

Twin Valley Council, BSA



Geocaching Handbook for Cuyuna Scout Camp

Frequently Asked Questions About Geocaching

Adapted from <http://www.geocaching.com>

What is Geocaching?

Geocaching is an entertaining adventure game for GPS users. Participating in a cache hunt is a good way to take advantage of the wonderful features and capability of a GPS unit. The basic idea is to have individuals and organizations set up caches all over the world and share the locations of these caches on the internet. GPS users can then use the location coordinates to find the caches. Once found, a cache may provide the visitor with a wide variety of rewards. All the visitor is asked to do is if they get something they should try to leave something for the cache.

How do you pronounce Geocaching?

You pronounce it Geo-cashing, like cashing a check.

So what's the big deal? You gave me the coordinates so I know where it is. Seems pretty easy.

It is deceptively easy. It's one thing to see where an item is, it's a totally different story to actually get there.

What is a GPS device?

A GPS unit is a electronic device that can determine your approximate location (within around 6-20 feet) on the planet. Coordinates are normally given in Longitude and Latitude. You can use the unit to navigate from your current location to another location. Some units have their own maps, built-in electronic compasses, voice navigation, depending on the device.

You don't need to know all the technical mumbo jumbo about GPS units to play Geocaching. All you need to do is be able to enter what is called a "waypoint" where the geocache is hidden. We're working on a section to help you set up your own GPS unit to play. In the meantime, feel free to ask questions in our online forums .

What are the rules in Geocaching?

Geocaching is a relatively new phenomenon. Therefore, the rules are very simple:

1. Take something from the cache (only if you leave something)
2. Leave something in the cache (optional)
3. Write about it in the logbook (always)

What shouldn't be in a cache?

Use your common sense in most cases. Explosives, ammo, knives, drugs, and alcohol shouldn't be placed in a cache. Respect the local laws. All ages of people hide and seek caches, so use some thought before placing an item into a cache.

Food items are ALWAYS a BAD IDEA. Animals have better noses than humans, and in some cases caches have been chewed through and destroyed because of food items in a cache. Please do not put food in a cache.

What do I do if I find out that a cache has gone missing?

If you visit a cache location and the cache is missing, always make sure to tell the ranger and log the cache as "not found" on the web site. Just because you didn't find it doesn't necessarily mean it's missing though! If you notice that the logs show an unusual number of "not found" logs, please inform the ranger so we can check on the cache and make sure it's still there.

What's the deal with the Cuyuna caches? Why aren't they listed on Geocaching.com?

The Cuyuna caches have been placed specifically for Scouts and Scouters visiting Cuyuna Scout Camp. Since these are private caches located on private property, these caches is not listed on geocaching.com and you will not be able to log your visit on their website. However, you can log your visit to the cache on the Twin Valley Council website at <http://www.twinvalleybsa.org/geocaching>.

Can I place additional cache's on Cuyuna property? Can they be listed on Geocaching.com?

Sure, you can place new caches on Cuyuna property. But make sure to check with the ranger first and follow all the industry standard guidelines in placing a cache. While there are no specific rules preventing a private geocache from being listed on the Geocaching.com web site, by listing a geocache on the website we're giving implied consent for anyone to come onto the property to search for the geocache. Twin Valley Council has chosen at this time to keep these caches for the exclusive use of Scouts and Scouters visiting Cuyuna Scout Camp.

Are there any other geocaches in the area?

At the time of putting together this guidebook, there were 37 caches within 20 miles of Crosslake! Go to Geocaching.com and search by zip code 56442. This will give you a current list of all the public caches in the area!

Guide to Finding a Cache

Adapted from <http://www.geocaching.com>

Step 1 – Researching the Cache

Keep in mind that distances can be deceiving. When you're using your GPS unit to find a cache, the unit only knows how close the site is as the crow flies (a direct line). You may be a mile from the cache, but there may be a river in the way, or a near-vertical climb involving 3 miles of switchbacks, or a mountain – you get the picture.

1. **Get a map** of the area from the ranger. Topographical maps (which show features of the land like hills) are best, so you can get a good idea of the terrain you'll be crossing.
2. If you have a good idea of the area, you can **navigate via the GPS** unit. This is best when the park is small. This is also the most challenging, and is not recommended for your first hunt.

You'll most likely need to do both things to prepare and reach the geocache, though our experience has shown different combinations for each cache.

Some caches may be visible from 20 feet away, while others in more trafficked areas may be buried under some rocks. Getting within a mile or two of the site isn't usually too difficult – it's the last mile that'll get you every time.

Step 2 – Preparation

Preparation is key in any kind of outdoor activity, but you can never stress enough the importance of preparation and safety. Keep these tips in mind when searching for a cache:

1. **Have a buddy with you!** Never go off into the woods or remote locations without a partner, especially when Geocaching. We don't want you focusing on your GPS unit and walking off a cliff.
2. Many of the caches are off-trail, so make sure to **be aware of your surroundings**. If you're concentrating on your GPS unit, look around you occasionally for holes, bears, etc.
3. **Bring and drink plenty of water**, and don't drink directly from a stream or lake!
4. **Let someone know where you're going** and when you're coming back.

Step 3 – The Hunt

Now you're ready for the hunt.

1. It should be pretty straightforward to get within a mile or so from the cache (unless it's deep off-trail). If you've done your research, **follow the map more than the GPS unit** (although we keep ours on the whole time). It's inevitable that you'll lose signal from overhanging trees, mountains, etc.
2. It's always good to **have a compass on hand** if your GPS unit doesn't have one.
3. **Mark your starting point as a waypoint!** Sounds silly, but once you get deep into the cache hunt, it's easy to get disoriented. We've learned this from experience!
4. When you get close to the Geocache (within 300 feet, which is the length of a football field), make sure to **check your GPS unit signal**. Sometimes the signal will have an error between 25-200 feet. Don't concentrate as much on the arrow as the distance decreasing, as you get closer to the site.
5. For the last 30 feet, **use a compass** or direct your buddy in the direction of the cache. In some cases we've had good luck circling the site with the GPS unit to get a good area to search.
6. The final 30-100 feet is the hardest. It helps to **think like the person who hid the cache**. If there are stumps around, investigate around the base. Check for a pile of rocks. Some stashes, especially in people-trafficked areas, are pretty ingeniously hidden, so it helps to know the container they used.

Step 4 – The Find

Huzzah! You found the cache! Congratulations! Now what?

1. Usually you **take an item and leave an item**, and enter your name and experience you had into the log book. Some people prefer to just enter their name into the log book. It's an accomplishment enough to locate the cache.
2. Make sure to **seal the cache and place it back where you found it**. If it had some rocks covering it, please replace them. It's pretty straightforward.
3. **Remember that waypoint** we suggested you create where your car/trail was located? Use that now to get back! You'll be glad you had it.
4. When you get home (or get back to the administration building), **log your find** on the Twin Valley council website at <http://www.twinvalleybsa.org/geocaching> let them us you found it! We're always happy to know the condition of their cache and it's nice to know that people are looking for them.
5. Go to www.geocaching.com, and search for your next cache off-camp! There are at least 37 caches within 20 miles of Cross Lake!

Great work! After several trips to geocaches in your area, you'll be ready to place your own. Welcome to the exciting world of Geocaching!

Cuyuna Scout Camp Geocache #1

Traditional Cache



All Scouting Stuff

By Greg Hasse and family

N 46° 42.040 W 094° 02.037

UTM:

Hidden: 10/20/2006

(ratings out of 5 stars. 1 is easiest, 5 is hardest)

Difficulty: 1.5 Terrain: 1.5

Cache is within Cuyuna Scout Camp. All caches start from the Administrative building.

Cache is a green metal 50 cal ammo box with log book, pencil, and a bunch of small Scouting stuff for trading.

Additional Hints

1. Elbow your way here
2. Right Angle Tree
3. EVTYE NATYR GERR

Decryption Key
A|B|C|D|E|F|G|H|I|J|K|L|M

N|O|P|Q|R|S|T|U|V|W|X|Y|Z
(letter above equals below,
and vice versa)

Reference locations:

- Admin building
- Family camp
-

Cuyuna Scout Camp Geocache #2

Traditional Cache



Monsters

By Greg Hasse and family

N 46° 41.922 W 094° 2.742

UTM:

Hidden: 10/20/2006

(ratings out of 5 stars. 1 is easiest, 5 is hardest)

Difficulty: 2.5 Terrain: 2.5

Cache is within Cuyuna Scout Camp. All caches start from the Administrative building.

Cache is a green metal 50 cal ammo box with log book, pencil, and a bunch of small "Monster" related trinkets for trading.

Additional Hints

1. Poplars & Pines
2. Twin Trees
3. SHMML TERRA GERR

Decryption Key
A|B|C|D|E|F|G|H|I|J|K|L|M

N|O|P|Q|R|S|T|U|V|W|X|Y|Z
(letter above equals below,
and vice versa)

Reference locations:

- Admin building
- Family camp
-

Cuyuna Scout Camp Geocache #3

Traditional Cache



Fun and Games

By Greg Hasse and family

N 46° 42.438 W 094° 2.341

UTM:

Hidden: 10/20/2006

(ratings out of 5 stars. 1 is easiest, 5 is hardest)

Difficulty: 3.5 Terrain: 2.5

Cache is within Cuyuna Scout Camp. All caches start from the Administrative building.

Cache is a green metal 50 cal ammo box with log book, pencil, and a bunch of small games and toys for trading.

Additional Hints

1. Look where the raccoons would live
2. Parent pines with babies
3. HAQRE GUR FGHZC
4. SYRPURF JBBQF

Decryption Key
A|B|C|D|E|F|G|H|I|J|K|L|M

N|O|P|Q|R|S|T|U|V|W|X|Y|Z
(letter above equals below,
and vice versa)

Reference locations:

- Admin building
- Family camp
-

Cuyuna Scout Camp Geocache #4

Traditional Cache



The Beast!

By Greg Hasse and family

N 46° 42.138 W 094° 2.806

UTM:

Hidden: 10/20/2006

(ratings out of 5 stars. 1 is easiest, 5 is hardest)

Difficulty: 3.5 Terrain: 4.5

Cache is within Cuyuna Scout Camp. All caches start from the Administrative building.

Cache is a green metal 50 cal ammo box with log book, pencil, and a bunch of small plastic beasts for trading.

Additional Hints

1. Lake (swamp) view
2. In the hand of the beast master
3. QBJA GUR UVYY

Decryption Key
A|B|C|D|E|F|G|H|I|J|K|L|M

N|O|P|Q|R|S|T|U|V|W|X|Y|Z
(letter above equals below,
and vice versa)

Reference locations:

- Admin building
- Family camp
-

(This page should be included within the geocache. Please inform ranger if missing.)

GEOCACHE SITE - PLEASE READ

Congratulations, you've found it! Intentionally or not!

What is this hidden container sitting here for? What is this thing doing here with all these things in it?

It is part of a worldwide game dedicated to GPS (Global Positioning System) users, called Geocaching. The game basically involves a GPS user hiding "treasure" (this container and its contents), and publishing the exact coordinates so other GPS users can come on a "treasure hunt" to find it. The only rules are: **if you take something from the cache, you must leave something for the cache, and you must write about your visit in the logbook.** Hopefully, the person that hid this container found a good spot that is not easily found by uninterested parties. Sometimes, a good spot turns out to be a bad spot, though.

IF YOU FOUND THIS CONTAINER BY ACCIDENT:

Great! You are welcome to join us! We ask only that you:

Please do not move or vandalize the container. The real treasure is just finding the container and sharing your thoughts with everyone else who finds it.

If you wish, go ahead and take something. But please also leave something of your own for others to find, and write it in the logbook.

If possible, let us know that you found it, by visiting the web site listed below.

Geocaching is open to everyone with a GPS and a sense of adventure. There are similar sites all over the world. The organization has its home on the Internet. Visit our website if you want to learn more, or have any comments:

<http://www.geocaching.com>

If this container needs to be removed for any reason, please let us know. We apologize, and will be happy to move it.



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Cuyuna has at least 4 caches hidden – have you found them all?