

Around The State



August 2016

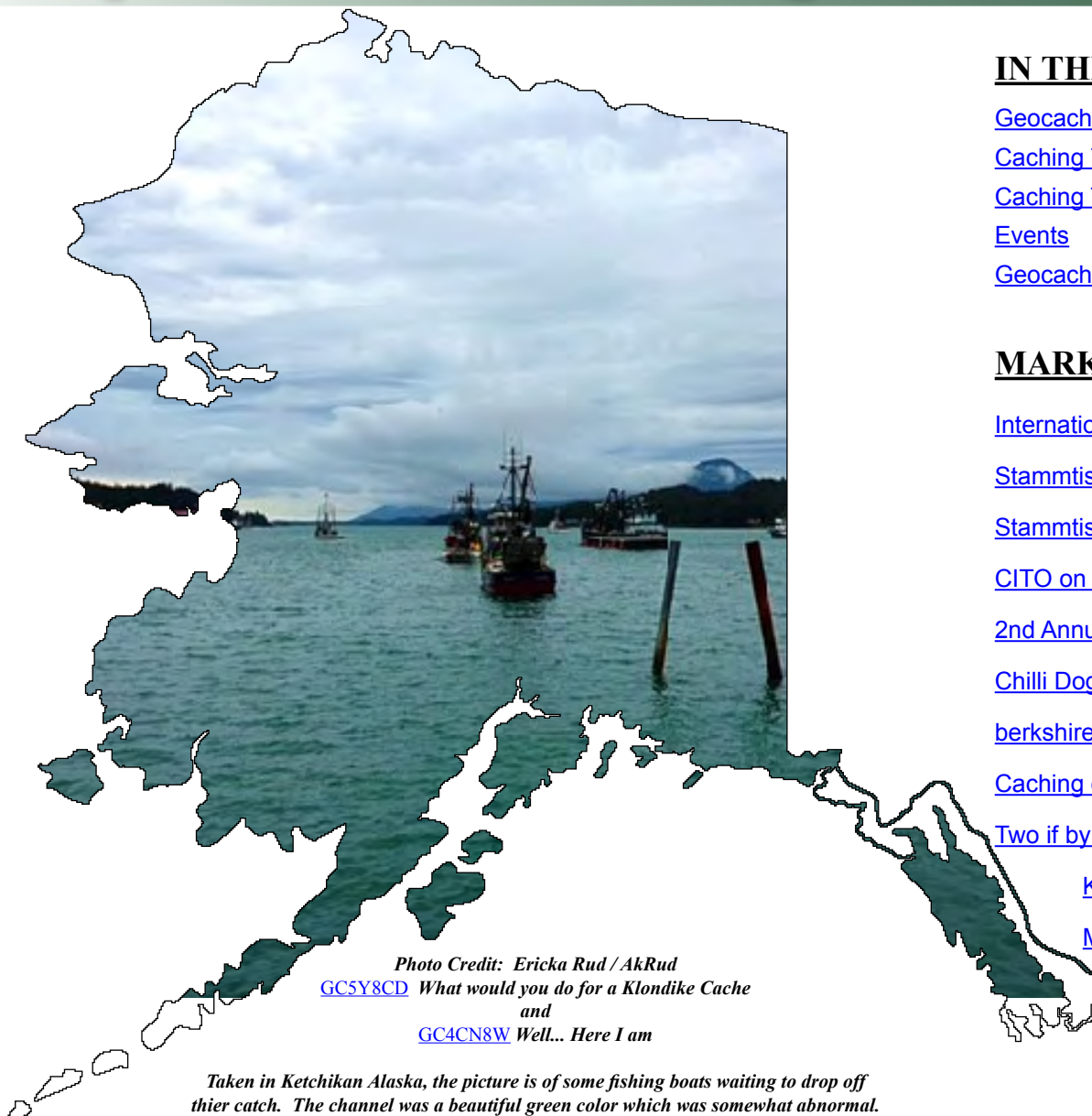


Photo Credit: [Erica Rud / AkRud](#)
[GCSY8CD](#) What would you do for a Klondike Cache
and
[GC4CN8W](#) Well... Here I am

Taken in Ketchikan Alaska, the picture is of some fishing boats waiting to drop off their catch. The channel was a beautiful green color which was somewhat abnormal.

IN THIS ISSUE

[GeocacheAlaska! Updates](#)
[Caching Tricks, Tips, & Tools](#)
[Caching Travelogues](#)
[Events](#)
[GeocacheAlaska! Information](#)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

[International Beer Day \(Stammtisch\)](#), August 7, 7pm, Anchorage
[Stammtisch Coffee Master](#), August 10, 6:30pm, Anchorage
[Stammtisch 7 Summer Reunion](#), August 11, 6:30pm, Anchorage
[CITO on C street](#), August 13, 10am, Anchorage
[2nd Annual Meet-n-Sniff](#), August 14, 3pm, Anchorage
[Chilli Dog Chill Out II](#), August 14, 4pm, Anchorage
[berkshire geobash meet greet](#), August 16, 4pm, Anchorage
[Caching on The Kenai - 8th Annual Picnic](#), August 20, 10:30am, Kenai
[Two if by Sea](#), August 20, 5pm, Anchorage
[Ketch Me If You Kan](#), August 25, 11:30am, Ketchikan
[Meet & Greet at Denali](#), August 30, 6:30pm, Denali

GeocacheAlaska! Updates

President's Corner

By Wes Skinner / NorthWes



We've had one of the warmest summers on record across all of Alaska, and it's made getting outdoors to hunt for geocaches a real delight. In fact, I've noticed my own caches needing log replacements at a higher rate than in the past thanks to all the folks making finds – something I'm really appreciating. As you make plans to enjoy this summer with your GPS in hand, take time to bring along a few 'cache repair items' like small baggies, replacement logs, and small pencils that can be used to 'freshen-up' a cache you might visit that needs some TLC. Don't be shy about cleaning a cache out of swag that doesn't belong or is ruined by exposure, either. Community care of cache placements helps keep the game fun for everyone, new or experienced alike. And – remember that land managers and fellow citizens appreciate our CITO practices as well – be seen picking up and hauling out trash off the public lands where we're privileged to play our game.

One of the best article series found in our newsletter is written by our very own Greatland Reviewer, and I strongly encourage you to take time to absorb the information contained in each issue's article. In fact, if there's one place to read for developing your caching skills this article series is it. Remember that all the back issues of our newsletter are available on our freshly-updated website at geocachealaska.org (itself **THE** top place to visit for learning more about geocaching in Alaska!). Nearly every frustration, mistake, bad experience, or wrong way to do something has had '**preventive guidance**' provided in the Greatland Reviewer article series, making them worth every moment you spend poring over them.

Just around the corner is our annual elections effort, where we seek persons willing to serve their fellow Alaskan cachers as members of the GeocacheAlaska! Inc. Board of Directors. We're interested in members from all areas of the state and all levels of experience, with the primary qualifications being a desire to dedicate time and energy to building up the game across the entire state. If you're interested, or have an individual to suggest for nomination, contact our Vice President by email at vicepresident@geocachealaska.org with details.

Membership Renewal Reminder!

Don't forget to renew your GeocacheAlaska! membership. Renewal/sign up information is always available on the last page of the newsletter, or on the GeocacheAlaska! website. Membership has its bonuses: make sure you're paid up and your membership is active. We are currently working on a membership giveback item! Don't miss out - make sure you're paid up today!

Save a stamp and renew your membership or join [GeocacheAlaska! online](#) today using your PayPal account or a major credit card. Alternatively, you may [click here](#) to download a printable membership form to mail. GeocacheAlaska!, Inc. is a not for profit 501(c)(3) organization, so your membership fee qualifies as a tax deductible donation.

Sourdough Members enjoy voting rights, are eligible for event and merchandise discounts, and can set up a geocachealaska.org email address. Download and read the [by-laws](#) (86k pdf) for more details. All paid Sourdough Members will be issued an official GeocacheAlaska! trackable Sourdough Nametag! To see these trackables in action, take a look at our [current member's traveling tags!](#) Sourdough memberships are now a rolling 12-month period based on your initial sign up date. (Unless you are on PayPal autopay subscription, you will receive a renewal notice near the beginning of the anniversary month of your initial membership with dues payable by the end of that month.)

Cheechako Memberships are free and allow you to "try before you buy" to see what the organization is all about. Adding your name to our membership list helps with negotiating park permits. Cheechako Memberships are available by printing and mailing the membership application form, or you scanning the form (or a legible picture of it) and emailing it to the [Secretary](#).



GeocacheAlaska! Updates

New Monthly Giveaway for paid Sourdough Members

By: Sean Gaither / FTL-AK

So the GeocacheAlaska! Board voted to increase member support, and we will have a monthly giveaway for all paid members of GeocacheAlaska! Why are we doing this? We are doing this to provide some added value to your membership. I will be providing a list of who won on the newsletter for the year so everyone can see. Will it be you?

Rules:

1. Only paid GeocacheAlaska! Members are allowed to participate. I have that list and will look at it monthly so no need to do anything except keep your membership current!
 2. You can only win 1 time per Calendar Year Jan-Dec per name – sorry, family accounts with 5 users you only pay for one membership so you will only have one name in the drawing.
 3. If you became a paid member in any month you are immediately available to be in that month's drawing.
 4. All prizes are selected by the board and are not available to be changed or traded for something else. If you don't like your free prize you are more than welcome to place it in a Geocache for a FTF prize! Or I can give you my home address...
 5. All prizes will be shipped or hand delivered to our members. This will be paid for by us and not you. Please make sure we have the most up to date info when you renew your membership.
 6. If available, a picture of the winner with the prize will be posted in the newsletter. If I can't get a photo of me handing you the item I will make sure to provide a photo of the item so everyone can see what amazing item or items you got!
- March Winner: Meljo won a Limited edition Dutch Windmill Trackable.
 - April Winner: Braveladd won a 15 Year Spinner Geocaching Coin.
 - May Winner: Polgera won a 15 year Road Trip Crew coin!
 - June Winner: twinkywalks won a Lego Ammo Can Cache Container. *some assembly required*.
 - July Winner: MamaMouse won a 2015 Geocaching Lacey geo coin!

The August Winner is slatrat who won a set of the 7 deadly ducks!

Make sure your membership is paid: it's the only thing you have to do to be entered to win!



Fundraising Committee

The Fundraising Committee is looking for fun and creative people. You're invited to join us and see what its all about. Join us Wednesday, September 17 from 5:30pm to 6:30pm at Starbucks across from Target on 100th and C Street.

If you're unable to make this one but, are interested in joining us in the future, please send Sean / [FTL – AK](#) a message and he will make sure to keep you in the loop.

GeocacheAlaska! T-shirts

T-Shirts have been ordered!!! Thank you for the 121 Shirt orders! Geocache-Alaska! is very excited to get them to you as soon as we get them/ They are currently being made!

Editor's Note

By Cathy Wilmeth / [The_Firefly](#)

Submission deadline for the next issue of *Around The State*:

August 20, 2016

I'm happy to help with any questions or concerns you may have about submitting! Send to editor@geocachealaska.org

Caching Tricks, Tips, and Tools

Reviewer's Corner

By Michael Malvick / Greatland Reviewer

DNFs, Throwdowns, & Urban Caching

Cachers are again reminded the proper protocol to follow is when a cache is not found, is to write a "Didn't Find It" (DNF) log should be written. A "throwdown" or replacement cache is NOT to be placed (unless the Cache Owner is in agreement AND the cacher knows where the replacement container should go), nor should a Needs Maintenance log should be written (the seeker can't possibly know if a cache needs maintenance if they didn't see it, touch it, open it, and or try to sign the full/soggy log sheet).

The DNF log is one of the most useful tools to let Cache Owner and the local Reviewer know the container may be missing. Logging a DNF for very difficult finds is important because it provides the Cache Owner with feedback that the cache is being hunted and builds the cache's history and notoriety. Some cachers say they won't log a DNF unless they have visited the site two or more times, or looked for more than an hour, or some other criteria. However, a DNF log is simply a DNF log. The cacher arrived at ground zero, s/he looked, and either found the cache or didn't find it. There really isn't any between and eliminating the in-between takes care of any ambiguity over which type of log to write. Withholding a DNF very well could delay letting the Cache Owner know the container is missing, which results in a delay in the cache being replaced, which results in cachers continuing to look for what cannot be found.

Replacing a container without consulting the Cache Owner and knowing where the container should go creates a "throwdown" cache. Cachers who place a throwdown cache can create a number of problems. First, they may have placed the second cache in the area, which creates confusion for future visiting cachers. For unfound caches, no end of angst can be created (reference [Kougarok](#), the oldest remaining unfound cache in the Groundspeak database, where two throwdowns have been placed over the years). I am not saying community maintenance of caches with issues should not occur, but it should occur only when there is enough knowledge (from communicating with the Cache Owner or having previously found the cache) to maintain the integrity of the original cache hide.



Cachers are also reminded that when they are in the field, they must be mindful of how their actions will be perceived by non-cachers (muggles) in the area. An urban hide was recently archived after the following report from a local resident was received.

"I have had people breaking my trees, climbing my trees, looking into my yard, disturbing my dogs so they can't play outside, drinking and leaving alcohol bottles on my land, etc...and when I ask them what they are doing, I always get the answer that they are geocaching.

I also have a licensed daycare home. It is against federal regulations to have unauthorized cleared people on the property during daycare hours.

I would like this geocach removed. I think your program is a great way to get people involved in geography, but the destruction of my property and inability to use my front yard needs to stop."

I archived the cache as requested, but did question whether cachers were actually the perps leaving behind the alcohol bottles, explained geocaching's CITO ethic, and suggested that the land owner may have another user group issue. Subsequently, I received this response:

"We've had issues with drinking on the land in the past. This time it was geocachers. I came home to find them wandering up and down my property up near the fence line and alcohol bottles sitting around. When I asked them what they were doing, I was told they were looking for the geocache. I talked to them for a few minutes, and then noticed the bottles sitting around up near my fence... my fence line is up a hill about 18 feet from the edge of the road. I commented on the bottles and was told that they were theirs. It was about 11 PM...complete daylight because of summer. I couldn't even let my dogs play after getting back from our trip out of town because they wouldn't leave until they found it. They were planning to geocache all night. The bottle trash remained in the morning."

Fortunately, this was an isolated incident, but it did give geocaching a black eye in an urban neighborhood. When urban caching, please consider impacts on the residents when caching during late night or early morning hours, leave the area if the local dogs are raising the alarm, pick up your trash (and others'), and act like how you would like others to act if they are visiting your neighborhood.

Caching Travelogues

Oregon's Wild Coast – a Geocacher's Delight

By Wes Skinner / NorthWes

This year's July 4th weekend found me flying out to Portland to join up with Mrs NW for the holiday. Work had taken her south for two weeks over the Fourth, and we hit on a 3-day road trip down a stretch of Oregon's coast during the long weekend as a great way to celebrate our 39th anniversary. One of our favorite drives is Highway 101 along California's central coast, and we hoped Oregon's stretch of Highway 101 would be similar. We weren't disappointed, except that we didn't have enough time to really appreciate most of the 300-plus miles at all. Of course, much of our journey concerned finding earthcaches and caches with lots of favorite points at the scenic locales along the route. And, I'll admit, we reserved plenty of time for romantic stuff along the way too (great restaurants, sleeping in late, walking along beaches hand in hand...)



Enroute to Cannon Beach from Portland, we found a large cache container located at the site of the largest Sitka Spruce in the United States – adjectives don't begin to describe the



sheer massiveness of this tree. It whet our appetite for trying to find areas down the coast where logging hadn't taken the original old growth rain forest trees.

After a lovely night spent right on the water at Cannon Beach (including a stroll right up to Haystack Rock at low tide) we drove north to Ecola State Park, one of

Oregon's best. Our schedule just didn't allow time to hike the many cache-laden trails here, but the overlooks offered stunning views south over Cannon Beach. This one vista typifies the entire coastline!

Returning to Highway 101, we stopped at the Haystack Rock earthcache south of Cannon Beach, and took this photo looking back to Ecola State Park with the Rock visible off the beach at high tide. We had hoped for a sunny day, but were rewarded with incredible mist-laden views of the coastline. Beach after beach, seen from pullouts and state parks (with easy beach access and scenic cache placements) were our view for rest of the day as we journeyed south to Newport for our second night. Delicious local-caught seafood on the menu helped us regain our strength as we prepared for our next day's explorations south towards Coos Bay and the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area.



Caching Travelogues



Before leaving Newport we took the time to find the Ranger Rick geocaches placed on the grounds of the Oregon Coast Aquarium, one of our nation's best. These caches are placed and maintained by aquarium staff within the paid access areas of the facility, and it was a delight to sign a logsheet while watching a pelican strut its stuff for the crowd. They're great hides for dropping travel bugs and geocoins for further travels. Within several dozen footsteps of the 'pelican' cache, we encountered sea otters and sea lions in exhibit areas reminiscent of Seward's Sea Life Center. In fact, several mammals living here came as rescues from the Sea Life Center! This is a must-see facility for cachers of all ages, and it's especially suited to creating excitement for any younger folks along on the trip.



As an avid benchmarking enthusiast, I made sure to check out the major bridges along our coastal journey. Bridges are second only to railroads for guaranteeing you're going to find a benchmark nearby! Many of these structures date from the earliest highway construction along the coast, and are beautiful structures in their own right. Shown here are bridges at Newport, Heceta Head, and south towards Coos Bay.

This coastline is home to a scattering of lighthouses, many built before the turn of the last century and most still in operation today. All of them are benchmarks, of course, and a handful of them allow access to the grounds. Heceta Head in particular is a great visit, with the lighthouse keeper's home open for tours and as a B&B rental. Our next visit to this area has the lighthouses targeted for extra time to appreciate the beauty of their locations.

Our final cache of the day took us away from the holiday crowds to visit an earthcache named 'Little Fen of Horrors.' The name almost put us off the visit, until we read the description and realized that this was a place where the geology associated with wetlands around the Oregon Dunes made possible the prolific growth of *Darlingtonia*, a kind of carnivorous pitcher plant. As we arrived to the parking area, we were the only vehicle in sight – the only empty parking



lot we saw on our entire 3-day journey! Adjacent to and inland from the Oregon Dunes Rec Area, this site required visitors to stay on a path leading out through dark woodlands to a fen covered with odd-looking plants about 18-24" tall. This unique bioclimate creates a soil condition where the only food source available for plants comes from insects drawn to the location by attractants the plants emit. Once inside the plant's chambers insects are led down to a fluid-filled pool that digests them as food for the plant. We were fascinated by this one-of-a-kind location.

We had to head back to our respective workplaces the next day, leaving behind the beauty of the Oregon coast for a visit we're planning in the future. The area's earthcaches, scenic cache placements, trails out to wild headlands, lonely beaches (easily accessed from the highway), great food and friendly locals make a week-long return visit a minimum for us sometime in the near future. We highly recommend this route for persons wishing to explore a portion of our country that's off the freeway, with a wide variety of recreational activities available for all ages and interests. Best of all, the density of caches along the coast brings with it some great scenery and excellent learning opportunities!

Check out these recent Geocaching events!

[July 4th in Seward](#), July 4, 10am, Seward

[July Birthday Celebration](#), July 8, 6:30pm, Anchorage

[ALLLL ABOARRRRRD!!!!](#), July 15, 12:30pm, Portgace

[Spencer Glacier Whistle Stop Camping Kick-Off 2.0!](#), July 15, 2pm, Portgace

[Spencer Glacier Whistle Stop Camping 2.0 - Day 2](#), July 16, 2pm,

Portgace

[Ice Cream U Scream](#), July 17, 2pm, Anchorage

[North to Alaska \(From Ohio\)](#), July 28, 7:30am, Skagway

Recent Events

Spencer Glacier Trip

By Sean Gaither / FTL-AK

Thank you GeocacheAlaska! for the campsites and thank you Adventurphal for hosting two amazing events! I loved every moment of this trip!

Wish more people made it, but the group we had was amazing!



Recent Events



Recent Events



Around The State

GEOCACHEALASKA! MEMBERSHIP

There are two membership levels at GeocacheAlaska! Inc.

Sourdough Membership (formerly known as Premium Membership) affords you discounts in the GeocacheAlaska! online and traveling stores and events that have an entrance fee (Geofest, etc.), voting rights in Board of Directors elections and a warm fuzzy feeling for helping underwrite the organization's operating expenses that include web hosting, printing, banners, post office box fees, event prizes, and lots of other things that are required to make things happen. Because GeocacheAlaska! is an incorporated 501(c) (3) tax exempt organization, your membership dues are tax deductible.

If you cannot join as a Sourdough at this time, you may support GeocacheAlaska! by joining as a Cheechako (formerly known as Associate) Member. This will allow you to receive the monthly newsletter and e-mail announcements. More members at any level gives GeocacheAlaska!'s more clout and credibility during land manager conversations, so sign up today!

There are a few ways you can join GeocacheAlaska! at the Sourdough level for \$20/year.

1. Navigate to the [GeocacheAlaska! webpage](#) and:
 - A. Click on the "Subscribe" button to set up an automatic subscription which will renew annually. Please enter your caching name in the provided box. OR
 - B. Click on "Add to Cart" to purchase an annual membership. OR
 - C. Download a membership form you can print and mail with your payment.
2. Attend one of the upcoming GeocacheAlaska! events and speak to any Board Member.

Find us online at:

1. GeocacheAlaska! Website: <http://www.geocachealaska.org>
2. GeocacheAlaska! Forums: <http://geocachealaska.proboards.com/index.cgi>
3. Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/geocachealaska/>
4. GeocacheAlaska! Facebook Page: [GeocacheAlaska! Page](#)
5. Follow us on Instagram [@geocachealaska](#)
6. Follow us on Twitter [@GeocachAlaska](#)

Questions? E-mail to contact@geocachealaska.org

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK, Twitter, and Instagram!

Like our official [GeocacheAlaska! Page](#) on Facebook to keep up to date on things happening with GeocacheAlaska! Also, join the official [GeocacheAlaska! Group](#) on Facebook to stay in touch and share your activities with fellow members of the geocaching community. This is where GeocacheAlaska! members can plan caching adventures, post photos, and pass messages within the membership ranks. This Facebook Group is designed to be yet another member benefit for Sourdoughs and Cheechakos alike. Visit our Group and request to Join so you can start viewing and participating with GeocacheAlaska! and your fellow geocachers.



[@GeocacheAlaska](#) Follow GeocacheAlaska! Inc. on Twitter!

Follow us on Instagram! [@geocachealaska](#)

STATE PARKS PERMITS

Caches may be published within Alaska State Parks! All caches must have the permit number on the inside of the cache along with the cache owner's contact information. On the outside of the cache, you must write "Alaska State Parks Permit #15-KA-1994 Geocache AK" in permanent marking. The cache listing must state "Cache placed under GeocacheAlaska! Park Use Permit #15-KA-1994" within the description section. Before submitting a cache listing within one of the parks, please thoroughly read the complete list of stipulations in the permit, which may be [downloaded](#) from the GeocacheAlaska! website.

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

The editors of *Around the State* would like to hear from you. Submit articles or suggestions to editor@geocachealaska.org Previous editions of *Around the State* are now on our website. If you have missed previous newsletters, check out the series [here](#).

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