



FOREST SERVICE MANUAL SOUTHERN REGION (REGION 8) ATLANTA, GA

FSM 2700 – SPECIAL USES MANAGEMENT CHAPTER 2720 – SPECIAL USES ADMINISTRATION

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Approved: CHARLES L. MYERS, Regional Forester **Date Approved:** 03/20/2006

2724.44 - Treasure Hunting

1. This designation includes the temporary placement of personal property for the purpose of geo-caching. 36 CFR 261.10(a) requires a special use authorization for occupancy and use of National Forest system land. This is further supported by 36 CFR 261.10(e) that prohibits abandoning personal property on National Forest system land.

2. Screen proposals to locate traditional (physical) caches using 36 CFR 251.54. Authorize traditional caches on FS 2700-5 Temporary Special Use Permit. The GPS coordinates of the caches must be included on the permit. Charge the regional minimum fee.

3. Traditional cache containers shall not exceed 12” on any side (height, width, or depth). Containers must be non-breakable, animal resistant, and have a closing mechanism to prohibit content exposure to wildlife and the environment. Containers must be permanently marked with the Holder’s permit ID, Name, address, and telephone number. Caches may not contain food, alcohol, tobacco, weapons of any type, fireworks, drugs, or other similar items. Caches may not be buried or hidden under water. Caches may not be placed in dangerous, inappropriate, or protected areas and habitats.

4. Virtual caches do not require an authorization. A virtual cache is a physical object that can be referenced through latitude and longitude. A virtual cache could be a geologic or unique feature or unusual landmark. Encourage use of virtual caches opposed to traditional caches.

5. Activities similar to geo-caching (for example, GPS Stash Hunt, Benchmark Hunting, Letterboxing, Geo-Poker) shall be administered in accordance with Geo-caching. Competitive events involving a participation fee will be authorized as a recreation event.

6. The activity of searching for geo-caches is a personal recreation pursuit and does not require an authorization.

7. Forests may adopt more restrictive policy on geocaching activities, such as restricting geocaching to virtual caches only.