

Alabama

Regional Geocaching Policies Wiki

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

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General Information

This page contains specific geocaching land management policies for Alabama. Naturally all other [Geocaching.com](#) guidelines, including obtaining adequate permission for any geocache placement, apply. This listing is not all-inclusive as some land managers have instituted policies we are not yet aware of or may have amended their posted policies. If you are a land manager with a geocaching policy which should be listed here please send a copy of your policy and contact information to [isht kinta](#) or [MayDay](#).

COVID19

Geocaches and events may be published statewide. Geocachers are encouraged to use proper sanitation when handling geocaches and practice proper distancing with non-family members.

The current guidelines from the [governor and health department](#) encourages businesses to practice social distancing. Therefore:

- **Event hosts having events in businesses, parks, and similar areas must contact the business or entity controlling the location and ascertain any restrictions on event size before submitting the event for review.**
- **The reviewer note must include the permissions for the event and note who granted the permission.**
- **The venue must be able to support the event without any attempt to restrict the number of geocachers who would attend.**

UPDATED 4-9-21

[Link to State of Emergency Orders](#)

[Link to listing of orders on State Health Department site](#)

Alabama Reviewer

[isht kinta](#), [MayDay](#)

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

National Park Service

Geocaches are not generally allowed on property managed, owned or operated by the United States National Park Service or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (National Wildlife Refuges). Exceptions can be granted with the express consent of the Park Manager and the NPS. In Alabama, this includes:

Alabama National Park Service Properties

- **Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument**
- **Freedom Riders National Monument**
- **Horseshoe Bend National Military Park**
- **Little River Canyon National Preserve** (Includes portions of State Park and Wildlife Area lands) Some geocaches published in the past in error are grandfathered but the NPS may request their archival in the future.
- **Natchez Trace Parkway**
- **Russell Cave National Monument**
- **Selma to Montgomery Historic Trail Site**
- **Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site**
- **Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site**

Alabama U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service National Wildlife Refuges

- **Bon Secour**
- **Cahaba River**
- **Choctaw**
- **Eufala**
- **Fern Cave**
- **Grand Bay**
- **Key Cave**
- **Mountain Longleaf**
- **Sauta Cave**
- **Watercress Darter**
- **Wheeler** This National Wildlife Refuge currently allows geocaches with verbal permission from the Refuge office. The name of the person granting the permission must be included in the reviewer note when the geocache is submitted. **The status of placing geocaches in Wheeler NWR has changed several times recently. Currently you must obtain permission from the staff at Wheeler and include in your reviewer note the contact name and date permission was granted.**

Alabama State Parks

The guidelines here apply to the following state parks:

- Bladon Springs
- Blue Springs
- Bucks Pocket
- Cathedral Caverns
- Cheaha
- Chewacla
- Chickasaw
- Desoto
- Lake Jackson RV Park At Florala
- Frank Jackson
- Gulf
- Joe Wheeler
- Lake Guntersville
- Lake Lurleen
- Lakepoint
- Meaher
- Monte Sano
- Oak Mountain
- Paul Grist

- Rickwood Caverns
- Roland Cooper
- Wind Creek

Geocaching is allowed in Alabama State Parks with written permission of the park manager.

You may download the Alabama State Parks Geocaching policy at [LINK](#).

You may download the Alabama State Parks Geocaching permit at [LINK](#).

You should have the form completed and attach an image of the form to your Reviewer Note when you submit your geocache for publication.

If the Alapark website is down, you may use the following link for a permit. Be aware this permit may not be up to date. [LINK](#)

Alabama Historical Parks

The following parks require verbal permission from the park staff to place a geocache. Please include the staff members name that granted the permission in your reviewer note when you submit the geocache for publication.

- Historic Blakeley State Park
- Brierfield Ironworks Historical State Park
- Tannehill Ironworks Historical State Park

Alabama Land Trusts

There are several Land Trusts in Alabama. Generally they allow geocaching on the properties they own or manage. Be aware there may be private landholdings inside the boundaries of the land trusts that will require permission of the actual landowner and that some land trust trail properties are only 25 feet wide.

U.S. Forest Service

Generally, geocaching is permitted within the national forests in Alabama without a permit. You must contact the ranger district before you place a cache to make sure your cache is not in a potentially problematic area.

"**Geocaching:** Geocaching is becoming a popular past time in the forest. We want you to have a positive experience and enjoy yourself, but we also want to protect sensitive areas and species. Therefore, we asking that you contact any one of the six Ranger Districts or the Supervisor's Office at: 334 /241-8136 BEFORE you plan the activity."

Talledega National Forest

Oakmulgee Ranger District

Cindy Ragland, District Ranger
9901 Highway 5, Brent, AL 35034
205-926-9765

Shoal Creek Ranger District - (Encourages geocaching, ask permission first)

Karen McKenzie, District Ranger
45 Highway 281, Heflin, AL 36264
256-463-2272

Talladega Ranger District - (Encourages geocaching, ask permission first)

Gloria Nielsen, District Ranger
1001 North Street (Highway 21 North), Talladega, AL 35160
256-362-2909

Tuskegee National Forest

Tuskegee Ranger District - (Encourages geocaching, ask permission)

Darrius Truss, District Ranger
125 National Forest, Road 949, Tuskegee, AL 36083
334-727-2652

Bankhead National Forest

Bankhead Ranger District - (Must contact them first before placement)

Elrand Denson, District Ranger 1070 Highway 33, Double Springs, AL 35553
205-489-5111

Conecuh National Forest

Conecuh Ranger District

Tim Mersmann, District Ranger 24481 Alabama Hwy 55, Andalusia, AL 36420
334-222-2555

Cemeteries

Most cemeteries are private property. There are a few cemeteries in the state that are owned by municipalities. Several states have banned geocaches in cemeteries due to disrespectful actions by geocachers. Geocaches may NOT be placed near graves. You must have permission from the entity that owns or controls the cemetery to place a geocache there and there must be public access. Just owning a plot in the cemetery is not sufficient permission. When submitting the geocache, attach photographs of the geocache placement to the reviewer note looking at the geocache from different directions.

Cemetery Law in Alabama

Section 13A-7-23.1 Desecration, defacement, etc., of memorial of dead; invasion or mutilation of corpse.

(a) Any person who willfully or maliciously injures, defaces, removes or destroys any tomb, monument, gravestone or other memorial of the dead, or any fence or any inclosure about any tomb, monument, gravestone or memorial, or who willfully and wrongfully destroys, removes, cuts, breaks or injures any tree, shrub, plant, flower, decoration, or other real or personal property within any cemetery or graveyard shall be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

(b) Any person who willfully or maliciously desecrates, injures, defaces, removes, or destroys any tomb, monument, structure, or container of human remains, and invades or mutilates the human corpse or remains shall be guilty of a Class C felony and upon conviction the person shall be punished as provided by law. Any person who maliciously desecrates an American Indian place of burial or funerary objects on property not owned by the person shall be guilty of a Class C felony and upon conviction the person shall be punished as provided by law.

(c) The provisions of subsections (a) and (b) of this section shall not apply to any person holding a permit issued by the Alabama Historical Commission pursuant to subsection (d) of this section.

(d) The Alabama Historical Commission, to provide for the lawful preservation, investigation, restoration, or relocation of human burial remains, human skeletal remains, or funerary objects, shall promulgate rules and regulations for the issuance of a permit and may issue a permit to persons or companies who seek to restore, preserve or relocate human burial remains, human skeletal remains, funerary objects, or otherwise disturb, a place of burial.

Acts 1980, No. 80-706, p. 1424; Acts 1993, No. 93-770, §1; Acts 1993, 1st Ex. Sess., No. 93-905, p. 201, §1.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers properties

The Corps of Engineers has no objection to the legal pursuance of geocaching activity based on your understanding of the following conditions:

1. There will be no site disturbance, illegal substances or uses involving the geocaching on Corps of Engineers property.
2. Caches will not be placed in or near restricted or sensitive areas or those areas not open to the general public.
3. The Corps of Engineers may terminate this permission at any time.
4. This permission conveys no property rights, grants no exclusive use, and in no way restricts the general public's privilege of using Corps of Engineers properties.
5. The Corps of Engineers assumes no liability and undertakes no obligation or duty (in tort, contract, strict liability, or otherwise) to you or to any third party for any damages to property (real or personal) or personal injuries (including death) arising out of or in any way connected with your performance of activities which are the subject of this statement of no objection.
6. Permission must be obtained from the managing public or private entity in situations where the Corps of Engineers has granted land rights via license, lease, or easement for public or commercial purposes.
7. Caches will not be placed on or in the immediate vicinity of dams, locks and water control structures.

Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) properties

As of February 27, 2004, the following is a quote from correspondence with TVA regarding geocaching: "TVA has no objection to the geocaching activity based on your understanding of the following conditions:

1. There will be no site disturbance, illegal substances or uses involving the geocaching on the TVA property.
2. (Caches will not be placed in or near restricted areas, dams, power generation facilities or equipment, substation sites, gated or signed areas, and/or transmission line sites, etc.
3. You will maintain a list of geocache locations on the TVA property which can be reviewed by TVA at any time.
4. TVA retain the rights to terminate this permission for the use of the TVA property at any time.
5. This permission conveys no property rights, grants no exclusive use, and in no way restricts the general public's privilege of using TVA public land.
6. TVA assumes no liability and undertakes no obligation or duty (in tort, contract, strict liability, or otherwise) to you or to any third party for any damages to property (real or personal) or personal injuries (including death) arising out of or in any way connected with your performance of activities which are the subject of this statement of no objection."
7. Caches should not be placed in or around cemetery areas.
8. Permission must be obtained from the managing public or private entity in situations where TVA has granted land rights via license, lease, or easement for public or commercial purposes.

Navigable waterways and islands

- Geocaches may not be attached to navigation markers or buoys.

- Islands in Alabama consist of property that are a mix of privately owned, owned by the State of Alabama or the Federal Government. The standard permission issues as if on the mainland apply for these lands.
- Geocaches may not be placed near marine restricted areas (Homeland Security designated).

Military Areas

Ft. McClellan

2019 update. A portion of the Ft. McClelland land is reserved for training by the National Guard and is off limits to geocaching. Another section has been turned into a Wildlife Refuge and is also off limits to geocaching.

In early 2011, land is being sold off to the City of Oxford, private developers and to the AL DOT as [McClellan Development Authority](#) (MDA) sweeps the land and deems them safe. This is happening on the west side. Cachers are starting to try to place caches in this area. I (mtn-man) contacted the MDA for guidance. Miki is gone, so I spoke to Robin Scott, the current Executive Director. Part of the land is owned now by the AL DOT, and they built a bypass through the old fort property. It seems that the City of Oxford and the MDA are settling out some of this land now, so the area is still pretty fluid. Here are the areas that I understand at this point:

Most of the land near [McClellan](#) Blvd appears to be sold off to private interest.

Iron Mountain Road is MDA property that is still under cleanup.

Summerall Gate Road to about 6th Ave. appears to be city property to the north, MDA to the south except near Iron Mtn Road.

From there, north of Brigadier Stem its city property -- if its south of Brigadier Stem then its MDA property.

Ft. Rucker

Ft. Rucker consists of a mix of access areas, in which geocaching is allowed in some parts. Geocachers must obtain a pass to enter the base. Non-military personnel should make advance arrangements by visiting the Ft. Rucker website (www.rucker.army.mil/visit) and download form 2746-R-E as well as following the posted instructions prior to approaching a Visitor Control Center.

Geocaches are not allowed in the Restricted Access Areas, Cantonment Area, Ranges, Impact Areas, and Airfields. Some of these restricted areas are outside the main boundaries of Ft. Rucker.

Geocaches are allowed in most of the other areas including training areas. Permission must be obtained from the base authority that controls the area (usually Outdoor Recreation or Family, Morale and Welfare) and the name of the personnel granting the authority and their phone number must be included in the reviewer note when the cache is submitted for review.

Areas in which geocaches are allowed may be temporarily restricted to access. If a sign or barricade indicates an area is currently restricted, do not enter the area under any circumstances.

Alabama Power owned lakes

Geocaching is allowed on lands owned by Alabama Power that is not leased to a private landowner. Islands may be owned by Alabama Power, private owners, or a combination of both. Docks and piers are generally privately owned.

Geocaches are not allowed to be attached to navigation markers or buoys.

No geocaches may be placed near dams and electrical generating facilities.

Universities and Colleges

Generally geocaching is allowed in areas on University and College campuses where the general public is allowed to visit unrestricted. Geocaches are not allowed to be placed near student housing, including Greek fraternity areas.

Residential neighborhoods.

Caches in residential areas tend to arouse the suspicion of neighborhood watch groups and general neighborly suspicion. This usually leads to either the police being called or confrontations with landowners. Geocaches in neighborhoods will require permission of the adjoining landowners.

Youth Camps

Youth camps are properties dedicated for the use of the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, special needs children, church camps or similar sites. Geocaches may not be placed on portions of these properties that are not open to the general public. A geocache placed on public portions of the camp must be placed with permission of the governing authority for the property and the contact information of the director granting that authority must be included in the reviewer note when the geocache is submitted to be published.

Privately Owned Prohibited Areas

Geocaching is specifically prohibited by the owners of these properties. Lease holders cannot override the corporate decision. There may be a few grandfathered geocaches that were placed before the prohibition took effect.

- All Cracker Barrel locations
- All Simon Mall Properties
- The Outlets Mall near Leads
- Bridge Street Mall in Huntsville
- Baptist Hospital property in Montgomery

Land ownership

Many of the counties and cities in Alabama have on-line resources that can be used to help you determine the ownership of land and obtain permission to place a geocache. For the other counties, you may have to either visit the local courthouse or subscribe to a paid service to determine the land ownership.

Geocaches that require underground travel

Geocaches that involve stages underground must have at least one stage above ground that requires navigation with a GPS enabled device. Underground geocaches should be submitted as either multi-caches, puzzle/mystery caches, wherigo caches or letterbox caches.

Underground geocaches may pass under areas that would be restricted if at ground level (such as schools or controlled access highways) as long as the ground level restricted area is not subject to any Homeland Security restrictions (such as courthouses or military installations).

Geocache owners submitting geocaches that involve underground stages must submit hidden waypoints for the stages as if they were at ground level, to the extent this is possible. This is to avoid another underground stage geocache being placed in the same area that would conflict with the existing one. Underground stages would not conflict with ground level geocaches.

Bridges, tunnels and guardrails

Geocaches may not be placed on, over or under bridges located on federal roadways and controlled access highways.

Geocaches must not be placed in or attached to highway tunnels or any part of their infrastructure.

Geocaches generally may be placed on municipal and county road bridges with the following exceptions:

- May not be over or under federal roads or interstates.
- May not be over or under railroads.
- May not be on bridges containing active drawbridges as listed by the Corps of Engineers.
- May not be on bridges located over spillways or part of dams.

Geocaches may be placed on bridges designed for pedestrian use only or former railroad bridges converted to pedestrian trails that pass over interstate or U.S. highways with the following restrictions:

- The geocache must be accessible by a geocacher standing on the surface area designed for foot traffic.
- Ammo cans or PVC containers are not allowed.
- Containers must be clearly labeled as being a geocache and designed where they could not be mistaken as an explosive device.

Guardrail caches are not allowed on federal highways, controlled access highways or as part of railroad signaling locations.

For bridge and guardrail geocaches to be published, there must be a location available for a geocacher to park his vehicle completely clear of the roadway and the parking location shall not be in a curve or other visually obstructed area.

Geocachers should understand that all roadway bridges are inspected on a regular basis by government inspectors and any geocache found attached to the bridge structure will probably be removed by the inspectors.

In urban areas geocaches may be placed in parks and green spaces located under controlled access highway overpasses with permission of the government agency that manages the park or green space. The geocache may not be attached to or placed immediately next to structures supporting the overpass.

Little Free Libraries

Little Free Libraries are growing in popularity and geocachers are increasingly wanting to use them for geocache placement.

They are publishable with the following considerations:

- The libraries are privately owned and usually on private property so permission must be obtained from the library owner.
- The cache page should not be promotional of the Little Free Library movement.
- They can use the term Little Free Library on the cache page.
- The <http://www.littlefreelibrary.org/> website sells the library boxes and solicits donations, so it should not be included on cache pages.
- The logbook should be placed in a container within the library, and not just be paper "floating" around.

Other restricted areas

Geocaches may not be placed near:

- Airports used for commercial or military flights. (NOTE: Some larger commercial airports own large amounts of land surrounding the airport that they lease to private businesses. Geocaching may be allowed on lease land that does not involve direct access to the airfield with permission of the lease holder)
- Communication towers
- Dams
- Electrical generating stations, substations and transmission towers.
- Municipal drinking water facilities.
- Facilities restricted to access or approach by Homeland Security rules.
- Federal Courthouses
- Financial institutions including close proximity to drop boxes and ATM machines.
- Hospitals
- Nuclear facilities
- Post Offices. This includes blue postal service mail boxes and green postal service mail storage boxes. **Virtual stages inside post offices require the permission of the Postmaster for that post office.**
- Prisons and jails
- Railroads and their right of ways. Depending on the location this may extend 25 feet to 200 feet from the center of the track.
- Schools and day cares

Playgrounds While there's no specific guideline against hiding a cache on playground equipment, many geocachers consider it a bad idea. It's perfectly normal for a 10 year old to be on a playground with their mom. But how normal would it be for him to go there without a parent and for someone who may be fifty something and doesn't have a kid with them to be prowling around the equipment? This might make most mom's kind of nervous. If the playground is not part of a school or daycare the geocache can be published, but the cache owner will be asked to reconsider before it is published.

The rest of Alabama is pretty much wide open as long as the geocaching guidelines are met. Be aware that geocaching guidelines are subject to change. *There is no precedent for placing geocaches.* This means that the past publication of a similar geocache in and of itself is not a valid justification for the publication of a new geocache. If a geocache has been published and violates any guidelines listed, you are encouraged to report it. However, if the geocache was placed prior to the date when a guideline was issued or updated, the geocache is likely to be [grandfathered](#) and allowed to stand as is.

Event Stacking

Submit events as one single event if your event has one of the following

- Several elements
- A sequence of events
- Events that are near the same time or location
- Intended for the same audience

Additional waypoints may be added to the Event Cache page for the locations of event activities.

Events on the same day must be at least 10 miles and 4 hours apart and not related to each other to avoid the event stacking rule.