



For Immediate Release

Contact:
Nancy Knutson
715-634-5025
Nancy.Knutson@Birkie.com

Birkie Green Comes to Life at Birkie 2020

ABSF Continues to Implement Steps to a Greener Birkie

Hayward, Wis. (February 12, 2020) – At its core, the Birkie lifestyle is about embracing an active lifestyle in the great outdoors. Knowing we have a responsibility to take the best possible care of the amazing resource that is the Birkie Trail, and the environment in general, the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation (ABSF) launched Birkie Green in 2019, an initiative designed to inspire and implement solutions to address changing climates; to implement sustainability practices whenever possible; to create solutions to support the environment and use of the land; and to consciously choose like-minded vendors and partners who demonstrate green and sustainability efforts. This will be the ABSF's first Birkie Week of events since launching Birkie Green. The ABSF has already implemented changes, both large and small, to reduce waste at events – like cup-less races (Birkie Trail Run Festival and Birkie Tour), digital race guides, and virtual event bags. The ABSF is excited to continue their efforts during the 2020 Birkie Week of events.



“Our Birkie Green initiative, while in its infancy, is already gaining traction,” said Ben Popp, ABSF Executive Director. “We are learning and evolving and always looking to expand our sustainability efforts at events, including during Birkie Week 2020.”

As racers and spectators prepare for Birkie Week events, they'll first encounter Birkie Green at the Birkie Expo on Thursday and Friday, February 20 and 21, 2020. In an effort to control waste and limit contamination, the ABSF will have one central waste station staffed by volunteers at the Birkie Expo. These volunteers will ensure that waste is properly sorted into a compost, recycling, or landfill bin. The same volunteers will also be able to speak to the Birkie Green efforts at Birkie events to date. The Birkie Store will feature Birkie Green inspired products, like reusable water bottles partially made from recycled plastic, and shirts made from recycled materials; a portion of the proceeds from the sale of these items will go to fund future Birkie Green initiatives (items are available at www.BirkieStore.com). As visitors make their way through the Expo, they should keep an eye out for the Birkie Green logo indicating that the ABSF, or a partner, is engaged in activities to support sustainability efforts.

“Birkie Green has given birth to some smart actions by the ABSF,” said Paul Thompson, Cool Planet Skiers. “Stop by the table near the Birkie Expo's waste station and learn about how you can implement Birkie Green in your own life.”

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In the spirit of Birkie Green, the ABSF has implemented a new trash penalty for the American Birkebeiner, Kortelopet, and Prince Haakon races. Any skier caught throwing trash outside designated aid station areas may be assessed a 15-minute time penalty for such actions. The Birkie Trail covers over 100-kilometers and with snow, wind and grooming, it is hard to effectively keep trash off of the forest floor. Skiers will see a “Last Chance” trash drop on both sides of the Birkie Trail as they exit each aid station alerting participants to throw any waste still in their possession. Skiers are responsible for keeping their trash on their person until he or she reaches the next aid station and waste receptacles.

In a pilot program, many of the racecourse aid stations will be serving hydration in compostable cups. The ABSF will be collecting aid station waste – compostable cups, food scraps like banana and orange peels - in green, compostable garbage bags on both Friday and Saturday. The waste will be stored and transferred to the ABSF’s industrial composting partner, Earth Bound Environmental Solutions, LLC. The ABSF is excited to be able to compost the majority of the thousands of cups generated at Birkie events.

While Birkie Green is in its infancy, every small action matters and the ABSF continues to implement and discuss sustainability with each and every event. Birkie Green provides a platform to help educate people about the importance of sustainability at events so skiers, runners, and bikers, can move forward together.

About the American Birkebeiner® Ski Foundation and Birkie® Events

Located near Hayward and Cable, Wisconsin, the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation (ABSF), a 501c3 organization, is perhaps best known for its signature American Birkebeiner Ski Marathon held each February. Today, however, the Birkie represents a variety of year-round, silent sport events that promote a healthy, active lifestyle for thousands of outdoor fitness enthusiasts. From the iconic American Birkebeiner ski race, to the Birkie Trail Run & Trek, and Fat Bike Birkie, the ABSF and the Birkie Trail attract skiers, runners, bikers, trekkers, and hikers, from casual day-trippers to elite athletes. **BIRKIE Ski. Run. Bike. Live!** Learn more www.birkie.com

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