Application – Geocache Placement in Waukesha County Parks System

Waukesha County Department of Parks and Land Use

GEOCACHING REGULATIONS - WAUKESHA COUNTY PARK SYSTEM

GEOCACHING IN THE WAUKESHA COUNTY PARK SYSTEM

Find a cache in the Waukesha County Parks! Geocaching is a popular outdoors "scavenger hunt" that uses a global positioning system (GPS) device and internet-published coordinates to locate a virtual or physical cache. A virtual cache may be an amazing view; a physical cache may be a trinket or logbook in a plastic container hidden under some leaves. Geocaching is an acceptable activity in the Waukesha County Park System when all the park guidelines and policies are followed – including paying the park entrance fees (when applicable) and parking in the appropriate designated areas.

TYPES OF GEOCACHING ALLOWED IN THE WAUKESHA COUNTY PARK SYSTEM

- **Virtual Caching:** (Preferred methods)
  Coordinates of stationary landmarks guide participants to the virtual cache. Virtual caches are verified only by e-mailed photos of the cache site.

- **Physical Geocaching:**

Participants seek a hidden **- not buried/do not break ground -** physical cache. A waterproof container stores the trade item or logbook. For a letterbox cache, there is usually a logbook and rubber stamp. Participants mark their personal logbooks with the stamp from the letterbox, and use their own personal stamp to mark the letterbox's logbook. For a micro-cache, a small container such as a film canister is used.

BASIC GUIDELINES FOR GEOCACHING (for all participants)

- You must abide by all **Waukesha County ordinances** .

- You must conform to the "Leave No Trace" outdoor ethics guidelines, that is, take nothing but photographs, leave nothing but footprints. For more information on the principles of "Leave No Trace," visit the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics website

- If you discover any illegal or hazardous materials in the cache, you must contact a Waukesha County Park System Administrative Office immediately at (262) 548-7790.

PLACEMENT OF A CACHE

- To place a physical or virtual cache, you **must have prior written permission** from the Waukesha County Park System. For each cache location, complete a separate **Permit Request Form and provide a map (ex. Google Earth or similar map) with each permit request.**

- Applications for caches in the core parks (Fox Brook, Fox River, Menomonee, Minooka, Mukwonago, Muskego, Naga-Waukee, and Nashotah) and the Retzer Nature Center will only be considered by management if placement of the cache is within the trail right-of-way (i.e. 5 feet of the trail on either side) of established trails.

- Geocaching is **not allowed** in
  - State Natural Area - Muskego Park hardwoods
  - Sensitive Areas: Those areas the Waukesha County Park System staff determine cannot tolerate human traffic or disturbance which includes portions of the parks & greenways.

- Cache may not physically change the character of the site. This includes but is not limited to disturbing/excavating soil, cutting vegetation, moving logs, etc. You must use the natural terrain and site conditions to hide the cache.

To submit, **email**: ParksInfo@waukeshacounty.gov, **fax**: 262-896-8071, or **mail**: Waukesha County Department of Parks and Land Use - Guest Services, 515 W Moreland Blvd. AC 230, Waukesha, WI 53188

- Caches will not be allowed within the normal field of play at recreational facilities (i.e. sand beach areas, playgrounds, or multi-purpose sports fields). We also do not allow cache placement in golf courses, campgrounds, or dog exercise areas.

- Caches may not be placed adjacent to birdhouses or bird nests. Federal law protects nesting birds and disturbing their nest is a federal crime.

- Caches will not be allowed on slopes greater than 5%. However, caches may be allowed on the area above the slope or the foot of the slope.

PHYSICAL CACHE CONTENT

- The following items are not permitted in a physical geocache:
    - Food of any kind
    - Pocket knives or weapons of any kind
    - Illegal items such as drugs
    - Materials restricted from minors, such as, but not limited to, tobacco and alcohol

- The maximum capacity of any single physical geocache must not exceed one gallon

- All cache containers must be clearly labeled in large lettering with the word "Geocache" on the outside of the container, **especially old ammo cans**.

- All caches must contain your permit number inside the container.

MONITORING THE CACHE

You are responsible for monitoring the cache regularly - four times per year recommended - and reporting any vandalism or deterioration of property. If you discover any illegal or hazardous materials in the cache, you must contact a Waukesha County Park System Administrative Office immediately at (262) 548-7801.

MOVING OR REMOVING A CACHE

- You will not need to fill out a second permit form to remove a cache, but you will need to email the Guest Services Office notifying Waukesha County Park System of the removal and provide the permit number if applicable.
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- Geocache permits are valid for ten years. If you wish to maintain your cache longer than ten years, you will need to re-apply for a new permit. If you do not re-apply for your permit, you will need to remove and archive your cache once the permit is expired.

- A cache may be required to be moved if the Waukesha County Park System staff deems that the cache area is being over-used, or that volunteer trails are developing, or the site is being developed.

- A cache will be removed if the Waukesha County Park System staff determines that there is an unacceptable hazard to humans, an unacceptable level of damage to the environment, or it is not in compliance with policy. The Guest Services Office shall make a reasonable effort to notify you of a removed cache. A removed physical cache will be stored for up to one week. If not claimed, it shall be disposed of as surplus property.

Application – Geocache Placement in Waukesha County Parks System

Waukesha County Department of Parks and Land Use

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ City: _____State:_____Zip:_____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Permit time-frame: Start Date: _____ End Date: _____ *If no end date, permit is valid for ten years*

Description of Cache- required:_____

Latitude and Longitude of Placement- required:_____

Property Name, Closet Street Intersection, or Municipality of Placement- required:

IN CONSIDERATION of Waukesha County (which, in this waiver, includes the County, all of its employees, and all of its boards, commissions, department and employees and members thereof) permitting me to place a geocache, I hereby agree to the following conditions:

1. Abide by all Waukesha County ordinances (see www.waukeshacounty.gov/countycode).
2. Conform to the "Leave No Trace" outdoor ethics guidelines, that is, take nothing but photographs, leave nothing but footprints. For more information on the principles of "Leave No Trace," visit www.lnt.org.
3. If you discover any illegal or hazardous materials in the cache, you must contact the Waukesha County Park System Administration office immediately at (262) 548-7790.
4. When placing a physical or virtual cache, you must have prior have the permit number from this application and afix the number to the cache itself in a permanent manner.
5. Geocaching is not allowed in State Natural Area (Muskego Park Hardwoods), or Sensitive Areas (those areas Waukesha County Park System staff determined cannot tolerate human traffic or disturbance which includes portions of the parks & greenways). A cache may be required to be moved if the Waukesha County Park System staff deems that the cache area is being over-used, or that volunteer trails are developing, or the site is being developed. It will also be removed if the staff determines that there is an unacceptable hazard to humans, an unacceptable level of damage to the environment, or is not in compliance with policy. Staff will make a reasonable effort to notify you of a removed cache. The removed cache will be stored for up to one week, and if not claimed, will be disposed of as surplus property.
6. Applications for caches in the core parks (Fox Brook, Fox River, Menomonee, Minooka, Mukwonago, Muskego, Naga-Waukee, and Nashotah) and the Retzer Nature Center will only be considered by management if placement of the cache is within the trail right-of-way (i.e. 5 feet of the trail on either side) of established trails.
7. Cache may not physically change the character of the site, including but not limited to, disturbing/excavating soil, cutting vegetation, moving logs, etc. You must use the natural terrain and site conditions to hide the cache.
8. Caches will not be allowed within the normal field of play at recreational facilities (i.e. sand beach areas, playgrounds, multi-purpose sports fields, etc.). We also do not allow cache placement in golf courses, campgrounds, or dog exercise areas.
9. Caches may not be placed adjacent to birdhouses or bird nests. Federal law protects nesting birds and disturbing their nest is a federal crime.
10. Caches will not be allowed on slopes greater than 5%. However, caches may be allowed on the area above the slope or at the foot of the slope.
11. The following items are not permitted in a physical geocache: food of any kind, pocket knives or weapons of any kind, illegal items such as drugs, materials restricted from minors, such as but not limited to, tobacco and alcohol.
12. The maximum capacity of any single physical geocache must not exceed one gallon.
13. All cache containers must be clearly labeled in large lettering with the word "Geocache" and the permit number on the outside of the container.

☐ By checking this box and submitting this form to Waukesha County, I certify that I agree to abide by the terms of this permit. I understand that this permit may be revoked at the discretion of Waukesha County staff if my actions are inconsistent with the terms of this permit.

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