An Introduction to Geocaching

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What is Geocaching?

"*Geocaching is a sport where you use a multi billion dollar satellite system to locate Rubbermaid containers in the middle of the woods.*"

- *Anonymous*

No, really, what is Geocaching?

► Geocaching is a family oriented activity where participants, using GPS technology and information off the Internet, locate caches in city parks, forests, management areas, town, cities, etc. and log their experiences online
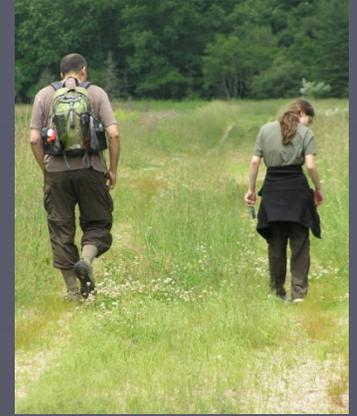
Some More Details

Selective Availability & Geocaching

► Prior to May 2000, civilian GPS signal included a random error (Selective Availability)

- Civilian accuracy >30m

► Pres. Clinton ordered SA to be turned off at 0000, 1 May 2000

- Any risk is offset by the benefits
- Resulted in accuracy < 10m
- Benefit sportsmen, FAA, etc
- 3 May 2000 - Dave Ulmer placed first "cache"
- Now over 1,500,000 caches worldwide!

The Basics

- ► The Hide
  - A player hides a container with a log book, and possibly "trade goodies" (swag) and records the coordinates
  - Posts a listing at one of the caching websites with the coordinates and any other pertinent information
- ► The Find
  - Once listed, cachers review the information on the website and enter the coordinates into their receiver or their smart phone
  - The Hunt Begins!
  - When found, the log is signed, trades made (optional) and cache returned to its hiding spot
  - Back home, a log is entered online

The Who's & Why's

► Who?
- There is no "typical" cacher
- Families, retirees, hikers, engineers, teachers, girl & boy scouts, librarians, doctors, truckers…the list is endless
- The game is getting more accessible with smartphones, and more "in town" hides

► Why?
- There are as many answers as there are cachers
- Exercise, family together time, thrill of the hunt, exploring new places, fun with friends, photography…

GEOCACHING

Hello, **BBWolf+3Pigs** (Sign Out)
2,347
Premium Member

Learn ▾ Your Profile ▾ Your Stuff ▾ Play ▾ Community ▾ Shop ▾ Partnering ▾ Videos   GCxxxx

GEOCACHING is a real-world outdoor treasure hunting game. Players try to locate hidden containers, called geocaches, using GPS-enabled devices and then share their experiences online. (Guide to the Game)

WATCH
Geocaching in 2 Minutes

Geocaching Applications

Learn about the environmental initiative **Cache In Trash Out.**

Attend the **GPS Adventures Maze** in Toronto, Canada.

Geocaching Premium
Spend less time planning and more time playing!

Shop Geocaching Merchandise

Give the Gift of **Premium Membership**

1 Browse
Search for interesting geocaches:

N 41° 35.838 W 071° 15.126

⊕ Find My Location

There are 1,599,038 active geocaches and over 5 million geocachers worldwide.

2 Discover
Explore the world as you search for the cache using a GPS device or smartphone. Find the cache, sign the logbook and see what others have left behind. (Cache Examples)

3 Share
Share your experience with other treasure seekers.

Recent Activity
In the last 30 days, there have been 3,913,299 new logs submitted

Quebec, Canada
slinky615 Found it
La Clôture
8 minutes ago

Michigan, United States
TeamFritz Found it
chicago dr series #7 Welco...
8 minutes ago

Niedersachsen, Germany
tarpan89 Found it
Kleinenkneter Steine
8 minutes ago

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Resources
Tools and Downloads
API Program
Find a Benchmark

Cache Types

Traditional

Multi

Letterbox Hybrid

Wherigo

Puzzle

Event

CITO

Mega-event

Sizes

► Micro
- Film canister
- Hide-a-key
- Pill Bottle
- "Nanos"

► Small
- Small rubbermaid (~cup size)

► Regular
- Rubbermaid, lock & lock, ammo can

► Large
- 5 gallon bucket
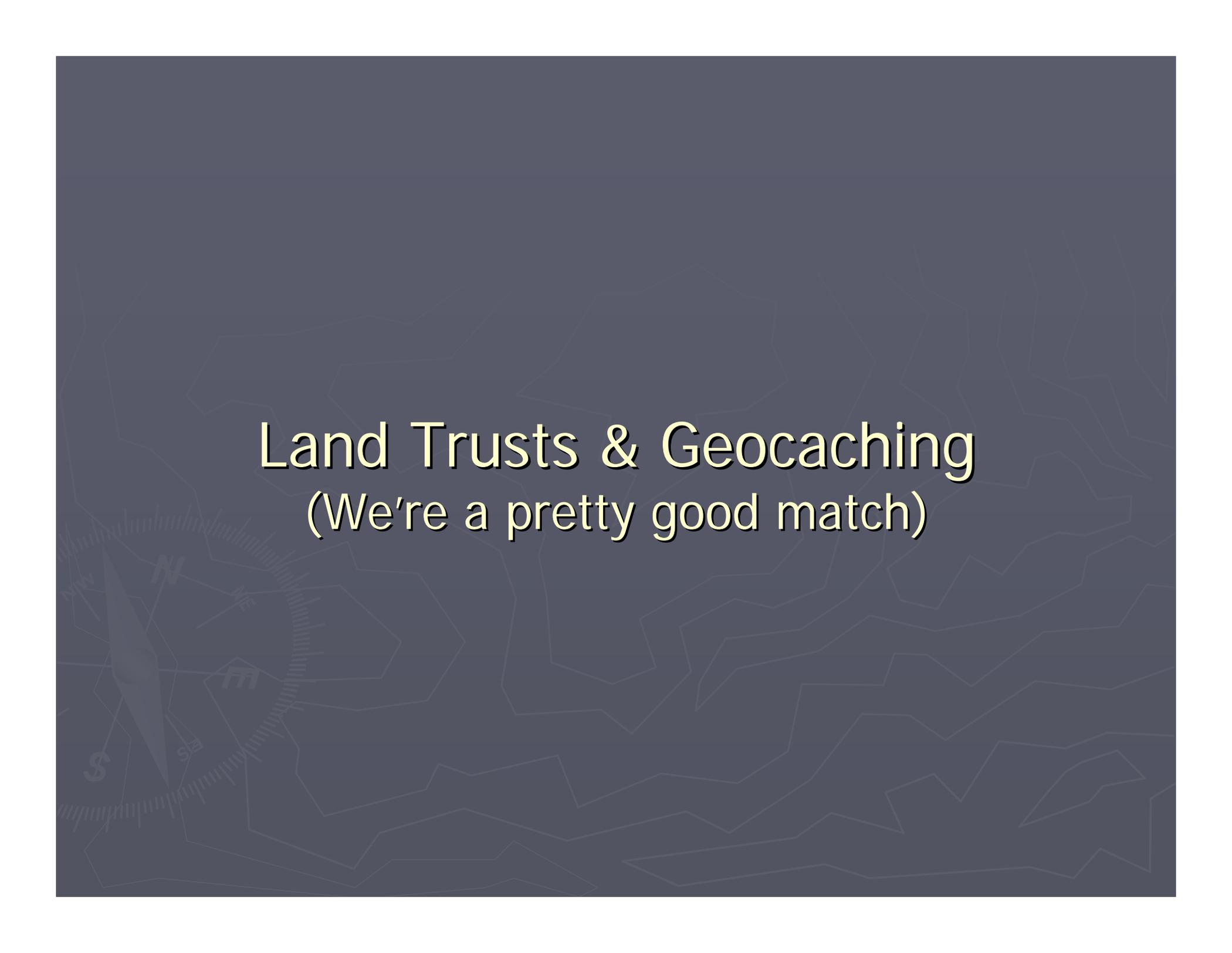
Land Trusts & Geocaching
(We're a pretty good match)

Your Properties and Geocaching

- ► We like to explore new places
  - ▪ Your property is probably one of those places
- ► We like to bring others to cool places we've found
  - ▪ We love what we found, and want to share
- ► Geocaching and related activities can help showcase your properties
- ► "If you hide it, they will come"
  - ▪ There may caches on your properties already

Promoting Your Property

► Land Trusts, Park Systems, etc. are embracing geocaching as a means to attract new visitors
  ▪ 1.5M Caches & 5M Cachers worldwide!
  ▪ A lot of properties and parks are unknown

► Hide a cache
  ▪ Provide a nice write-up of the property and include links to your policy
  ▪ Invite others to hide caches (in accordance with your policy)

► Events
  ▪ Picnics and Meet & Greets
  ▪ Intro to Caching Course
  ▪ Nature Walk with a new cache as the finale
  ▪ CITO – Cache In Trash Out

► Give-aways
  ▪ Geocoins & Pathtags
  ▪ NY Great Lakes Seaway
  ▪ Allegheny Geo Trail

Why Bother?

► Geocaching is another way to attract new people to your properties

- Some geocachers may not be your "typical" visitors

► Raise awareness about your properties and your work

► New Members & Volunteers

- Trail clearing and CITO

Responsible Geocaching
(Yes, we have "rules")
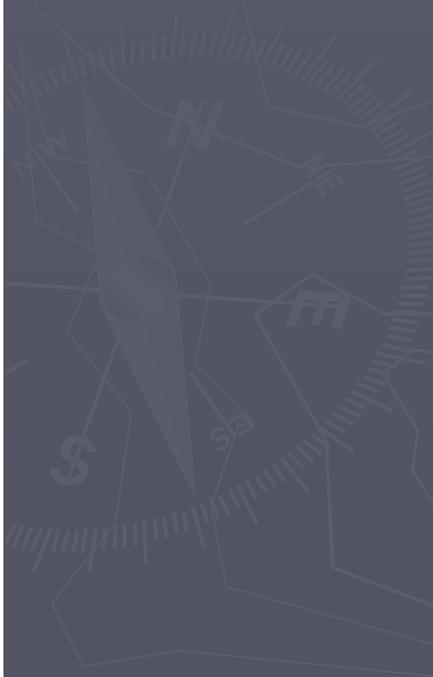
Geocaching.com Listing Guidelines
(Some key points)

► Geocaching.com provides listing specific guidelines

► Listings reviewed prior to publication

► No burying!

► Adequate permission (Private/Public spaces)
- "Frisbee Rule"

► No elementary schools

► No Federal properties (unless explicit manager permission)

► No military bases or potential terror targets

► "Saturation Rule" – 528' offset between caches

► Self-policing

Complete Guidelines at Geocaching.com

Property Policies

► Adopt consistent policies for geocaching
  - We'll get frustrated if every property has a different policy
  - We want to bring people to your properties
  - Can be more specific than geocaching.com guidelines

► Provide a POC (email, phone)

► Post the policy on your web site
  - Don't make it hard to find

► Provide policy to local geocaching.com reviewer
  - Reviewer will try to verify that the policies are adhered to

► Policy Examples
  - Westmoreland Conservancy (PA)
  - MA DCR
  - US Army COE

Suggestions for Property Policies

► All GC.com guidelines apply
  ▪ No digging! No defacing!

► All local/state/federal laws apply

► Permission Required
  ▪ Hider must get written/email permission from property manager and provide a copy of email to reviewer
  ▪ Requires "site inspection"
  ▪ Unauthorized caches will be removed by staff
  ▪ Permission can be revoked

► Labeled containers
  ▪ Transparent?

► No hiding in stones walls, ruins, etc

Questions?

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- ► Calvin Taft
  - Nomad64; chtaft@charter.net
- ► Rhode Island geocaching.com reviewer is gpsfun
  - Use "Send Message" link from geocaching.com user profile