ROYAL CANADIAN ARMY CADETS

GOLD STAR

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

SECTION 5

EO C422.02 – CREATE A GEOCACHE

Total Time: 30 min

PREPARATION

PRE-LESSON INSTRUCTIONS

Resources needed for the delivery of this lesson are listed in the lesson specification located in A-CR-CCP-704/PG-001, *Gold Star Qualification Standard and Plan*, Chapter 4. Specific uses for said resources are identified throughout the instructional guide within the TP for which they are required.

Review the lesson content and become familiar with the material prior to delivering the lesson.

Photocopy the Stash a Cache Record and Report Form located at Attachment A for each cadet.

Visit www.geocaching.com and print the information sheet of a geocache in the local area for use in TP 3.

PRE-LESSON ASSIGNMENT

Nil.

APPROACH

An interactive lecture was chosen for this lesson to introduce the cadet to creating a geocache.

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

The review for this lesson is from EO C422.01 (Locate a Geocache).

QUESTIONS:

Q1. What is geocaching?

Q2. When did geocaching originate?

Q3. What equipment is required to geocache?

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ANTICIPATED ANSWERS:

A1. Geocaching is a worldwide activity where one person establishes a cache and posts its location for others to find. Participants load the coordinates of the cache into their GPS receiver, and then use it to find the cache.

A2. Geocaching originated in May 2000.

A3. A GPS receiver and geocache coordinates are all that is required to geocache.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson the cadet shall be able to create a geocache.

IMPORTANCE

It is important for cadets to create a geocache. Cadets who participate in expeditions may come across unique places that they would consider a location many people would enjoy visiting. Being able to establish a geocache will allow others to seek out and find their unique location.

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Teaching point 1 **Identify factors to consider when selecting a container to store a geocache.**

Time: 5 min Method: Interactive Lecture

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GEOCACHE STORAGE CONTAINER

Creating a geocache requires careful planning. The geocache contains items that will have to be stored inside the container and must be able to withstand environmental conditions.

Durability

The type of container used to store a geocache should be based on the location. Considerations should include human traffic and environmental conditions, such as:

- deep cold,
- freezing,
- rapid thawing,
- rain, and
- extreme heat.

The contents of a geocache have to be protected from the environment in a waterproof container. Items can be placed inside a plastic bag within a container that is not waterproof but this is not recommended.

Size

Location can determine the size of a geocache. Urban geocaches are usually smaller, allowing the creator to hide them from the general passerby. Larger geocaches are generally placed in rural or wilderness locations. There is no set size of a geocache, but the standard that has been established reflects the following:

Micro. Tiny in size; roughly the size of a matchbox or 35-mm film canister.



Note. From "Shop Groundspeak," by Groundspeak, 2008, Micro-Cache Capsule. Copyright 2000–2008 by Groundspeak, Inc. Retrieved March 18, 2009, from http://shop.groundspeak.com/productDetail.cfm?CategoryID=13&ProductID=47

Figure 1 Micro Key Chain Cache

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Small. Large enough to hold a small logbook; similar to the size of a small butter container (250–500 mL) or slightly larger.



Note. From "Shop Groundspeak," by Groundspeak, 2008, Small Cache Stone. Copyright 2000–2008 by Groundspeak, Inc Retrieved March 18, 2009, from http://shop.groundspeak.com/productDetail.cfm?CategoryID=13&ProductID=24

Figure 2 Small Cache Stone

Regular. Plastic storage containers and ammo boxes (30–50 cal) are considered regular size. They are able to store most items, large or small, and contain a large log book.



Note. From "Shop Groundspeak," by Groundspeak, 2008, Pelican Cache Container–Medium. Copyright 2000–2008 by Groundspeak, Inc. Retrieved March 18, 2009, from http://shop.groundspeak.com/productDetail.cfm?CategoryID=13&ProductID=131

Figure 3 Pelican Cache Container–Medium

Large. This container is the size of a 19-L (5-gallon) bucket or fuel can.

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Colour

Containers can be any colour, but since the point of geocaching is to locate a hidden treasure, it is common to have the geocache coloured to blend in with the surrounding environment. Depending on the terrain and vegetation, olive and black are good colours for camouflage.



Note. From "BB," by BBC, 2005, Photo Galleries. Retrieved March 17, 2009, from http:// www.bbc.co.uk/wiltshire/content/image_galleries/wiltshire_05_year_in_pixs_gallery.shtml?6

Figure 4 Geocache Container

CONTENTS OF A GEOCACHE

Visitor Register

Every geocache contains a visitor register or log. It allows people to record their success in finding the cache and leave a comment for others. The size of the cache will affect the size of the register. The register may be a small scroll or a large notebook. Some cache hiders paste their logo or some other graphic on the cover of the visitor register.

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When creating a geocache, seek approval from the unit commanding officer to place the corps crest or logo on the register. If one is not available, seek approval to use the Royal Canadian Army Cadets Corps (RCACC) Crest or the Canadian Cadet Movement (CCM) logo (as illustrated in Figures 5 and 6).



Note. Created by 2562 Queen Elizabeth Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps. Retrieved March 17, 2009, from http://2562army.zapto.org

Figure 5 Sample Corps Crest



Note. Created by Director Cadets 3, 2009, Ottawa, ON: Department of National Defence.

Figure 6 Royal Canadian Army Cadets Crest

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Note. Created by Director Cadets 3, 2009, Ottawa, ON: Department of National Defence.

Figure 7 Cadets Canada

Pen or Pencil

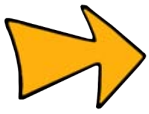
Allows other geocachers to write in the register about their discovery and share their experience with others. Pencils are the best option to place in the geocache as ink will freeze in the cold.

Trinkets or Treasures

These act as a reward for the visiting person. These items should be unique and interesting. They can include pins, medals, coins, pictures, etc. Geocaching is a family sport so put a mix of things that appeal to both young and old participants. There should be no need to continuously replace the trinkets, as geocachers should trade with the contents that have been initially placed in the cache. There is no specific requirement to fill the container with trinkets, but most caches have between 6–12 small items.

Resealable Plastic Bag

The container used should be waterproof but there is always the possibility the container may get damaged or left open. Store items that will be affected by moisture (eg, register, pen and treasures) inside the resealable bag.



If extra space is available inside the geocache container, include a few extra resealable bags in case the ones being used become damaged.

Identifying Information

The cache should have some information that identifies it as a geocache. There are two types of identifying information that can be found at a geocache:

Geocache information sheet. Describes what geocaching is and provides instructions to the finder (as illustrated in Figure 8). The geocaching.com website has this sheet available in a number of different languages. Laminating this sheet is a good idea. Be sure to record the geocache's name and its coordinates.

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GEOCACHE SITE–PLEASE READ

Geocache Name:_____

Coordinates:_____

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

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

It is part of a worldwide game dedicated to Global Positioning System (GPS) 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 visitor register. Hopefully, the person who 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:

- 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 visitor register.
- If possible, let us know that you found it, by visiting the website 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.

Note. Created by Director Cadets 3, 2009, Ottawa, ON: Department of National Defence.

Figure 8 Geocache Information Sheet

Official geocache label. Identifies the container as a geocache. It provides the name of the geocache, contact name and contact information, (as illustrated in Figure 9). It is not required to place this information on the container, but it helps reduce the chances of someone thinking it may be dangerous. It should be placed on the outside of the container, and be visible and waterproof.

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Geocaches registered with www.geocaching.com shall have an official geocaching label affixed to it. Contact information and the website with information pertaining to the geocache must be listed.



Note. Created by Director Cadets 3, 2009, Ottawa, ON: Department of National Defence.

Figure 9 Official Geocache Label

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 1

QUESTIONS:

Q1. What factors should be considered when selecting a geocache container?

Q2. The size of a geocache container sets a limit on what?

Q3. What are some of the items that can be place in a geocache?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS:

A1. The durability, size and colour are the factors that should be considered when selecting a geocache container.

A2. The size of a geocache container limits the amount of items and treasures that can be placed in the container.

A3. Items that can be placed in a geocache are:

- visitor register,
- pen or pencil,
- trinkets or treasures,
- resealable plastic bag, and
- identifying information.

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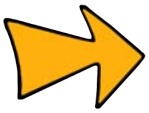
Teaching point 2 **Describe geocache locations.**

Time: 10 min Method: Interactive Lecture

GEOCACHE LOCATIONS

A geocache location should offer a unique challenge or experience for the finder. What some might consider an easy cache might present exciting challenges for others. Guidelines exist when determining where geocaches should / should not be located.



The location of a cache defines its success and popularity; location is like marketing—make it appeal to people.

Locations a Geocache Should Be Placed

In the vicinity of a unique feature. Locating a place that has a unique feature will be interesting and attractive to geocachers.

In a location where there is incredible scenery or a gorgeous view. Geocachers enjoy visiting places that have a great view. Not every geocacher is going to look for a difficult challenge; searching for a scenic site with little difficulty will be just as rewarding to some.

In a location that provides a significant challenge. Geocaches that are challenging to find or difficult to get to are popular.

Locations a Geocache Should Not Be Placed

Underground. Covering a geocache with some leaves or branches is okay but burying a geocache is not acceptable. Geocaches are not to be dug up as if they were pirate booty.

Environmentally sensitive areas. Archaeological sites, historic sites and fragile environments are areas that have been deemed out of bounds and should not be disturbed.

National parks or designated wilderness areas. These areas are protected from human traffic. Placing a geocache here is not acceptable in the geocaching community.

Within 46 m (150 feet) of railroad tracks. For safety reasons, geocaches are not to be placed near railroads.

Anywhere that might cause concerns about possible terrorist activities. Since the terrorist attacks in the United States of America (USA), people have become wary of strange objects, containers, and cases. When selecting a site for a geocache, give consideration to what others, who are not playing the game, may think if they come across the cache. Try to avoid placing caches near, on or under public structures. These may include, but are not limited to highway bridges, dams, government buildings, elementary and secondary schools, and airports.

Within 160 m (one tenth of a mile) of another geocache. Placing a geocache in close proximity of another could become confusing over time. Research the location online to determine there is no other geocaches close by. This is geocaching etiquette.

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CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 2

QUESTIONS:

Q1. What makes a geocache attractive for others to visit?

Q2. Where should geocaches not be placed?

Q3. Why should geocaches not be placed near government buildings or public structures?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS:

A1. Geocachers like to find caches in locations that have some unique features or incredible scenery and that are challenging to navigate.

A2. Geocaches should not be placed:

- underground,
- in environmentally sensitive areas,
- in national parks or designated wilderness areas,
- within 46 m (150 feet) of railroad tracks,
- anywhere that might cause concerns about possible terrorist activities, and
- within 160 m (one-tenth of a mile) of another geocache.

A3. People who do not understand the game may mistake a geocache for something dangerous.

Teaching point 3 **Identify how to submit a geocache to a website.**

Time: 10 min Method: Interactive Lecture

ACCESSING GEOCACHE WEBSITES

Search the Internet to locate websites that post geocaches. There is no cost associated with most geocache websites. Websites have rules and guidelines to follow when submitting a geocache.



The website www.geocaching.com is one of the most popular geocaching websites.

REGISTERING THE GEOCACHE BY SUBMITTING THE GEOCACHE INFORMATION



Distribute the Stash a Cache Record & Report Form located at Attachment A to each cadet. This is the information a website requires to post a geocache.

Show the cadets the information sheet of the geocache in the local area printed from www.geocaching.com

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Log on to a website and begin the process for submitting a cache. The site should guide cadets through the process with an online form about the geocache. The contents of the form will vary from site to site; however, the information below is some of the common information that would be submitted when posting a geocache.

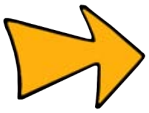
Geocache type. There are many types of geocaches, including traditional (a single container), multi-cache (clues to one or more other caches in a single cache point), virtual (a location that does not have a container), and letterbox (clues are listed instead of coordinates). When submitting information, the type of geocache will have to be identified.

Geocache size. Can be from a micro size (35-mm film canister) to a large size (19-L bucket). Reference the website form and select the size of the geocache.

Nickname. The name of the geocache.

Date placed. Commonly written as mm/dd/yyyy.

Coordinates. The standard system used is latitude and longitude.



When inputting latitude and longitude coordinates and switching to Military Grid Reference System (MGRS), the original coordinates will automatically change.

Location. Lists the province and country.

Difficulty rating. Typically based on a scale from one to five: one being easy and five being hard. The scale is often developed by the host website; when filling out this information, consult their rating system.

Terrain rating. Typically based on a scale from one to five: one being easy and five being hard. The scale is often developed by the host website; when filling out this information, consult their rating system.

Short description. Provides the geocacher with location information, such as terrain, general difficulty levels, and altitudes.

Long description. Provides details about the geocache, including contents and what the container looks like.

Trackable items. These items are placed as treasures. The requirement of the finder is to report online back to the creator of the geocache, and comment that they have located their trackable treasure and will follow up when they place the item in another geocache. The item will continue to get tracked as it is passed from geocache to geocache**.**

MAINTAINING THE GEOCACHE

Servicing a Geocache

Once a geocache has been established it becomes the responsibility of the creator to maintain the cache. This means visiting the cache periodically to verify that it is still there and in the same condition. The cache may need to be resupplied with little trinkets and treasures. If the site seems like it is being disturbed or damaged, consider moving the geocache or removing the geocache entirely. If one determines they no longer want to manage the geocache, it must be entirely removed from the location and the website.

Overseeing Posted Blogs

The geocache created will hopefully be visited by many people. By registering the geocache online, the website(s) will allow visitors to submit a blog (small note) on the geocache visited. It is the responsibility of the geocache creator to ensure the blogs posted are legitimate and to determine if the entry is a true or false report.

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CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 3

QUESTIONS:

Q1. What website is the most popular website for geocaching?

Q2. What does the scale of terrain difficulty explain?

Q3. Who is responsible to maintain a geocache?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS:

A1. The most popular website for geocaching is www.geocaching.com

A2. The scale of terrain difficulty describes the rating system used to determine how difficult the terrain is when traveling to the geocache; one being easy and five being hard.

A3. The creator of the geocache is responsible to maintain it.

END OF LESSON CONFIRMATION

QUESTIONS:

Q1. What website is the most popular website for geocaching?

Q2. What kinds of items are located inside a geocache?

Q3. In what type of coordinates would a geocache usually be recorded?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS:

A1. The most popular website for geocaching is www.geocaching.com

A2. The items placed in a geocache should be unique and interesting. They can include pins, medals, coins, and pictures.

A3. The coordinates would usually be recorded in latitude and longitude.

CONCLUSION

HOMEWORK / READING / PRACTICE

Nil.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Nil.

CLOSING STATEMENT

GPS technology is a very accurate way to navigate from point to point. Geocashing is one of the fastest ways to get real-world experience with a GPS receiver. This sport is a fun and challenging activity that combines modern technologies with outdoor navigation skills.

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INSTRUCTOR NOTES / REMARKS

Print a list of local geocaches from a website (eg, www.geocaching.com) illustrating the information from an established geocache.

EO C422.01 (Locate a Geocache) shall be completed prior to conducting this lesson.

Time has not been allocated during this lesson for the cadets to create a geocache. A geocaching activity has been developed as an option in EO C422.06 (Practice Navigation as a Member of a Small Group). Corps are strongly encouraged to use these complementary periods to create and locate geocaches.

REFERENCES

C2-142 ISBN 0-7645-6933-3 McNamara, J. (2004). *GPS for dummies*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Publishing, Inc.

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STASH A CACHE
Record and Report Form

GEOCACHE TYPE	
	eg, Traditional, Multi or Letterbox.
GEOCACHE SIZE	
	eg, Micro, Small, Regular or Large.

NICKNAME	

DATE PLACED MM/DD/YYYY	

COORDINATES	Latitude & Longitude Degrees and Minutes N _____ ° _____ `  W _____ ° _____ `	MGRS Grid Zone Designator _____ 100 000-m Square Identifier_____ 10-Figure GR: E_____ N _____

LOCATION	

DIFFICULTY RATING (select one)	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4	4.5	5
TERRAIN RATING (select one)	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4	4.5	5

SHORT DESCRIPTION	Provide the geocacher with location information, such as terrain, general difficulty levels and altitudes.

LONG DESCRIPTION	Provide details about the cache, including contents of the cache and what the container looks like.

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