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 David Miner will send you a copy of the approved safety plan. Contact David at mailto:openwateradvisor@usmastersswimming.org or 941-545-9709.

Open Water Safety Plan Application

Event Information

General Information

Name of Host: Swim Without Limits, Inc.

Name of Event: Fontana Lake, Best Dammed Lake 5K, 10K, 15K

Event Location: 8105 Tsali Rd., Almond, North Carolina , 28702

City: Almond State: NC LMSC: North Carolina

Event Dates: 6/13/2020

Length of Swim(s): 5K, 10K, 15K

Dual Sanctioned with USA-Swimming: Yes

Key Event Personnel

Event Director: David Miner Phone: 941-545-9709 E-mail: dminer02@gmail.com

Referee: David Miner Phone: 941-545-9709 E-mail: dminer02@gmail.com

Certified Safety Director: Steve Butler Phone: 941-376-3524 E-mail: Steve@triathlonrocks.com

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

Tentative date: 6/13/2020 Time: 7:30am

Tentative agenda: Discuss role of each power boat and spotter and the safety kayakers on the water. Radio communication channel, where to take swimmers who need to exit the course, how to manage a swimmer on your boat riding it out to the finish. Weather plans, cold water issues, feeding stations, start/finish, and the course layout. Etc.

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

Tentative date: 6/13/2020 Time: 8:00am

Tentative agenda: Safety for each swimmer, rules of the race, the start and finish, the course layout, post race event and awards.

Course & Event Conditions

The Course

Body of water: Lake Water type: Fresh Water depth from: 2 to: 100+

Course: Open

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

Agency name: Swain County Search and Rescue and possibly a Wildlife officer. How to contact during event: Radio and cell phone communication.

Expected water conditions for the swimmers: (marine life, tides, currents, underwater hazards): Lake type conditions with no tides or currents. Possible windy conditions depending on weather. Little to no marine life expected. Water temps expected to be 70-80F.

How is the course marked?

- Turn buoy(s): Height(s) 5’ Color(s) Yellow and Red Shape(s) Round or tetrahedron
- Guide buoy(s): Height(s) 5’ Color(s) Yellow Shape(s) Round or tetrahedron
- Approximate Distance between Guide buoys: 200-300 yards

Number of Feeding Stations: 2

Type of structure(s) used as feeding station(s): Anchored pontoon boat or multi-person raft

Number of people the structure(s) can safely hold: 6

Water & Air Temperatures

Expected air temp range: 75-85 Expected water temp range: 70-80 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

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.

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.

Monitor website: https://www.waterqualitydata.us/provider/STORET/NALMS/NALMS-4620/

If the water quality is too poor for swimming, the event will be cancelled.

Event Safety

Medical Personnel

Lead medical personnel (emergency trained) on site: Two EMTs,

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? Two EMTs

First Responders/Lifeguards & Monitors

Indicate the qualifications of the first responders: EMTs

Number on course: 1 Number on land: 1

Indicate their location on the Race Plan Map.

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. A medical tent will be onsite staffed with and EMT and additional volunteers to assist swimmers. If the swimmer does not respond to onsite treatment, EMS services will be called.

Ambulance/Emergency Transportation & Nearby Medical Facilities

Ambulance(s) onsite: No ambulance onsite On Call: 911

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

Closest medical facility: Swain County Hospital Phone: 828-488-2155

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

Distance to closest medical facility: 15 miles Approximate transport time: 20-30 minutes

Watercraft

Motorized Watercraft:

- Owned/operated by government agencies (Coast Guard, police, fire & rescue, etc.): 3-5
- Owned/operated by volunteers or hired individuals: possibly 1 or 2

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): Possibly 1 jet ski
- Anchored from start to finish: 1 or 2

Allocation of Watercraft:

- Safety Watercraft:
  - 1st Responders: Motorized: 3-4 Non-motorized: 20-25 kayaks/paddle boards
  - 2nd Responders: Motorized: **0** Non-motorized: **0**
- Watercraft for race officials: Motorized: 0 Non-motorized: 0
- Watercraft for race supervision: Motorized: 1 Non-motorized: 0
- Watercraft for feeding stations: Motorized: 1-2 Non-motorized: 0

- Watercraft for escorted events: Motorized: 0 Non-motorized: 0
- Other event watercraft: Click here to enter text.

Emergency Signal Flag Color for all watercraft: Orange

Communications

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

Primary method between medical personnel, first responders & safety craft: Radio

Secondary method: Cell phone

Swimmer Counting & Accountability

Describe method of swimmer body numbering: On swim caps and right and left shoulder and back for swimmers not wearing wetsuits, back of hands for swimmers wearing wetsuits

Describe method of electronic identification of swimmer (Recommended): Electronic timing system

Describe different bright cap colors for various divisions (Recommended): 5K:lime green, 10K yellow, 15K orange

Describe method of accounting for all swimmers before, during and after swim(s): Just prior to race start all swimmers will line up in numerical order and be checked into the water. Swimmers will finish crossing an electronic finish line indicating that they finished. Swimmers who don't finish will check in so that we know they're off the course. We will know who went into the water and who came out. Swimmers doing the 10k and 15k will cross a timing pad after each lap, checking them in that they completed a lap and will be heading out for their next lap.

Describe method of accounting for swimmers who do not finish: They will be instructed that they must check in at the finish line so that we can score them as DNF and know that they're off the course.

Warm-up/Warm-down Safety Plan

Describe safety plan for warm-up/warm-down, include number and location of lifeguards and designated watercraft. Safety kayakers will be on the water in a small, designated swimming area.

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? No entries taken on race day

How will you deploy the safety staff and crafts distributed to supervise this event to ensure swift recognition, rescue, and treatment of any swimmer? The crafts will be in designated locations based on how the pack of swimmers spreads out…one towards the front, one towards the middle and one towards the back. Boats will be roaming the course and handling the first response if a safety kayaker indicates needing help. If more help is needed, a boat will come to the swimmer and have them come onboard or help secure the scene for further medical assistance.

How will you deploy the safety staff to maximize rapid response to a troubled swimmer? Safety kayakers will be onsite first to help the swimmer. We'll have a sweep kayaker behind the last swimmer on the course making sure no swimmer is missed along the course. If needed, a safety powerboat will provide assistance and transport

the swimmer to the finish area if needed. Safety kayakers will be distributed throughout the course in zones watching swimmers come their zones.

How will you alter the event if insufficient safety personnel/craft are available on the day of the swim(s)? Shorten the course, send swimmers in waves, cancel if necessary

Describe your missing swimmer plan: Communicate to all watercraft personnel the swimmer's number and have them communicate with kayakers on the course in helping to verify each number on a swimmer. Have powerboarts spread out on the course looking and communicating with each swimmer and kayaker still on the water while looking for any swimmer who may be on their own or having trouble. Continue the search working with our local police department and forest service until swimmer is found.

Severe Weather Plan

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

Describe your plan for severe weather or natural disaster: Severe weather prior to race, the race will be canceled. If severe weather occurs during the event, powerboats will communicate to all kayakers and swimmers to make their way towards land and get out of the water seeking any available shelter. The boats on the water will patrol the course until all swimmers have left the swim course. We will then determine if the race can continue when weather clears or if the race must be cancelled. If the race cannot continue, we will begin dispatching boats to pick up swimmers around the course radioing in each swimmer number who is picked up and returned to the start/finish area. We will check off each swimmer as they are returned until all swimmers are accounted for.

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

Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims

General Information

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**.

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: Offer a wetsuit division. Event information will state possible cold water conditions and swimmers will be encouraged to have cold water swimming

experience. If not, they will be encouraged to participate in the wetsuit division, wearing a wetsuit for the entire race.

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: All of the above

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

Specify what extra listed items you will provide: Click here to enter text.

Comment on how you will be prepared to care for multiple medical issues: A medical tent will be onsite with warm beverages, thermal blankets, and additional volunteers to assist swimmers. EMT will be onsite providing assistance as well. If the swimmer does not respond to onsite treatment, EMS services will be called.

If the water temperature is below 72° F, will you be prepared to deal with cold water medical issues: Yes