

Geocaching Policy

The Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District (MWCD) permits geocaching in keeping with its mission to provide opportunities for safe recreational activities. The purpose of this policy is to establish management guidelines for geocaching, so as to minimize impact on the natural resources.

For purposes of this policy and the permit, we will be using the following definitions:

- **Cache:** A hidden container filled with a logbook, pen/pencil, and possibly swag.
- **Geocaching:** Geocaching is a game for GPS (Global Positional Systems) users. The basic idea is to have individuals/organizations place caches and share the locations of these caches on the Internet. GPS users can then use the location coordinates to find the caches. Once found, the user records their find on <http://www.geocaching.com> and in the cache logbook.
- **Multi-cache:** Multiple cache containers are located from information received from the previous container.
- **Earthcache:** A virtual cache means there is no cache container. It's the location that is the cache itself. Nothing is normally traded, except photos and experiences.

Procedure

1. Cache owners wishing to place a cache on MWCD property must obtain a Geocaching Placement Permit. The Recreation Department or designee is to review the permit and the cache for policy compliance, according to the following conditions:
 - All cache seekers and cache owners must abide by MWCD rules and regulations.
 - Caches may not be placed in any location that interferes with MWCD resource management objectives.
 - The MWCD retains the right to limit the number and density of caches on its lands.
 - There should be no earth disturbance or vegetative impact to any approved site.
 - The cache should not be readily discernible and should blend into the surrounding environment.
 - The cache may not be placed within riparian zones, wetlands, prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, exemplary natural communities, ecologically sensitive areas, unique geological features, dam structures, or unsafe areas.
 - Hidden objects must be on and reached via designated trails, green spaces, or waters.
 - The cache is not in an area that might cause potential danger to park visitors, i.e. climbing on cliffs/bluffs, trees, or located under water.
 - Text for the cache has been reviewed, and it is accurate and is family friendly.
 - Hidden objects may not be ammo cans, PVC pipes, or have the appearance of a dangerous object.
 - The hidden object must be clearly labeled with the following information clearly printed on it: "Official Geocache", owners name and contact information, date of placement and GC#.
 - Contents of hidden objects should be family-friendly. Tobacco, alcohol, drugs, firearms, dangerous items and adult items are prohibited.
 - Multi-caches are limited to five total sites, yet treated as one cache and require only one permit.
2. After the permit has been completed the Recreation Department or designee will approve or deny the permit.
3. Once the permit is issued, the cache may be placed. The cache owner is to monitor the site and maintain family friendly contents.
4. The MWCD will keep a map indicating the cache locations in the file with the permits.
5. The original copy of the completed permit is to remain on file with the MWCD Recreation Department. A copy of the permit, approved or denied, is to be given to the cache owner. If the permit is denied, the justification is to be recorded on the permit.
6. If it is determined that the location of an existing cache will place the public at risk, interferes with MWCD land management objectives, or is causing undo impact to resources, the MWCD will notify geocache owner in order to have the cache removed or relocated. All information regarding the risk is to be recorded on the original permit. If the owner relocates the cache, a new permit is to be generated.
7. If at any time the terms of a permit are violated, the MWCD has the authority to void the permit, remove the cache from its location, and attempt to notify the owner or indicate on www.geocaching.com that the cache has been removed. Justification for these actions is to be recorded on the permit.
8. If a non-permitted cache is discovered, the MWCD personnel are to remove the cache, retain it for 30 days and, if possible attempt to notify the owner of their actions. If contact is not made, the cache is to be considered abandoned property. The property is to be retained for 6 months in the event the owner comes to claim it at a later date.



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Geocache Placement Permit

Owner Name _____ Cache Handle _____
 Address _____
 Phone _____ E-mail _____

Geocache Information

Reservoir _____ Trail(s) _____
 Name of Geocache _____
 Coordinates: Latitude _____ Longitude _____ (list multi-cache locations on additional sheets)
 Geocache to be listed on (check all that apply) _____ www.geocaching.com _____ Other:

**Please attach the text that will be displayed on geocaching.com and other websites.

Type of Cache: _____ Traditional _____ Multi-cache (5 max – list each location information on additional sheet)
 _____ Mystery _____ Letterbox _____ Event _____ Other:

Detailed description of container, dimensions, and contents: _____

Physical description of hide area and style of hide: _____

Parking area closest to the geocache location: _____

Read and initial the following:

_____ I understand that caches not in compliance with the terms of this permit will be removed from the property and this permit voided for failure to comply.

_____ I understand that I am to monitor this cache and maintain it to be family friendly.

_____ I hereby assume all risks of accident or injury and release the MWCD from all liability for personal injury or damage of any kind sustained in association with the placement or maintenance of a geocache on MWCD property.

I have read and understand the terms of this permit and the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District Geocaching Policy, and agree to comply accordingly. I will retain a copy of this permit for my records.

 Signature of Applicant Date

OFFICE USE ONLY		
Conservation _____	Park/Marina Manager (if applicable) _____	
Approved _____	Denied _____	Notes: _____
Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District Representative	Date Received	Date Approved/Denied
This permit was cancelled as of _____ by _____		
for reason of _____		