

## Massachusetts DCR Geocaching Approval Guidelines

1. Applicants, herein referred as owner, must be 18 years of age or older to register a traditional cache, multi-cache, or letterbox.
2. Caches are not approved for the following locations:
  - Sensitive archaeological sites.
  - Locations that would encourage disturbance or dismantling of historic buildings, structures, or rock walls.
  - Priority Habitat as identified by the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program
  - Wetland resources protected under the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (310 CMR 10)
  - Areas that could potentially cause danger to visitors trying to locate the cache (e.g., cliff faces; upper branches of trees; inaccessible terrain, or in areas with heavy vehicular traffic.
  - Locations where cache-related foot traffic may create confusion, public safety concerns or impacts to significant ecological or cultural resources.
  - Underwater.
  - Caves or dens.
  - Appalachian Trail Corridor<sup>[1]</sup>.
  - Restricted access areas in the Quabbin Reservoir, Ware River, Wachusett Reservoir, and Sudbury Reservoir Watersheds.
  - Other locations that are deemed inappropriate by the facility manager, their designee, or the Department.
3. Caches located within DCR buildings, structures, or vessels shall be limited to DCR management only.
4. Caches must be transparent containers, e.g., Tupperware or Rubbermaid. Metal (ammo boxes), PVC pipes, or other non-transparent containers are prohibited. Permitted caches are required to have the DCR Geocache label displayed in a manner that is easily visible and recognizable.
5. No digging or excavation is permitted at any time in the placement or retrieval of a cache.
6. No defacement or alteration to DCR property, including but not limited to signs, benches, buildings, or natural features is allowed.
7. No removal or significant disturbance of vegetation, plant growth, or other flora is permitted at any time in the placement or operation of a cache.
8. Caches will not contain food, alcohol, firearms, drugs, dangerous items (e.g., fireworks, matches), or sexually explicit material. No natural or cultural materials from the park or facility shall be placed into the cache.

9. Multi-caches are limited to five total sites, yet treated as one cache and require only one permit.
10. No monies or profits can be derived from the placement of a cache by the owner or an affiliated business or organization.
11. If any park staff determines that the location of a permitted cache poses a risk to park visitors or significant impact to natural or cultural resources, the owner will be contacted and notified that the cache has been removed. All information regarding public safety risks and or resource disturbance is to be recorded on the original permit. If the owner wishes to relocate the cache, a new permit can be issued.
12. If at any time the terms of the permit are violated, the facility manager has the authority to revoke the permit, remove the cache from its location, and should attempt to notify the owner or indicate on the appropriate website that the cache has been removed. Justification for these actions is to be recorded on the facility copy of the permit.
13. If a non-permitted cache is discovered, the facility manager is to remove the cache, retain it at the facility office for 30 days and, if possible, attempt to notify the owner. If at the end of the 30 days contact is not made, the cache is to be considered abandoned property and disposed of.
14. Permits are valid for three years from date of issue with DCR retaining the right to review the permit on a yearly basis. After that date, the cache owner must apply for a registration extension or remove the cache.

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[1] Prohibited under policies outlined in the Appalachian Trail Corridor Cooperative Management Agreement between DCR, National Park Service, Appalachian Trail Conference, and Appalachian Mountain Club.