

# SNC mints coin for geocachers

The CA is using the popular GPS-based recreation to raise environmental awareness

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**F**inch - South Nation Conservation has plunged into the geocaching world big time, to the point of minting its own custom "geocoin" for cachers to target.

For those not yet in the know, geocaching is a high-tech treasure hunting game played throughout the world by adventure seekers equipped with GPS devices. The basic idea is to find containers hidden outdoors and share experiences about the contents and locations where they were found.

Many organizations have designed their own trademark oversized coins which are collectable, tradeable and often trackable, a special prize for geocachers and a good PR opportunity for the coin sponsor.

Participants have the option of re-caching, resulting in a coin potentially travelling across the country and around the world.

SNC's first custom-made geocache coin is selling like hotcakes, with some 135 of the attractive medallions already snapped up at \$10 each.

That leaves about 190 of the keepsakes left to sell, SNC staffer Tim Jackson told members of the communications committee which met at Finch headquarters recently.

In gold or silver, the bilingual coin features the SNC logo embossed on one side and a map of the watershed on the other side. The words: "Our Local Environment... We're In It Together" appear in English on one side and in French on the flip side.

While Jackson had no trouble

selling coins to members of the committee, most were purchased during SNC's first partnered event with Geocachers of Eastern Ontario, a group in which both Jackson and committee member Ian Mitchell are passionately involved.

It was that connection which launched SNC into geocaching as yet another way of raising awareness of the authority and its programs throughout its 4,000 square-km watershed east of Ottawa and bordered to the north and south by the Ottawa and St. Lawrence rivers.

Held April 24 at Cass Bridge Conservation Area south of Winchester, the partnered geocache event drew 74 people for breakfast and up to 110 participants for the day, which involved searching for hidden caches while collecting garbage.

That's one of the beauties of the new-age activity, Jackson noted... It can be combined with other worthwhile pursuits such as trash pickup.

The event was called SNCITO...South Nation Conservation Cache In Trash Out. It was so successful, it'll likely be repeated in some form this fall, Mitchell said.

"It was a five-star event which put us on the geocaching map. We even got international geocaching radio network coverage."

Jackson explained that the primary goal was to collect litter along sections of the South Nation River, parks, trails and roadsides. The secondary goal was to have fun while searching for 70 geocaches along the way.

