

Win For KC 2011 Triathlon Environmental Sustainability Plan



The Win for KC Women's Triathlon will be held July 30, 2011. Located just north of Kansas City in at Smithville Lake, it is our goal to reduce the environmental impact of the event on the surrounding area and region. This plan was originally assembled in 2009 to guide the goals and vision of the organizing committee as criteria in all of the planning. The green team will consider the environmental impact in every decision and make sure we follow through with this commitment in the run up to the event, the day of the event itself, and the post race review and publicity.

Another major goal will be educating everyone on the positive impact they can have on the environment as a part of this race. That includes the planners, vendors, participants, and spectators. If we can reduce our impact and help some of these key parties learn ways to reduce their impact, we have then accomplished our goal. We will also strive for certification under the Council for Responsible Sport's Green Race Guidelines. We are keeping a running track of the credits we are applying for at the end of this document. The following plan will highlight our goals and anticipated methods for achieving these credits.

The event is a short course triathlon that caters to first-time triathletes and beginners in many ways. First of all, the course itself is manageable with distances of 500 M swim, 10 mile bike, 5k run, and is relatively flat triathlon in and around Smithville Lake Park.

Waste

One of the biggest impacts on race day is the amount of waste that can be generated. To reduce this impact we have put together an integrated waste management plan to reduce as much waste as possible, cutting down on the overall environmental impact of waste generated by the event and its participants. The goal of this plan is to maximize the recycling of triathlon-associated waste, and reduce the amount of waste deposited in the landfills around Kansas City. We will work with Deffenbaugh Industries in the design of the waste management plan to ensure the proper collection of waste materials generated, which eases sorting and increases recycling rates.

Much of the success of the triathlon's trash diversion has and will be based on the efforts of the green team volunteers. These volunteers will be stationed around the race course and at all waste/recycling stations, helping participants and spectators to understand which of the colored signs to put their items:

Yellow: Food Waste for composting
Green: Recycling
Blue: Landfill Waste

We plan to use single stream recycling for the race. This allows the deposit of any recyclable item (cardboard, glass, paper, plastic) into a common recycling bin. The bin is then transported to a recycling center where people and processing equipment separate the waste into material type (paper, glass, etc.). Single stream results in a higher capture rate for recyclables, especially in large event settings, since separate containers are not required for each waste type. We will approach recycling with a combination of our volunteers and clear signage to direct participants to dispose recyclables and non-recyclables in the appropriate bin. We will recycle cardboard, glass, plastic water bottles, aluminum cans, and paper (1.1-1.5). Not only will items consumed at the event be recycled, but the race organizers encourages participants to bring old water bottles and other recyclable material to the race, and the event will take care of their proper disposal. Recyclables will be removed by Deffenbaugh and taken to their recycling center.

Food waste will be collected and sent to Missouri Organic, a local company that makes compost, topsoil, and through the use of their 'FRED' program (Food Residual Environmental Diversion) diverts food waste from the landfill waste stream (1.6).

By establishing multiple colors for the waste reduction strategies we can reduce the overall landfill waste to a very low weight per participant, and through continued education of the participants the organizers have set a goal of a 10% reduction in landfill waste from the previous year (per participant). (1.7-1.9)

Success in waste management will result if all of the plans put in place are followed as anticipated. It will take a group effort to make this happen. The more we do now at the outset, the more successful the end result.

Climate

Due to the location of the event, our closest public or mass transportation access point is approximately 10 miles away. We have established a carpooling ride sharing program through PickUpPal and let all of the participants know about its availability through pre-race communications to cut down on single trips. (2.2)

We will make every effort to source food from local vendors, although there may be a challenge with some of the fruit and the fact much of the food is donated. Once again this year we'll use a 3rd party certified food product as a fair trade or organic (2.5). Additionally, we've set a goal to provide signs at the serving area alerting spectators and participants of these certified products (4.3/4.5).

We live in a time where water resources will soon become a very important issue, and in many states the legal battles over water rights portend a larger issue if we do not address conservation starting immediately. To that end, we will implement the following policies to reduce water consumption and use (2.9):

- Eliminate sprinklers at the finish line to cool off participants, despite the typical early August weather in Kansas City being hot and humid.

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- Sweep the transition area and Gazebo command post with brooms instead of hosing them down.
- Modifying the transportation of drinking water to a smaller module jug that can be used to fill larger jugs.

Because our site is north of Kansas City, we must strive to eliminate any redundant travel associated with the event. We will hold as many of our planning meetings by conference call and this year will provide packet pickup at the event to limit travel to one time (race day only). This approach should eliminate any 'special trips' of redundant travel. (2.10)

Equipment & Materials

This process has educated us in the areas that we are already following criteria to lessen our impact. As usual all paper-based materials created by our event will use FSC certified recycled paper and soy-based inks (3.1). Once again this year we will allow only online registration to avoid the need for additional paper waste (3.2).

Again this year we will plan to rent all of the materials and equipment from one source. We will plan to use all 'reused' materials, though we will have to deal with the banners' date specific information. We will at least rent one 'major' essential piece of equipment. In fact all of our 'major' pieces of equipment will be rented.(3.3)

Although the race t-shirts will not be organic this year we will provide all participants the ability to opt out of receiving the shirt, thus reducing the amount of materials needed for the event. (3.6)

New this year we plan for the race finisher award to use local and/or sustainable materials, as well as providing participants the ability to opt-out of the award (3.7)

We will also set a goal of using only compostable plates and flatware. In years past this has been difficult, but with new partners and more offerings we should be able to meet the criteria. As before we will inform them of our goal and ask if they are able to participate. (3.8)

Community & Outreach

Along with all the environmental initiatives, it is critical we do not lose sight of our relationship with the local community. We continue to 'Think Globally, Act Locally'. For the third consecutive year we're working with the Parks Department in Clay County to help with their tree planting and prairie restoration around the park. (4.1)

We again strive, as in past years, to continue our wonderful relationship with Smithville. As Smithville is a ways from Kansas City we will focus on involving local community members in our organizing committee. The triathlon will be promoted nationally but produced locally. (4.2)

A "green" theme will permeate the event. We will continue to educate participants, vendors and spectators of the sustainability initiatives while inviting them to take part. We will use pre-race literature and the website to educate and offer the responsible choices being made. If done well this combination can provide a great reward – these three groups feeling like they are part of the process and become motivated to help. By including the PickUpPal and Soles4Souls programs as a part of our plan participants and spectators will be able to directly engage in the sustainable theme of the triathlon. New this year will be the inclusion of the event planners on the Going Green Radio Show in Kansas City. We plan to be guests of the show twice through the late spring and early summer to promote the event and its green impact.(4.3)

Once again our proceeds after expenses will be used to support the mission of WinForKC and their work with girls and women's health, involvement in sports, and self-esteem (4.4)

The race itself taking place at Smithville Lake Park gives us an excellent opportunity to share the environmental impacts with the public. As we support the Parks Department efforts in 4.1 above we will be sure to educate the public through different media sources, such as the radio show indicted in Credit 4.3 above. (4.5)

We will also encourage participants who are coming in from out of town to not stay at a hotel, but to stay with friends, family, or even others they do not know. If nothing else, we anticipate this will provide some remarkable stories that we can share as we tell the overall story of the event. (4.6)

Health Promotion

We know triathlons (and races in general) typically put up large barriers for the underrepresented population. As always, we are focusing on female/youth female participation as it comes back to the promotion of healthy lifestyle, a mission of WinForKC. And with our focus on environmental and social sustainability, we believe the race will appeal to another set of values within the participants and spectators. (5.1)

This year we will also offer a Girls Tri, an online training program for girls ages 6-12 years old, where they can train with their moms and log miles and distance in all three sports. But most importantly they get to come to the race and witness all of the female role models participating, and experience/participate in the energy of this empowering women's event. (5.2)

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We will offer a number of programs to help the first time and beginning triathlon participants. We are planning a "Fitness Series" that will provide women all the information and support they need to go from inactivity to triathlete. These events will include a Triathlon Clinic, Triathlon Workshop, Fitness Fair, Fitness Profiles, Nutrition Workshop, Bike and Shoe fit seminars, and several group trainings where women can train with others preparing for the race. In addition, we will offer three First Timer Forums that focus specifically on preparing women for their first race. We also will put the PowerPoint presentation online as a reference for the women. We also have a Triathlon Coach that will attend all of the trainings and is available anytime to answer questions or help in any way. In essence, we have created a triathlon community consisting of the women that have signed up for the race. We will send out weekly email updates about different opportunities, trainings, and articles that may be of interest or assistance. This correspondence will be a good forum for us to share the sustainability message on a regular basis leading up to the race. (5.3-5.4)
Finally, to encourage feedback on all of these efforts and see if we have achieved some of our goals, we will distribute a survey electronically. (5.5)

Innovation (6.1-6.3)

Each year we'll look for innovative ways our race can go above and beyond the sustainability goals we have set. This approach will continue to drive the development of new ideas and evolve races closer to the true definition of sustainability. Some of the ideas we are pursuing this year include, but are not limited to:

- Multiple water reduction policies implemented.
- Exemplary level of underrepresented participants.
- Development of partnership with sponsors who while support the Triathlon's mission as a whole they have engaged the event specifically for its Green Mission/Promotion.
- In lieu of landfilling the vinyl banners we've developed a program to reuse the banners in the form of bags.
- All 'major' equipment will be rented for the event.
- Developing a program to increase the green education aspects of the event, including:
 - o Regular emails to participants, sponsors and friends informing them on our ongoing efforts and plans to green the event.
 - o Media coverage in local outlets such as newspaper/magazines as well as appearance on local radio.
 - o Signage and personal interaction the day of the event to share the green aspects of the event with participants, fans and friends.

As we continue through the process we expect this document to change and evolve. Despite the final outcome, if we can educate the public on the importance of these goals, we will have achieved more than any standard or certificate.

As you read through these goals during the planning process, please provide feedback to us so we can continue to improve this document.

Thanks!

The green team.