

## **Metro Geocaching and Letterboxing Guidelines**

Metro's Parks and publicly accessible Natural Areas are intended to provide visitors with safe and enjoyable nature based recreational opportunities. Metro actively manages natural areas and parks to protect and restore cultural and natural resources that have been entrusted to us by the voters of the region, with a level of recreation access determined based on balancing human access with the sensitivity and value of the natural resources at a given site. The policy outlined herein establishes procedures to facilitate and control geocaching and letterboxing activities on Metro property. The same guidelines will apply to both geocaching and letterboxing.

If you desire to place a geocache, or have already done so on Metro property, please note that Metro has developed guidelines for the placement and maintenance of caches. The purpose of the guidelines is to protect natural and cultural resources, the safety of all visitors while providing reasonable opportunities for geocaching on Metro owned lands.

### General Guidelines

- Geocaches shall only be located in the following Metro owned parks and natural areas:
  - Blue Lake Park
  - Oxbow Park Regional Park
  - Cooper Mountain Nature Park
  - Mt. Talbert Nature Park
  - Graham Oaks Nature Park
  - Smith and Bybee Wetlands
  - Gabbert Butte Natural Area
  - Pioneer Cemeteries
  - Chinook Landing Marine Park
  - Gleason Boat Ramp
  - Howell Territorial Park
  - Sauvie Island Boat Ramp
  - Mason Hill Park
  
- If a specific park or natural area is not listed above, placing a geocache is prohibited.
  
- one or more of the following reasons are why a park or natural area may not be listed as an approved site:
  - Lack of developed areas and/or lack of maintained trails.
  - Lack of safe and legal parking in proximity to the park or natural area.
  - The presence of sensitive cultural and natural resources.
  
- A permit is not required, but all caches must be registered on [www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com)
  
- Caches must comply with all guidelines established with geocaching.com.

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- No more than 5 caches shall be allowed in any one park or natural area.
- Each individual may only place one cache per site.

### Placing a Geocache

- Geocaches shall be placed so that they are fully accessible from the tread of a maintained trail, from other hardscape features such as patios, paths, or parking lots or from mowed lawn areas. Leaving the trail, hardscape or mowed lawn area to place or retrieve a geocache is not permitted. Casual, demand footpaths or wildlife trails that are not signed or identified on park maps are not considered maintained trails.
- Geocachers must “leave no trace”. This means not damaging the ground or vegetation while placing or locating a cache and considering potential damage that may result from other geocachers searching for or accessing the cache location.
- Geocaches shall not be attached to or placed in any living or non-living natural resources. No caches shall be placed in birdhouses, nests, or animal dens.
- Offensive, illegal, perishable, or dangerous items are not allowed in any cache. All items placed in caches must comply with the policies of Geocaching.com.
- Metro retains at its discretion the right to remove, or have removed, any cache that it feels is in an inappropriate location, is causing undo damage to natural, physical or cultural resources, or for other reasons is deemed inconsistent with the mission and statutes of Metro.
- Moving downed logs or debris and moving rocks to hide caches is not permitted. Excavating soils, digging holes, cutting vegetation, and moving or removing archeological or natural objects is not permitted. The use of metal detectors to locate geocaches on Metro property is not permitted.
- Geocaches shall not be attached to any man-made park amenity in such a manner as to damage the object or to impede proper use. The physical placement or attachment of caches to any buildings or sheds is prohibited. Altering signs, fences, posts, trails, trail markers or buildings is prohibited. Acceptable use includes attaching a small magnetic geocache to the back side of an interpretive sign.
- Geocaches must comply with all Metro Title 10 park and natural areas rules, regulations and other restrictions. <http://library.oregonmetro.gov/files/chap10.01.eff.011410.pdf>
- Night caching and earth caching on Metro property is prohibited. Cache owners should include wording stating the acceptable caching hours (within stated park hours) on their cache pages.
- Caches shall only be placed in safe locations that do not pose undue visitor risk. Geocachers must review the topography of the location where the cache is to be placed and the potential safety risks to the visitors trying to find the cache.

- Metro is not responsible for any damage to or loss of geocaches or equipment. Metro reserves the right to have any geocache removed. Metro will dispose of any removed cache if unable to contact the owner of the cache to remove or pick up the items.

#### Cache Containers and Contents

- Containers must be waterproof or sealable and no greater than 9”L x 6”W x 3”H and must be identified as a geocache, preferably with a “geocache” sticker. Ammo cans are prohibited.
- Caches placed to promote commercial, political, religious or other social agendas are not allowed.
- Caches may only contain a logbook in which to record visits, a description of geocaching and non-perishable, family friendly items.
- Caches that have not been maintained will be considered litter and will be discarded.

#### Metro Contact Information

For questions about geocaching on Metro property please call: 503-797-1545