



Forest Service - Rocky Mountain Region
Geocaching Talking Points
August 23, 2006

1. Geocaching is a great way to teach people how to use a GPS unit with map (and compass back-up) to find their way in woods (like a treasure hunt). The new technology allows "geocachers" to place a geocache and have others find it by following coordinates.
2. Geocaching provides an opportunity to hone orienteering skills, provides the opportunity to get outdoors, and it can be a wholesome family activity. It can also be conducted with minimal impact to the environment when conscientious land use ethics are followed.
3. The Forest Service promotes the concept of "Cache In. Trash Out" that is encouraged on the geocaching website (<http://geocaching.com>).
4. The Forest Service discourages geocaching in congressionally designated wilderness or other areas of sensitive areas such as cultural sites.
5. Concerns are (1) directing people to specific areas without any trail infrastructure causing an increase in social trailing, (2) creating "magnet" spots where additional trampling leave potential ground disturbance, scarring, noxious weeds invasion and vegetation loss. Geocaching are essentially private property left on public land.
6. The Forest Service encourages "virtual" caches where no private property is left behind and the location has been approved by land managers. Virtual caches can be located away from sensitive natural and cultural sites and outside of congressionally designated wilderness.
7. Geocachers are asked to contact their local National Forest or District Office to request permission and suggestions of where to place a virtual geocache site.
8. For additional information go to www.LNT.org or www.geocaching.com to learn more about responsible use of public lands.