

# Virginia

## Regional Geocaching Policies Wiki

An evolving, community-created wiki on where you can and can't hide geocaches.

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## Applachian Trial

There is a current moratorium on caching on the Appalachian Trail. This is because most of the Appalachian Trail is on property under the stewardship of the National Parks Service (NPS) which does not allow geocaching on their lands.

## Abingdon City

Blanket Permission

## Bedford County

Blanket Permission

## Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship

permits and encourages geocaching. See: [link](#)

## Breaks Interstate Park

### Virginia Reviewers

[offline.cacher](#), [YetAnotherReviewer](#)

### About This Guide

The local laws and guidelines for geocaching placement vary from place to place. As community reviewers learn geocache placement policies for a certain location, they can add it here. This site may not be a complete or accurate list of land policies. These policies are made by the land owner or manager, they are neither the reviewer's nor Geocaching HQ's. This guide is just for reference, if no policies for the area you're looking for are listed, that doesn't mean no policies exist. You must still obtain permission to place your geocache from the landowner or land manager, comply with all applicable laws, and follow the [Geocaching Listing Requirements](#).

If you have an update, email the community reviewer(s) listed.



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- Requires a permit available [here](#)
- Maintenance visits are required four times a year and your cache must be family friendly. This means your cache contents should be suitable for all ages. It is your responsibility to ensure that the following items are not in your cache: explosives, firearms, ammo, lighters, knives, drugs, alcohol, adult items, dangerous items, or any other type of weapon. Your cache should not contain any food item or food scented items. Please direct fellow geocachers to follow the trails. Upon completion of the permit, please email it to the Breaks Interstate Park Geocaching Coordinator at [BreaksGeocaching@gmail.com](mailto:BreaksGeocaching@gmail.com).

If you share information from this site, you must mention "These regional land policies came from the [Geocaching.com Public Wiki](#) and are licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-No-Derivatives 4.0 International License](#)."

And, you agree to keep content current by checking back regularly for updates.

## Bull Run Mountains Conservancy

Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) is the landowner and manager of the Bull Run Mountains Natural Area Preserve (BRMNAP). VOF leases 800 acres of the southern portion of BRMNAP to Bull Run Mountains Conservancy, (BRMC). BRMC provides visitor management services. BRMC and VOF have established the following geocaching guidelines to assure good stewardship of the natural, cultural, and historical resources on the preserve. Geocaches may be placed on the 800-acre public preserve as long as they adhere to the following guidelines:

1. BEFORE placing a cache, you must notify BRMC to determine the location of the cache.
2. Caches must be located on our marked trails and accessible by our marked trails. The intent of this and other guidelines is to protect the preserve's natural, cultural, and historical resources. Trails are a disturbance in natural ecosystems. Any additional disturbance by going off trail can increase the dispersal of invasive plants, cause damage to underlying vegetation, and disturb wildlife. From the protection of cultural and natural resources perspective, BRMC and VOF do NOT authorize people to go off trail. Established trails within the preserve are usually sited far enough away from sensitive resources in order to protect them -- going off trail encourages users to go into the sensitive resource areas.
3. Caches must be placed no more than 3 feet from the marked trails.
4. Caches must be within the 800-acre public access boundary.
5. Geocaches shall be a minimum of 50' from private property.
6. The 800-acre preserve can accommodate a limited amount of geocaches to be determined by BRMC and VOF.
7. The movement of already downed leaves, twigs and pieces of bark to conceal geocaches is allowed. BRMC prohibits the movement of rocks to make a cairn, removing bark from a tree to use as camouflage, and/or relocating a living plant. It is prohibited to excavate soils, cut vegetation, move or remove archaeological or natural objects (including living plants, animals, minerals, fungi, archaeological artifacts or features, etc.).
8. Geocaches shall not be attached to any living or non-living natural resources in such a way that there is any possible damage to the resource. Loosely attached containers that do not restrict growth or cause damage to the resource may be used. Any attachments such as string, twine, wire, or tie wraps that cinch tightly to the resource are prohibited.
9. Geocaches shall not be attached to any man-made park amenities in such a manner as to damage the object or to impede its proper usage, the physical placement or attachment of caches to any buildings, sheds, regulatory signs or informational signs is prohibited. The use of data printed on the signs as offsets for coordinates is allowed. Alteration of the sign in any way is prohibited.
10. Geocachers must abide by all visitor-use guidelines for the preserve as posted by BRMC. This includes access hours of sunrise to sunset, no dogs, no horses, no climbing, no motorized vehicles, etc. See the list of visitor-use guidelines at [www.brmconservancy.org](http://www.brmconservancy.org).
11. Caches placed on the preserve land without permission are subject to removal without notice. Geocaching Approval Process Before placing a geocache on the 800-acre public preserve, you must obtain approval from Bull Run Mountains Conservancy. BRMC will work with the cache owner to find an appropriate location for the cache that meets all of our guidelines.

Contact Bull Run Mountains Conservancy at:

Bull Run Mountains Conservancy  
P.O. Box 210  
Broad Run, Virginia 20137  
POC: Michael Kieffer (Executive Director)  
Phone: (703)753-2631(703)753-2631(703)753-2631(703)753-2631(703)753-2631(703)753-2631  
Email: [info@brmconservancy.org](mailto:info@brmconservancy.org)  
Website: [www.brmconservancy.org](http://www.brmconservancy.org)

## Bureau of Land Management

"The BLM believes that geocaching is an appropriate casual use of public land, but, as use increases or becomes a management issue in a particular area, the following minimum steps should be taken: 1) try to locate a person or group that is responsible for the cache and have them register the cache with the BLM. Make sure the cache is safe and environmentally sound, 2) prepare an environmental assessment or other appropriate National Environmental Protection Act document, 3) issue a letter of agreement or SRP with special stipulations to mitigate concerns, 4) if sites are not registered within a reasonable amount of time after notification, then the cache should be removed from public land, normally, the cache would be determined to be abandoned property after 10 days unless the appropriate authorization has been obtained, 5) monitor the use to assess public health and safety and environmental protection issues, 6) if the activity/sport becomes too large and begins to conflict with other authorized use, appropriate steps should be taken to properly manage the activity." (See also [link](#))

## Cemetery Law in Virginia Applicable to Geocaching

Unless specific permission is given, physical stages of caches should be outside cemeteries and not near graves. This is to comply with Virginia cemetery law and to be respectful of the area. Following are statutes regarding Virginia cemeteries and their application to geocaching:

- **No geocaching at night in VA cemeteries.**
  - 18.2-125. Trespass at night upon any cemetery.
    - If any person, without the consent of the owner, proprietor or custodian, go or enter in the nighttime, upon the premises, property, driveways or walks of any cemetery, either public or private, for any purpose other than to visit the burial lot or grave of some member of his family, he shall be guilty of a Class 4 misdemeanor.
- **Caching should never deface or injure cemetery property, including gravestones, plantings, fences railing, etc.**
  - 8.01-44.6. Action for injury to cemetery property.
    - The owner or operator of a cemetery company may bring an action to recover damages sustained, together with costs and reasonable attorneys' fees, against any person who willfully or maliciously destroys, mutilates, defaces, injures, or removes any tomb, monument, gravestone, or other structure placed within any cemetery, graveyard, or place of burial, or within any lot belonging to any memorial or monumental association, or any fence, railing, or other work for the protection or ornament of any tomb, monument, gravestone, or other structure aforesaid, or of any cemetery lot within any cemetery. The cemetery owner or operator may recover, as part of damages sustained, the cost of repair or replacement of damaged property, including any labor costs, regardless of whether the property damaged is owned by the cemetery or by another person.

## Charles City County Parks

have specific rules and require a permit. See [here](#) to download the park's guidelines and permit.

## Charlottesville

- [Ivy Creek Nature Area-Charlottesville](#) Not allowed at this time.
- [Ragged Mountain Nature Area - Charlottesville](#) Not allowed at this time.

## Chesapeake City Parks

Blanket permission granted with these exceptions:

- **Northwest River Park:**
  - IN ADDITION to the geocaching.com guidelines, the following restrictions apply to NRP:
  - Avoid restricted areas (campsites, Ropes & Initiatives Course and surrounding area)
  - Caches shall be placed no further than 50 feet from any trail, park road, or mowed area
  - Avoid the placement of water caches.
  - Work with Park Rangers to maintain a safe program and environment
  - Comply with all Federal, State, Local and Park Laws (given)

## Chesterfield County

Blanket Permission

## Danville City

Blanket Permission

## Dahlgren Railroad Heritage Trail

Please take note that caches currently located on the trail require a permit. Please use "guests of Friends of DHRT" if you do not wish to divulge personal information.

## Fairfax County Parks

[FCPA Geocaching Guidelines web page](#)

[FCPA Geocaching Policies and Approved Parks list](#)

Part of the guidelines for cache placement include available geocache seeking hours (Park Hours?) placed on the cache page. Ensure your cache page meets this expectation, and if you own any grandfathered caches in FCPA parks, please update them to include the available seeking hours if you haven't done so already.

To ensure geocachers have read, understood, and their cache submission abides by the FCPA geocaching requirements, I'm requiring a reviewer note include either the TAX MAP ID, or the contact information for the person giving permission for your cache - along with the name of the park.

## Harrisonburg City

Blanket Permission provided the caches do not cause any problems or concerns

## Hampton City

[Park policy Permit](#)

## Historic Markers

In Virginia, historic markers are installed and maintained by different agencies (cities, counties, historic groups, VDOT, and others). Geocaches may not be placed on/near markers which are maintained by the Department of Transportation. The responsibility for determining which agency/group maintains a historic marker belongs to the cache owner, and should be done prior to submitting a cache on/near a historic marker. There is a website which may be helpful in making the determination [here](#).

## James City County Parks

- Permission granted but a form must be filled out.
- Contact [Superintendent Nancy Ellis](#) direct # (757) 259-5370, general # (757) 259-4200
- Parks in this jurisdiction include:
  - Brickyard Landing
  - Chickahominy Riverfront Park
  - Diascund Reservoir
  - Forest Glen Playground
  - Freedom Park
  - Greensprings Greenway Hiking Trail
  - Ironbound Park
  - Jamestown Beach Campground
  - Little Creek Reservoir Park
  - Mid County Park
  - My Place Playground
  - Powhatan Creek Water Access
  - Skate Park
  - Upper County Park
  - Virginia Capital Trail
  - Waller Mill Dog Park
  - Warhill Sports Complex

## Lynchburg City

Blanket Permission

## National Wildlife Refuges

in Virginia are *off-limits* to physical geocache placements. [Visit Link](#)

## National Forests

(George Washington and Jefferson National Forests). A permit is required. See [link](#). The permit is \$59. Contact the ranger in charge of the area.

## National Park Service

managed land in Virginia are *off-limits* to physical geocache placements without a special usage permit.. [Visit Link](#)

## Newport News Parks

Effective 1/1/2010 this policy affects all Newport News Green Foundation Areas  
These locations are **OFF LIMITS** to caches: <http://www.nngreen.com/properties.html>  
If you own caches in any of these areas, please remove them.

Effective 3/1/2007 this policy applies to all Newport News Parks

- All **new** caches will require a permit. Permits are issued at the Newport News Park Headquarters building.
- Park management have now set boundaries to keep caches from being placed inside the campground loops or too close to a few highly historical (meaning sensitive to additional traffic) areas.
- **All** geocaches that are presently in the parks will receive a blank permit that cache owners will be required to fill out or their cache will be pulled from its location. If this applies to you, please contact the park staff ASAP to arrange for a permit.
- All parks staff will have the right to pull the caches if they are not permitted or interfere with park operations. This means they can and will remove any cache that causes problems even if it was granted a permit. Please respect this. [Ranger B. Holliday](#)

Some Newport News Parks general guidelines in addition to those in the geocaching.com cache submission guidelines

- No climbing trees to hide or seek a cache.
- Not near any earthworks areas
- Not near the archery area.

## National Recreation Trails/Areas

land in Virginia are generally considered *off-limits* to physical geocache placements. This includes but is not limited to areas directly on the official A.T. corridor, and the Cascades National Recreation Trail.

## Northern VA Regional Park Authority (NVRPA)

See [this link](#) [Permission is now required.](#) [List of parks here.](#) [Note that this includes the W&OD Trail.](#)

## Old Dominion University

We have received communication that, "due to the sensitive nature of placing caches on the ODU campus we want to make sure all considerations are being made before any new cache is placed; we want to make sure all possible involved parties are made aware. For example campus safety, academic buildings, etc. Please refer the cachers to me if they would like to plot a cache." [Allyson Kelly](#)

## Portsmouth City Park

From the Director: There are no restrictions - if you want to go look at possibilities that is fine. Please let us know where and what it looks like in case citizens think it is something strange or in case security sees people doing what might appear to them as strange behavior -(constantly reaching under a bench). Otherwise, as long as it is not destructive or does not create a citizen nuisance or maintenance problem, we are okay with it. Just let us know specifically where and in what form and we will most likely be fine with it or give you an alternative if that location does not work.

Michael Morris, Director  
Portsmouth Parks, Recreation and Leisure Services  
801 Crawford Street  
Portsmouth VA 23704  
757-393-8481/757-393-8481

## Potomac Overlook Regional Park

chief naturalist now requires advance permission prior to placing caches in this park. The current limit will be 3 caches, with dibs being given to those who already had a cache there and may be merely relocating slightly to meet the park management's requests.

## Prince William County Parks

Prince William County Park Authority welcomes new caches in PWC parks as long as geocachers first email [Eric Wysocki](#), with the following cache information:

- Name
- Address
- Phone Number
- where the cache will be placed (specifically)
- original contents
- container's description
- picture's of the container(s) and cache location(s)
- any other info that will help the rangers not be alarmed

## Ragged Mountain Nature Area

**Charlottesville** Not allowed at this time.

## Railroad Law in Virginia

§18.2-159. Trespassing on railroad track.

Any person who goes upon the track of a railroad other than to pass over such road at a public or private crossing, or who willfully rides, drives or leads any animal or contrives for any animal to go on such track except to cross as aforesaid, without the consent of the railroad company or person operating such road, shall be guilty of a Class 4 misdemeanor. A second violation of the provisions of this section occurring within two years of the first violation shall be punishable as a Class 3 misdemeanor. A third or subsequent violation of the provisions of this section occurring within two years of a second or a subsequent violation shall be punishable as a Class 1 misdemeanor. This section shall not apply to any section of track which has been legally abandoned pursuant to an order of a federal or state agency having jurisdiction over the track and is not being used for railroad service.

For purposes of this section, track shall mean the rail, ties, and ballast of the railroad.

(Code 1950, §18.1-148; 1960, c. 358; 1975, cc. 14, 15; 1993, c. 845.)

## Reston's Walker Nature Education Center (WNEC)

staff needs to approve the location of caches. Also caches placed ANYWHERE on ANY **Reston Common areas** are limited to members and require permission and have guidelines [Visit Link](#) 703-435-6518703-435-6518 NOTE: There are some areas within Reston which are not governed by the Reston Association including the "Reston Town Center" area. Care should be taken to acquire permission where required. Cache owners should be prepared to demonstrate whether permission is required.

## Roanoke City

Blanket Permission

## Staunton City parks

Contact [Claire Anderson](#) 540-332-3945540-332-3945  
[Geocache permit](#) on Staunton City Parks website.

## Shenandoah County parks

Geocache in Shenandoah County parks require prior permission

Contact Park Official [Jered Hoover](#)

## Virginia Department of Transportation ("VDOT")

Virginia Department of Transportation ("VDOT") has prohibited all caches on property they own or maintain, thus no street sign caches, no guardrail caches, no median caches, no utility pole caches, no roadside caches, no historic marker caches (on/near markers maintained by VDOT, (see section on historic markers above)and so forth. In Virginia, the state has preeminence over local governments and localities may not set their own rules unless specifically provided for by the state. We have been advised that placing, seeking, finding or monitoring a cache on VDOT-controlled property will be considered a crime, a violation of Title 24 of the Virginia Administrative Code, a Class IV Misdemeanor. VDOT has extended the prohibition of geocaches to all Virginia rest areas as well as other VDOT maintained property. A list of those rest stops can be viewed [here](#)

## Virginia State Forests

at this time, geocaching is permitted in Virginia State Forests. Walking, hiking, or boating is permitted without a State Forest Use Permit. For a list of all Virginia State Forests see [link](#).

## Virginia State Parks

Permit required plus a geocaching sticker must be applied to the cache (available from park ranger). This process has been established:

- Find a spot to place the cache.
- Contact the appropriate authority and request permission to place cache AT THAT SPOT.
- Obtain permission and sticker.
- Place cache.
- The cache is not considered "placed" until permission is granted.
- See+:+ [VA State Park Web Site](#), [this link](#) for specific details. Click [this link](#) for the permit form.

## Town of Warrenton

Geocaches in the Town of Warrenton are prohibited except for geocaches hidden by the Town of Warrenton Parks and Recreation.

- Town of Warrenton recreational property includes:
  - Warrenton Sports Complex
  - Rady Park
  - Warrenton Greenway
  - Warrenton Visitors Center
  - Eva Walker Park
- Additional properties owned by the Town of Warrenton:
  - Town of Warrenton Police Department
  - Gold Cup Park
  - Academy Hill Park
  - Warrenton Aquatic and Recreation Center
  - Town of Warrenton Wastewater Plant
  - Town of Warrenton Water Treatment Plant
  - Town of Warrenton Reservoir
  - Town of Warrenton Public Works yard
  - Town Hall Building
  - John S. Mosby House
  - Town of Warrenton Cemetery

## William and Mary campus

Contact [Lt Gary Ryan](#) for details. His direct phone is 757 221-1152757 221-1152. This information comes from John Coleman (former contact) on April 14, 2012.

## Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs)

At this time ALL WMAs are off-limits for geocaching. The reason given by the State Wildlife Biologist Manager is that the WMAs are maintained by tax dollars and "as geocaching is not related to, nor does it support wildlife or habitat management, this activity is not allowed on our WMAs."