COMMUNITY MAPPING: Collecting Data for Your Map - How to Mark Waypoints

ASK

How can you mark waypoints to enhance your map?

In this section, you will use a GPS receiver to find and mark waypoints.

Note: This activity is similar to “Finding Geographic Positions and Waypoints” in the Navigation Tools section.

INVESTIGATE

A waypoint is the term used for the geographic position of an exact intersection of latitude and longitude as marked by a GPS receiver. A waypoint is useful when no street address is available to mark a geographical position. Imagine if you were in a place with no address, like a forest or the desert, how could you know your exact location? No matter where you are, a waypoint can define your location. Waypoints may be used to identify a precise location even when addresses are available. By adding waypoints to your map, you can identify any geographic object.

CREATE: FIND AND MARK A WAYPOINT

• Make a list of the geographic objects on your map to which you want to provide waypoints. Your list may include a business, park, sign, tree, historical site, house, walking trail, etc. You will need to be able to go to the object in order to record the geographic position.

• Become familiar with your GPS receiver. Because GPS receivers need to communicate with satellites, be sure to go outside where the receiver can get a clear satellite connection. It is best to do this activity when the sky is not overcast.

• Go to your selected geographic object.

• Find the “main page” screen of the GPS receiver. Select “mark” and then select “ok.” The waypoint numbers (latitude and longitude values) will be displayed on the GPS receiver.

• Record the waypoint numbers on a sheet of paper and be sure to mark the corresponding geographic object. This is helpful when you are measuring several objects and waypoint numbers.

• Transfer the waypoint data to your map (see “How to Transfer Data from GPS”).

DISCUSS

• How does providing waypoints enhance your map?

• How close did the GPS receiver lead you to your target location?

REFLECT

• How can gathering waypoints help you in the future?

• In what situations might you need to use waypoints?