

SPECIAL EDITION

THE WIND DRINKER

BIG SKY WIND DRINKERS SUMMER
2020 “VIRTUAL FUN RUNS” PLAN



Photo by Mark Egge, Bridger Ridge Run 2019

Due to COVID-19, and related social distancing requirements, we can't hold our "normal" summer Fun Runs, in a group setting. In our recent online survey our members (you!), told us you are keen to keep: 1) running, 2) participating with a group, and 3) sharing running experiences with each other, however that might look in the current environment. So, we are planning to adapt to the situation and came up with the following plan.

Weekly Virtual Fun Runs – the same, but different!

In keeping with our tradition, and member feedback, we will do weekly Fun Runs again this summer! But, instead of in-person, group runs, we will (at least, while we are under social distancing restrictions) do them “virtually.” What this means, is that you will run on your own, on one of the “standard” courses the club lists or on a course of your own choosing, and then report your run to the club so your participation can be recorded and tracked over the season.

On our website, we will list each weekly Fun Run. Like we’ve done in the past, each week, we will designate a particular club Vice-President (“VP”) to be in charge of that week’s run; he or she will be responsible for monitoring who participates, integrating the results into the season participation tracking spreadsheet, and possibly establishing and judging a special “Challenge” for that week’s run. Unlike what we’ve done in the past, each week’s event listing will NOT specify where the run is being held, nor the specific date and time of the run (more on this later)! The runs can be one of our Short, Medium, or Long courses – or of any length you want (but at least 0.75 miles – that’s really the minimum we’ll allow, in order for the run to count for participation purposes!). You can time yourself and report your time, as well – but that’s not necessary, as the important point is really not how fast you run, but that you run!

As part of doing these runs “virtually,” though, it will also be important to adhere to good social distancing protocols – we in no way want to run afoul of the efforts being made by our elected officials to ensure our safety during this pandemic! Thus, it will be important to do the following on your runs:

2020 Summer Fun Run Entry Log

Use this form to submit your runs for the Wind Drinker 2020 Summer Fun Run season!

* Required

Visit <https://winddrinkers.org/trailhead/2020-summer-fun-runs-member-entries/> to submit your fun run times after to participate in participation awards for 2020!

Know and obey all current restrictions put out by state and local authorities.

Run only alone, or in small groups, preferably including only household members. Remember that if you run with partners, you and those partners could be asymptomatic, but risk passing the virus from your own family/friends to your partner's family/friends, or vice versa.

Always stay at least 6 feet away (the more, the better) from others at all times during your outing – at the trailhead or parking lot, while running, and after your run. Don't hang out near others after your run, play with others' dogs, etc.--stay separated!

Expect that normal trailhead amenities like bathrooms, water sources, trash cans, etc., will be unavailable. To the extent you can, use the bathroom before leaving the house, bring your own water and food, and pack out all your own trash or doggie "presents."

If a location you intended to run is being heavily used, think about going somewhere less crowded. Try to visit more heavily-trafficked routes and trailheads during times of lighter use.

In order to comply with the spirit of these rules, we are making the following adjustments to our normal Fun Runs protocol:

1. Rather than having you run at a specific weekly time (i.e., Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m.), we will allow you to run at any time, on any day that week. For our tracking purposes, a week will run from Monday through the following Sunday). This will keep us from running together (in time), and let us each find running times that avoid peak usage periods.
2. We will not specify where you are to run each week. You will have the option to select running routes from a large list of courses the club provides, or to run your own route of choice. This will keep us from running together (in location).

While we will not designate a particular course to be run each week, we intend to make certain "standard" Wind Drinker Fun Run courses available as options; each will include our normal Short, Medium, and Long routes, with course maps we'll post on the Wind Drinkers' website (<https://winddrinkers.org>).

These will be (for the most part) the locations where we would have held the weekly runs, if we'd had a normal summer season. Our hope is that you will pick a different one of these courses each week, and try to hit as many as possible over the course of the summer – for example, you might run a Triple Tree course in June, and a Regional Park course in August, while someone else does the Regional Park run in July, and Triple Tree in September. And you'll always have the option to run a route of your own choosing, for any given week – maybe you'll even want to share a favorite route of yours with others in the club?

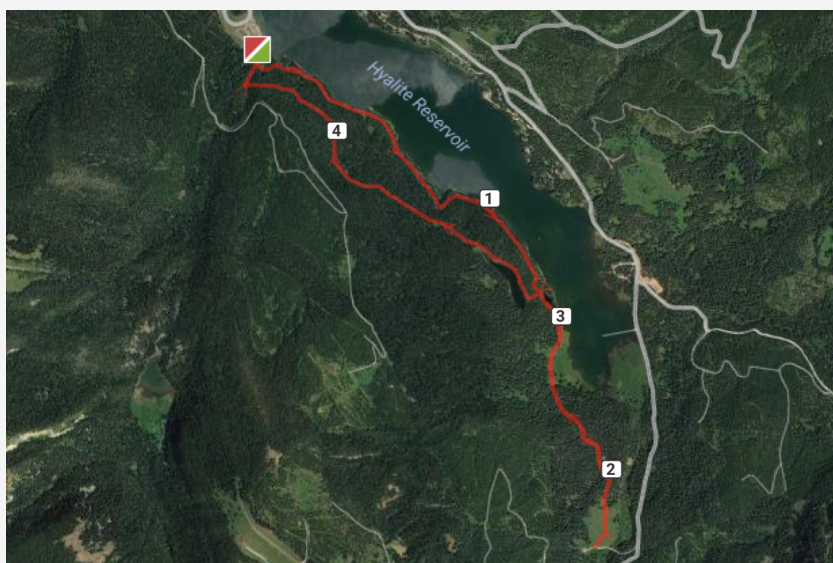
Weekly Virtual Fun Runs – the same, but different!

In the recent survey, many of you indicated you like to see how you and your friends are doing at participating over the summer, and get rewarded for meeting a certain threshold of participation for the season. Since we won't be meeting in person, we won't have our normal race results from chip timing, which we've used in past seasons to track participation. Instead, we'll be relying on you to tell us when you've completed the weekly runs!

We are setting up a special page on our website where you can record your run each week, letting us know when you ran, where, how far, what interesting cloud formations you saw, etc. If you're participating in our Strava Club (see more on this, later), all your runs in a week will be recorded there, but we'll want you to use our special website page to identify the single run from that week that you want us to use as that week's Fun Run, for participation purposes. If you forget to submit a run you did, during the week you ran it, you can submit it at a later time – but if you submit 20 weeks of runs during the last week of the season, the Fun Run Committee will deem this a bit suspicious!

Our intrepid VP's will be in charge of managing and collating your run inputs over the summer season, and updating a summary table tracking how our members are doing, as far as progressing towards Participation Awards. This tracking table will be viewable on our website, too so you can see where you stand each week.

We (your Wind Drinkers Board) think it's important to encourage our members to get out and run, so we offer awards to our members who get out and get it done! In our survey, we asked you what types of awards would be valuable to you, and you surprised us (well, at least, me – I'm not sure about the rest of the Board)!



Visit <https://winddrinkers.org/trailhead/standard-fun-run-routes/> to see a list of our virtual summer fun run routes!

We have other, similar, cool swag from past promotions, so if you'd prefer a nice thermos bottle or buff, we can hook you up

You said, "just give us some more of that normal running swag that we usually get." You have spoken and so it shall be! This summer we'll be pushing our latest BSWD-branded swag item, collapsible silicone water bottles – perfect for carrying your own water to those trailheads that no longer have working faucets or water fountains!

Something New – the Strava online tracking platform!

As we were investigating ways to track our members' running this summer, we played around with Strava as a potential tool. Strava (<https://strava.com>) is an online platform for recording your runs, and can be very useful for tracking and analyzing your training over time ("Am I over-/under-training? Am I running too hard, or not hard enough? Am I increasing my weekly mileage too quickly, so that I'm risking injury?"). Many of you have probably heard of Strava, or similar tracking systems like Garmin Connect, Map My Run, TrainingPeaks, or maybe you've been using one or more of these systems for years. What sets Strava apart, in my mind, is that it has additional social networking capabilities that can help us feel like we're all in this together – it's kind of like having a combination of a run-tracking tool and Facebook!



When you have a Strava account, you can join Strava “Clubs” – these are groups that you can participate in, where you can share your runs and see what runs other club members have done, share feedback and encouragement (give your friend a “Kudo” for completing a hard workout or hitting a PR), set up events for the club, post info that might be of interest to other members (“South Cottonwood trail still has knee-deep drifts beyond the second bridge”). You can also add photos to your running entries. We will establish a Strava Club, exclusively for the Wind Drinkers, where you can share your runs with others – all of your runs, or just the ones you want other club members to see (you can keep your activities “Private” or make them “Public”).

Some of our weekly Fun Runs may, at the discretion of the VP responsible for that week, include some type of fun challenge, such as “run in your oldest race T-shirt,” “wear your best Hawaiian shirt,” “run the most scenic trail you know of” or “create a picture, using the trace of your running route” (yes, this is a thing, now). To participate in most of these Challenges, you’ll need to include a photo with your run – that’s where Strava’s capability to upload a picture with your run is useful. We’ll highlight our Challenge winners, with their photos, in our club newsletter. I think we’ll have fun seeing what interesting and engaging social activities we can create for the club, using this tool!

And don’t think that you need to own a fancy GPS watch to use Strava! If you carry your phone when you run, you can also use the Strava app to measure and upload your runs very easily (hit “Start”; hit “Stop”. Done!). Or, you can enter your time and distance manually – no ‘device’ needed at all! For those who want to learn it, we’ll do an online tutorial demo sometime early in the season, and put a recording of it onto the website for later reference.

What else?

Well, that’s the plan! Sound good? We’ll keep hoping that at some point in the summer, we’ll get past the need to restrict our group activities – if that happens, we’ll do a quick pivot, and resume doing our normal in-person runs on Wednesday nights at 6:30! But if it doesn’t happen, we’ll have fun anyway!

P.S. As we do virtual runs this season, we won’t need the usual 2-3 volunteers to help with timing and refreshments, so you won’t have to sign up for any volunteer stints in order to get a Participation Award. If you are knowledgeable on Strava, or on using Wordpress to create web content, we’d love to have some help with setting up and managing the infrastructure to support these plans! If you want to contribute, please contact one of our Board members, email us, or send us a note through our Contact Form on the Wind Drinkers website!