

Five Rivers MetroParks GeoCaching Policy

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SECTION I	BRIEF OVERVIEW
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Permits

- You must apply for a permit to place a GeoCache in Five Rivers MetroParks, apply online at www.metro parks.org/geocache or call (937) 277-4374
- Permitted GeoCaches must be registered on www.geocaching.com
- Permitted GeoCaches must be placed and maintained per guidelines.
- Permits issued between January and August, expire at the end of the calendar year in which the permit was issued. Permits issued between September and December expires at the end of the following calendar year.
- When demand for permits is high, no person can have more than 3 active permits at any one time.

Location Limitations

- With few exceptions, caches can be placed within 15 feet of an official park hiking trail once applied for and a permit is issued.
- In addition to unique park by park restrictions, off limits areas have been established and no caches may be placed in; developed areas, any planted gardens, shelters, buildings, horse trails, mountain bike trails, bridges, or more than 15 feet off an official park hiking trail.
- As GeoCaching has increased in popularity, MetroParks has established a maximum number of GeoCaches allotted per MetroPark (see below). Your first park of choice may be full and you will be placed on the waitlist for that park or have the opportunity to apply for a permit at another park.

[Carrying capacity formula generally based on 1 cache per trail mile]

MetroPark Facility	Trail	Cache	Park Specifications for off-limit areas
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	Mileage/ Acreage	Allotment	
Aullwood MetroPark	0 miles/ 31 acres	No Physical Caches	Earth Caches Only
Carriage Hill MetroPark	5.67 miles/ 758 acres	6	Not at the Farm or Developed areas
Cox Arboretum MetroPark	3.07 miles/ 132 acres	3	Natural habitat areas only (trail on back side) not in gardens or developed areas
Deeds Point MetroPark	0 miles	1	Earth Cache Only
Eastwood MetroPark	2.81 miles/ 184 acres	3	Water Dept. Equipment/Developed Areas
Englewood MetroPark	9.5 miles/ 1538 acres	10	Not near shelters, none in North Park (near Pumpkin Ash area) or developed areas; 1 multi-cache allowed
Germantown MetroPark	17.66 miles/ 1528 acres	12	None on horse trails, dam, or developed areas
Hills and Dales MetroPark	1.5 miles/ 65 acres	2	None on Monument, Tower, Dogwood Camp, Shelters, or Developed Areas
Huffman MetroPark	2.29 miles/ 152 acres	2	None in Developed Areas/MoMBA off-limits
Island MetroPark	0 miles/ 33 acres	1	Not South of Bandshell
Possum Creek MetroPark	7.1 miles/ 477 acres	7	Not on the Farm, Pastures, horse trails or Developed Areas
RiverScape	0 miles	1	Earth Cache Only
SugarCreek MetroPark	6.7 miles/ 558 acres	7	Not on horse trails or developed areas
Sunrise MetroPark	0 miles	1	
Taylorsville MetroPark	8.39 miles/ 883 acres	8	Not on dam, developed areas, Sunderland falls
Twin Creek MetroPark	10.23 miles/ 966 acres	10	Not in developed areas or on Horse Trails
Wesleyan/Adventure Central MetroPark	1.19 miles/ 50 acres	1	Not in developed areas
Wegerzyn MetroPark	1.1 mile/ 60 acres	1	None in gardens, swamp trail. developed areas
National City Second Street Market	0 miles	1	Not in particular vendor booths

SECTION II APPLICATION PROCESS

Application Process

1. Identify the MetroParks Facility that you would like to place a cache.
2. If desired, call the Outdoor Recreation Department at (937) 277-4374 or e-mail outdoors@metroparks.org to inquire about parks with availability or length of waitlist prior to investing time in scouting potential cache location.
 - a. This is only a service and MetroParks will not hold a spot prior to receiving formal application.
3. Review GeoCache park maps online for permitted areas or e-mail outdoors@metroparks.org to receive a digital map.
4. Apply for permit by filling out the online form at www.metroparks.org/geocache or by calling the Outdoor Recreation Department at (937) 277-4374 between 9am-4pm M-F.

Application

<http://www.surveymethods.com/EndUser.aspx?8EAAC6DB8DCCD2D9>

5. You will be asked to provide;
 - a. Facility Name
 - b. Proposed cache GPS Coordinates
 - c. Type of Cache
 - d. Trail Color
 - e. What intersection numbers the proposed cache location is between (shown on map and on trail markers)
 - f. The intersection number closest to proposed cache location (shown on map and on trail markers)
 - g. Detailed description of proposed cache location
 - h. Your geocaching.com username and other contact information
6. Submit Applications anytime during the year;
 - o Permits that are set to expire at the end of the current calendar year must reapply by Nov. 30th for a chance to maintain their cache without interruption.
 - o If there is no availability, you will not receive a new permit, you will be asked to remove your cache, and will be placed at the end of the waitlist.
 - o If no waitlist exists for that park, you will receive a new permit and can maintain your cache in the same location without interruption.
7. MetroParks has the discretion to limit the number of permits one person may hold at any one time, as a general guideline you will be limited to 3 active permits at any one time.

Once Application Is Received

8. Application will be received online or over the phone;
 - a. If there is missing information, MetroParks will contact you.

- b. If all information required is provided, MetroParks will allow up to 14 days to process application and either;
 - i. Approve
 - ii. Request more information
 - iii. Reject
 - iv. Place on waitlist
 - 1. Approval or rejection for waitlisted application is not determined until availability opens for that park and application becomes active.
 - 2. Due to the popularity of GeoCaching, the volume of applications dictates that MetroParks only actively manage an application when availability to place that cache exists.
 - i.e. A waitlisted application submitted in March may be in an off limits area and have other concerns. However, MetroParks may not immediately determine this problem and communicate to the applicant until availability opens up several months later at which time that application becomes active and begins its route through the approval process.
 - v. MetroParks will contact you within 14 days regardless of approval, requesting more information, rejecting, or placing on the waitlist.
- Upon receipt of application, Outdoor Recreation call center staff will send a confirmation e-mail acknowledging receipt. Either;
 - i. “We have all the information we need, we will contact you within 14 days to update you on the status of you application”
 - ii. “We received your application but some information may be incomplete, please call 277-4374 between 9am and 4pm to update your application.”
 - iii. Waitlist letter with number of where applicant stand noting that any issues with the cache location may not be determined until the application becomes active.

SECTION III	APPLICATION APPROVED
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1. Once approved, you will receive a phone call from Five Rivers MetroParks to orient you to our GeoCaching process that includes a signed agreement, maintenance requirements, etc..
 - a. If approved between January and August your permit is good through December 31 of issue year. If your permit is issued in September to December your permit is good through the end of the following calendar year. If you desire to maintain your cache for another year, you must

reapply by Nov 30th of the year your cache will expire. **If a waitlist exists for that park you will not receive a new permit, you will be asked to remove your cache, and will be placed at the end of the waitlist.**

- b. A copy of the permit and an official MetroParks GeoCache sticker with permit number will be mailed to you which must be placed on the cache.
- c. All information must be completed on the application. If any contact information or other pertinent information should change you must inform MetroParks as soon as possible.

SECTION IV	PLACEMENT RULES
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- 1. You will receive a verbal Cache Orientation by the Outdoor Recreation Department Call Center Staff over the phone or in person.

- a. Location Rules**

- i. Can NOT be placed in: sensitive areas, garden areas, developed areas, shelters, buildings, horse trails, bridges or unsafe terrain
- ii. Must be in a safe environment, i.e. not hanging over water, backs of street signs, or guard rails
- iii. Do not place in the flood plane (no anchoring)
- iv. Do not place within train track right of way
- v. Must be placed within 15 feet of an official MetroParks hiking trail
- vi. No Digging
- vii. Must be located within 3 feet of the ground or on the ground
- viii. All coordinates must be to the exact location of placed Cache (if they change slightly between scouting your preferred site and placement you must update Five Rivers MetroParks within 48 hours)
- ix. Caches can be removed at any time at the choice of the permit holder with notification to Five Rivers MetroParks Outdoor Recreation Department within 48 hours.
- x. Permit holder must maintain all caches and follow maintenance regulation policy.

- b. Container Regulations**

- i. Must be a MetroParks approved container with official MetroParks GeoCaching Sticker placed on the container with all the information filled in the sticker with a permanent marker.
- ii. Containers used cannot be metal or resemble anything that might cause public alarm (NO AMMO CANS PERMITTED).
- iii. The container must be smaller than 10"x5"x6" or equivalent cubic inches and bigger than a standard 12oz soda can.

c. Registration

- i. You must register your cache at www.geocaching.com for it to be a valid cache.
- ii. Cache owners must state in their web description of the cache location that participants must stay on designated trails and follow all park rules.
- iii. Cache owners must include (Five Rivers MetroParks) in their cache name
 1. i.e. Orange Trail Cache (Five Rivers MetroParks)
- iv. Cache owners may also be asked to include MetroParks logo or other related information in their cache description.

SECTION V	MAINTENANCE AND INSPECTION
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- a. Inspection/Maintenance Plans are loaded into the online form and filed on the cache Sharepoint site for reference.
 - i. Checklist of tasks for each site visit
- b. Online Maintenance Form

Geocache Maintenance Form

<http://www.surveymethods.com/EndUser.aspx?D0F49886D99A8680>

d. Maintenance Regulations

- i. Once every four months (3 times per year) or after 4 Did Not Finds (DNF's) location checks by permit holder must be reported on MetroParks online maintenance check form.
- ii. Bi-Annual location check by MetroParks (Volunteers) may also take place.
- iii. If trails form to cache, location must be moved.
 1. New location must be in the same vicinity as original approved location and reported to MetroParks for review.

e. Removing and Voiding Caches

- i. Caches should be maintained as a family friendly cache. Caches should contain no food, smellables, or other wildlife attractants, firearms, drugs, alcohol, or any adult items. Inappropriate caches will be removed by park personnel.
- ii. Five Rivers MetroParks reserves the right to remove the cache at anytime if it is felt that there are adverse effects to the surrounding area or safety concerns. Cache owners will be notified of the removal within 48 hours.
- iii. To maintain a cache for another year, if it expires at the end of the current calendar year, you must apply for renewal by

November 30th of the issue year. If not, you must remove it by December 31st of that year.

1. If there is no availability you will not receive a new permit and will be placed at the end of the waitlist.
 2. If no waitlist exists for that park, you will receive a new permit and can maintain your cache in the same location without interruption.
- iv. Once you have removed the cache, your sticker must have the word **VOID** with the date written across it and either mailed back to MetroParks or a picture sent to us that it has been voided with the date.

SECTION VI	VOLUNTEER SUPPORT
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- a. Adopt-A-Park Program
 - i. Volunteers will provide bi-monthly checks on each cache.
 1. This volunteer will confirm each cache is;
 - a. Family friendly
 - b. Will not alarm the public (no ammo cans, etc.)
 - c. Sticker placement and not expired
 - d. No social trails are developing

SECTION VII	EVENTS
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- f. GeoCache events can be submitted through the Five Rivers MetroParks special event application process. All event caches will be considered temporary caches and must be removed at the end of the event.
- g. Contact Park Services Administrative Coordinator Shane Conley at (937) 277-4331 or shane.conley@metroparks.org to receive an event application or for any other questions regarding special events.
- h. Events
 1. All requests will be funneled to Park Services for processing through special event application.