GEOCACHE/LETTERBOX PROCEDURES

All proposed locations will be evaluated by the Conservation District staff for the following:

- Sensitivity to the area
- Land classification (recreation, dedicated nature preserve, restoration, Historic, etc)
- Potential impact on the habitat
- Current development or restoration plans
- Public safety
- Other issues related to the site

**Cache from here on out refers to both geocaches and letterboxes**

In order to be approved, the geocache/letterbox must meet the following requirements:

1. Prior to placing a cache, the District’s Main Office must be contacted for pre-approval. This can be done by phone, e-mail or a letter. A picture of the cache container in any camouflage to be used must also be submitted. Once the cache location and container has been initially approved, the proper paperwork will be sent to you to fill out.
   - It is understood to complete the paperwork you will need the exact coordinates of the cache.
   - After prior permission has been given, you will be given a District identification label and you may place the cache in the approved area in order to complete the paperwork.
   - The paperwork will be sent for approval from the Chief of Police, Land & Facilities Manager and the Natural Resource Management Manager. Once approved by all three managers, you will receive a copy; then you may post it on the geocaching website.

2. Location must be given to the office with coordinates and a general description. Personal information of the individual placing it must be provided and all blanks on the paperwork must be filled out.

3. The location can only be in an area open to the public and no more then 12 feet from a designated trail.

4. The container can be no greater than 4”x8”x12” but may be smaller in size.
   - Specialty containers or containers using camouflage must be pre-approved by submitting a picture of the container
   - All containers will be required to have a District label affixed to the outside of the container. Labels will be provided by the District and mailed to the cache requester upon approval of the container.

5. There is a limit of 3 caches per District site. Certain sites, due to their size, will be allowed to have 6 caches. The current sites where more caches are allowed consist of Glacial Park, Coral Woods, Pleasant Valley, Marengo Ridge, Rush Creek, The Hollows and Stickney Run.
6. Caches must be 0.10 miles apart. Geocaches and letterboxes cannot occupy the same spot.
7. Certain sites are closed for geocaching. Geocaches are not to be placed on designated nature trails.
8. Geocaches may not contain food items, inappropriate, offensive or hazardous materials.
9. Geocaches may not be buried and no vegetation or natural features disturbed in any manner.
10. In addition, the geocache may not be affixed to any natural feature (rock, tree, stump, root, etc) in any manner. This does not stop anyone from hiding caches under logs, in tree holes, in or under downed trees, in brush, under brush, etc – it is simply meant from stopping individuals from permanently or temporarily attaching a cache to an object.
11. Caches may not be attached to any man-made structure with the exception for magnetic caches
   - Magnetic caches will be allowed as long as a picture of the container and what the cache will be attached to is provided.
   - Magnetic caches will not be placed under any bridges, buildings or attached to any electrical boxes, pipes or other mechanical structures.
   - Cache types commonly referred to as “light pole caches” (lpc) will not be allowed.
12. No geocaches shall be hidden or sought after sunset, even if the individual has a camping permit or is otherwise allowed to be on site overnight for any reason.
13. All geocaches must be removed by the end of the year or renewed prior to the beginning of the next calendar year. All caches not renewed will be removed.
14. The individual placing the geocache is responsible for removing the cache from the geocache web site if it is removed for any reason.
15. The following information must be placed on the geocache website notice:
   - The geocache is on McHenry County Conservation District land with permission.
   - Do not place the following items in the cache: food, inappropriate, offensive, or hazardous materials.
   - Absolutely no cutting of brush or other vegetation is allowed.
   - Visitors must remain on designated trails.
   - It is the visitor’s responsibility to orient themselves with the rules of the District site.
   - Sites are open sunrise to sunset, however some gates may not open until 8am.
   - At certain times of the year, sites will close for a variety of reasons- it is illegal and dangerous to enter at these times.
16. The District is not responsible for any lost or stolen caches.

**NOTE:** Through management procedures, caches may be inadvertently burned, mowed, or destroyed. The District is not liable for damaged caches.
17. Non-registered caches or caches violating any other rules will be removed by District staff.
18. Any violation of these procedures may result in all permitted caches being removed and any future caches being denied.