

Requirements and Duties of the Regional Rep

As the Ontario Geocaching Association is a developing entity, more individuals are needed to help share the tasks that we have ahead of us.

Some tasks are ongoing while others only need be addressed once. But all of these are done for the betterment of Geocaching in Ontario. Much of what is contained within this document are suggested methods, but as long as the outcome is the same then you are free to use your own solutions.

If you are a Regional Rep, or considering becoming one, this document has been put together to help you understand the duties of the position.

Some things to consider before becoming a Regional Rep:

1. You MUST be a Premium or Charter Member of Geocaching.com
2. You should have a registered copy of GSAK (Geocaching Swiss Army Knife)
3. You should know the political boundaries of your region
4. You should be willing to meet with various Land Owners to discuss Geocaching
5. You should be willing to act on behalf of OGA and/or the Geocaching.com site
6. You should organize or support a CITO Event at least annually
7. You should be willing to help new Geocachers learn the hobby, if requested
8. You should be promoting OGA and Geocaching whenever possible

1. Premium or Charter Member

Premium or Charter Members have the ability to generate Pocket Queries. This is essential for tracking and monitoring the Geocaches in your region. It will be necessary to create an HTML listing of all active Geocaches in your region on a bi-weekly, if not weekly, basis and submit them to the Regional Manager for inclusion on the OGA web site. To facilitate this, you will need to use OGA Filter Files for GSAK as detailed below.

2. Registered copy of GSAK

GSAK (Geocaching Swiss Army Knife) is the current Waypoint management software of OGA. This program can be used to view all of the Geocaches from your Pocket Queries and apply 'Filter Files' to isolate the Geocaches that fall in your region. While this program is free, unless it is registered you will have to download and reinstall it repetitively. Additionally by using GSAK, you will be able to see Geocaches that have gone missing, or get Archived. GSAK can also assist in identifying Geocaches that need maintenance or have been abandoned. While this is not your immediate concern, you may find that you are called upon to address concerns related to a Geocache in your area, but helps to identify what caches should be recommended for visitors, and what ones should be avoided.

3. Political boundaries

As an OGA Rep, a 'Filter File' for your region will assist you in identifying the Geocaches in your area, and it is in your best interest to know where the boundaries of your region are. This helps identify parks of various levels, and additionally when multi-caches or puzzle caches enter or leave your region. Also, we have a dedicated web page for every region to both showcase the 'must-do' Geocaches as well as other items of interest that a tourist should know about. Part of OGA is encouraging people to visit new areas, and this is one of the ways you can attract people to your region. You may also find that you will be working with neighboring areas when items like Watersheds, or Provincial Parks cross those boundaries. Filter Files are available in the OGA – Sales and Service area, look in the Library.

4. Meet with Land Owners

One of the primary reasons that OGA came into being was to help Land Owners understand the effects of Geocaching. We want to ensure that Geocaching is seen as a positive use of Federal, Provincial and Local level parks. To do that, we need to discuss Geocaching practices with various Land Owner groups. Working in tandem to create policies and guidelines that establish trust and co-operation is the most beneficial plan we have. Across Ontario we have had some success with Land Owners, and OGA wants to continue those efforts. You may be called upon to meet with a Land Owner to implement, or give advice on the creation of those policies. We are here to assist you with those meetings, should the need arise.

5. Act on behalf of OGA and/or for Geocaching.com

From time to time, Geocaches need to be addressed. When a Geocache has been abandoned, or is not getting the maintenance it needs, there must be a process in place to deal with these concerns. A Geocache that is in bad shape is no fun for anyone and only makes local Land Owners concerned when they read the log entries. The Geocaching.com reviewer, currently Cache-Tech, may request that you go out and remove a Geocache, or check on its condition and report back. Another example is when a local Land Owner does not want a Geocache on their land, you might be asked to remove it for them. This should be seen as a positive activity, as we want to illustrate that the Geocaching community can self-monitor and resolve concerns. OGA firmly believes that removing a Geocache that is not promoting the enjoyment of the hobby will improve the view of the hobby by all those that are affected by it.

6. CITO Events – Support of

“Cache-In-Trash-Out” is one of the positive ways we can show the community that we are concerned for the locations that we enjoy in our hobby. Normally one week before Earth Day in April, Geocaching.com has a coordinated effort to clean up a park or hiking area. At OGA, we support this effort and encourage the Regional Reps to organize a CITO Event to bring those positive effects forward. If you are unable to set up a CITO Event, you should try to get another Geocacher in your region to perform this for you.

7. Helping new Geocachers

If there is an interest, whether it be individuals to school groups or Scouts, many more people are becoming aware of Geocaching and they might be looking for someone to show them how the activity works. We all would agree that having the right start will provide a more positive experience, and you may be asked to provide your experience and knowledge.

8. Promoting OGA and Geocaching

This also may include members of the Media in their various forms. In the case of Media Relations, you should inform the OGA Information Manager before and after any such discussions, to ensure all of the information we provide is accurate. Other items often appear, and if you find somewhere that you feel might benefit from OGA and/or Geocaching, you should consider approaching them.

While this might seem like a lot to ask, there really isn't a lot involved. Once you have a list of Geocaches in your region, it is fairly easy to update it on a weekly basis.

Generating the HTML file and sending it to the Regional Manager takes a minute or two. The other items happen rarely, but should be noted.

If you decide that you are ready to become a Regional Rep for OGA, we can provide you with the 'Filter File' of your region, as well as the method of generating the HTML page from GSAK. And as meetings with Land Owners are arranged, we would keep you informed and provide you with documents to assist you with the meeting.