An Introduction to Geocaching

Chris Kracik
aka BBWolf+3Pigs
&
Calvin Taft
aka Nomad64
What is Geocaching?
“Geocaching is a sport where you use a multi billion dollar satellite system to locate Rubbermaid containers in the middle of the woods.”

- Anonymous
No, really, what is Geocaching?

Geocaching is a family oriented activity where participants, using GPS technology and information off the Internet, locate caches in city parks, forests, management areas, town, cities, etc. and log their experiences online.
Some More Details
Selective Availability & Geocaching

Prior to May 2000, civilian GPS signal included a random error (Selective Availability)

- Civilian accuracy >30m

Pres. Clinton ordered SA to be turned off at 0000, 1 May 2000

- Any risk is offset by the benefits
- Resulted in accuracy < 10m
- Benefit sportsmen, FAA, etc
- 3 May 2000 - Dave Ulmer placed first “cache”
- Now over 1,500,000 caches worldwide!
The Basics

► The Hide

- A player hides a container with a log book, and possibly “trade goodies” (swag) and records the coordinates
- Posts a listing at one of the caching websites with the coordinates and any other pertinent information

► The Find

- Once listed, cachers review the information on the website and enter the coordinates into their receiver or their smart phone
- The Hunt Begins!
- When found, the log is signed, trades made (optional) and cache returned to its hiding spot
- Back home, a log is entered online
The Who’s & Why’s

► Who?

- There is no “typical” cacher
- Families, retirees, hikers, engineers, teachers, girl & boy scouts, librarians, doctors, truckers... the list is endless
- The game is getting more accessible with smartphones, and more “in town” hides

► Why?

- There are as many answers as there are cachers
- Exercise, family together time, thrill of the hunt, exploring new places, fun with friends, photography...
GEOCACHING is a real-world outdoor treasure-hunting game. Players try to locate hidden containers, called geocaches, using GPS-enabled devices and then share their experiences online. (Guide to the Game)

1. **Browse**
   - Search for interesting geocaches:
     - N 41° 36.838 W 071° 15.126
     - Find My Location

   There are 1,599,038 active geocaches and over 5 million geocachers worldwide.

2. **Discover**
   - Explore the world as you search for the cache using a GPS device or smartphone.
   - Find the cache, sign the logbook and see what others have left behind. (Cache Examples)

3. **Share**
   - Share your experience with other treasure seekers.

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**Recent Activity**

In the last 30 days, there have been 3,913,299 new logs submitted

**Quebec, Canada**
- slinky615 Found it
- Alison做好了 found it
- 8 minutes ago

**Michigan, United States**
- TeamPrat Found it
- ChicagoDrizzle Found it
- 7 minutes ago

**Niedersachsen, Germany**
- tarpent33 Found it
- Kleinschmieden Stein found it
- 8 minutes ago

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Choose Your Language: **English**

**About**
- Glossary of Terms
- Brochures
- About Groundspeak

**Press**
- News Articles
- Media FAQs
- Media Inquiries

**Questions & Suggestions**
- Help Center
- Discussion Forums
- Land Management and Law Enforcement

**Resources**
- Tools and Downloads
- API Program
- Find a Benchmark
Cache Types

- Traditional
- Multi
- Puzzle
- Event
- CITO
- Wherigo
- Mega-event
Sizes

► Micro
  ▪ Film canister
  ▪ Hide-a-key
  ▪ Pill Bottle
  ▪ “Nanos”

► Small
  ▪ Small rubbermaid (~cup size)

► Regular
  ▪ Rubbermaid, lock & lock, ammo can

► Large
  ▪ 5 gallon bucket
Land Trusts & Geocaching
(We’re a pretty good match)
Your Properties and Geocaching

► We like to explore new places
  ▪ Your property is probably one of those places

► We like to bring others to cool places we’ve found
  ▪ We love what we found, and want to share

► Geocaching and related activities can help showcase your properties

► “If you hide it, they will come”
  ▪ There may caches on your properties already
Promoting Your Property

► Land Trusts, Park Systems, etc. are embracing geocaching as a means to attract new visitors
  ▪ 1.5M Caches & 5M Cachers worldwide!
  ▪ A lot of properties and parks are unknown

► Hide a cache
  ▪ Provide a nice write-up of the property and include links to your policy
  ▪ Invite others to hide caches (in accordance with your policy)

► Events
  ▪ Picnics and Meet & Greets
  ▪ Intro to Caching Course
  ▪ Nature Walk with a new cache as the finale
  ▪ CITO – Cache In Trash Out

► Give-aways
  ▪ Geocoins & Pathtags
  ▪ NY Great Lakes Seaway
  ▪ Allegheny Geo Trail
Why Bother?

► Geocaching is another way to attract new people to your properties
  - Some geocachers may not be your “typical” visitors

► Raise awareness about your properties and your work

► New Members & Volunteers
  - Trail clearing and CITO
Responsible Geocaching
(Yes, we have “rules”)
Geocaching.com Listing Guidelines

(Some key points)

► Geocaching.com provides listing specific guidelines

► Listings reviewed prior to publication

► **No burying!**

► Adequate permission (Private/Public spaces)
  - “Frisbee Rule”

► No elementary schools

► No Federal properties (unless explicit manager permission)

► No military bases or potential terror targets

► “Saturation Rule” – 528’ offset between caches

► Self-policing

[Complete Guidelines at Geocaching.com]
Property Policies

► Adopt consistent policies for geocaching
  ▪ We’ll get frustrated if every property has a different policy
  ▪ We want to bring people to your properties
  ▪ Can be more specific than geocaching.com guidelines

► Provide a POC (email, phone)

► Post the policy on your web site
  ▪ Don’t make it hard to find

► Provide policy to local geocaching.com reviewer
  ▪ Reviewer will try to verify that the policies are adhered to

► Policy Examples
  ▪ Westmoreland Conservancy (PA)
  ▪ MA DCR
  ▪ US Army COE
Suggestions for Property Policies

► All GC.com guidelines apply
  - No digging! No defacing!
► All local/state/federal laws apply
► Permission Required
  - Hider must get written/email permission from property manager and provide a copy of email to reviewer
  - Requires “site inspection”
  - Unauthorized caches will be removed by staff
  - Permission can be revoked
► Labeled containers
  - Transparent?
► No hiding in stones walls, ruins, etc
Questions?

- **Chris Kracik**
  - BBWolf+3Pigs; bbwolf.3pigs@cox.net

- **Calvin Taft**
  - Nomad64; chtaft@charter.net

- Rhode Island geocaching.com reviewer is gpsfun
  - Use “Send Message” link from geocaching.com user profile