

December 9, 2004

Wesley Massey
Program Manager – Education & Outreach
Geological Society of America
3300 Penrose Place
Boulder, CO 80301

Dear Wesley,

I am writing to express support for the Geological Society of America's proposal to develop the Earthcache project. We feel that education-based projects of this nature have significant potential to get more individuals in the out of doors while at the same time providing them with useful information about the natural world. Additionally, we feel it is particularly important for Leave No Trace information to be readily available to earthcachers because of the overwhelming number of people that will likely get involved.

Leave No Trace is not about rules and regulations. It's an education program that teaches outdoor enthusiasts how to protect the places they love. The principles of Leave No Trace originated out of a need to protect backcountry and wilderness areas from human-caused recreational impacts. However, the application of Leave No Trace extends far beyond these areas. The Leave No Trace program is based on the following seven principles:

Plan Ahead and Prepare
Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
Dispose of Waste Properly
Leave What You Find
Minimize Campfire Impacts
Respect Wildlife
Be Considerate of Other Visitors

The Leave No Trace program is managed by the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics (the Center), based in Boulder, Colorado. The mission of the Center is to promote and inspire responsible outdoor recreation through education, research and partnerships. The Center is the headquarters for the national education and training program. Additionally, the Center unites land management agencies, manufacturers, outdoor retailers, media, conservation groups, recreation groups, organizations, clubs, outdoor educators and individuals who share a commitment to maintaining, preserving and protecting our lands.

The Center is committed to educating all non-motorized recreational users, and the Earthcache project could potentially expose a new and very large audience to our message. We fully support you proposal and hope to see the project come to fruition.

Sincerely,

Ben Lawhon
Education Director
Leave No Trace
Center for Outdoor Ethics

