

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Big Sur Marathon to Postpone Due to Growing Coronavirus Threat

Race organizers work to establish a new 2020 date, targeted for late summer or early fall.

CARMEL, CA – Organizers of the 35th Annual Big Sur International Marathon, originally set for Sunday, April 26th, have announced that the race will be postponed until later this year. Over the past several weeks, the Big Sur Marathon Foundation has been monitoring updates from county, state, federal, and international public safety and health agencies regarding the global coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. With state and local efforts to control the virus expanding quickly, the Foundation’s governance board, medical director, and race officials decided that postponing the race is the best way to help ensure the safety of participants, volunteers, spectators, and residents.

Race officials are currently coordinating with local agencies, partners, and other impacted entities to secure a reschedule date for the 2020 Big Sur Marathon, Relay, 21-Miler, 11-Miler, 12K, and 5K. They aim to reschedule for late summer or early fall and plan to update participants as soon as a date is secured. The By-the-Bay 3K, which draws roughly 4,500 schoolchildren from Monterey County Schools each year, will not be rescheduled for 2020.

“Like our participants, we were disappointed to have to move the race to a later date, but we strongly feel it is the responsible thing to do,” said Doug Thurston, Race Director and Executive Director of the Big Sur Marathon Foundation. “This situation is moving so quickly locally, nationally, and world-wide and we all have to work together to try to stop the spread of this virus.”

Registered runners in the 2020 Big Sur Marathon weekend of events will be given the chance to run their race on the rescheduled date or choose from other options, the details of which are in process. Thurston said all options will be made public as soon as possible.

“We understand a postponement might not work for some of our participants and we are working hard to determine alternate options for those runners,” Thurston said. “We appreciate the patience, understanding, and concern of all those affected during this stressful time.”

The mission of the Big Sur Marathon Foundation is to “create beautiful running events that promote health and benefit [the Monterey County] community.” This year, the marathon and other race weekend distances were scheduled to receive a sold-out, 13,000-plus participant field from all 50 U.S. states and 40 countries. To hold the Big Sur Marathon next month would be in direct opposition to the organization’s mission of promoting health. The swiftly evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic caused race officials also to consider the event’s potential impact on local health care and public safety resources.

“When we conduct one of our races, we partner with several local health-care and public safety resources. We need to ensure that these resources are available for our community,” said Thurston.

The Big Sur International Marathon is produced by the Big Sur Marathon Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the health of the Monterey County community. The organization carries out its mission by providing grants to local groups who volunteer at Foundation races throughout the year and other charitable programs including the year-round JUST RUN youth fitness program.

The 2020 Big Sur Marathon is the third Foundation event to be affected by situations outside the organization’s control. The Salinas Valley Half Marathon in 2016 and the Monterey Bay Half Marathon in 2018 were canceled due to poor air quality from nearby wildfires.

Big Sur Marathon officials are looking forward to the opportunity for entrants to run on iconic Highway 1 at a future date in 2020. For questions regarding the postponement of the 2020 Big Sur Marathon, please visit <https://www.bigsurmarathon.org/2020/03/09/coronavirusupdate/> or send an email to info@bsim.org.

About the Big Sur Marathon Foundation

The Big Sur Marathon Foundation is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to create beautiful running events that promote health and benefit the community. Under the brand are three individual race weekends: Big Sur International Marathon in April, Run in the Name of Love 5K and 2K in June, and the Monterey Bay Half Marathon, 5K and 3K in November. In addition, the Foundation oversees the award-winning JUST RUN® youth fitness program. www.bsim.org

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