

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

Mike Collingwood Memorial Triathlon

Gatineau Park, Quebec

Commitment

The organizing team of the Mike Collingwood Memorial Triathlon commits to leaving the Gatineau Park in better condition than we found it, and to demonstrating leadership in the National Capital Region in the planning and implementation of an environmentally sustainable sporting event.

Objectives

1. To mitigate any harmful effects of the triathlon on the land, water and wildlife of the Gatineau Park; and to have an overall positive impact on the Gatineau Park environment.
2. To produce no garbage.
3. To ban bottled spring water from the event.
4. To continually reduce carbon emissions directly related to the event.
5. To minimize environmental impacts arising from the production of food for the athletes.
6. To nurture the athletes' deep appreciation of, and connection to, their training and racing environments—particularly the Gatineau Park—and to improve their knowledge of how to “step lightly” on the planet while pursuing their passion for triathlon.

Actions

Pre-Race Planning and Communications

1. Plan the event in consultation with the National Capital Commission and the Friends of the Gatineau Park to avoid or minimize any disturbance to the land, water and wildlife of the Gatineau Park. On an annual basis, review plans and post-race reports to identify environmental issues and opportunities.
2. Continue to site high-traffic zones in paved or gravel areas as much as possible; use barriers to keep athletes out of more sensitive vegetated areas as appropriate, particularly on the Meech Lake shoreline.
3. Develop and maintain an environmental page on www.meechlaketri.ca to inform sponsors, volunteers and athletes about our environmental objectives, what we're doing to achieve those objectives, and detailed instructions on how they can help.

Registration

4. Continue to carry out all marketing and registration in electronic format.
5. Continue to eliminate any unnecessary “stuff” from kits, including kit bags. Provide swim caps on an as-needed basis only, and eventually a for-purchase basis.
6. Consider (in the mid- to long-term) providing the opportunity (on registration or payment websites) for athletes to purchase high-quality carbon credits to offset their individual carbon footprint associated with the event.

Transportation

7. Reduce carbon emissions and degradation of grassy parking fields by minimizing the number of vehicles driven to the venue, and used on-site:
 - Encourage athletes to car pool to the triathlon. Investigate existing carpooling websites on which we can establish an event module. Consider providing a draw for athletes who carpool to the venue.
 - Encourage cycling to the venue. Consider providing a draw for athletes who cycle to the venue, or a prize for the athlete who cycles from the furthest location on race day.
 - Encourage volunteers to cycle between sites at the venue.
8. Consider (in the mid- to long-term) offering premium parking spots for energy-wise vehicles.
9. In consultation with sponsors, consider (in the mid- to long-term) holding race-kit pick-up at the venue on race-day only.

Set-up of venue

10. Invite the National Capital Commission to set-up a booth in the finish line zone, to inform participants and answer questions about their natural resource management program and strategy for “environmentally respectful recreation” in the Gatineau Park.
11. Purchase eco-friendly products and services wherever possible (e.g. port-a-potties that do not use toxic chemicals).
12. Re-use triathlon signage.

Food and drinks

13. As much as possible, offer local fruits and vegetables, or certified organic or eco-friendly products at the post-race snack table.
14. Continue to use compostable cups for serving water at the run turn-around.
15. Continue to provide water in large-volume containers for refilling athletes’ water bottles. Investigate the availability of a water truck to replace bottled spring water with tap water in the mid- to long-term.
16. Use re-usable, recyclable or compostable food packaging; avoid individual serving-size containers and plastic cutlery.
17. Provide recycling and compost bins at the post-race snack table.
18. Ensure all left-over food is used or composted rather than put in the garbage.

Other

19. In collaboration with the NCC and Tree Canada, plant a native tree for each age-group winner, to establish the memorial Mike Collingwood Forest and to provide a positive environmental benefit for the Gatineau Park. (While not considered a carbon offset, planting trees does complement efforts to reduce greenhouse gases.)
20. Continue providing a charitable donation from the proceeds of the triathlon to the Friends of the Gatineau Park.
21. Consider (in the mid- to long-term) becoming a carbon neutral event: measure and reduce emissions associated with the triathlon’s activities and offset residual carbon emissions.

22. Talk briefly to the athletes during the event about the *Environmental Sustainability Strategy* and how they can help.
23. Consider the value of pursuing official recognition of our greening efforts, such as:
- Certification by the Council for Responsible Sport www.resport.org, which provides an independent, comprehensive certification for sustainable athletic events. Only one other athletic event in Canada—and no other triathlons—have the certification (the Port Perry Half Marathon/5K);
 - Athletes for a Fit Planet “Pledge of Sustainability” www.afitplanet.com, or
 - Carbon neutral certification.

