



## PARKS GEOCACHING POLICY

**Effective:**  
September 27, 2010

**Replaces:** N/A  
**Next Review Date:** 3 years from new effective date

**Approved:**

Metro Vancouver Regional Parks Manager

### PURPOSE

To provide direction for the management of geocaching as a recreational activity in Metro Vancouver (MV) Regional Parks.

### DEFINITION

Geocaching is a game where participants hide and seek physical "treasure." A typical geocache contains items to trade, a log book and a pen or pencil placed inside a waterproof container. A geocacher can place a cache anywhere in the world, pinpoint its location using GPS technology and then share the cache's existence and location online. Anyone with a GPS device can then try to locate the cache. Variations can include location-less, virtual or webcam caches that do not involve typical physical "treasure."

### POLICY

Geocaching and its variations are permitted, where appropriate, in MV Regional Parks. Geocaching activities must be conducted in such a manner that the environment in which they occur is not unduly impacted. Participants must adhere to all related policies, regulations, and natural resource management program goals and strategies.

### APPLICATION

This policy applies to all MV Regional parks and greenways. Geocaching is prohibited in regional reserves, ecological conservancy areas, areas not open to the public or any other area specifically identified by the Manager, Regional Parks.

### GEOCACHE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Cache Identification and Contents:** All caches must be marked "Geocache" on the outside of the container and the owner's name and contact information must be inside of the cache. Caches may not contain food items or any other materials that may attract wildlife.  
  
Any caches without proper identification and owner information or any caches that may be deemed inappropriate will be removed by MV Regional Parks staff.
2. **Placement of Caches:**
  - a. Caches must not be placed in areas that may put participants or other visitors at increased risk of injury (e.g. cliffs, unstable ground, in close proximity to unstable trees, areas subject to seasonal or flash flooding or traditional bear feeding areas).

- b. Cache placement must not result in the disturbance of soils, vegetation, wildlife, wildlife structures (dens, wildlife trees, nesting areas) or natural, sensitive or cultural heritage sites and features.
- c. Caches must not be located within or in close proximity to traditional habitat areas that are critical to wildlife species conservation (e.g. heronries, established raptor nests, nesting sites for birds, reptiles etc.)
- d. Caches are to be placed in a manner that reduces searching impacts.
- e. Caches must be accessible from established trails, approved travel routes (including remote backcountry areas that allow travel in areas without established trails) or other public areas (e.g. picnic areas.)

MV Regional Parks retains the right to remove any cache deemed to be located in an inappropriate location or any cache that, by concentrating park use, results in unintended and unacceptable damage to park resources. Where practical, MV Regional Parks staff will attempt to notify the cache owner.

3. **Cache Lifespan:** Caches placed in MV Regional Parks must not be considered "permanent" by the cache owner. Caches must be removed once the cache is no longer being actively sought or, within 3 years, whichever is sooner.
4. **Permits Not Required:** Permits or prior authorization are not required providing the cache placement is consistent with the direction of this policy.
5. **Geocaching Events:** Organized geocaching events may be permitted in a MV Regional Park site in accordance with the Park Fees and Charges Bylaw (Number 1062, 2007) and the provisions contained within Fee Schedule K of the bylaw. A park permit is not required and there is no fee for events that are non-commercial in nature, include fewer than fifty individuals and have been granted verbal approval by the MV Park Operations Supervisor with responsibility for the site.
6. **Related Recreation and Park Management Activities:** Geocaching or cache placement may not occur anywhere that will interfere with other approved recreational activities or where it may be contrary to park management objectives.

## REFERENCES

The British Columbia Geocaching Association (BCGA) website:  
<http://www.bcgeocaching.com>