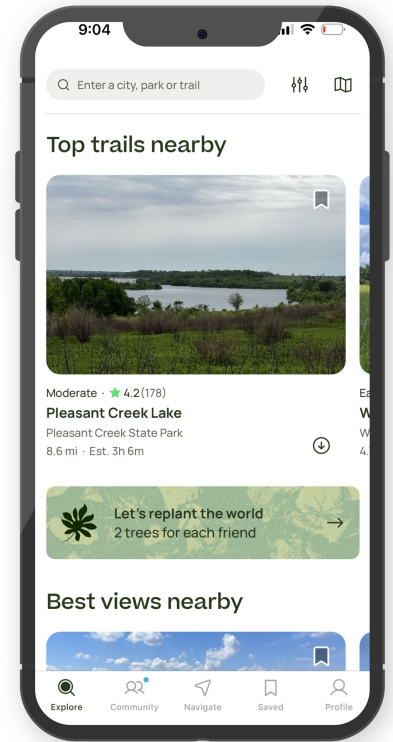




Uploading Trail Data Guidelines

Today's trail mapping applications are changing how we learn about places to spend time outdoors. Like social media use in the outdoors, trail mapping applications can be a force for good, or they can have the opposite effect. Uploading inaccurate trail data can cause avoidable impacts by directing other people to trails that have not been intentionally put there (designated) by land managers. These "social trails" can cause human safety and environmental impact issues.

Leave No Trace isn't about being right or wrong. It's a framework for making good decisions about responsibly enjoying the outdoors, regardless of how one chooses. If we stop and think about the potential impacts and associated consequences of our actions, it can go a long way towards ensuring the protection of our shared outdoor spaces. To that end, Leave No Trace encourages trail app developers and app users to stop and think about their actions and the potential consequences of apps that allow for or users that upload inaccurate GPS data, waypoints, detailed maps, photos, etc., to trail mapping applications.



When developing an app or adding information to your favorite app for others to use, consider the following:

TRAIL INFORMATION

Are you certain you are permitting the upload of or are uploading data for a designated trail?

When uncertain about a trail or section of the trail, be sure to check with a land manager before permitting the upload of or uploading data to your app of choice.

WAYPOINTS

Consider the impact of the waypoints you are approving for upload or recording before uploading.

Provide waypoints for places like established camping sites, trail highlights, important trail information like reroutes, etc. Avoid providing waypoints for culturally sensitive areas, closed camping areas, sensitive wildlife habitats, sensitive or endangered plants, etc.

GEOTAG THOUGHTFULLY

Posting a photo that specifies your location and appropriate Leave No Trace information can be a great way for others to learn about your favorite place and invite people into the outdoors. It can also empower people to research safety measures, learn about the location's history and culture, and find out what to expect when visiting. Remember that people viewing your photo may not be familiar with the importance of planning ahead, so it's always a great idea to include Leave No Trace information and encourage further learning in your caption.

BE MINDFUL OF WHAT YOUR IMAGES PORTRAY

Give some thought to what your images may encourage others to do. Images that demonstrate good Leave No Trace practices can help to share a stewardship message.

SHARE RESPONSIBLY

Make sure the data someone else uploaded that you are about to share is accurate data for designated trails. Review the content, including photos, to ensure you are not sharing information that could cause more harm to a sensitive area or non-designated trail.

GIVE BACK TO PLACES YOU LOVE

If you are able to, invest your own time and resources into the outdoor spaces and places you care about. Learn about volunteer stewardship opportunities and get involved in trail work days at sites near you.



Enjoy Your World, Leave No Trace!

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