

# Summary

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Finger Lakes Trail Conference, Inc.

## **Policy on Geocaching, Letterboxing and Similar Activities for All Trails in the Finger Lakes Trail System**

Approved and Adopted by the  
Board of Managers  
April 19, 2010

The Finger Lakes Trail Conference Board of Managers (FLTC BOM) adopts this policy in order to strike a balance between the value of “geocaching” and similar pastimes as outdoor recreational activities and the potentially significant negative impacts to natural and cultural resources and landowner/land manager permissions that unmanaged geocaching and similar activities can cause. The FLTC BOM enacts this policy for the primary purpose of protecting and preserving the continuity and long-term viability of the trail. The FLTC desires to minimize impact on the environment, maximize the hiker’s wilderness experience, and support the right of landowners and land managers to control public access to, and use of, their lands. The FLTC also intends its FLTC Geocache Policy to be consistent with North Country Trail Association (NCTA) Geocache Policy, which can apply to all North Country National Scenic Trail that is coincident with the Finger Lakes Trail, and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy’s ATC Policy on Geocaching.

**To minimize concerns and to protect and preserve the trails in the Finger Lakes Trail System, the FLTC acknowledges that geocaching and similar activities on trails in the Finger Lakes Trail System may be appropriate, but only under all of the following conditions:**

1. **Where written permission has been obtained *in advance* from the landowner or appropriate land manager, providing a specific timeframe and a description of the location sufficient for the landowner or land manager and the FLTC to identify the site area.** Geocachers are responsible for knowing the ownership of the lands they intend to recreate on, contacting the appropriate land-management unit or private landowner, and obtaining written permission and any permits that may be necessary. Written permission from the landowner or land manager is necessary to establish the temporary right of the geocacher to carry out geocaching on the land and will exempt temporarily the geocacher from applicable Trail Use Regulations.

**The geocacher may use the generic written permission form that follows this policy.** The lack of written permission will result in removal of the cache from the property.

2. **Where the written statement of permission stipulates that the geocacher must take proper care to avoid damage caused by digging or trampling to vegetation, archeological evidence, trail tread and corridor or other fragile resources in the area, or damage to other aspects of the landowner’s property.** The absence of this stipulation from the permission statement will result in removal of the cache from the property.
3. **Where this written permission has been forwarded to the Finger Lakes Trail Conference office for review at least two weeks in advance of the start date.** The FLTC will confirm the written permission with the landowner or land manager. Failure to forward the written permission to the FLTC at least two weeks in advance of the start date will result in removal of the cache from the property.
4. **Where the cache is labeled with the owner’s name and complete contact information.** The contact information in the label and the written permission must correspond. Unlabeled caches will be removed.

Written permission is a necessary precondition for listing the geocache on geocaching websites. Registration with the geocache website's administrator for that location will be protested if any one of the above terms is not met.

The FLTC reserves the right to remove any geocache or letterbox found along the trail.

The geocacher and letterboxer may use the generic written permission form letter entitled, **Permission to Hide Geocache or Letterbox on Private Property or Public Land**, that follows.

The full policy and attachments may be found on the Finger Lakes Trail Conference website:  
[www.fingerlakestrail.org](http://www.fingerlakestrail.org).

## Permission to Hide Geocache or Letterbox on Private Property or Public Land

**Applicant and Property Owner/Land Manager:** Please read the *entire* letter first. *Step 1: Applicant* - Fill in your name on line 7; use the space at line 8 to describe the intended cache site for the landowner's or land manager's approval; and put the intended start and stop dates on lines 9-10. Sign, date, and provide your contact information, bottom right (lines 11-15). *Step 2: Property Owner/Land Manager* - Fill in your contact information on lines 1-3, print your name in the space on line 4, write in the address or location of the land where the cache will be placed on line 5, review the description and the dates (lines 7, 8-9) to confirm that you approve, and sign and date (line 10, left). *Step 3: Applicant* - Mail a copy of this completed form and any required permits to the Finger Lakes Trail Conference (FLTC), 6111 Visitor Center Rd., Mt. Morris, NY 14510, at least two weeks prior to the commencement date.

	Line
_____	1
(property owner's/land manager's name)	2
_____	3
(address)	4
_____	5
(address)	6
_____	7
(title, if manager of public land)	8
_____	9
(phone numbers)	10
_____	11
(email address)	12
I, _____, owner of private property or manager of public land at _____	13
(print name)	14
_____ do hereby grant permission for	15
(address or location of the land <i>on which the cache will be hidden</i> )	16
_____ to place a letterbox or geocache on my property/this land at the	17
(printed name of geocacher or letterboxer asking permission)	18
the following location along or near the Finger Lakes Trail (describe precisely):	19
_____	20
_____	21
The geocache or letterbox may be hidden at this location commencing _____ and will be	22
removed no later than _____ (fill in dates).	23
The person to whom I give this permission promises to label his/her cache with his/her name and contact data.	
To reach this cache site, the person may leave the trail, but only on the condition that he/she promises, by his/her signature below, to avoid damaging vegetation, archeological evidence, trail tread or corridor, and other fragile resources in the area, or damaging any other aspects of the described private property or public land, by digging, cutting or trampling.	
The person to whom I give permission promises, by his/her signature below, to forward a copy of this written permission, along with any permits or forms that may be required by the public land manager, to the Finger Lakes Trail Conference (FLTC), 6111 Visitor Center Rd., Mt. Morris, NY 14510, at least two weeks prior to the commencement date. I understand that the FLTC may call to verify this permission with me.	
_____ / _____	24
Signature of landowner or land manager / date	25
_____ / _____	26
Signature of geocacher or letterboxer / date	27
_____	28
(address)	29
_____	30
(address)	31
_____	32
(phone numbers)	33
_____	34
(email address)	35