



Geocaching

Policy Statement

The North Country Trail Association recognizes that the sport of geocaching offers a unique and social approach to exploring the outdoors that may appeal to a growing segment of trail users. At the same time, the Association also recognizes the potential drawbacks of practicing this sport, which may include resource degradation, infringement of property rights, and/or conflicts with “tread lightly” trail use ethics. Therefore, to minimize these concerns, the Association endorses geocaching and similar activities along the North Country National Scenic Trail only under the following conditions:

1. Where written permission has been obtained in advance from the appropriate land manager or land owner, providing a specific timeframe and location for the activity, and
2. Where proper care is taken to avoid damage caused by digging or trampling to vegetation, archeological evidence, trail tread or other fragile resources in the area.

Background

Geocaching is an exploration activity for GPS users. Individuals and organizations set up caches all over the world and share the locations of these caches on the internet. GPS users can then use the location coordinates to find the caches. Once found, a cache may provide the visitor with a wide variety of rewards. Visitors are expected to leave something in exchange for whatever they may take from the cache. All caches also generally contain a logbook. According to the website geocaching.com, “Where you place a cache is up to you.”

Rationale

This policy was enacted because a growing number of members were expressing interest in geocaching, and the NCTA needed an official statement of policy to help minimize or eliminate potential damage to the trail and surrounding resources.