**Open Water Safety Plan**

**Application Instructions**

* Before applying for a USMS open water sanction, event hosts must review their event information and safety plans with their LMSC Sanctioning Officer. Upon approval from the LMSC Sanctioning Officer, the event host is then ready to apply for sanction.
* When applying for a USMS open water sanction, event hosts are required to submit their safety plan for review and approval by the Open Water Compliance Coordinator (OWCC) ON THIS APPLICATION through the online sanction process. We welcome additional supporting information—after all, many event hosts have developed extensive safety plans over years of hosting events—but everyone must submit this completed application to ensure that all pertinent points are covered in safety planning.
* Using a Google Earth map or equivalent, event hosts are also required to upload a map of the venue and course with the safety plan application. Maps must include locations of start & finish, guide & turn buoys, feeding stations, safety craft, lifeguards/first responders, on-site medical care, and evacuation points.
* In the best scenario, the Safety Director should assist the event host in the developing the event safety plan. If the Safety Director did not take part in developing of the safety plan (usually in the case of appointment after the sanction request or in the case of a substantially unchanged safety plan developed over years of experience), the event host must give the Safety Director a copy of the approved safety plan.
* Upon request, USMS OWCC Bill Roach will send you a copy of the approved safety plan. Contact Bill at [wfroach@att.net](mailto:wfroach@att.net) or 317-989-3164.

**Open Water Safety Plan Application**

## Event Information

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| **General Information** |

Name of Host: Bellingham Bay Swim Team

Name of Event: Aly Fell Memorial Open Water Swim

Event Location: Lake Padden Park, 4882 Samish Way

City: Bellingham State: WA LMSC: 98226

Event Dates: 8/25/2018 through 8/25/2018

Length of Swim(s): 2.5k, 5k, 10k

Dual Sanctioned with USA-Swimming: Yes

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| **Key Event Personnel** |

Event Director: Willie Truemper Phone: 360-710-8161 E-mail: george\_willie@yahoo.com

Referee: Steve Booth Phone: 360-961-5095 E-mail: sbbooth@gmail.com

Certified Safety Director: Chris Furhman Phone: 360-398-3026 E-mail: cfurhman614@yahoo.com

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| **Pre-Race Safety Meeting (required):** **all officials & safety personnel must attend** |

Tentative date: 8/25/2018 Time: 8AM.

Tentative agenda: Assigned locations of safety personnel, monitors, emergency plans, etc.

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| **Pre-Race Swimmer Meeting (required):** **all officials & swimmers must attend to participate in race** |

Tentative date: 8/25/2018 Time: 8:40

Tentative agenda: Course description, rules, timeframes, etc.

**Course & Event Conditions**

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| **The Course** |

Body of water: Lake Water type: Fresh Water Water depth from: 0 to: 59 feet

Course: Closed-only event watercraft allowed

If open course, indicate the agency used to control the traffic while swimmers are on the course.

Agency name: N/A How to contact during event: N/A

Expected water conditions for the swimmers: (marine life, tides, currents, underwater hazards): calm to mild lake chop depending on DOR weather.

How is the course marked?

* Turn buoy(s): Height(s) 4 foot Color(s) Yellow Shape(s) pyramid
* Guide buoy(s): Height(s) N/A Color(s) N/A Shape(s) N/A
* Approximate Distance between Guide buoys: 600m

Number of Feeding Stations: 1

Type of structure(s) used as feeding station(s): floating dock, swimmers will pass each lap

Number of people the structure(s) can safely hold: 4

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| **Water & Air Temperatures** |

Expected air temp range: 52-71 deg Expected water temp range: 65-72 deg Wetsuits: Optional

**USMS Water Temperature Index for sanctioned open water events:**

**- Below 57°F (Very Cold) – heat retaining swimwear and a Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims is REQUIRED**

**- 57°F-60°F (Cold) - heat-retaining swimwear is required or a Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims is REQUIRED**

**- 60°F-66°F (Quite cool) - Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims is RECOMMENDED**

**- 66°F-72°F (Fairly cool) - Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims is ENCOURAGED**

**- 72°F-78°F (Cool) - No Thermal Plan required**

**- 78°F-82°F (Optimal) - Heat-retaining swimwear & neoprene caps are not permitted above 78°F.**

**- 82°F-85°F (Warm) - Thermal Plan for Warm Water Swims is RECOMMENDED**

**- 85°F-87.8°F (Very warm) - Thermal Plan for Warm Water Swims is REQUIRED**

**- 87.8°F-95°F (Hot) - Sanctioned open water swims cannot be held**

**- Over 95°F (Extremely hot) - Any swimming is ill-advised**

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| **USMS Water Temperature Measurement Procedure:** Using an accurate thermometer, the event host should take three to five measurements at various places on the course—12 to 18 inches below the water surface and no closer to the shore than 25 meters (if possible)—within one hour before the start of an open water swim. The host should average these measurements, post and/or announce the resulting average temperature at least 30 minutes before the start of the swim, and announce it during the pre-race staff safety and swimmers’ meetings. |

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| **Water Quality** |
| It is recommended that one week before the event, check water quality. If results returned are inconsistent with the local governing body’s standards, notify swimmers who participated in the event of any known exposures post-race. If an exceptional event such as heavy rain or flooding affects the water quality, the Event Director, Referee, or Safety Director shall have the authority to postpone or cancel the race. It is recommended to take and retain water samples on race day and retain for reference. |

The event takes place at a city park and water is monitored by the city. We will contact city as event nears concerning water quality and inform swimmers of any issues.

## Event Safety

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| **Medical Personnel** |

Lead medical personnel (emergency trained) on site: Minimum of 1 RN, EMT, or MD

Experience in sporting events (Marathon, Triathlon, Open water swim, etc.): Yes

Will medical personnel be located on the course? Yes

The number of medical personnel will be dependent on the course layout, number of swimmers in the water,

expected conditions, etc. How many medical personnel do you plan to have on site? 2

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| **First Responders/Lifeguards & Monitors** |

Indicate the qualifications of the first responders: ARC Lifeguards

Number on course: 4 Number on land: 1

Indicate their location on the Race Plan Map: [Course Map](http://www.alyfellmemorialopenwaterswim.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Lake-Padden-125km-Course-Map.pdf)

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| **Onsite Medical Care & Facilities** |

Describe onsite set up for medical care, such as medical treatment tent, heating/cooling tent or facility. etc., and indicate locations on the Race Plan Map.

Med tent, ice onsite, warm showers available, see map at link provided above.

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| **Ambulance/Emergency Transportation & Nearby Medical Facilities** |

Ambulance(s) onsite: 2 fire stations within 1.3 miles of venue On Call: 911

Have you spoken with local emergency response agency regarding potential emergencies? Yes

Closest medical facility: PeaceHealth Medical Center Phone: 360-788‐6324

Type of medical facility (urgent care, hospital, etc.): Hospital

Distance to closest medical facility: 5-10 miles Approximate transport time: 10minutes

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| **Watercraft** |

Motorized Watercraft:

* Owned/operated by government agencies (Coast Guard, police, fire & rescue, etc.): Whatcom Emergency Services, first responders will transport athletes in need to boat outside the course.
* Owned/operated by volunteers or hired individuals: volunteer, water rescue techs supplied by Whatcom search and rescue.

Will all motorized watercraft with a propeller owned/operated by volunteers or hired individuals be equipped either with a propeller guard or a swimmer monitor? Yes

Other motorized watercraft:

* With propellers fore of the rudder: 0
* With impeller motor (jet ski, jet boat): 0
* Anchored from start to finish: 0

Allocation of Watercraft:

* Safety Watercraft:
* 1st Responders: Motorized: 1 Non-motorized: 5

# 2nd Responders: Motorized: N/A Non-motorized: N/A

* Watercraft for race officials: Motorized: Non-motorized: 4
* Watercraft for race supervision: Motorized: Non-motorized: 10
* Watercraft for feeding stations: Motorized: Non-motorized: 1
* Watercraft for escorted events: Motorized: N/A Non-motorized: N/A
* Other event watercraft:

Emergency Signal Flag Color for all watercraft: orange

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| **Communications** |

Primary method between event officials: Radio Secondary method: Cell Phone

Primary method between medical personnel, first responders & safety craft: Radio (separate channel from Meet Officials)

Secondary method: Cell Phone

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| **Swimmer Counting & Accountability** |

Describe method of swimmer body numbering: The race number will be written on the swimmer’s back and on the outside of both shoulders, so the numbers can be seen while the swimmer is in the water, as well as on swim cap.

Describe method of electronic identification of swimmer (Recommended): Chip timing on ankle by BuDu racing.

Describe different bright cap colors for various divisions (Recommended): Swimmers will be provided swim caps in high visibility colors, organized by race distance.

Describe method of accounting for all swimmers before, during and after swim(s): Before the start of every swim event, the swimmers affix the chip to their ankle and are given a popsicle stick with their race number. Upon entering the water, each swimmer will turn over their popsicle stick to a designated race volunteer. These numbers will be recorded and confirmed upon exit at the swim finish. Start volunteers observe the start area to confirm all swimmers cross the start sensor and do not inadvertently enter the water without their starting chip being registered in the automated count. Once exiting the swim, the swimmer will be required to cross a timing mat which will also track competitors as completing the race. Volunteers will also manually take the number of each finisher. Manual and electronic finisher lists will be cross-checked to assure a complete count.

Describe method of accounting for swimmers who do not finish: When swimmers voluntarily withdraw or are removed from the race, their chip numbers are relayed to the safety director who informs operators of the timing service.

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| **Warm-up/Warm-down Safety Plan** |

Describe safety plan for warm-up/warm-down, include number and location of lifeguards and designated

watercraft. Warmup will be allowed within the swim course (near the start area) prior to the start of the first race. Warm up will be monitored by lifeguards. Prior to the race all swimmers will be cleared from the water so that they can be officially checked into the water.

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| **Swimmer Management** |

Maximum number of swimmers on course at a time: 200

If more swimmers show up on the day of the swim(s), how will you adjust the safety plan to accommodate the increased number of entries? We will plan for 200 swimmers and will cap this year at this level to ensure safety.

How will you deploy the safety staff and crafts distributed to supervise this event to ensure swift recognition, rescue, and treatment of any swimmer? Lifeguards and kayakers will monitor the race and be deployed as shown on the course map. The lifeguards will pull a distressed swimmer from the water onto the board for transportation to the shore or transfer to a boat. Lifeguards will have whistles to attract attention from rescue craft.The purpose of the kayakers is to quickly respond to a distressed swimmer and allow the swimmer to grab the end of the kayak and await rescue. Kayakers will have whistles and flags to attract attention from rescue craft, and a PFD available to throw to a swimmer. They will also help to keep swimmers on course, and help transport any swimmers withdrawing or needing rescue to a boat or paddle board.One power boat will be provided and staffed by Search and Rescue. This boat will have a marine air horn, radio and cell phones, and will be in constant radio contact with the medical station. It is the intent of this safety committee that all kayaks, SUPS and boats will have the cellular numbers of a person in all other boats.

How will you deploy the safety staff to maximize rapid response to a troubled swimmer? If witnessing a medical emergency or if a kayaker, paddleboard or swimmer notifies or approaches with a medical emergency, **NOTIFY THE RACE DIRECTOR/SAFETY OFFICER IMMEDIATELY!!** This is the fastest, most reliable communication to initiate a rescue. If a swimmer is panicking or appears in trouble, signal a kayak, and/or lifeguard. Lifeguards are intended to be the first response to rescues if they are available. If a lifeguard is unable to reach the swimmer, a kayaker should quickly approach the swimmer, toss a life jacket/rescue tube/flotation device. As a last resort, allow the swimmer to hold onto your boat. Use caution, a panicked swimmer can dump a kayak easily and quickly. Get the swimmer to the stern of the kayak and tow them to the edge of the course and transfer to the power boat. The power boat will not enter the course. Any swimmer rescued by a paddle board or kayak will be removed from the race. If a swimmer must be rescued by the row boat for any reason, **notify the Safety Director immediately as instructed Day of Race** It may be necessary to fill out an incident report. Obtain swimmer name and number and general condition. Relay information to Race Director, also noting time and approximate location along the course. If the rescued swimmer does not need medical care (e.g. fatigue), get swimmer into boat and comfortable. Offer blanket and keep swimmer on board until docked at race finish. If the swimmer rescued requires medical attention The boat will proceed to the start/finish area where the EMT and doctors will be stationed. The onsite medical personnel will determine the immediate course of treatment, and whether the swimmer should be transported to medical facilities. When the rescue is complete, notify Safety Director that rescue concluded and boat returned to position or has ferried swimmer to extraction point if medical emergency is determined. Note that swimmer has withdrawn, restate swimmer’s name, number and condition, time of rescue. If required by Race Director, fill out incident report at conclusion of race.

How will you alter the event if insufficient safety personnel/craft are available on the day of the swim(s)? Will not start the event until all safety personnel are in place.

Describe your missing swimmer plan: The finish of the race will require the swimmers to pass around the start buoy with the right shoulder, then exit the water and crossing a timing mat near the water’s edge on the beach. Once the race chip crosses the mat, the competitors will have completed the race. Volunteers will also manually record the number of each finisher. Manual and electronic finisher lists will be cross-checked to assure a complete count. If a swimmer is not accounted for, we will notify race director to make announcement that the swimmer needs to check in. If swimmer does not come forward, safety monitor and search and rescue will be notified immediately.

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| **Severe Weather Plan** |

Is a lightning detector or weather radio available on site? Yes

Describe your plan for severe weather or natural disaster: Cancellation triggers are conditions that would make it unsafe to proceed with the swim, and may either be present at the start of the swim or have a high probability of developing during the swim. Cancellation triggers include: Visibility: Factors may include fog, rain, smoke, or haze. Rain: Hard rain that affects course visibility, makes sighting/navigation difficult for swimmers, or affects ability of crew to monitor swimmers. Wind: Wind that makes sighting/navigation difficult for swimmers, or affects ability of crew to monitor swimmers. Swimmers may resume swimming after hazard is removed. Other: Severe weather, such as lightning; Thunderstorm activity in the area will be tracked for potential time of arrival at the race site.

Prior to the event start The race director is responsible for determining and announcing event cancellation after consultation with the safety director. If Lake Padden is closed, the race will be cancelled. Check in the athletes and hand out any caps and shirts. Announce plans for rescheduling if possible. If cancellation is due to something completely beyond the control of the event hosts (i.e. weather), any refund will be calculated from any funds saved with cancellation.

During the event The Safety Director is responsible for stopping the swim if circumstances warrant. The Race Director is responsible for determining and announcing event cancellation. Referee and Safety Officer will also determine if the swim needs to be modified (e.g.an alternative finishing area is needed).

Describe your course and site evacuation plan, including accounting for all swimmers and other participants:

The Safety Director shall notify lifeguards and kayakers immediately. Kayaks and guards shall inform swimmers of cancellation and alternative finish area if necessary. The abandonment signals will be 5 short blasts of the whistle followed by one long blast. Swimmers are to discontinue swimming and look for directions from the Officials or water craft personnel. Once safe on shore, make sure they get checked off as being safely out of the water. Guards, kayaks and boats shall direct swimmers to designated finish area. Main beach is within 400 yards of any part of the course at any one time. Far shore is 400 yards from the main beach. Course was set up for emergency exit on either side of the course to provide for rapid evacuation if required. If an alternate finish area is necessary, the Race Director, Safety Officer and shore support shall relocate the finishing area at the alternative site. If time permits, set-up the chip timing scan-in at the alternative finish area. If time prevents relocating the chip scanner, shuttle people back to the original finish area for chip scanning. Verify that all entrants have been accounted for.

## Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims

| **General Information** |
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| Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims: USMS Rules for Open Water Swims state:  302.2.2A (1) A swim shall not begin if the water temperature is less than 60° F. (15.6° C.), unless heat-retaining swimwear is required of all swimmers or a USMS-approved thermal plan is in place.  302.2.2A (2) A swim in which heat retaining swimwear is required of all swimmers shall not begin if the water temperature is less than 57° F. (13.9° C.), unless a USMS-approved thermal plan is in place. |
| Remember that the average masters swimmer does little or no acclimatization to cold water, so even a small drop in water temperature—especially in the colder ranges—dramatically increases the odds of thermal issues: Cold Shock Response, Cold Incapacitation, Hypothermia, and Circum-rescue Collapse). Be Prepared! |
| - If your swim course has a remote chance of water temperature less than 60° F., you are **REQUIRED** to complete the thermal plan below, showing your specific commitment to increased swimmer preparation before the event, reduced swimmer exposure during the event, and maximize mitigation & treatment of thermal issues during & after the event.  - If your swim course has a chance of water temperature between 60° F & 66° F., a thermal plan is **RECOMMENDED**.  - If your swim course has a chance of water temperature between 66° F & 72° F., a thermal plan is **ENCOURAGED**. |

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| **How will you assist swimmer preparation before the event:** |

**The following methods are among the ways you can do this:**

1. Emphasize & stress on entry information of possible cold water swim conditions.

2. Require prior cold water swim experience.

3. Require swimmer cold water preparation plan.

4. Refuse entry if swimmer is not acclimated to cold water swimming.

What method(s) of swimmer preparation will you take: Follow recommendation #1 above. Also Race director will take temps several times week before the race and will keep racers updated on precautions that may be instituted based on the results. Wetsuits would be required if the water temperature is below 60 deg F.

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| **What action will you take to reduce swimmer exposure to thermal issues:** |

**The following methods are among the ways you can do this:**

1. Cancel the swim(s).

2. Shorten swim(s) or institute/shorten time limits.

3. Encourage wetsuits for all swimmers.

4. Require wetsuits for all swimmers.

Explain your plan of action: Follow all recommendations above. Race director will take temps several times week before the race and will keep racers updated on precautions that may be instituted based on the results.

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| **What extra medical care will you provide to mitigate & treat symptoms of thermal issues:** |

**The following methods are among the ways you can do this:**

1. Bring in more emergency trained medical personnel and/or ambulances.

2. Bring in more volunteers to assist medical personnel.

3. Bring in more emergency craft and first responders on the course.

4. Increase warm beverages before the swim and at feeding stations.

5. Have special procedures (different than normal) for removing swimmers from the water & venue.   
6. Increase warm beverages after the swim.

7. Increase thermal treatment gear (blankets, hot water bottles, etc.)

8. Make warm showers available on-site.

9. Make warming facilities (buildings, tents, vehicles, etc.) available on-site.

10. Other:

Specify what extra listed items you will provide:

Comment on how you will be prepared to care for multiple medical issues: This is the 4th incarnation of this event and we have had all of the above available in prior races, as water temps are usually between 65-70 degrees.

**If the water temperature is below 72° F, will you be prepared to deal with cold water medical issues:** Yes, water temps will most likely be below 72 degrees and have been in past.

## Thermal Plan for Warm Water Swims

| **General Information** |
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| Thermal Plan for Warm Water Swims: USMS Rule 302.2.2A(3) for Open Water Swims states:  “A swim of 5K or greater shall not begin if the water temperature exceeds 29.45° C. (85°F.). A swim of less than 5K shall not begin if the water temperature exceeds 31° C. (87.8°F.).” |
| Remember that the average masters swimmer does little or no acclimatization to warm water, so even a small increase in water temperature—especially in the warmer ranges—dramatically increases the odds of thermal issues: Dehydration, Heat Stroke, and Hyperthermia. Be Prepared! |
| - If your swim course has a chance of water temperature from 85° F to 87.8° F, you are **REQUIRED** to complete the thermal plan below, showing your specific commitment to increased swimmer preparation before the event, reduced swimmer exposure during the event, and maximize mitigation & treatment of thermal issues during & after the event.  - If your swim course has a chance of water temperature between 82° F & 85° F., a thermal plan is **RECOMMENDED**. |

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| **How will you assist swimmer preparation before the event:** |

**The following methods are among the ways you can do this:**

1. Emphasize & stress on entry information of possible warm water swim conditions.

2. Require prior warm water swim experience.

3. Require swimmer warm water preparation plan.

What method(s) of swimmer preparation will you take: Highly unlikely as Lake Padden has never reached the above temps. Again, we will monitor water temps the week before and make recommendations to the athletes based on results.

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| **What action will you take to reduce swimmer, official, and staff exposure to heat-related issues:** |

**The following methods are among the ways you can do this:**

1. Cancel the swim(s).

2. Shorten swim(s) or institute/shorten time limits.

3. Remind all participants to stay well hydrated.

4. Remind swimmers to select appropriate pace.

5. Make swim caps optional or use Lycra swim caps.

Explain your plan of action: If warm weather, water temps will not be excessive, more than likely there would be more issues with heat exposure on shore than in the water.

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| **What extra medical care will you provide to mitigate & treat symptoms of heat-related issues:** |

**The following methods are among the ways you can do this:**

1. Bring in more emergency trained medical personnel and/or ambulances.

2. Bring in more volunteers to assist medical personnel.

3. Bring in more emergency craft and first responders on the course.

4. Increase cool beverages before, during and after the swim (for swimmers and staff, including extra cool beverages on watercraft and feeding stations)

5. Increase heat exhaustion and heat stroke treatment gear (iced water, ice chips, cold water bottles, misting tents/fans, etc.)

6. Make cool showers available on-site.

7. Make shade and cooling facilities (buildings, tents, etc.) available on-site.

8. Other:

Specify what extra listed items you will need to provide:

**Comment on how you will be prepared to care for multiple medical issues:** See above.

**If the water temperature is above 82° F, will you be prepared to deal with heat-related medical issues:** Yes, will make recommendations based on pre race water temps. Highly unlikely padden will be above 75deg on raceday.