



The American Birkebeiner Trailhead

A Fresh New Start

- A little over 2 years ago the ABSF began our first-ever Capital Campaign with a goal of securing a new permanent start area for the American Birkebeiner.
- With the closing of Telemark lodge years ago, the start of the American Birkebeiner ski race was in jeopardy. For a number of years, the race's starting line was moved to the runway of the Cable Union Airport, adjoining the closed Telemark Lodge.
- In an effort to ensure the race's future, the ABSF purchased land near Telemark Lodge and adjacent to the current start area at the Cable Union Airport and created the American Birkebeiner Trailhead, home to the new Birkie race permanent start.
- Site preparations began in the fall of 2015 with trailhead and start line infrastructure completed in summer 2016.
- The inaugural use of the new permanent start on February 25, 2017 will be a monumental moment in American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation history books.
- The new trailhead guarantees the future of the race for generations to come.
- The new American Birkebeiner Trailhead is home to a new "Great Hall" to be used for storage throughout the year and as a pre-race warm space on brisk race mornings. A new warming shelter/trailhead building also provides a safe space for runners, hikers, bikers and skiers throughout the year.
- The new American Birkebeiner Trailhead is key to improving overall participant experience, to securing the future of various Birkie events, and providing the ABSF with a medium to promote and encourage a year-round, active lifestyle.

- Last year alone, an estimated 100,000 silent sports enthusiasts utilized the Birkie Trail. The new permanent start venue will not only enhance future events experiences, but will act as a gateway to the iconic Birkie Trail.
- The Birkie Trail was recently named the number one cross-country ski destination in the nation by USA Today/10Best
- The ABSF Capital Campaign (current phase 2) is focused on sustaining and improving the infrastructure that will enable a healthy active lifestyle: Creating Venues (Nordic Center); Improving Trails; Infrastructure additions (Warming shelters along the trail, wells, Hwy 77 Underpass near Fish Hatchery, initial investment in snowmaking equipment, a new wide trail groomer, and more).

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