not be currently authorized due to the park's urban setting, limited space, or lack of facilities. However, they are included because they are governed by federal regulations and could be proposed by a member of the public. The Superintendent may deny such requests based on incompatibility with park purposes, resource protection, or public safety concerns.

The following activities require a permit **within the area designated for special use at Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park**:

- **36 CFR § 1.5 – Closures and public use limits**
 - **Some filming, still photography, and audio recording (depends upon the facts and circumstances; contact the park for more information). 36 CFR 1.5(a)(2) and 54 U.S.C. 100905.**
- **36 CFR § 2.5 – Research specimens**
 - **(a) Taking wildlife, plants, rocks, or other resources for scientific research.**
- **36 CFR § 2.6 – Gathering of plants or plant parts by federally recognized Indian tribes for traditional purposes**
 - **(a) Gathering or removal of plants or plant parts by members of federally recognized Indian tribes.**
 - *Note: This activity is not compatible with the urban park environment but remains subject to regulation.*
- **36 CFR § 2.12 – Audio disturbances**
 - **(a)(2) Operating a power saw in developed areas.**
 - **(a)(3) Operating a motor or engine in undeveloped areas.**
 - **(a)(4) Operating a public address system.**
- **36 CFR § 2.37 – Noncommercial soliciting**
 - **(a) Soliciting or demanding gifts, money, goods, or services.**
- **36 CFR § 2.50 – Special events**
 - **(a) Conducting a sports event, pageant, celebration, entertainment, wedding, cultural observance, ceremony, organized recreational activity, or other public gathering that is not solely for expressive activity.**
 - Special events may involve setup of temporary structures, amplified sound, signage, or crowd control measures.
 - *Note: Events at Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park must be compatible with the park's historic setting, urban landscape, and neighboring community. Size, location, and timing may be limited.*
- **36 CFR § 2.51 – Demonstrations**
 - **(b) Conducting a demonstration involving more than 25 persons.**

- The designated First Amendment area is defined between the Cogswell Fountain, the flagpole, Main Street, Roosevelt Avenue, and the Blackstone River at the southern end of Hodgson Rotary Park.
 - View policy and map: nps.gov/blrv/planyourvisit/first-amendment.htm
- **36 CFR § 2.52 – Sale or distribution of printed matter**
 - **(b) Sale or distribution of printed matter or message-bearing items (e.g., leaflets, buttons, signs) by groups of more than 25 persons.**
 - Activity must remain within the designated First Amendment area and not disrupt park use or pedestrian movement.
- **36 CFR § 2.61 – Residing on federal lands**
 - **(a) Residing on park lands without authorization.**
 - *Note: This activity is not compatible with the urban park environment but remains subject to regulation.*
- **36 CFR § 2.62 – Memorialization**
 - **(b) Scattering of human ashes from cremation.**
 - *Note: This activity is not compatible with the urban park environment but remains subject to regulation.*
- **36 CFR § 5.1 – Advertisements**
 - **(a) Displaying, posting, or distributing commercial notices or advertisements without a permit.**
 - Includes posters, flyers, banners, digital screens, or signage promoting goods, services, or events.
 - Must be part of an authorized activity and compatible with park values and visual character.
- **36 CFR § 5.3 – Business operations**
 - **(a) Engaging in or soliciting any business, including the sale of food, beverages, or other commercial goods or services, without a permit or concession agreement.**
 - Business activity must meet NPS commercial use authorization or concessions requirements and be explicitly authorized.
- **36 CFR § 5.6 – Commercial vehicles**
 - **(a) Use of commercial vehicles on park roads, except when using designated routes for through traffic.**
 - *Note: This activity is not compatible with the urban park environment but remains subject to regulation.*
- **36 CFR § 5.7 – Construction of buildings or other facilities**
 - **(a) Construction or attempted construction of any building, structure, road, trail, path, or utility.**
 - *Note: This activity is not compatible with the urban park environment but remains subject to regulation.*
- **36 CFR Part 14 – Rights-of-way**
 - Permit required for utility or access easements under NPS jurisdiction.
- **43 CFR Part 3 – Preservation of American Antiquities**
 - Examining ruins, excavating archeological sites, or gathering antiquities.
 - *Note: This activity is not compatible with the urban park environment but remains subject to regulation.*

- **43 CFR Part 7 – Protection of archeological resources**
 - Excavating, removing, or disturbing archeological resources on federal lands.
 - **Note:** *This activity is not compatible with the urban park environment but remains subject to regulation.*
- **43 CFR Part 49 – Paleontological resources preservation**
 - Collecting paleontological (fossil) resources.
 - **Note:** *This activity is not compatible with the urban park environment but remains subject to regulation.*
- **54 U.S.C. § 100905 – Filming, photography, and audio recording**
 - Some filming, still photography, and audio recording (depends upon the facts and circumstances; contact the park for more information). 36 CFR 1.5(a)(2) and 54 U.S.C. 100905.
 - View filming permit guidance: nps.gov/blrv/planyourvisit/film-permit.htm

36 CFR § 1.7 PUBLIC NOTICE AND NOTIFICATION

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.7, notice of restrictions, closures, designations, permit requirements, and other conditions imposed under discretionary authority (§ 1.5(a)) will be made available to the public by at least one of the following methods:

- Posting prominently at affected locations
- Distribution through news releases
- Alerts on the park’s official website [Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park \(U.S. National Park Service\)](#)
- Social Media
 - [Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park | Pawtucket RI | Facebook](#)

36 CFR Part 2 - Resource Protection, Public Use and Recreation

36 CFR § 2.1 – Preservation of Natural, Cultural, and Archeological Resources

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 2.1(a)(1), (2), (5), and (6), the following conditions apply on NPS-owned property within Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, including but not limited to the Old Slater Mill, Wilkinson Mill and Sylvanus Brown House, and the park grounds.

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, the following is prohibited:

(a)(1) – Possessing, destroying, injuring, defacing, removing, digging, or disturbing from its natural state:

The following are prohibited:

- Removing, cutting, damaging, or collecting any plant materials, flowers, tree limbs, or other vegetation on NPS-owned property.

- Only leaves and pinecones may be collected from grounds for personal use.
- Possessing or collecting any part of a living or dead animal, including feathers, nests, or remains.
- Climbing, defacing, nailing, tying and hanging objects on or from trees is prohibited.

(a)(5) – Walking on, climbing, entering, ascending, descending, or traversing an archeological or cultural resource, monument, or statue, except in designated areas and under conditions established by the superintendent.

The following are prohibited:

- Walking on, climbing, or sitting on the stone ledges, railings, or foundation elements of the Old Slater Mill, Wilkinson Mill, Sylvanus Brown House and park grounds, unless specifically designed for public use.
- Using interpretive panels, granite plinths, or fencing as seating, climbing structures, or for physical support.
- Digging, placing stakes, or inserting any object into the ground in the park grounds or surrounding landscape is prohibited.
- Accessing exposed structural or archeological features during maintenance or construction without authorization.

(a)(6) – Possessing, destroying, injuring, defacing, removing, digging, or disturbing a structure or its furnishing or fixtures, or other cultural or archeological resources.

The following are prohibited:

- Damaging, removing, or tampering with exhibit panels, interpretive signs, furnishings, railings, fixtures, or building components.
- Affixing stickers, tape, posters, adhesives, or signage to any building, fence, panel, or NPS structure.
- Leaning items against buildings or fencing without permit approval.

***Determination:** These conditions are necessary to prevent the degradation and defacement of historic and cultural resources located on NPS-owned property within Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park. The park is located in a dense urban environment with high pedestrian traffic, which increases the risk of incidental damage, vandalism, and unauthorized ground disturbance. Park buildings are historic landmarks that are not designed for physical contact, climbing, or modern structural loads. The park grounds, is a managed park space where ground disturbance or the introduction of non-native species may cause environmental or infrastructural harm. These restrictions are consistent with federal preservation standards and NPS resource protection policies.*

36 CFR § 2.2 – Wildlife Protection

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1) and 36 CFR § 2.2(a)(1), (a)(2), (b), and (c), the following regulations are in effect on National Park Service-owned properties within the boundaries of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park:

(a)(2) – The feeding, touching, teasing, frightening, or intentional disturbing of wildlife nesting, breeding, or other activities is prohibited.

The following specific actions are prohibited on NPS-owned property within the park:

- Feeding or attempting to feed urban wildlife, including but not limited to squirrels, rabbits, and birds.
- Disturbing active nests or nesting sites located in trees, gardens, building eaves, signage, or architectural ledges, especially.

***Determination:** Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park is located in a densely developed urban area where rabbits, squirrels, and other urban animals make their homes. Urban wildlife may become habituated to human presence and food, leading to nuisance behavior, dependency, aggression, and public health risks. These restrictions are necessary to protect wildlife, ensure visitor safety, and maintain compliance with National Park Service urban wildlife management standards.*

36 CFR § 2.3 FISHING

Pursuant to 36 CFR §2.3(c), the Superintendent, under the authority of §1.5, may restrict or close park areas to the taking of fish. The following restrictions have been established:

- Fishing is allowed within park boundaries, in accordance with MA and RI state laws, except on park-owned walkways, and raceways around Old Slater Mill and Wilkinson Mill.

***Determination:** Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park is located in a densely developed urban area with high traffic along its walkways. These restrictions are necessary to ensure visitor safety, and maintain compliance with National Park Service management standards.*

36 CFR § 2.4 – Weapons, Traps, and Nets

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 2.4(a), the following are prohibited on NPS-owned property within Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park:

- The carrying or possession of concealed firearms is subject to Rhode Island state licensing requirements. The NPS does not issue or recognize exemptions beyond what is provided under state law. Possession of firearms is prohibited in Federally-owned or leased buildings.

***Determination:** Title 18 of the United States Code §930 prohibits the possession of firearms and dangerous weapons in federal facilities and shall be conspicuously posted at each public entrance. Federal facilities are defined as buildings or parts thereof owned or leased by the federal government, where federal employees are regularly present for the purpose of performing their official duties. A dangerous weapon is a weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance, animate or inanimate, which is used for, or is readily capable of causing death or serious bodily injury, except that such term does not include a pocket knife with a blade of less than 2 ½ inches in length*

Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park is located in a densely populated urban setting and consists entirely of NPS-owned historic structures, administrative facilities, and visitor use areas. There is no backcountry, hunting access, or wildlife harvesting allowed. These restrictions are necessary to protect visitors, staff, and historic resources from the risks associated with the use and possession of weapons and trapping devices. The presence or discharge of such items is incompatible with the cultural landscape and public safety needs of the park. These conditions are consistent with NPS public safety policy and the intent of 36 CFR § 2.4..

36 CFR § 2.10 – Camping and Food Storage

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 2.10(a), (b), (c), and (d), the following regulations apply on National Park Service-owned (NPS-owned) property within the boundaries of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park:

(a) – Camping Permits and Designations

- No areas of NPS-owned property within Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park are designated for camping.

***Determination:** Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park is a compact, day-use site located in a densely developed urban environment. All NPS-owned property within the park is intended for short-term visitor engagement and interpretive use. The park grounds are open during regular park hours but is not to be used for rest, sleep, or extended occupancy. Improper food storage, unattended waste, and unauthorized cooking or camping increase safety risks, attract nuisance wildlife, and compromise visitor access and resource protection. These restrictions are necessary to uphold public safety, protect historic and cultural assets, and maintain equitable access in alignment with National Park Service policies and 36 CFR.*

36 CFR § 2.11 – Picnicking

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 2.11, the following conditions apply to picnicking on National Park Service-owned (NPS-owned) property within the boundaries of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park:

- Picnicking is permitted at the park provided picnic tables, on a first come first serve basis.
- Picnicking is not permitted on building steps, entrances, doorways, interpretive panels, granite plinths, or the accessibility access on NPS-owned property.
- Picnicking must not interfere with public walkways, access to facilities, or park operations.

***Determination:** Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park is a compact, day-use urban site where visitors are welcome to enjoy food in a designated setting while respecting the historic landscape and fellow park users. The park grounds provides a peaceful environment for responsible picnicking during business hours. The park's pack-in, pack-out policy and Leave No Trace expectations support ongoing cleanliness, wildlife safety, and public accessibility. Prohibiting picnicking on steps, ramps, and interpretive features ensures that walkways and accessible routes remain safe and compliant with federal accessibility standards. These regulations promote sustainable use of public space and are consistent with National Park Service management goals under 36 CFR.*

36 CFR § 2.12 – Audio Disturbances

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 2.12(a) and (b), the following conditions apply on National Park Service-owned (NPS-owned) property within the boundaries of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park:

(a)(1) – Operation of motorized equipment or audio devices in an unreasonable or disruptive manner

The following are prohibited on NPS-owned property within the park:

- Operating audio devices (including but not limited to radios, Bluetooth speakers, musical instruments, phone speakers, or amplifiers) or any motorized equipment at a volume that:
 - Exceeds 60 decibels when measured on the A-weighted scale at 50 feet; or
 - Is unreasonable, considering the historic and educational character of the park, the proximity to other visitors, the intended use of the area, the time of day, and the overall impact on visitor experience.
 - This applies to both outdoor and indoor spaces.

***Determination:** These restrictions are necessary to protect the visitor experience, support public programming, and maintain a respectful and accessible environment on NPS-owned property. Many areas within the park, are designed to support public engagement, quiet reflection, educational programming, and creative interpretation. Unreasonable or amplified sound within these spaces can interfere with visitor enjoyment, interpretive presentations, school programs, and accessibility for individuals with sensory sensitivities.*

36 CFR § 2.13 – Fires

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 2.13(a) through (d), the following conditions apply on National Park Service-owned (NPS-owned) property within the boundaries of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park:

(a) – Fire Prohibited

The following activities are prohibited on NPS-owned property within the park:

- Open flames, charcoal grills, or cooking devices are not permitted on park grounds.

***Determination:** These fire restrictions are necessary to protect historic structures, cultural landscapes, and visitor safety on NPS-owned property within Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park. The park is located in a densely developed urban area and does not contain campgrounds, fire pits, or designated areas for open flame use. Any open flame, including matches, grills, candles, or portable stoves, poses a risk to historic resources and the surrounding community. These regulations ensure the safe use of public space, minimize the potential for accidental ignition, and support the park's mission to preserve irreplaceable historic assets.*

36 CFR § 2.14 – Sanitation and Refuse

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 2.14(a) and (b), the following regulations apply on National Park Service-owned (NPS-owned) property within the boundaries of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park:

(a) – Prohibited Sanitation and Refuse Activities The following activities are prohibited on NPS-owned property within the park, including inside and outside the park buildings, and the park grounds:

(a)(1) Disposing of refuse in any location other than appropriate waste receptacles.

- Visitors are responsible for their own trash management, collection, and disposal of trash generated strictly from their lawful use and enjoyment of the park. All other use of government refuse and recycling receptacles or facilities for dumping household, commercial or industrial refuse, brought as such from private or municipal property, is strictly prohibited.

(a)(5) Bathing, washing food, clothing, dishes and other property at public outlets except where designated is prohibited.

- The Superintendent has not designated any areas for bathing, and/or washing.

(a)(8) Disposal of human waste, except in designated areas is prohibited.

- The Superintendent has not designated any areas for waste disposal

(b) – Waste Disposal Conditions

- All personal items, trash, and waste, including sharps, must be removed and disposed of in accordance with public health and local waste regulations.

Note: No sharps disposal containers are provided. Sharps must be carried out and disposed of properly offsite.

Determination: *This determination is necessary to protect public health, safety, and accessibility on NPS-owned property at Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park. These areas serve as high-use public spaces for interpretation and education in a dense urban setting. The abandonment of waste and personal items has created sanitation hazards and obstructed ADA access. These restrictions are essential to ensuring the safe, clean, and respectful use of this nationally significant site.*

36 CFR § 2.15 – Pets

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1) and § 2.15(a)–(f), the following conditions and restrictions apply to pets on National Park Service-owned property within Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park:

(a)(1) – Pets in Public Buildings and Restricted Areas

Pets are prohibited inside all NPS-owned public buildings.

- **Exception:** Service animals trained to perform tasks for individuals with disabilities, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), are permitted.
 - **Note:** Emotional support, therapy, or comfort animals are not considered service animals under the ADA and are not permitted indoors.

(a)(2) – Restraint of Pets

Pets must be physically restrained at all times on park property, including sidewalks, entrances, and the park grounds. Acceptable restraint methods include:

- A leash no longer than six feet
- An enclosed carrier or fully enclosed pet stroller
 - **Note:** Voice control or electronic collars are not acceptable alternatives.

(a)(5) – Pet Waste

- Pet excrement must be collected and disposed of by the pet owner in the refuse receptacles located on the park grounds.
- Pet waste must not be left in planters, tree pits, garden beds, or restroom trash cans

***Determination:** This determination is necessary to protect public safety, preserve park resources, and maintain accessibility on NPS-owned property within Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, including the park grounds. Due to the park’s urban location and lack of pet amenities such as waste bins, tie-off areas, and dog-friendly spaces, all waste must be removed by the owner. Pets left unattended, barking, or disturbing nesting baby seagulls, rabbits, or squirrels can create safety issues and disrupt public programs. Pet waste, noise, and obstructions near the accessibility ramp have presented hazards to visitors, particularly those with disabilities. These restrictions help preserve a clean, respectful, and welcoming environment for all park users.*

36 CFR § 2.20 – Skating, Skateboards, and Similar Devices

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1) and § 2.20, the following conditions apply to National Park Service–owned property within the boundaries of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park:

- The use of roller skates, skateboards, roller skis, hoverboards, scooters, coasting vehicles, or similar wheeled or recreational devices is prohibited on all NPS-owned property.

***Determination:** This determination is necessary to reduce visitor safety risks, prevent damage to cultural resources, and maintain accessible pedestrian routes in a dense urban park environment. The park buildings and grounds are frequently used for public programs, quiet reflection, and school visits. Use of wheeled recreational devices in these areas has caused damage to masonry, railings, benches, and walkways, and poses safety hazards for visitors and staff.*

36 CFR § 2.21 – Smoking

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1) and § 2.21, the following conditions apply to National Park Service–owned property within the boundaries of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park:

Smoking is prohibited in the following areas:

- Smoking and use of electronic cigarettes (ENDS) are prohibited inside and outside all park buildings and within 25 feet of buildings entrances.
- Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) such as e-cigarettes, vape pens, and similar devices, regardless of the substance being consumed

There are no designated smoking areas on NPS-owned property within the park.

***Determination:** This determination is necessary to reduce fire risk, limit exposure to secondhand smoke or vapor, and maintain a safe, welcoming environment in this urban park setting. The park buildings and grounds are heavily used for educational programs, visitor services, and community events. Smoking and vaping in or near these areas have resulted in litter, fire hazards near landscaping, and discomfort for visitors—especially those with respiratory conditions or sensory sensitivities. Prohibiting smoking in these locations supports public health and protects park resources.*

36 CFR § 2.22 – Property

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1) and § 2.22, the following conditions apply to all National Park Service–owned property within the boundaries of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, including the park grounds.

(a) The following are prohibited:

(a)(1) Abandoning property, including but not limited to luggage, carts, clothing, bedding, bicycles, art supplies, or electronic devices.

(a)(2) Leaving property unattended for longer than 24 hours is considered abandoned.

***Determination:** This determination is necessary to protect park resources, ensure visitor safety, and prevent interference with operations and public access within this densely used urban park. Abandoning property within Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, including within park grounds, interferes with the visitor experience, obstructs pathways and ADA routes, and can obscure important viewsheds of the historic cultural landscape. Abandoned or unattended items such as bedding, clothing, cameras, or art supplies may pose safety or security concerns. The use of park electrical outlets for charging personal items is prohibited due to the absence of designated charging stations. The park enforces a "no abandoned property" policy across all NPS-owned areas.*

36 CFR § 2.35 – Alcoholic Beverages and Controlled Substances

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1) and § 2.35, the following regulations apply on all National Park Service (NPS)-owned property within the boundaries of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park and other federally managed areas:

(a) Alcoholic Beverages

(a)(1) The use and possession of alcoholic beverages within park areas is prohibited.

(a)(3) The Superintendent has closed all NPS-owned property in the park to the consumption of alcoholic beverages and the possession of open alcoholic beverage containers, pursuant to 36 CFR § 2.35(a)(3):

- (i) The consumption of alcoholic beverages or possession of open alcoholic beverage containers is prohibited.

(b) Control Substances

- Control substances are prohibited on within park areas, unless such substance is obtained by valid prescription.
- Despite RI and MA state laws on recreational marijuana, The National Park Service rules follow United States Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) rules, and the DEA prohibits the use of marijuana and therefore the Park prohibits the use of marijuana.
- In regard to permits or first amendment activities, Blackstone River Valley NHP will not issue permits to allow use of marijuana for any events or First Amendment activities.

***Determination:** This determination is necessary to maintain the integrity of public use areas designed for educational, interpretive, and family-friendly experiences. The park's facilities are frequently used for school visits, formal events, and public interpretation. Alcohol consumption or possession in these spaces creates conflict with these uses, invites the potential for disorderly conduct, and increases the risk of property damage. Given the urban context of the park and its open environment, the potential for misuse is heightened. Closing all NPS-owned property within the park to alcohol ensures safe, respectful, and inclusive public access.*

36 CFR § 2.37 – Noncommercial Soliciting

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1) and § 2.37, the following regulation applies on all National Park Service (NPS)-owned property within the boundaries of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, and other federally managed areas:

(a) Soliciting or demanding gifts, money, goods, or services is prohibited, except pursuant to the terms and conditions of a valid permit issued under:

- § 2.50 (Special Events)
- § 2.51 (Demonstrations)
- § 2.52 (Sale or Distribution of Printed Matter and Other Message-Bearing Items)

***Determination:** This determination is necessary to preserve the visitor experience, ensure public safety, and maintain unobstructed access to park facilities and interpretive programs. As an urban park with limited federal property embedded within downtown, this park experiences high pedestrian use, including by families, school groups, and visitors participating in educational programs. Unregulated noncommercial solicitation in or around the park buildings and grounds can create congestion, interfere with*

interpretive services, and lead to confusion about official National Park Service activities. Requiring a permit for such activity ensures the orderly use of public space while protecting constitutionally protected free speech.

36 CFR § 2.51 – Demonstrations and Designated Available Park Areas

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 2.51 and § 1.5(a)(1), the following regulations apply on all National Park Service (NPS)-owned property within the boundaries of the park, and other federally managed areas:

Designated First Amendment Area

The designated First Amendment area is defined between the Cogswell Fountain, the flagpole, Main Street, Roosevelt Avenue, and the Blackstone River at the southern end of Hodgson Rotary Park. A map and image of the designated area are provided in Appendix A of this compendium.

(a) Demonstrations

- (b) The term “demonstrations” includes demonstrations, picketing, speechmaking, marching, holding vigils or religious services, and all other like forms of conduct that involve the communication or expression of views or grievances, engaged in by one or more persons, the conduct of which is reasonably likely to attract a crowd or onlookers. This term does not include casual park use by visitors or tourists that is not reasonably likely to attract a crowd or onlookers.

(b) Permits and the small group permit exception

Demonstrations are allowed within designated areas only when the Superintendent has issued a permit, except:

- Demonstrations involving 25 persons or fewer may occur without a permit within the designated First Amendment area, provided that:
 - The group is not acting as an extension of another group using the small-group exception.
 - Activities do not interfere with permitted events, programs, or visitor services.
 - Only hand-carried signs are used; no stages, platforms, structures and/or sound equipment.

Determination: *This determination is necessary to balance the rights of free expression with the need to protect visitor safety, preserve historic and cultural landscapes, and ensure uninterrupted operation of public programs in an urban national park setting. The designated area in the park provides appropriate visibility and access while preventing interference with accessibility ramps, building entrances, and park programming. Larger gatherings, amplified sound, or physical structures can obstruct park operations and detract from the visitor experience. The permit system ensures that all demonstrations can be safely accommodated without conflicting with other permitted uses or public access.*

36 CFR § 2.52 – Sale and Distribution of Printed Matter and Other Message-Bearing Items

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1), § 1.6, § 2.51, and § 2.52, the sale or distribution of printed matter (such as books, pamphlets, or leaflets) and the free distribution of other message-bearing items (such as buttons, pins, bumper stickers, or clothing with a message) is subject to the following regulations on all NPS-owned property within Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park:

(a) Designated Area:

All sales or distributions of printed or message-bearing materials must take place only within the designated First Amendment area, with approval via permit or under 25 people. This space provides clear visibility while maintaining visitor flow and accessibility. No stakes, digging, or structures are permitted, as this area contains underground infrastructure.

(b) Permit Requirements:

A permit is required for any such activity unless the small group permit exception applies. This exception allows up to 25 people to distribute or sell message-bearing items without a permit, provided that:

- The group is not part of a larger coordinated effort already using the exception.
- The activity does not interfere with permitted park events, educational programs, or visitor services.
- No structures, tables, platforms, or signage are erected.

Determination: *This is necessary to maintain an appropriate balance between First Amendment rights and the preservation of a respectful, educational, and family-friendly environment in a dense urban setting. Restrictions on structures, signage, and placement help protect underground utilities and maintain accessibility. These guidelines ensure that expressive activity can occur without interfering with park operations, public safety, or the visitor experience.*

36 CFR § 2.62 – Memorialization

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1) and § 2.62, the following regulations apply to all National Park Service (NPS)-owned properties within the boundaries of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, and all other federally managed spaces:

(a) Unauthorized Installations

The installation of any monument, memorial, plaque, bench, tablet, sculpture, or other commemorative object on National Park Service property is strictly prohibited unless explicitly authorized in writing by the Director of the National Park Service. No areas within the park are currently designated for permanent or temporary memorial installations.

(b) Scattering of Ashes

The scattering of human ashes from cremation is not permitted anywhere within Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, including in outdoor areas and waters. The park does not have any designated areas for ash scattering, and no permits will be issued for this purpose.

Determination: This determination is necessary due to the urban, small-footprint, and historically sensitive nature of Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park. The park preserves nationally significant structures and public spaces that are not appropriate for scattering of remains or for the installation of private commemorative items. The prohibition ensures the protection of historic resources, maintains the intended purpose of shared public space, and avoids conflicts with interpretive and visitor service operations. In keeping with federal policy and the park's commemorative intent, memorialization activities are not permitted.

36 CFR Part 3 – Boating and Water Use Activities

36 CFR § 3.8 – Vessel Operation

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 3.8 (a)(2), Launching and recovering a vessel, except at a launch site designated by the Superintendent.

- No launching and recovering sites have been designated.

36 CFR § 3.16 – Swim or Wade in Park Waters

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5 and §1.7 accessing and/or swimming in the Blackstone River from park property is prohibited. Accessing and/or swimming in the mill raceway structures is also prohibited.

Determination: This is necessary to avoid adverse environmental impact and honoring the historical significance of the site. It also helps maintain an appropriate balance between use and the preservation of a respectful, educational, and family-friendly environment in a dense urban setting.

36 CFR Part 4 – Vehicle and Traffic Safety

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 4.10, off-road motor vehicle use is prohibited.

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 4.21 (b), the following speed limits are established for park routes and routes indicated:

- 5 mph within parking areas

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 4.30 (a), The use of a bicycle is prohibited except on park roads, in parking areas, and on routes designated for bicycle use. Park roads and parking areas that are closed to bicycle use are listed in §1.5 of this document.

The following additional routes, in developed areas or special use zones, have been designated for bicycle use:

- Bicycles are not permitted on the brick and stone sidewalks and walkways within the park boundaries.

Determination: This is necessary to avoid adverse environmental impact and honoring the historical significance of the site. It also helps maintain an appropriate balance between use and the preservation of a respectful, educational, and family-friendly environment in a dense urban setting.

POLICY DISCLOSURES

1. Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Policy Statement

In accordance with National Park Service Law Enforcement Reference Manual 9 (RM-9), notice is hereby given that Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park uses Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) security camera monitoring.

The park's use of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) for law enforcement and security purposes is limited to visually monitoring public park areas and public activities where no constitutionally protected reasonable expectation of privacy exists. Such CCTV use—including privacy and First Amendment safeguards—is intended to help ensure public safety and security; facilitate the detection, investigation, prevention, and deterrence of crime or terrorist activity; assist in the deployment of public safety resources; and support the protection of visitors, staff, and park resources. (RM-9, 26.1)

This policy does not restrict the official use of CCTV in government administrative areas, including offices, administrative buildings, jail holding facilities (RM-9, 26.3.7), or revenue collection sites. For example, unrestricted video/audio recording may occur at revenue collection points such as visitor center counters. This policy also does not restrict the use of Audio/Visual Recording Devices (AVRD) in patrol vehicles or officer-worn recording devices used by commissioned law enforcement rangers. (RM-9, 26.1)

Operation of CCTV systems, management of recorded footage, and the use of those recordings will comply with NPS and Department of the Interior policies, applicable laws, and regulations. (RM-9, 26.1–26.4) No person will be targeted or monitored based on race, religion, gender, sex, disability, national origin, political affiliation, or views. (RM-9, 26.4.2)

Nothing in this policy statement is intended to create any rights, privileges, or benefits not otherwise recognized by law.

2. Visitor Support

Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park is committed to providing meaningful experiences for all visitors, including those with disabilities. The park follows federal laws, including Section 504 and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to experience park programs, facilities, and digital content.

Park features include ramps, restrooms, and exhibits designed to support visitors with physical, sensory, or cognitive needs. Some historic buildings and outdoor areas may have limitations due to terrain or preservation requirements, but staff are available to assist where possible.

Visitors who have specific needs or requests are encouraged to contact the park before their visit. Staff will do their best to provide support in a timely and thoughtful way.

To request assistance or learn more, please contact:

Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park

67 Roosevelt Ave.

Pawtucket, RI 02860

Phone: 401-725-8638

Email: BLRV_info@nps.gov

SPECIFIC PARK NOTICES

Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park is unique in that it is an **urban “partnership” park**, consisting of a historic district with many sites owned by various partners. The NPS **owns and manages only a few properties** outright (notably the Old Slate Mill, Wilkinson Mill and Sylvanus Brown house). Other key sites within the authorized park boundary – such as the Little Red Shop Local Historic District, Whitinsville Historic District, Slatersville Historic District, Ashton Historic District, Blackstone River State and others – are owned by private or public organizations or state, or the city and operate under their own

management. The regulations in this compendium **apply only to federally owned or administered lands** and facilities of the park (Special Use Permit - Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park (U.S. National Park Service)). Visitors should be aware of the following park-specific nuances:

- **Partner Sites and Non-Federal Areas:** When visiting attractions like the Blackstone River State Park or one of the Mill Villages within the park, remember that those facilities have their own rules (e.g., hours, admission fees, photography policies, etc.). The NPS does not regulate behavior inside those partner buildings, though generally their rules will be similar in spirit (for example, museums prohibit smoking and require shirts and shoes, etc.). If you have questions about a specific building not operated by NPS, please inquire at that site or at the NPS visitor center for guidance.

Elevator Usage During Emergency Evacuations

- Elevators are prohibited for use during fire emergencies unless specifically designated for emergency evacuation and explicitly authorized by emergency responders. Currently, **no elevators within park facilities are approved for emergency evacuation use.**

SECTION IV. APPENDIX

Appendix A: Designated First Amendment Area Map

The designated First Amendment area defined between the Cogswell Fountain, the flagpole, Main Street, Roosevelt Avenue, and the Blackstone River at the southern end of Hodgson Rotary Park.

This space is identified on the official park map and marked in white, labeled First Amendment Area.

Map:



Note: This space is accessible and ADA-compliant. Park rules regarding group size, permit requirements, and conduct apply in this area.

Appendix B: Reference Information

- **Legal Authorities:** This compendium is issued under the authority of Title 54 United States Code (National Park Service Organic Act) and Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations. Specific sections invoked include 36 CFR 1.5 (closures and restrictions), 1.6 (permits), and provisions of Part 2, 4, and 5 as cited in the text. Additionally, 54 United States Code 100905.
- **Supporting Policies:** The compendium's provisions conform to NPS Management Policies 2006, NPS Director's Orders, and applicable federal laws. For example, the closure on drones aligns with **Policy Memorandum 14-05 (Unmanned Aircraft)** which prohibits unmanned aircraft in parks unless approved.
- **Effective Date:** January 1, 2026 (unless updated sooner).
- **Annual Review:** This document will be reviewed each year and updated as necessary by the Superintendent. Changes will be made available to the public with a new approval signature and date.
- **Contact Information:** For permits, questions, or more information about any regulation herein, contact: *Superintendent, Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, 67 Roosevelt Ave. Pawtucket, RI 02860. Phone: 401.725.8638.* Additional info is also available on the park's official website.

End of Superintendent's Compendium – 2026.