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GRANDMA'S MARATHON SEEKING RESPONSIBLE SPORT CERTIFICATION IN 2023

Working Throughout Entire Year to Meet Certain Goals, Parameters

(DULUTH, MINN.) --- Grandma's Marathon has been working throughout the year to become a Responsible Sport Certified event, and the final test will come when 50,000+ people descend on Duluth and the surrounding area next weekend for the 2023 race weekend.

The certification is granted by the Council for Responsible Sport, which started in 2007 and now has grown into a recognized leader in helping to measure and manage the social and environmental impacts of events around the world.

In order to qualify for certification, an organization must demonstrate and document its actions in planning and executing its events are in alignment with the Council's standards.

"If we can make this the new normal in our way of thinking," Program Director Alivia Nelson said, "the hope is that it then spreads to our participants, volunteers, and community. We're fortunate to have this beautiful backdrop for our race, and it's a rapidly growing part of our job to make sure it stays that way."

Certifiers will be in Duluth for this year's Grandma's Marathon weekend to make final reviews of the organization's work, and the public will see several initiatives at work that are part of the certification process. Those items include, but are not limited to:

ACCESS & EQUITY

Removing barriers to entry for underrepresented groups within the running community has become a leading, central focus of Grandma's Marathon. After engaging with industry and community leaders, the race has added a non-binary category and implemented a program called *Running to Common Ground*, which in 2023 offered up to 500 discounted registration fees to participants from underrepresented communities and cultures.



HICCUP

Through a partnership with Hiccup Earth, Grandma's Marathon is providing reusable cups at two of its water stations for this year's event, which will replace the need for 50,000+ paper cups. The reusable cups are provided by Hiccup Earth, which after the race will collect and clean them before sending them to their next event.

CARBON OFFSETS

Through a partnership with NCX, Grandma's Marathon is offering participants an opportunity to purchase carbon offsets that will counteract their own travel to the event. The money collected is then distributed to Minnesota landowners in exchange for not harvesting the forest on their land.

REDISTRIBUTION

Through a partnership with Goodwill – Duluth, Grandma's Marathon encourages participants to wear extra layers on race morning that they can discard at the start line. Goodwill staff collects those clothes to then be reused or recycled.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Grandma's Marathon recently installed solar panels on its main office building in Canal Park, allowing the organization to use alternative energy to power its operations throughout the year.

Out of the 61 points possible on the certification scorecard, Grandma's Marathon aims to earn either Evergreen (90% of points possible) or Gold (75% of points possible) status for its work ahead of and during the 2023 race weekend.

Should the race earn its Responsible Sport Certified distinction, Grandma's Marathon must then update its reporting each year and a site visit will be required every two years for the next six and every three years thereafter to maintain that classification.

For any questions or interview requests, please contact Marketing & Public Relations Director Zach Schneider via phone at (218) 343-9874 or via email at zach@grandmamarathon.com.

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ABOUT GRANDMA'S MARATHON

Grandma's Marathon began in 1977 when a group of local runners planned a scenic road race from Two Harbors to Duluth, Minnesota. After seeing just 150 participants that year, the race weekend has now grown into one of the largest in the United States and welcomes more than 20,000 participants for its three-race event each June.

The race got its name from the Duluth-based group of famous Grandma's Restaurants, the first major sponsor of the marathon. In addition to the 26.2-mile race, the organization has now added the Garry Bjorklund Half Marathon and William A. Irvin 5K to its weekend offerings.

As the popularity of Grandma's Marathon has grown, our mission has stayed the same – to organize, promote, and deliver annual events and programs that cultivate running, educational, social, and charitable opportunities to our communities.



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Grandma's Marathon-Duluth, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization with a nine-person, full-time staff and a 17-member Board of Directors.



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