

Learning to Interpret My GPS Files

I have arranged my GPS waypoint naming system to follow a certain format.

I hope they are not too confusing for you to use.

Listed below will be examples that you will find within my .gdb/.gpx files along with their meanings.

Please read all of this to fully understand my gps files.

I may have enough room for spacing waypoint names, but most of the time I do not.

The first thing you will notice is the waypoint symbol name:

Ex.1) 0815 GCS

- This means that at mile 8.15 you will find a Good Campsite!
 - Generally GCS's have a good water supply
 - Are big in size
 - Have a nice fire ring with seating

GCS = Good Campsite,

ECS = Established Campsite

PCS = Possible Campsite Location

You may also find other words behind the GCS , ECS or PCS such as:

NoH2O which means there is NO WATER HERE! or

-H2O which means LOW WATER SOURCE HERE! Or UNRELIABLE due to location or during periods of no rain or drought when I was there

Ex. 2) 0693 Lt Wds Rd

- This means at mile 6.93 you will make a LEFT on a Woods Road.

You many also find other words after the mileage such as:

Lt = Turn Left

Left = Same as Above

Ex: 0693LtGrassyRd

Rt = Turn Right

Right = Same as Above

Ex: 0693RtGrassyRd

St = Continue Straight

Straight = Same as Above

Ex: 0693StGrassyRd

Lv = Leave Road

Leave = Same as Above

Ex: 0693LtLvGrsyRd (turn left leaving Grassy Rd.)

Ex. 3) **5048XCraneSpur**

- This means at mile 50.48 you will cross over the Crane Spur Trail

You many also find other examples after the mileage such as:

3982 X Sm Trib = Cross over a Small Tributary at mile 39.82

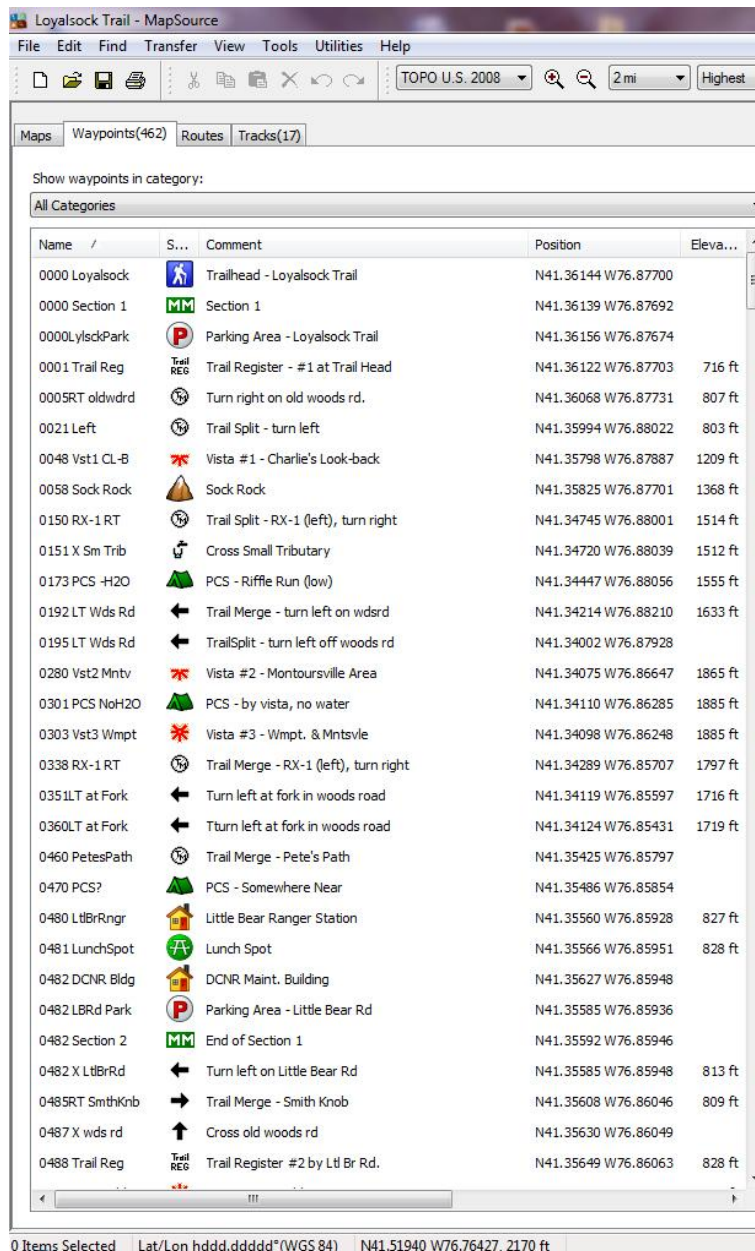
X = Cross Over or Crossing

Sometimes I use an X and sometimes I do not. It depends on the name

Ex. 4) **0385 Bohem Run**

Just simply means you will cross Bohem Run at that mile marker.




























** The rest of my sayings are pretty much self explanatory.*



MapSource Waypoint Naming Scheme Screenshot

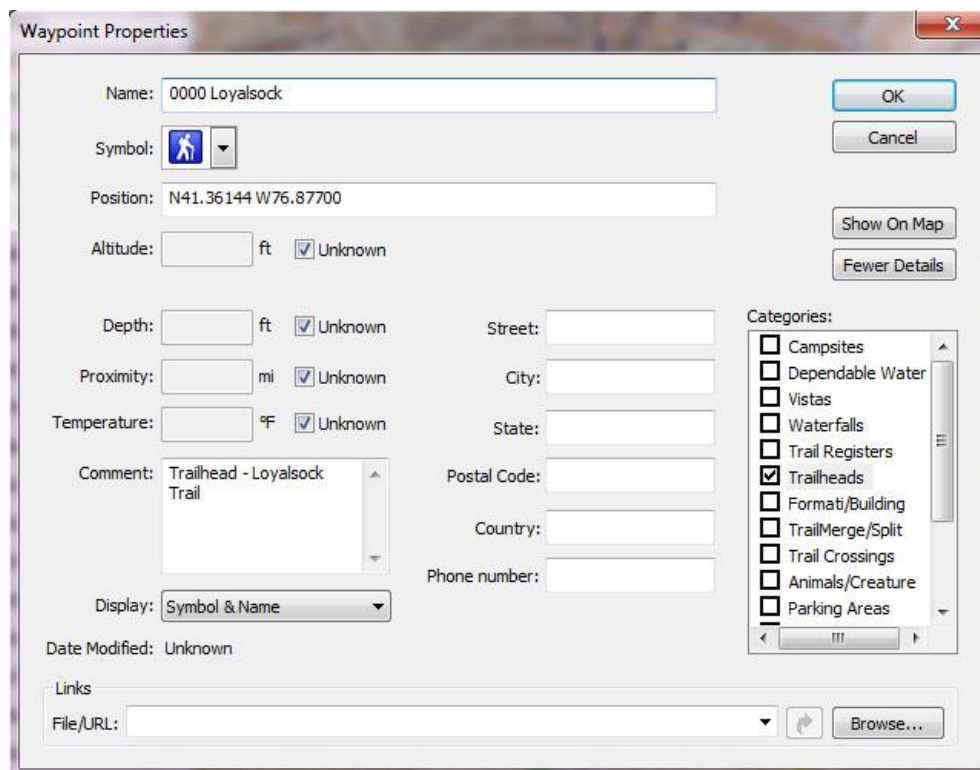
The second thing you will notice is the waypoint symbol itself:

Each symbol has its own meaning. They are on my website and are as followed:

	= Cross a Road or Merge onto a Road		= Vista looking East
	= Turn/Bear Left onto a Road or off the Road		= Panoramic Vista looking North
	= Turn/Bear Right onto a Road or off the Road		= Panoramic Vista looking South
	= Reptile or an Amphibian		= Panoramic Vista looking West
	= Flower or a Plant		= Panoramic Vista looking East
	= Trail Register		= Snake
	= Trail Merge		= Run
	= Trail Crossing		= Bail-out Trail to Main Road
	= Low or Non-Dependable Water Source		= Animal
	= Small Waterfall		= Insect or Caterpillar
	= Big Waterfall		= Trail Split
	= Vista looking North		= Trail Bears Left
	= Vista looking South		= Trail Bears Right
	= Vista looking West		

Note: The GPSMAP 60CSx allows”

- 14 characters in the “name” section
 - *All of my waypoints are 14 characters or less*
- 30 characters in the “comments” section
 - *Please Read Them Prior to Your Outdoor Adventure*
- 1 “symbol” per waypoint of any precreated or personally created waypoint
 - *24 user created symbols, I have created 27*
 - *All of my waypoints have an icon with it*



MapSource - Waypoint Properties Screenshot

The third thing you will notice is the comment section:

- All of my waypoints have a comment written in this field
 - *Please Read Them*
 - *They contain valid and valuable information about that waypoint*
- I've created a format with this section as well.

Ex. 1) **Trail Merge – RX-3 (left), turn right**

This means that you will merge with the RX-3 trail that comes in from the left, but you will turn right.

Ex. 2) **Trail Merge – RX-3, turn right**

This means that you will merge with the RX-3 trail that comes in from the left, but you will turn right.

Ex. 3) **Trail Split – RX-3 (right), turn left**

This means that you will depart the trail by turning left, but the RX-3 trail continues to the right.

Ex. 4) **Trail Merge - Unknown, turn left**

This means you will turn left to continue on the trail. Unknown simply means I don't know the name of the trail that merges into the trail you are hiking

Ex. 5) **Trail Crossing – X-C Ski**

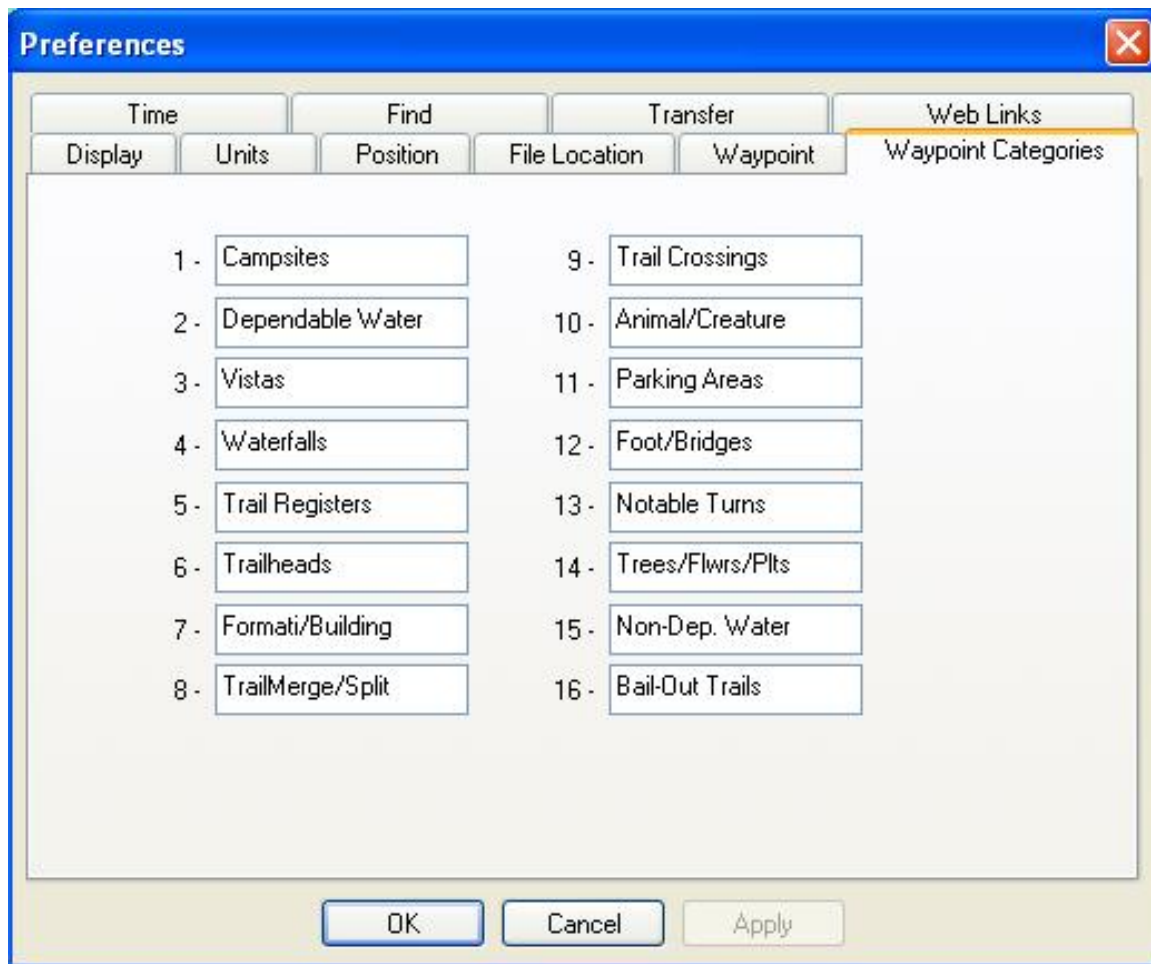
This means that you will cross over the cross country ski trail.

I have several other formats that I use, they are self-explanatory.

The fourth thing you will notice is the categories section:

Note: If you have not created categories yours will appear as Category 1, 2, etc.. to 16

Each waypoint is placed into one of my precreated categories, they are as followed:



The categories come in handy, especially if you only want to view a certain aspect of the trail, for instance: campsites, vista, etc...

You can also arrange the waypoints in order by either:

1. name (from A-Z)
2. Waypoint Symbol
3. Comment, Coordinates, Altitude, etc.

Just click on the bar above the waypoints symbols where the title appears.

After the category title you will find a personal comment about the waypoint, either the name or specific instructions.

Additional Important Information

Concerning Tracks:

- The majority of my tracks are the actual electronic breadcrumb trail tracks that my GPSr (Garmin GPSMap 60Csx) has laid out.
- I have my unit set to do this every .01 miles, roughly 52.8 feet (17.6 yards).
 Setting the GPSr to record track data in time intervals is not practical in my eyes and anything more than .01 miles is too much.
I want my tracks to be as accurate as possible.

Track Log & Odometer Discrepancy

- The Track Log & Odometer on my unit never match up correctly on any of my adventures.
 - At first the odometer recorded a distance shorter than actually traveled.
 - After an update, my odometer now records a distance longer than my track log?

Garmin is fully aware of this problem and has not given me a straight forward answer. I have received multiple explanations from different technicians. All that I can tell you is the odometer and the track log record by two different means of data. Why? I don't know, but my best educated guess is:

- A. the track odometer considers the vertical change in the trail as you hike and
- B. the track log record straight distance only or as we call it, "the way the crow flies"

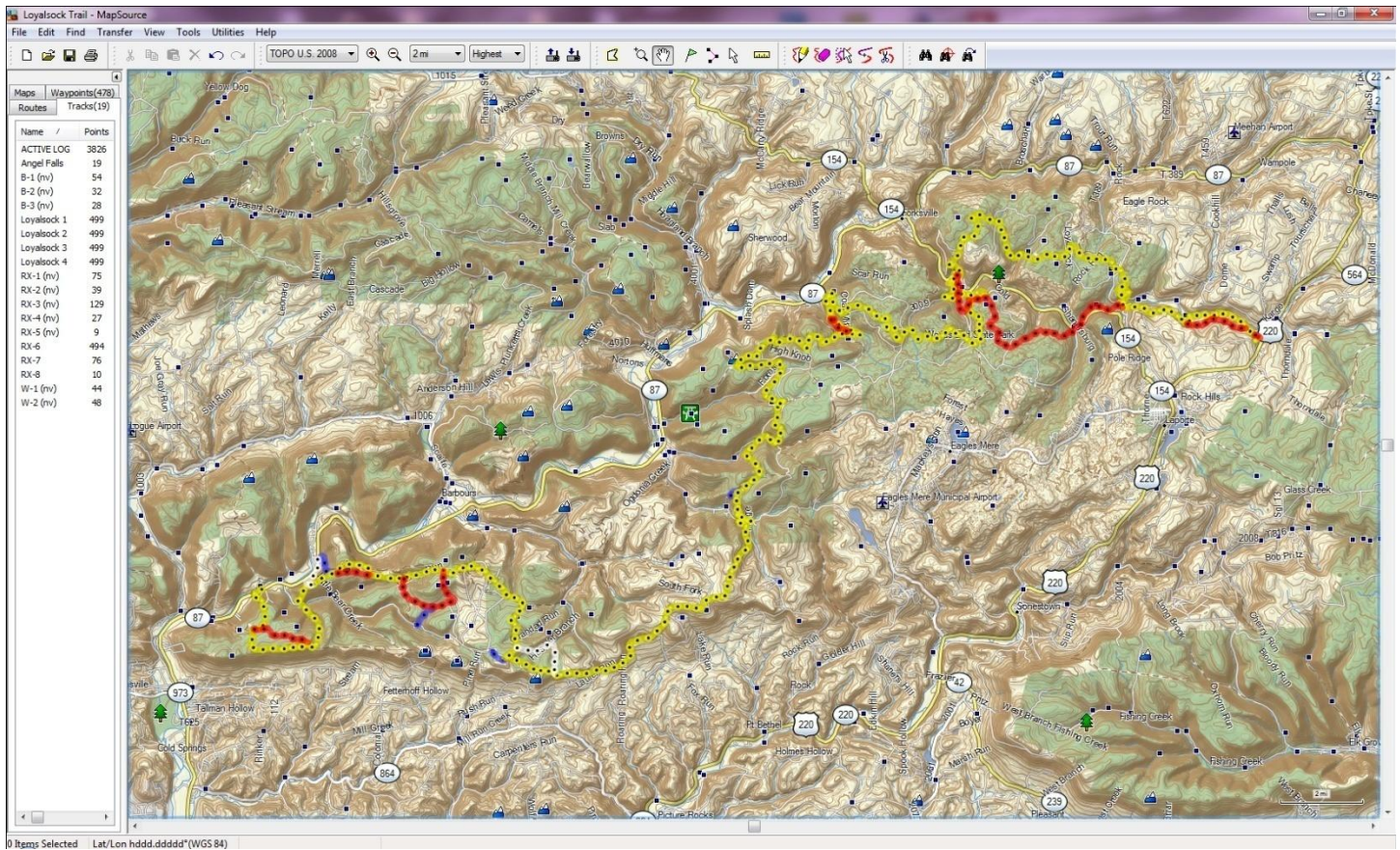
This is very frustrating for me, because I spend many hours correcting the waypoints to their exact distances. I do this one of two ways:

1. The Trail Book (most trails detailed in trail guides have been recorded via a surveyors wheel or a surveyors gps with differentiating.
2. MapSource using my tracklog

I want my data to be accurate for both you and me. My wife and I like to go back and visit certain geographical features on the trail at a later time. This data is critical for us when time is a factor.

Track Log Color

- The color of my track logs all have meaning too.
 - **Red trail/track** = represents the state forest trail that we hiked, they are orange-blazed out in the woods, but red is the closest color to orange
 - **Blue trail/track** = side trail or spur trail that connects two trails, blue-blazed out in the woods
 - **Yellow trail/track** = side trail that leads to a town, road or other trail, yellow-blazed out in the woods
 - **Dark Red trail/track** = shared used trail where foot, bike and horse travel is permitted, red-blazed out in the woods
 - Default (light gray) = the default color that I used for the track log that is over 500 points
 - **Dark Magenta** = The color I usually set my GPS to use for real-time tracking, but not always



Note: This trail's main track color is yellow, that is because the LT is blazed with yellow disks.

Most popular state forest trails are blazed with orange 2" x 6" rectangles.

* Take note to the track colors and the menu on the side.

Tracks In General

- Prior to a hike I draw out the trail by using the maps purchased for the trail. Many of them are USGS 7.5 minute maps or near quality.
- After the hike I delete my precreated trail and use the actual track log trail.
 - This is what you get from me when you use my recorded data, unless it is a...
- Many of the side trails are estimated by the method above.
 - If I have hiked the side trail it will be listed
 - If I have not hiked the side trail, I will place a (NV) at the end of the name which means
 - not validated by me
 - Or if I have an estimated track log such as the last half of the STS.

* Accuracy is very important to me. If the trail was drawn correctly on the map, I will reproduce it as best as I can.

Saved Tracks

- Saved tracks can only be 500 points long, no matter how many miles the trail is. Stupid, but that is the way it is for the 60CSx
 - The GPSMAP60CSx can save 20 tracks on the unit and an infinite number on the card (depending on how much space is available on your card.)
- The unit saves the active track log file as, “ACTIVE LOG” (you will notice this in MapSource) so if you upload a saved track bigger than 500 points to your unit you will see the word “TRUNCATED” on the GPSr screen. This means that data has been lost during the upload due to the track log being too big!
 - So I have made sure that you get both track log files.
 1. ACTIVE LOG = This is the units actual electronic bread crumb trail
 - *Most accurate track*
 2. 500 Point Log = saved version of this hike on the unit.
 - *GPSr's version of this track log saved, not as accurate but is fine*

Work Around...

- I have figured a way to work around this truncated track problem.
- If you want to upload a track log file larger than 500 points to your unit, whether it is...
 - *Created by you or me on the computer or*
 - *By The Unit*
 - Just rename the track log file on the computer to “ACTIVE LOG” (this is what the units saves the active track log files as)
 - Then upload it to the unit.
 - What has happened is; the unit's active track log file has been filled with this data and this section of the GPSr can store up to 10,000 points! Just make sure that your active log is clear before doing this.

GPS Files

- Some of my older GPS files do not follow my format 100% like my newer files. I am in the process of renaming these files to follow my new format. Some are worth changing and some are self-explanatory if you read this document.

Elevation Profile Documents

- Again, some of my older Profile documents do not follow my newest format 100% like my newer files do. I again am in the process of correcting these files to follow my new format. Most of my day hikes do not have detailed elevation profiles, they just contain the elevation information. I am also in the process of recreating these to contain the detailed information.