

DOG SCOUTS OF AMERICA

# Trails Titling

## Official Guidebook



FOR DSA SANCTIONED TRAIL DOG TITLING

Date: January 2018

Inside:

*What are TrailDog, PackDog, LetterboxDog, and GeocacheDog?*

*Information on:*

*Safety*

*Training*

*Equipment*

*Titling Requirements*

# DSA Trails Titling Guidebook

## Table of Contents

DSA Trails Titling Guidebook .....	2
General Information .....	3
Important Safety Information .....	3
DSA Trails Titling Program Rules .....	3
Training and Conditioning .....	4
Selecting Equipment .....	4
Trail Manners .....	5
PackDog .....	7
What is the PackDog? .....	7
PackDog Title Quick Reference .....	7
PackDog Titling Requirements .....	7
TrailDog .....	9
What is the TrailDog? .....	9
TrailDog Title Quick Reference .....	9
TrailDog Titling Requirements .....	9
LetterboxDog .....	11
What is LetterboxDog? .....	11
LetterboxDog Title Quick Reference .....	11
LetterboxDog Titling Requirements .....	11
GeocacheDog .....	16
What is the GeocacheDog? .....	16
GeocacheDog Title Quick Reference .....	16
GeocacheDog Titling Requirements .....	16
DSA Trails Titling: Registration and General Info .....	21
Library of Trails Titling Forms .....	22
DSA Competition Registration Number (CRN) Request Form .....	23
DSA Trails Mileage Log for: __PackDog __TrailDog (check one) .....	24
DSA Trail Log for LetterboxDog Logs .....	25
DSA Trail Log for LetterboxDog Finds .....	25
DSA Trail Log for LetterboxDog Section 1 .....	27
DSA Trail Log for LetterboxDog Section 2 .....	27
DSA Trail Log for GeocacheDog Logs .....	28
DSA Trail Log for GeocacheDog Finds .....	28
DSA Trail Log for GeocacheDog Plants .....	29
DSA Trail Log for GeocacheDog Section 1 .....	30
DSA Trail Log for GeocacheDog Section 2 .....	30
Submission Form for TrailDog / PackDog titles: .....	31
Submission Form for LetterboxDog / GeocacheDog titles: .....	32



## General Information

### *Important Safety Information*

The Trails Titling Program was designed to provide additional opportunities for you and your dog to get out and enjoy hiking together. These titles are not intended to be easy to achieve, and they do require a level of physical fitness for both you and your dog. Please use common sense and approach these activities with safety in mind just like any other physical activity, you will want to prepare yourself and your dog for the new strain on the muscles which may not have been used regularly. Start out slowly, walking only a mile or less the first day. Slowly build on the distance you will cover on your hikes. Remember to stretch your muscles (your dog's too) before exercising. When you start having your dog carry his pack, start with it empty, and add weight gradually each trip.

Before making a big change in your dog's activity level, it's a good idea to consult with your veterinarian.

When working on PackDog or TrailDog titles you will need to have a hiking buddy (if you have one) sign your log sheet. If you don't hike with a buddy, then you should notify someone that cares about you that you are going on a walk. Tell them exactly what route you plan to take and when you are expected to return. Then notify them when you return. This person should attempt to contact you or send out a search party if you do not contact them after your walk. This person can sign your log sheet for the hikes you did alone (while accompanied by your dog of course).

DSA does allow small dogs to be carried when needed. Handlers that are not able to walk the required distances can use alternate means as long as it is safe for the dog to move alongside (the dog still needs to do the hiking). A golf cart, 4 wheeler, or powered wheelchair are examples of "alternate means". Since it is the dog that is getting the title, substitute or alternate handlers are allowed.

### *DSA Trails Titling Program Rules*

#### **Rules that must be followed while working toward all DSA Trails titles:**

Dogs and handlers must obey all applicable laws and policies, to include leash laws, and whether dogs are permitted in certain areas.

When off leash in an area where this is allowed, dogs must be kept under control, and only permitted to approach other people or dogs after getting permission of the person / handler of the dog.

The handler must clean up all of the dog's waste, and deposit it in an appropriate outdoor trash receptacle. The handler must always carry waste disposal bags for this purpose.

Dogs must not be permitted to harass wildlife, harm the environment, or perform other behaviors which might cause dogs to be unwelcome in the future.

Whether members of DSA or not, handlers should strive to uphold the Dog Scout Laws, which can be found on the DSA website [www.DogScouts.org](http://www.DogScouts.org). Handlers should not use harsh corrections or training techniques or use training equipment that may cause pain or discomfort to the dog such as electronic collars (shock collars), prong collars, or choke (slip) collars. For more information and help learning positive alternatives and great force-free training methods, see the DSA website, FaceBook page, Yahoo group, or your local troop.



## ***Training and Conditioning***

### **Important skills for Trails Titling activities include:**

Walk on a loose leash

Leave-it - generalized to be useful with wildlife, edible hazards, passers-by, etc.

Come when called (recall) if off leash

Move to side of trail and stay while others pass

Wear a backpack

Potty on cue (to assist dog in understanding where it is appropriate to urinate/defecate)

Sit or Down Stay while owner does waste cleanup

Lift paws and allow handling of entire body - to inspect for parasites, minor injuries, burrs, etc.

### **Introducing new equipment, such as a backpack:**

Any time you put something new on a dog, you want to create a favorable association with the new thing. When you first try the pack on the dog, place it across his back like a saddlebag and give him treats. Next, connect the harness straps and give treats. Next require that he actually WALK while wearing this apparatus (more treats).

To make the pack more comfortable for your dog, make sure you distribute the weight evenly between the two saddlebags. This can be done the easiest way by carrying two smaller water bottles, instead of one bigger one. By having two containers, water can be shifted from one side to the other to keep the pack perfectly balanced.

### **Physical conditioning:**

Make sure you and your dog are in condition for the hike you plan to take. At camp, we start with a short hike, and do gradually longer ones each day. Stretch your muscles before any physical activity, and stretch your dog's muscles with some brief exercise or some range-of-motion stretching.

## ***Selecting Equipment***

### **Choosing the right pack for your dog**

Dogs can carry a good deal of weight on their backs, which is helpful in trekking across country, as your dog can then lighten your load by carrying his own provisions at the very least. It is important to place the weight which your dog will carry over the shoulder blade (withers) area, and not in the middle of the back. The shoulders are built to carry the weight--the spine is not. This is especially important in long-backed breeds. Get a pack which places the weight over the dog's shoulders.

If your dog's pack is loaded, and he is doing any kind of climbing, uphill walking or pulling, you will want to be sure to have a non-restrictive harness on your pack. Non-restrictive means that the dog's shoulder movement (point of shoulder) is not impeded by any kind of horizontal strap across the front. A non-restrictive pack would have a harness hook-up which goes over the dog's head like a sledding harness, comes to a "V" at the hyoid bone, and continues down between the dog's front legs. This allows the pulling pressure to go on the middle of the dog's chest, and not on the forelegs, which would restrict his movement. Get a pack which is non-restrictive.

Whether you want padding or not on your pack depends on the weight and the amount of pulling your dog will do. It will also depend on what type of coat your dog has. A short coated breed would benefit more from a padded harness if



there will be a lot of rubbing of the pack. Padding is usually in the form of polar fleece or fake lamb's wool. Some packs are padded under the saddlebags, and some are padded around the neck and chest areas of the harness.

Color is a matter of personal preference, but remember that your dog will be in the woods, and a high visibility color, like orange, yellow, or red will help you (and others) spot your dog from a distance, without mistaking him for a game animal.

Packs should be made from a light-weight, water-proof material, with adjustable nylon web straps and quick-snap buckles for ease in getting on and off.

You can order a Scout backpack from Dog Scouts of America. This is a non-restrictive, adjustable, light-weight pack, which has removable saddlebags. Kurgo packs are also available in the Dog Scout store and are non-restrictive and light weight.

### **Obtaining the Items You Need for Your Pack**

There are various clubs which offer titles for backpacking. Some are breed clubs for specific dogs (like Malamutes). Each one has different requirements as to what must be carried in your pack and what percentage of the dog's total body weight must be carried to qualify for their titles. If your breed has a backpacking title program, contact your national breed club for rules and requirements.

The following items are required to be carried by the dog in its pack for all titles except TrailDog. Please see the TrailDog section for further information.

#### **Items for The Dog**

- Water
- Bowl
- Poop Bags
- Spare Collar
- Spare Leash

#### **Survival Items**

- Flashlight
- First Aid Kit
- Waterproof matches
- Compass
- Handler's ID
- Knife
- Signaling Device (such as a whistle or mirror)
- Map of area (if needed)

### ***Trail Manners***

When hiking be sure to "Leave No Trace". These practices reduce your impact on the environment and you already follow many of them as a responsible Dog Scout parent.

**Plan ahead** to make sure dogs are welcome in the area you want to hike. Also check on the wildlife appropriate to the area to ensure the safety of you and your dog.

**Avoid impact as you travel.** Stay on approved trails as vegetation surrounding trails is fragile in many areas. Walk single file on narrow trails when hiking with others. Keep dogs from chasing wildlife and always pick up after your dog. Be sure to pack out any waste along with all trash from any snacks, drinks, etc.



Move to the side of the trail or to a wide spot when people and/or other dogs are coming towards you. Some people may want to greet your dog so make sure you manage the environment for him and politely decline if needed. Assess the situation carefully before allowing your dog to greet unknown dogs. Don't forget to ask others to move their dog back if you or your dog is uncomfortable with the situation. Be prepared to encounter bicycles and horses coming from either direction. If horses are common in the area you are hiking your dog should be trained to behave appropriately around them without barking or lunging.

**Respect Wildlife.** Know the types of wildlife you may come across and observe any you encounter from a distance. Do not follow or approach wildlife. Do not feed wildlife and control your dog around animals at all times. Dogs should not be allowed to bark or lunge at wildlife. If your dog's behavior around wildlife is not solid then you should choose another area to hike.

Always **leave what you find**. Observe but do not touch any cultural or historical artifacts or structures. Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them. Never take a souvenir of any kind no matter how tempting that may be. Avoid transporting any non-native plants or insects into the environment.

Following these practices ensures that your hike will be safe and fun for both you and your dog and also ensures that the area will remain available to you for hiking for many years to come.



## PackDog

### *What is the PackDog?*

The PackDog program allows you to log mileage toward DSA PackDog titles. In PackDog, the dog performs the useful function of carrying a backpack containing required safety items.

### *PackDog Title Quick Reference*

Quick Reference Guide	Total Miles	5-mile Hike	10-Mile Hike
Pack Dog (PD)	50	1	
Pack Dog Excellent (PDX)	100		1
Utility Pack Dog (UP)	200		1
Utility Pack Dog (UP500)	500		
Utility Pack Dog (UP750)	750		
Utility Pack Dog (UP1000)	1000		
Utility Pack Dog (UPx000)	2000, 3000, etc		

### *PackDog Titling Requirements*

#### **Standard PackDog Utility Titles:**

PD - 50 miles, including one 5-mile day hike

PDX - 100 miles, including one 5-mile day hike, and one 10-mile day hike  
(meaning one 10-mile day hike in addition to previous titles)

UP - 200 miles, including one 5-mile day hike, and two 10-mile day hikes  
(meaning one 10-mile day hike in addition to previous titles)

UP500 - 500 total miles

UP750 - 750 total miles

UP1000 - 1000 total miles

UPx000 – 2000, 3000 (etc) total miles (Title will reflect the total miles, in 1000 mile increments)

*NOTE: Higher mileage titles do not have additional 5 or 10 mile hikes, in order to reduce any strain on older dogs still working on PackDog titles. However, the 5 and 10 mile hikes for the previous PD, PDX, and UP titles must have been completed.*

#### **Logging your miles – Pack dog titles**

Each time you hike a mile or more with your dog, keep track of the distance, location and date.

Please maintain separate logs for PackDog and TrailDog miles.



**NOTE: Even if the dog carries a backpack while earning TrailDog miles, the same miles may NOT count toward both titles. Each hike must count either as PackDog mileage, OR TrailDog mileage, but not both.**

Use of the DSA mileage logs is preferred, but not required. As long as the log clearly shows the same information in a similar format, and a printout can be submitted with the title request form, the log will be accepted by DSA.

Logs will be spot-checked to ensure they meet requirements. Please do not submit logs that do not meet all of the requirements of the title being requested.

### **Verification of your log entries**

You will need to have a hiking buddy sign your log sheet.

For the longer distance hikes (the required 5 and 10 mile hikes) A forest ranger, Dog Scout Camp Director or Troop Leader, Dog Scout backpacking evaluator or other official (such as a Forest Ranger, Fair Manager or Club President) needs to sign your log sheet. Also acceptable: the use of a GPS mapping program that allows you to print out a copy of your route after your hike.

### **Submitting your title request**

Once your dog has completed the requirements of a title, fill out the title request form, and submit it with your logs, verifications, and payment.



## TrailDog

### *What is the TrailDog?*

The TrailDog program allows you to log mileage toward DSA TrailDog titles. Unlike in PackDog titling, the dog is not required to carry a backpack. The dog performs the useful functions of accompanying the handler, serving as an example of responsible dog ownership, and exemplifies the results of positive training by being well-mannered in public.

The same items required to be in the dog's backpack for DSA PackDog titles are important for safety and responsibility on the trails, and should be brought on all trips—but may be carried by either the dog or the human.

Even if the dog carries a backpack while earning TrailDog miles, the same miles may NOT count toward both titles. *Each hike must count either as PackDog mileage, OR TrailDog mileage, but not both.*

### *TrailDog Title Quick Reference*

Quick Reference Guide	Total Miles	5-mile Hike	10-Mile Hike
Trail Dog (TD)	50	2	
Trail Dog Excellent (TDX)	100	1	1
Utility Trail Dog (UT)	200	2	
Utility Trail Dog (UT500)	500		
Utility Trail Dog (UT750)	750		
Utility Trail Dog (UT1000)	1000		
Utility Trail Dog (UTx000)	2000, 3000, etc		

### *TrailDog Titling Requirements*

#### **Standard TrailDog Utility Titles:**

TD - 50 miles, including two 5-mile day hikes

TDX - 100 miles, including three 5-mile day hikes and one 10-mile day hike  
(meaning one additional 5-mile hike after completing the TD title)

UT - 200 miles, including five 5-mile day hikes and one 10-mile day hike  
(meaning two additional 5-mile day hikes after completing the TDX title)

UT500 - 500 total miles

UT750 - 750 total miles

UT1000 - 1000 total miles

UTx000 – 2000, 3000 (etc) total miles (Title will reflect total miles earned in 1000 mile increments)



*NOTE: Higher mileage titles do not have additional 5 or 10 mile hikes, in order to reduce any strain on older dogs still working on TrailDog titles. However, the 5 and 10 mile hikes for the previous TD, TDX, and UT titles must have been completed.*

## **Logging your miles – Trail dog titles**

Each time you hike a mile or more with your dog, keep track of the distance, location and date.

Please maintain separate logs for PackDog and TrailDog miles.

***NOTE: Even if the dog carries a backpack while earning TrailDog miles, the same miles may NOT count toward both titles. Each hike must count either as PackDog mileage, OR TrailDog mileage, but not both.***

Use of the DSA mileage logs is preferred, but not required. As long as the log clearly shows the same information in a similar format, and a printout can be submitted with the title request form, the log will be accepted by DSA.

Logs will be spot-checked to ensure they meet requirements. Please do not submit logs that do not meet all of the requirements of the title being requested.

## **Verification of your log entries**

You will need to have a hiking buddy sign your log sheet.

For the longer distance hikes (the required 5 and 10 mile hikes) A forest ranger, Dog Scout Camp Director or Troop Leader, Dog Scout backpacking evaluator or other official (such as a Forest Ranger, Fair Manager or Club President) needs to sign your log sheet. Also acceptable: the use of a GPS mapping program that allows you to print out a copy of your route after your hike.

## **Submitting your title request**

Once your dog has completed the requirements of a title, fill out the title request form, and submit it with your logs, verifications, and payment.



## LetterboxDog

### *What is LetterboxDog?*

The LetterboxDog program allows you to log various letterboxing activities toward DSA LetterboxDog titles. In LetterboxDog, the dog performs the useful functions of accompanying the handler, serving as an example of a well-mannered and trained companion, and carrying their own signature stamp and logbook.

Note: Miles logged towards the Letterbox Dog or the Geocache Dog titles may be counted towards either the Pack Dog or Trail Dog titles, but not both.  
thousand

### *LetterboxDog Title Quick Reference*

Quick Reference Guide		Letterbox Badge 3	Letterbox Dog (LBD)	Letterbox Advanced (LBA)	Letterbox Excellent (LBX)	Letterbox Thousand (LB1000)
Required	Found Letterboxes (cumulative)	50	100	250	500	1000
Required	Planted Letterboxes (cumulative)	10	15	25	35	-
Required	Planted Letterboxes with Positive Training Theme (cumulative)	0	5	10	15	-
Required	Carry a Personal Traveler	0	0	1	1	-
Section 1: Choose 1 (non- cumulative)	Attend Letterbox Events	1	2	2	2	-
	Plan Letterbox Events		1	1	1	-
	Plant Letterboxes		5	5	5	-
Section 2: Choose 2 (non- cumulative)	Find Hitchhikers	0	3	3	3	-
	Release Hitchhikers		1	1	1	-
	Attend Virtual Event		1	1	1	-

### *LetterboxDog Titling Requirements*

#### **Letterbox Dog (LBD)**

##### Required Items

100 Letterboxes found under pack

Plant a total of 15 boxes

At least 5 planted boxes should have a Positive Training theme

Section 1 (Choose 1 from this section)



- Plant 5 Letterboxes (not to be counted towards overall plant count)
- Attend a total of 2 events
- Plan 1 event (not including the ones you attend) with a DSA or Positive Training theme
- Section 2 (Choose 2 from this section)
  - Find 3 hitchhikers
  - Release 1 hitch hiker - log online
  - Attend a Virtual Event

### **Letterbox Advanced (LBA)**

#### Required Items

- 250 Letterboxes found under pack
- Plant a total of 25 boxes
- At least 15 planted boxes should have a Positive Training theme
- Carry a personal traveler to all events and hikes
- Section 1 (Choose 1 from this section)
  - Plant 5 Letterboxes (not to be counted towards overall plant count)
  - Attend a total of 2 events
  - Plan 1 event (not including the ones you attend) with a DSA or Positive Training theme
- Section 2 (Choose 2 from this section)
  - Find 3 hitchhikers
  - Release 1 hitch hiker - log online
  - Attend a Virtual Event

### **Letterbox Excellent (LBX)**

#### Required Items

- 500 Letterboxes found under pack
- Plant a total of 35 boxes
- At least 25 planted boxes should have a Positive Training theme
- Carry a personal traveler to all events and hikes
- Section 1 (Choose 1 from this section)
  - Plant 5 Letterboxes (not to be counted towards overall plant count)
  - Attend a total of 2 events
  - Plan 1 event (not including the ones you attend) with a DSA or Positive Training theme
- Section 2 (Choose 2 from this section)
  - Find 3 hitchhikers
  - Release 1 hitch hiker - log online
  - Attend a Virtual Event

### **Letterbox Excellent (LB1000)**

#### Required Items

- 1000 Letterboxes found under pack

### **Logging your activities – Letterboxing titles**

#### Finding Letterboxes

In addition to the required items for the PackDog titles, the dog must also carry their own signature stamp and logbook in their pack. An ink pad is also required for letterboxing. That may be carried in your pack or the dog's pack. Each time you find a letterbox with your dog (that includes a hike of a mile or more on the same day) keep track of the distance,



location and date.

Copies of the stamp images found in each letterbox will also need to be saved for verification. These will need to be sent in with the submission form. Digital images, photo copies and scanned copies are allowed.

#### Mileage Requirement for Finding Boxes

The trails title program is enthusiastic about getting you and your dog out and exercising. The purpose of the 1-mile requirement is to ensure that we are always working to keep ourselves and our dogs healthy.

For drive-up boxes or boxes located where it may be unsafe to hike, it is acceptable to complete your hike at another location. The 1-mile hike must be completed in intervals no smaller than 0.5 miles on the same day that you found a box(s). Finding multiple letterboxes during one hike is allowed.

#### Planting Boxes

Clues for planted boxes must be logged online or on the Dog Scout Camp computer, if the box is placed at camp. At a minimum the box must include a stamp and a logbook. Including an inkpad in the box is recommended, but not required. Labeling your box as a "Letterbox" is also recommended. A copy of the stamp image must be saved for verification. Photos of the box and stamp are recommended, but not required. These will need to be sent in with the submission form and a copy of the clues, including the online listing.

#### Personal Travelers

Personal travelers are special letterboxes that are carried with the owner. Usually there is a clue or a riddle that someone needs to solve to get the stamp image. Generally there is no logbook. The personal traveler letterbox should have its own listing online. Copies of the stamp images will also need to be saved for verification. These will need to be sent in with the submission form.

#### Hitchhikers

Hitchhikers are letterboxes that travel from place to place. They are hidden in other letterboxes. When you find a hitchhiker, log the stamp in your logbook. Then you can choose to either take it with you to help it on its journey or leave it where it is. If the hitchhiker is registered online, you need to register your find and your move. Copies of the stamp images for each hitchhiker will also need to be saved for verification. These will need to be sent in with the submission form.

To release a hitchhiker, simply leave your stamp and logbook in any box. They should be enclosed in a plastic bag or a small container. Register your hitchhiker online. Photos of the stamp and the stamp image must be saved for verification. These will need to be sent in with the submission form.

#### Attending Letterboxing Events

Only events where the dog and handler can attend together will be accepted. Events at restaurants or bars are not acceptable, unless the dog is a service dog. Attending a Letterbox event is verified by obtaining a copy of the stamp image of the event stamp for the event. These will need to be sent in with the submission form.

#### Planning Letterbox Events

Handler will plan or assist in the planning of a Letterbox event. Anyone that performed a significant role in the planning



and running of an event may count that event as their own. This may include scouting/selecting a suitable location, reserving the location, collecting and/or planting boxes for the event, creating the event box, creating clue guides or other handouts for attendees, organizing food, organizing supplies needed, arranging for prizes for any contests held, being at the event to welcome people, answer questions, organize food, do any prize drawings, help set up/clean up, etc. A Troop Leader or other planner at the event may be contacted for their opinion on whether your level of participation would be considered "significant" or not.

The event must be advertised publicly online on a Letterboxing website. Event details must be posted no less than 30 days prior to the event. The event should have a Dog Scout or Positive Training theme. An event box with an event stamp must be supplied for each event. A copy of the online event listing, including the list of attendees should be saved for verification. Photos of the event (activities and attendees), the event stamp and the stamp image must be saved for verification. These will need to be sent in with the submission form.

### Virtual Letterbox Events

These are special events posted on AtlasQuest usually to celebrate an event. Virtual events that will count for the title will be ones that require you to plant a new letterbox. There are generally specific requirements regarding the theme, name of the new box and dates to be planted. The planted box can be used for a Virtual Event requirement or a planted box requirement, not both. A copy of the stamp image must be saved for verification. Photos of the box and stamp are recommended, but not required. These will need to be sent in with the submission form and a copy of the clues, including the online listing. A copy of the link to the event you participated in will also need to be included.

### **Submitting your title request**

Once your dog has completed the requirements of a title, fill out the title request form, and submit it with your logs, verifications, and payment.

### LetterboxDog (LBD)

For the first level of the title the dog needs to carry his loaded pack while finding 100 letterboxes (at least one mile at a time). The dog needs to carry his loaded pack while you plant 15 boxes. At least 5 planted boxes should have a Positive Training theme. You need to choose one option from Section 1 and complete all the requirements. You need to choose two options from Section 2 and complete all the requirements.

Copies of the Dog Scouts of America Letterbox merit badge forms can be submitted for the first 50 found boxes and the first 10 planted boxes for the Letterbox Dog title, if these have been previously completed. Once your log is checked and approved, your dog can use the title of Letterbox Dog (the initials LBD after the dog's name.)

### LetterboxDog Advanced (LBA)

For the next level of the title, the dog needs to carry his loaded pack while finding 150 letterboxes (at least one mile at a time). The dog needs to carry his loaded pack while you plant 10 boxes. At least 5 of the boxes planted for this level should have a Positive Training theme. You need to choose one option from Section 1 and complete all the requirements. You need to choose two options from Section 2 and complete all the requirements.

The dog should carry their own personal traveler to all events and hikes. Once your log is checked and approved, your dog can use the title of Letterbox Advanced (the initials LBA after the dog's name.)



LetterboxDog Excellent (LBX)

For the third level of the title, the dog needs to carry his loaded pack while finding 250 letterboxes (at least one mile at a time). The dog needs to carry his loaded pack while you plant 10 boxes. At least 5 of the boxes planted for this level should have a Positive Training theme. You need to choose one option from Section 1 and complete all the requirements. You need to choose two options from Section 2 and complete all the requirements.

The dog should carry their own personal traveler to all events and hikes. Once your log is checked and approved, your dog can use the title of Letterbox Excellent (the initials LBX after the dog's name.)

LetterboxDog Thousand (LB1000)

For the highest level of the title, the dog needs to carry his loaded pack while finding 500 letterboxes (at least one mile at a time).

All previous LB titles are required prior to earning LBK. Once your log is checked and approved, your dog can use the title of Letterbox Thousand (the initials LBK after the dog's name.)



## GeocacheDog

### *What is the GeocacheDog?*

The GeocacheDog program allows you to log various geocaching activities toward DSA GeocacheDog titles. In GeocacheDog, the dog performs the useful functions of accompanying the handler, serving as an example of a well-mannered and trained companion, and carrying tradeable cache items.

Note: Miles logged towards the Letterbox Dog or the Geocache Dog titles may be counted towards either the Pack Dog or Trail Dog titles, but not both.

### *GeocacheDog Title Quick Reference*

Quick Reference Guide		Geocache Badge 3	Geocache Dog (GEOD)	Geocache Advanced (GEOA)	Geocache Excellent (GEOX)	Geocache Thousand (GEO1000)
Required	Found Geocaches (cumulative)	50	100	250	500	1000
Required	Planted Geocaches (cumulative)	10	15	25	35	-
Required	Planted Geocaches with Positive Training Theme (cumulative)	3	5	10	15	-
Section 1: Choose 1 (non-cumulative)	Attend Geocache Events	0	2	2	2	-
	Plan Geocache Events	1	1	1	1	-
	Plant Geocaches		5	5	5	-
Section 2: Choose 2 (non-cumulative)	Find Travelbugs	5	5	5	5	-
	Release Travelbugs	3	3	3	3	-
	Find Earth Cache or Mystery/Puzzle Cache		1	1	1	-

### *GeocacheDog Titling Requirements*

#### Geocache Dog (GEOD)

##### Required Items

- 100 Geocaches found under pack
- Plant a total of 15 caches
- At least 5 planted caches should have a Positive Training theme
- Dog must carry their own tradable items

##### Section 1 (Choose 1 from this section)

- Attend a total of 2 events
- Plan 1 event (not including the ones you attend) with a DSA or Positive Training theme
- Plant 5 Geocaches (not to be counted towards overall plant count)



**Section 2 (Choose 2 from this section)**

Find 5 travelbugs

Release 3 travelbugs - log online

Find 1 Earth Cache, Mystery Cache or Puzzle Cache (complete all requirements for cache, not to be counted towards overall plant count)

**Geocache Advanced (GEOA)****Required Items**

250 Geocaches found under pack

Plant a total of 35 caches

At least 15 planted caches should have a Positive Training theme

Dog must carry their own tradable items

**Section 1 (Choose 1 from this section)**

Attend a total of 2 events

Plan 1 event (not including the ones you attend) with a DSA or Positive Training theme

Plant 5 Geocaches (not to be counted towards overall plant count)

**Section 2 (Choose 2 from this section)**

Find 5 travelbugs

Release 3 travelbugs - log online

Find 1 Earth Cache, Mystery Cache or Puzzle Cache (complete all requirements for cache, not to be counted towards overall plant count)

**Geocache Excellent (GEOX)****Required Items**

500 Geocaches found under pack

Plant a total of 35 caches

At least 25 planted caches should have a Positive Training theme

Dog must carry their own tradable items

**Section 1 (Choose 1 from this section)**

Attend a total of 2 events

Plan 1 event (not including the ones you attend) with a DSA or Positive Training theme

Plant 5 Geocaches (not to be counted towards overall plant count)

**Section 2 (Choose 2 from this section)**

Find 5 travelbugs

Release 3 travelbugs - log online

Find 1 Earth Cache, Mystery Cache or Puzzle Cache (complete all requirements for cache, not to be counted towards overall plant count)

**Geocache Thousand (GEO1000)****Required Items**

1000 Geocaches found under pack

**Logging your Geocaches – Geocache Dog titles**Finding Geocaches

In addition to the required items for the PackDog titles, the dog must also carry their own tradable items in their pack. You will also need a GPS. Each time you find a geocache with your dog (that includes a hike of a mile or more on the same day) keep track of the distance, location and date.



Found geocaches should be traditional type caches. Multi type caches only count as one find. The total find count for each level may include no more than 10% of any other type cache (such as Earth, puzzle and virtual type caches).

Photos of each geocache and the GC code will also need to be saved for verification. These will need to be sent in with the submission form.

### Mileage Requirement for Finding Caches

The trails title program is enthusiastic about getting you and your dog out and exercising. The purpose of the 1-mile requirement is to ensure that we are always working to keep ourselves and our dogs healthy.

For drive-up caches or caches located where it may be unsafe to hike, it is acceptable to complete your hike at another location. The 1-mile hike must be completed in intervals no smaller than 0.5 miles on the same day that you found a cache(s). Finding multiple geocaches during one hike is allowed.

### Planting Geocaches

Clues for planted caches must be logged online or on the Dog Scout Camp computer, if the cache is placed at camp. At a minimum, the cache should include a logbook. Tradable items and a pen are recommended. Photos of the caches must be saved for verification. These will need to be sent in with the submission form and the GC code. If the cache is placed at camp, a copy of the clues and the waypoints will need to be submitted.

### Tradable Items

The dog must carry their own tradable items in their backpack. Tradable items are left in a cache and traded for something of equal or greater value. These can be handmade or purchased. Firearms and food items cannot be left in caches. Items left in caches must be family-friendly.

### Travelbugs

Travelbugs are trackable items that travel from cache to cache on specific journeys. When you find a travelbug, take a photo of it as proof of your find. Then you can choose to either take it with you to help it on its journey or leave it where it is. You can log your find online using the code on the travelbug. Photos of each travelbug and the TB code will need to be saved for verification. These will need to be sent in with the submission form.

To release a travelbug, register your tag online and create a goal for the travelbug. Then simply leave your travelbug in any cache. Photos of the travelbug and the TB code must be saved for verification. These will need to be sent in with the submission form.

Geocoins, Log My Dog Tags, CachekinZ, or other trackables are acceptable substitutes for Travelbugs. Any of these can be counted as trackables that you find. Only one Log My Dog Tag can be substituted for releasing a trackable. A Log My Dog Tag stays with your dog and is discovered by other geocachers you meet on the trail or at events.

### Earth, Mystery & Puzzle Caches

An EarthCache is a special geological location people can visit to learn about a unique feature of the Earth. Typically, to log an EarthCache, you will have to provide answers to questions by observing the geological location. A copy of the answers or photos submitted to solve the cache will need to be saved for verification, along with the GC code. These will



need to be sent in with the submission form.

Mystery and Puzzle caches may involve complicated puzzles that you will first need to solve to determine the correct coordinates. A copy of the answers or photos submitted to solve the cache will need to be saved for verification, along with the GC code. These will need to be sent in with the submission form.

### Attending Geocaching Events

Only events where the dog and handler can attend together will be accepted. Events at restaurants or bars are not acceptable, unless the dog is a service dog. A copy of the event log will need to be saved and sent in with the submission form. Photos of the event will also need to be submitted.

### Planning Geocaching Events

Handler will plan or assist in the planning of a Geocache event. Anyone that performed a significant role in the planning and running of an event may count that event as their own. This may include scouting/selecting a suitable location, reserving the location, collecting and/or planting caches for the event, creating clue guides or other handouts for attendees, organizing food, organizing supplies needed, arranging for prizes for any contests held, being at the event to welcome people, answer questions, organize food, do any prize drawings, help set up/clean up, etc. A Troop Leader or other planner at the event may be contacted for their opinion on whether your level of participation would be considered "significant" or not.

The event must be advertised publicly online on a Geocaching website. Event details must be posted no less than 30 days prior to the event. The event should have a Dog Scout or Positive Training theme. A copy of the online event listing, including the list of attendees should be saved for verification. Photos of the event must be saved for verification. These will need to be sent in with the submission form.

## **Submitting your title request**

Once your dog has completed the requirements of a title, fill out the title request form, and submit it with your logs, verifications, and payment.

### Geocache Dog (GEOD)

For the first level of the title the dog needs to carry his loaded pack while finding 100 geocaches (at least one mile at a time). The dog needs to carry his loaded pack while you plant 15 caches. At least 5 planted caches should have a Positive Training theme. You need to choose one option from Section 1 and complete all the requirements. You need to choose two options from Section 2 and complete all the requirements.

Copies of the Dog Scouts of America Geocache merit badge forms can be submitted for the first 50 found caches and the first 10 planted caches for the Geocache Dog title, if these have been previously completed. Once your log is checked and approved, your dog can use the title of Geocache Dog (the initials GEOD after the dog's name.)

### Geocache Dog Advanced (GEOA)

For the second level of the title the dog needs to carry his loaded pack while finding 250 geocaches (at least one mile at a time). The dog needs to carry his loaded pack while you plant 10 caches. At least 5 planted caches should have a Positive Training theme. You need to choose one option from Section 1 and complete all the requirements. You need to choose



two options from Section 2 and complete all the requirements.

Once your log is checked and approved, your dog can use the title of Geocache Advanced (the initials GEOA after the dog's name.)

#### Geocache Dog Excellent (GEOX)

For the final level of the title the dog needs to carry his loaded pack while finding 250 geocaches (at least one mile at a time). The dog needs to carry his loaded pack while you plant 10 caches. At least 5 planted caches should have a Positive Training theme. You need to choose one option from Section 1 and complete all the requirements. You need to choose two options from Section 2 and complete all the requirements.

Once your log is checked and approved, your dog can use the title of Geocache Excellent (the initials GEOX after the dog's name.)

#### Geocache Dog Thousand (GEO1000)

For the highest level of the title, the dog needs to carry his loaded pack while finding 500 geocaches (at least one mile at a time).

All previous GEO titles are required prior to earning GEOK. Once your log is checked and approved, your dog can use the title of Geocache Dog Thousand (the initials GEOK after the dog's name.)



## **DSA Trails Titling: Registration and General Info**

### **Registering with DSA, Entry Eligibility**

All dogs submitting for any DSA Trails titles must be registered with DSA. See the Forms section in this guidebook for a DSA Competition Registration Number (CRN) Request Form, or the Competition & Titling page on the DSA website. All dogs must have a DSA CRN number to earn DSA titles.

DSA CRN numbers are emailed to legible email addresses for all forms, when received and processed. If there are any questions regarding filling out DSA CRN forms, contact DSA.

Contact: Kelly at dsatraildog@gmail.com

### **Updating Your DSA CRN Information:**

Send address, phone, email, or other changes to DSA by mail or email, and include \$5 per dog for processing.

Contact: Kelly at dsatraildog@gmail.com

### **Event Entries & Check-in Procedures**

A general liability waiver will be a standard part of the entry forms for any DSA-sanctioned Trails events.



## Library of Trails Titling Forms

The forms on the following pages may be reproduced from this book, or can be obtained online along with other DSA Competition & Titling program information at [www.dogscouts.org](http://www.dogscouts.org).



## DSA Competition Registration Number (CRN) Request Form

Complete a separate registration form for each dog you are registering. Each dog needs only one CRN to compete in any and all DSA competitions. **Please print clearly or type** – this information will appear on all DSA Competition & Titling records. Registration confirmation will be emailed to you. If you do not have email, it will be sent via US mail. Email dsatraildog@gmail.com with any requests for expediting.

Handler Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Dog Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Breed/Mix: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Altered: \_\_\_\_\_

Height at Shoulder: \_\_\_\_\_ Approximate Weight: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have previously registered with DSA, list the first 6 digits of your CRN: \_\_\_\_\_

**Fees:**

DSA CRN Registration .....	\$35.00	
Responsible Owner Discount (see below for how to qualify) .....	-\$10.00	_____
I confirm that I am a responsible pet owner (initial each line)		
_____ My dog travels safely in my vehicle (canine seatbelt, crate, etc) *		
_____ My dog gets a health check-up from a veterinarian annually *		
_____ My dog has a permanent ID (tattoo or microchip) *		
_____ I am prepared for an emergency (dog first aid kit, recent photo)		
_____ We "leave no trace" in public (pick up poop, don't pollute, etc.)		
_____ We use positive reinforcement training methods (treats, toys, etc.)		
_____ My dog is considered my family member and is in a lifelong home.		
If this is the 3rd (or greater) dog being registered in this household .....	-\$5.00	_____
DSA Member Discount .....	-\$5.00	_____
Total .....		_____

*\* To receive the Responsible Pet Owner discount, all items must be initialed and the following documentation included: photo of dog prepared to ride safely inside vehicle or receipt for canine seat belt purchase; documentation of most recent vet visit; and photo of tattoo or documentation of microchip/tattoo number.*

**Payment Information**

Make check or money order payable to DSA (in US funds drawn on U.S. Banking institutions.)

Mail to: **Dog Scouts of America, Attn: Kelly**  
**380 Meridian St Ext, Apt21, Groton CT 06340**









## ***DSA Trail Log for LetterboxDog Section 1***

**Dog's Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

Letterbox Dog Title (circle one): LBD / LBA / LBX

<b>Section 1</b>				
Option 1: Attend 2 Letterbox Events	Count	Date	Name of Event	Location
	1			
	2			
Option 2: Plan 1 Letterbox Event	Count	Date	Name of Event	Location
	1			
Option 3: Plant 5 Letterboxes	Count	Date of Placement	Letterboxes Planted	Location
	1			
	2			
	3			
	4			
	5			

**Letterbox requirements for LetterboxDog Titles with Dog Scouts of America:**

Section 1: Choose 1 option. Complete all requirements for chosen option.

## ***DSA Trail Log for LetterboxDog Section 2***

<b>Section 2</b>				
Option 1: Find 3 Hitchhikers	Count	Date	Hitchhikers Found	Location
	1			
	2			
	3			
Option 2: Release 1 Hitchhiker	Count	Date	Hitchhiker Released	Location
	1			
Option 3: Participate in 1 Virtual Event	Count	Date	Name of Event and Letterbox Planted	Location
	Event			
	Box			

**Letterbox requirements for LetterboxDog Titles with Dog Scouts of America:**

Section 2: Choose 2 options. Complete all requirements for chosen option.







**DSA Trail Log for GeocacheDog Section 1**

Dog's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Geocache Dog Title (circle one): GEOD / GEOA / GEOX

Section 1					
Option 1: Attend 2 Geocache Events	Count	Date	Name of Event	GC Code	Location
	1				
	2				
Option 2: Plan 1 Geocache Event	Count	Date	Name of Event	GC Code	Location
	1				
Option 3: Plant 5 Geocaches	Count	Date	Geocaches Planted	GC Code	Location
	1				
	2				
	3				
	4				
	5				

**Geocache requirements for GeocacheDog Titles with Dog Scouts of America:**

Section 1: Choose 1 option. Complete all requirements for chosen option.

**DSA Trail Log for GeocacheDog Section 2**

Section 2					
Option 1: Find 5 Travelbugs	Count	Date	Travelbugs Found	TB Code	Location
	1				
	2				
	3				
	4				
Option 2: Release 3 Travelbugs	Count	Date	Travelbugs Released	TB Code	Location
	1				
	2				
Option 3: Complete 1 Earth / Mystery or Puzzle Cache	Count	Date	Geocache Found (include answers to clues and photos)	GC Code	Location (city/state & area/park)
	1				

**Geocache requirements for GeocacheDog Titles with Dog Scouts of America:**

Section 2: Choose 2 options. Complete all requirements for chosen option.



# Submission Form for TrailDog / PackDog titles:

Person's Name(s):\* \_\_\_\_\_

Dog's Name:\* \_\_\_\_\_

*\* Please include names as you would like them to read on your certificate.*

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Dog's CRN Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Title Achieved:

PD / PDX / UP / UP500 / UP750 / UP1000

TD / TDX / UT / UT500 / UT750 / UT1000

\*A title patch will be awarded for the first level title earned in each category. Extra patches cost \$3.

Date title achieved on: \_\_\_\_\_ (this is the date that will be shown on title certificate)

\*Attach copy mileage log. Please include copies of log sheets (or certificate) for previously completed levels.

\_\_\_\_\_

For PD: Date of 5-mile day hike: \_\_\_\_\_

For PDX:      Date of 10-mile day hike: \_\_\_\_\_

For UP:      Date of 2nd 10-mile day hike: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

For TD:      Dates of two 5-mile day hikes: \_\_\_\_\_

For TDX:      Date of 3rd 5-mile day hike: \_\_\_\_\_

                Date of 10-mile day hike: \_\_\_\_\_

For UT:      Date of 4th & 5th 5-mile day hikes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form, a COPY of the dog's mileage log, and a \$25 recording fee (payable by check or money order made out to "DSA") to:

***Dog Scouts of America, Attn: Kelly  
380 Meridian St Ext, Apt 21, Groton CT 06340***



## Submission Form for LetterboxDog / GeocacheDog titles:

Person's Name(s):\* \_\_\_\_\_

Dog's Name:\* \_\_\_\_\_

*\* Please include names as you would like them to read on your certificate.*

Trail Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Dog's CRN Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Title Achieved: Letterbox Dog: LBD / LBA / LBX / LB1000

Geocache Dog: GEOD / GEOA / GEOX / GEO1000

\*A title patch will be awarded for the first level title earned in each category. Extra patches cost \$3.

Date title achieved on: \_\_\_\_\_ (this is the date that will be shown on title certificate)

*\*Please include copies of the log sheets (or the certificate) for previously completed levels.*

Include COPIES of the following (**Digital/Electronic images, preferred**):

<u>Letterbox Dog Titles:</u>	<u>Geocache Dog Titles:</u>
Copies of stamps from all boxes found	Photos of all caches found
Copies of stamps placed, including copies of clues	Photos of all caches placed and code for online listing (unless planted at camp, then clues must be submitted)
Copies of stamps from all hitchhikers found	Photos of all travelbugs found
Copies of stamps from all hitchhikers released	Photos of all travelbugs released, including code for online listing
Photos of your personal traveler	Photos from each event you attend and code for online listing
Copies of the event stamp and photos of the event from each event attended	Photos from each event you plan and code for online listing
Copies of the online listing, photos of the event and a copy of the event stamp from the event you planned	

Mail this form, a COPY of the dog's letterbox/geocache log, and a \$25 recording fee (payable by check or money order made out to "DSA") to: **Dog Scouts of America, Attn: Kelly**  
**380 Meridian St Ext, Apt 21, Groton CT 06340**



