

## Catawba Lands Conservancy Geocache Policy and Guidelines

**Background:** Geocaching is a passive recreation activity where participants use GPS-enabled devices to locate containers, called caches. The caches are placed by other participants who record their location, description, and other details at [www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com). Each cache is owned and maintained by the person who placed the cache. Groundspeak Inc. is the organization that oversees activity on the geocache website. Groundspeak Inc. has certain guidelines that must be met to allow a cache to be listed on their website ([www.geocaching.com/about/guidelines.aspx](http://www.geocaching.com/about/guidelines.aspx)).

A cache can range in size from 'micro' (35mm film canisters) to 'large' (Coolers). Each cache includes a log-book where individuals can record information indicating they found the cache. Larger caches can accommodate the placement of trinkets or small toys which can be swapped out each time a new person finds the cache. It is the cache owner's responsibility to monitor the cache, ensure it is being used properly, and maintain its listing on the geocache website.

Part of Catawba Lands Conservancy's (CLC) mission is "connecting lives to nature." As such, CLC supports the efforts of the Geocaching program and welcomes cachers to appropriate properties and trails. However, the location of caches cannot impact sensitive areas or habitats on our conserved properties. The purpose of this policy is to balance the needs of the geocache community with CLCs efforts to conserve sensitive natural areas.

**Policy:** CLC is permitted to place geocaches on any properties they own fee-simple or hold an easement on. Caches placed by CLC will be listed under the 'CatawbaLands' account on the geocaching website.

CLC may, but is not required to, allow individuals from the general public to place geocaches on public access properties owned by CLC 'in fee'. The number and location of geocaches permitted on any property is at the discretion of CLC. Geocaches must obey all rules established by Groundspeak and abide by the following guidelines:

- A. Individuals must get prior approval before placing a cache by submitting a completed permit form (See Attached).
- B. The container must be clearly label as a 'Geocache'.
- C. The geocache must either be small or regular sized, according to Groundspeak categories.
- D. The geocache listing and container must include information indicating that the property and trail are owned and managed by Catawba Lands Conservancy. A link to our website ([www.catawbalands.org](http://www.catawbalands.org)) would also be appropriate and appreciated.
- E. Geocaches cannot be placed more than 10-feet from a trail or trailhead.
- F. Geocaches should not be buried, be attached to other objects, or require the removal of vegetation.
- G. Items placed inside caches should reflect the family friendly and outdoor nature of Geocaching. Offensive, illegal, dangerous, or food-based items are not allowed inside any cache.
- H. Caches cannot promote commercial, political, or religious points of view.

The completed permit can be sent to Sean Bloom via email ([sean@catawbalands.org](mailto:sean@catawbalands.org)) or to the following address:

Catawba Lands Conservancy  
Attn: Sean Bloom  
105 West Morehead Street  
Charlotte, NC 28202

CLC will respond within 10-days once a complete geocache application is received.

**Maintenance:** It is the responsibility of the cache owner to maintain and monitor a cache. The frequency of maintenance will be left to the cache owner. However, cache owners should perform maintenance on a cache if a “Did Not Find” is logged four consecutive times. In addition, maintenance should occur often enough to ensure items left in the cache conform to CLC and Groundspeak guidelines.

CLC can visit and inspect caches to ensure they meet CLC and Groundspeak guidelines. However, it will not be CLC’s responsibility to maintain caches or monitor their contents. The cache owner is ultimately responsible for all aspects of a cache.

**Removal:** CLC retains the right and discretion to remove a cache itself or request a geocache be removed at any time or for any reason. CLC may first attempt to contact the cache owner and request they remove a cache within one week. After one week, CLC will confiscate the geocache and its contents. CLC always reserves the right to remove caches from CLC owned properties or trails without prior notice to the cache owner.

Reasons for removal of a cache include, but are not limited to:

- Unpermitted geocache
- Inappropriate contents inside a geocache
- Location of geocache does not meet the guidelines of CLC and/or Groundspeak
- Presence of the geocache is found to pose an unreasonable risk to human health or the environment. This may include unsafe terrain, identification of protected or vulnerable species, or negative impacts to the surrounding environment.

Approved by Land Stewardship Committee on February 5, 2014

# Application to Place Geocache



## CONTACT INFORMATION

*Official Use*

Preserve Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Trail Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved (Initial/ Date): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Geocache User Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## GEOCACHE INFORMATION

Geocache Name: \_\_\_\_\_

GPS Coordinates: Latitude: \_\_\_\_\_ N Longitude: \_\_\_\_\_ W

Brief Description of Container: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that by placing a Geocache on property owned and maintained by the Catawba Lands Conservancy that I am accepting responsibility for the maintenance and contents of the cache.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that Catawba Lands Conservancy can remove my cache and its contents at any time without notice.

\_\_\_\_\_ I verify that the placement of this cache will meet the guidelines and policies of the Catawba Lands Conservancy and Groundspeak Inc.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby covenant and agree to indemnify and save harmless Catawba Lands Conservancy, the Carolina Thread Trail, their officers, employees, volunteers, and agents from any and all claims and demands for all loss, injury, death or damages that may result from activities relating to this cache.

Permit Holder: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CLC Representative: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

