

<h1>#10-34</h1> <h2>GEOCACHE POLICY</h2> <h3>Division of Forestry</h3>	
~ <b>Effective</b>	October 7, 2010
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Purpose</b>	To establish a policy and procedure to govern the placement, use and tracking of Geocaches on State Forest lands.
 <b>Authority</b>	Chief, Division of Forestry ORC 1503:01
 <b>Reference</b>	Law Enforcement/Recreation Administrator Special Use Permit Policy
 <b>Resource</b>	Law Enforcement/Recreation Administrator

### Preface

Geocaching is a high-tech treasure hunting game played throughout the world by people equipped with GPS devices. The basic idea is to locate hidden containers, called geocaches, outdoors and then share your experiences online. Geocaching is enjoyed by people from all age groups. A geocacher can place a geocache any where in the world, pinpoint its location using GPS technology and then share the geocache's existence and location online.

The Ohio Division of Forestry supports Geocaching, but recognizes that cache locations can place the visiting public at risk and also interfere with forest management practices that are integral to the Division's mission and strategic plan.

### A. Geocache Placement Guidelines

1. A person wishing to place a geocache on state forest land must first apply for a **Special Use Permit** through the unit manager of the respective forest. Unauthorized caches will be removed. Applications for Special Use Permits will be accepted on a first come-first-served basis. There is no fee for a geocache permit.

2. Caches may not be buried, but must be located above ground in a location that does not place the visiting public at risk of injury or harm and does not damage any tree, vegetation or natural feature.
3. Caches may not be placed in any location that interferes with Division of Forestry resource management objectives.
4. Each individual cache may be placed for a period not to exceed two (2) years. At the end of two years the cache must be removed by the permit holder, the site restored to its original condition, and the Forest Manager informed in writing of the removal.
5. The Ohio Division of Forestry retains the right to limit the number and density of caches on state forest lands.
6. The placement of a "Premium Member only Geocache" will not be permitted on State Forest lands. All caches on State Forest lands shall be available to the public without a fee.

### **B. Public Access to Geocache's**

1. Geocaches may not be accessed between the hours of 11:00PM and 6:00AM. Caches located at Hocking State Forest may be accessed during daylight hours only.
2. Cache seekers or cache owners must abide by all other forestry rules and regulations.

### **C. Geocache Containers & Contents**

1. All Geocache containers must be clearly marked with the word "Geocache" and include the Special Use Permit number assigned to that particular cache.
2. Maximum size of cache containers shall not exceed 600 cubic inches of capacity. Minimum size of cache containers shall not be less than 50 cubic inches of capacity.
3. Cache containers may only contain a log book and non-perishable, family-friendly items.

### **D. Geocache Tracking**

1. District Foresters shall approve and issue all Special Use Permits for geocaches.
2. Distribution of the permit shall be as defined in the Special Use Permit Policy.
3. All prospective geocache locations will be checked by the respective District Land Management Forester against known and planned timber harvest locations, prescribed fire locations and any other management activity that could place the public at risk or jeopardize the Division's mission or strategic plan.
4. If it is determined that the location of an existing cache will place the public at risk, interferes with Division land management objectives, or is causing undo impact to forest resources, the respective State Forest Manager will notify the

Law Enforcement/Recreation Administrator in order to have the cache removed or relocated.

5. The Law Enforcement/Recreation Administrator shall keep a database of all geocache permits and will be responsible for notifying permit holders of changes in permit status and expiration dates.