



Alabama State Parks Geocaching Policy

REVISED 052006

Geocaching, and all other similar activities whether organized or unorganized which involve “hiding” items, usually containers holding various “treasures”, log books, or virtual locations and then providing specific Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) coordinates for each “cache” must be pre-approved by the Park Manager or designated representative which includes the completion of a no-cost Geocaching placement permit. Caches placed prior to the effective date of this policy are considered “grandfathered”, but park managers, at their discretion, may require that the permits are subsequently obtained.

Each Park Manager must determine the maximum number of caches his/her park can sustain.

The purpose for establishing this policy is to protect the resources of Alabama State Parks and to sustain the sport of Geocaching. Alabama State Parks are Geocache Friendly.

Procedures concerning geocaching in Alabama State Parks are as follows:

I. CACHE PERMITS

- a. Placement of a cache on an Alabama State Park or Alabama State Park managed property must be pre-approved by the Park Manager or designated representative and secured with a permit. Any placement of a cache on an Alabama State Park is unauthorized and is subject to removal from its location unless it complies with this policy.
- b. The person applying for a permit must provide valid contact information such as: address, telephone number, email address, (driver’s license number), and the website address on which the cache will be posted (Geocaching.com, Navicache.com, etc...).
- c. The exact location of the cache must be pre-approved by the Park Manager or designated representative, whose main concern will be public safety and the prevention of undesirable impacts to natural, historical, and cultural resources.
- d. The exact cache location, including GPS coordinates, must be stated on the permit.
- e. If a permit holder wants to change the location of the cache, a new permit must be issued and the original permit cancelled.
- f. The permit holder is responsible for website posting, preventative and normal maintenance of the cache, and for removing the cache location from all websites and any information sources if the cache is ever lost, vandalized or abandoned.
- g. If the permit holder fails to maintain the cache in working order and does not remove the cache, it will be removed by park staff and held for ten (10) days, after which staff will dispose of the cache. Confiscation and disposal by park staff will be recorded in a minor incident report.
- h. If it is determined that a cache has been the cause of adverse environmental damage, the permit may be cancelled and the cache removed and handled as in “g” above.

II. CACHE CONTAINERS AND CONTENTS

- a. Cache containers must be non-breakable, have some form of latch or other closing mechanism to prohibit content exposure to wildlife, and must be approved by the Park Manager or designee.
- b. Caches may not contain inappropriate or dangerous items. Such items include, but are not limited to, food, medications, personal/hygiene products, pornography, or weapons of any type, etc.
- c. All caches are subject to random inspection by Park Manager or designee. Park staff has the authority to immediately remove any cache item deemed unacceptable or that is in violation of this policy, and which may cause the cache permit to be revoked and the cache to be removed.

II. CACHE LOCATIONS:

- a. The location of a cache must be pre-approved by the Park Manager or designee.
- b. Caches may not be placed in locations that may lead to the creation of spur trails.
- c. Caches may not be buried.
- d. Caches may not be placed in dangerous, inappropriate, or protected areas and habitats, on cliffs, or underground. (Digging devices or metal detectors may not be used in cache searches.)
- e. Cache locations and cache searches must not be in violation of any Alabama Law or Alabama State Park rule or regulation.

III. COMPLIANCE

- a. Failure to comply with this policy directive will result in the revocation of effective geocaching permits and/or removal of the cache. Continued failure to comply with these guidelines will prevent the issuance of any further geocaching permits to the non-compliant group or individual.
- b. If geocaching or geocaching-type activities as a whole are found to have a negative impact on park resources or if safety becomes an issue in cache searches, the Park Manager may ban caching-type activities from certain areas or from the entire park or property.