



OPEN WATER MEET ANNOUNCEMENT

2026 Waterman Eco-Challenge Ocean Swim 5 Kilometer, 1 Mile, and 400 Meter Races

**Saturday, July 18, 2026 | Rain Date: Sunday, July 19
Roger Wheeler State Beach, Narragansett, Rhode Island**

SANCTIONS: Held under the sanction of [USA Swimming](#) and [New England Swimming LSC](#), Sanction # NE26-0718KING, and sanctioned by the [New England LMSC](#) for [United States Masters Swimming Inc.](#), Sanction # 026-W005.

HOSTED BY: [Kingfish RI Swim Club](#) and [Life Safety Solutions LLC](#)

LOCATION: [Roger Wheeler State Beach, 100 Sand Hill Road, Narragansett, Rhode Island](#) ([map](#))

OVERVIEW & SPECTATOR ACCESS: Founded in 2011, the [Waterman Eco-Challenge](#) is an annual multisport festival supporting charities focused on drowning prevention, cancer support, cardiac health, and coastal sustainability. The event features running, swimming, and paddleboard races. This year's ocean swim is an open-water swim meet dual sanctioned by USA Swimming and U.S. Masters Swimming and includes 5-kilometer (ages 11+), 1-mile (ages 9+), and 400-meter (ages 12 & under) races, as well as cumulative time relay and team points competitions. Spectator admission is free.

KEY EVENT STAFF:

- **Event Director:** Brian Guadagno, (305) 807-1804, bg@lifesafetysolutions.us
- **Entry & Sanction Coordinator:** Douglas Sayles, (401) 633-5756, douglas.sayles@swimri.org
- **Safety Director:** Joe Vingj, (401) 265-6918, jvingj@gmail.com
- **Medical Director:** David Bowden, M.D.
- **Meet Referee:** Dave Heller, hellerd@nationwide.com
- **SafeSport Coordinator:** Susan Pascale-Frechette, (401) 965-0813, susan@podsswimming.com
- **Independent Safety Monitor:** Dave Kunces

RACE DAY SCHEDULE:

- **Individual event entries close:** 8:00 AM
- **Swimmer check-in:** 7:00 AM to 8:30 AM
- **Relay team entries close:** 8:30 AM
- **Mandatory swimmer briefing:** 8:40 AM
- **400-meter swim start:** 9:00 AM
- **5K swim start:** ~9:10 AM
- **1-mile swim start:** ~9:15 AM
- **Awards ceremony:** ~11:45 AM

VENUE & CONDITIONS: Located 35 miles south of Providence in Narragansett, Rhode Island, Roger Wheeler State Beach is a south-facing oceanfront venue with ample parking, a boardwalk, pavilion, snack stand, playground, indoor and outdoor showers, and permanent and portable restrooms. The swim course is within the Point Judith Harbor of Refuge, a semi-enclosed area protected by stone breakwaters that reduce ocean swell and provide relatively calm open-water conditions. Water quality is [routinely tested](#) in-season and is consistently suitable for swimming. Typical mid-July conditions include ~70°F water temperatures and ~80°F afternoon air temperatures.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Event day conditions will dictate whether the swim starts from the beach or in-water. Swimmers will race on a one-mile rectangular course — three loops for the 5K, one-loop for the 1-mile, and a shorter segment for the 400-meter swim — as measured by event staff using GPS coordinates, with final confirmation on race morning. The seafloor gradually slopes from the beach to about 6 feet of water, with depths ranging from 6 to approximately 14 feet beyond the jetties. The course will be marked with large, bright triangular buoys. Teardrop banners and an inflated arch will mark the finish chute on the beach. Motorized safety craft will remain outside the buoyed swim course except when rendering assistance.



COURSE ACCESS: Access to the swim course and designated warmup area is restricted to authorized event personnel, safety staff, and swimmers as directed by the event director, safety director, or meet referee or their designees. Participants may not be in the water within the event footprint outside approved warmup times or race starts. Failure to comply may result in immediate removal from the water, scratching from any remaining events, and loss of eligibility for cumulative time relay competitions or team scoring.

PUBLIC BEACH & NON-EVENT WATER ACCESS: Areas of the beach and water outside the event footprint are not part of the event and are not under event control. The event organizers are not responsible for swimmers or spectators who use the state beach’s recreational (non-event) swimming areas or amenities, which are supervised separately by state-employed lifeguards and staff.

TIMING SYSTEM: ChronoTrack automatic timing system with ankle band RFID chips and timing mats provided by [New England Timing](#). The finish line will be video recorded.

SWIM MEET ELIGIBILITY:

USA Swimming or U.S. Masters Swimming Membership Requirement: Every meet participant must be a 2026 member in good standing of USA Swimming or U.S. Masters Swimming or must obtain a USA Swimming Single-Meet Open Water Athlete membership or USMS One-Event membership as described below. A valid membership ID number, club affiliation, and workout group affiliation (if applicable) must be provided during online event entry. Exception: Minors who intend to compete under a Single-Meet membership from USA Swimming may provide WEC that Single Meet membership number after they have entered the Ocean Swim per the directions below. Registrants whose membership cannot be verified before or during swimmer check-in are not eligible to compete. Participants are strongly encouraged to complete entry at least one week in advance.

Membership Options:

Membership Type	Ages	Membership Cost & Meet Benefits	How to Obtain
USA Swimming Premium	All ages	\$98 full annual membership in New England Swimming LSC. Costs of other memberships vary. Eligible for WEC meet individual events, relays, team points, awards, and USA-S national recognition.	usaswimming.org
U.S. Masters Swimming Standard	18 & older	\$75 full annual membership. Eligible for WEC meet individual events, relays, team points, awards, and USMS national recognition.	usms.org
USA Swimming Single-Meet	All ages	\$25 separate expense refunded by WEC upon receipt of membership number (see directions below). Three-day event-specific membership valid for July 18-19. Eligible for WEC meet individual events and awards. <u>Not</u> eligible for WEC relays, team points, or USA-S national recognition.	Purchase separately on usaswimming.org after entering the meet. Follow the directions below.
U.S. Masters Swimming One-Event	18 & older	\$20 included in meet entry fee at no extra cost. Event-specific. Eligible for WEC meet individual events and awards. <u>Not</u> eligible for WEC relays, team points, or USMS national recognition.	Select USMS One Event membership during the online event entry process.
Dual Membership	18 & older	Swimmers holding both USA-S and USMS memberships must choose one to compete under when entering the Waterman Eco-Challenge Ocean Swim.	

To purchase a Single-Meet Open Water Athlete Membership from USA Swimming:

1. Visit usaswimming.org, select Login / Register, and create an account.
2. Log out and register as an Unattached Swimmer via this link: <https://omr.usaswimming.org/omr/welcome/8CBF4E0F88D579>
3. Follow the prompts, select the "Single Meet Athlete" option, and proceed to checkout.
4. Your Single-Meet membership ID number will appear in the payment receipt.
5. Provide this membership ID to the event organizers before event day by replying to your Waterman Eco-Challenge entry confirmation email. WEC will reimburse you for the \$25 expense by crediting your card on file.

Event Age & Time Limits:

Swim Distance	Age Limit	Course	Time Limit	Interim Cutoff Times*
5 kilometers	11 & older	3 x ~1-mile loops	2 hours	1 mile @ 40 minutes 2 miles @ 1 hour 20 minutes
1 mile	9 & older	~1-mile loop	1 hour	0.5 mile @ 30 minutes
400 meters	12 & under	~400-meter loop	15 minutes	200 meters @ 8 minutes

*Interim cutoff times are at the discretion of the meet referee and safety director.

Age-Determining Date:

- Eligibility to enter individual swim events is determined by the swimmer’s age on July 18.
- For local event awards, age groups are determined by age on July 18.
- For records, rankings, and national recognition, each national governing body applies its own age-determining rules. USA Swimming uses age on the first day of the meet, July 18. U.S. Masters Swimming uses age as of December 31, 2026, except swimmers must be 18 by July 18.
- National governing body age calculations apply only to national recognition and do not affect local event age groups, results, or awards (which are based on age on the meet date).

Age Groups for Event Awards:

- **5K swim:** 11-12, 13-14, 15-17, 18-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70+
- **1-mile swim:** 9-12, 13-14, 15-17, 18-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70+
- **400-meter swim:** 12 & under

Team Affiliations:

- **For USA Swimming members:** The club affiliation listed in the meet entry must match the swimmer’s club affiliation, if any, in the SWIMS database. For help, contact the New England Swimming LSC registrar at registrarnes@gmail.com.
- **For U.S. Masters Swimming members:** The team affiliation in the meet entry must match the club affiliation and, if applicable, the New England Masters Swim Club (NEM) workout-group affiliation in the swimmer’s USMS member record. Each NEM workout group will compete as a team against other registered NEM workout groups and USMS and USA Swimming clubs.

For instructions on how to update your USMS club or workout-group affiliation in real time, visit <https://bit.ly/usms-transferinfo>. (Exception: Bridge members cannot change their college club affiliation without first purchasing a standard USMS membership.) For assistance, contact the New England LMSC membership coordinator at NEmembership@usms.org.

Coach's Note Requirement (Ages 12 & Under): Entries for participants ages 12 and younger require a swim coach or instructor note affirming the swimmer's ability to safely complete their open water race distance in the allotted time. To submit this attestation, coaches or instructors must either complete the online form at <https://bit.ly/wec26-coachnote> or email the entry coordinator at douglas.sayles@swimri.org. Coaches are strongly encouraged to complete this process at least one week in advance in case follow-up is warranted. Registrants whose ability cannot be verified before or during check-in may be scratched without refund.

Seed Time Requirement: Each swimming race will be seeded by submitted seed time and may be started in multiple waves. Swimmers must submit either a time for the entered distance or a 500-yard freestyle pool time within the last two years. Pool times may be adjusted for open water seeding. Entries without a seed time will not be accepted. The entry coordinator and meet referee may adjust swimmer seeding or wave placement.

Time Limits / Abandonment: Swimmers who do not meet the interim cutoff times listed above or who are not making sufficient forward progress may be removed from the course at the discretion of the meet referee or safety director. Swimmers who are removed from the course or who voluntarily retire will be listed in the event results as Did Not Finish (DNF).

Liability Waivers: Every participant (or minor's parent or legal guardian) must accept the liability waivers included in the event registration process. By entering this event, participants acknowledge the inherent risks of open water swimming and release and hold harmless USA Swimming, New England Swimming LSC, U.S. Masters Swimming, New England LMSC, Kingfish RI, the State of Rhode Island, Life Safety Solutions LLC, event organizers, sponsors, officials, volunteers, and agents from any liability or claims for damages arising from injuries to any person during the conduct of the event, except as otherwise provided by law.

Image Authorization: Participants (or a minor's parent or legal guardian) grant permission for the use of their name, image, and biographical information, including photo and video recordings, for event promotion and in any broadcast or other accounts of this event, without compensation.

SWIMMERS WITH DISABILITIES: Please provide advance notice to the entry coordinator and meet referee for any desired reasonable accommodation. The athlete or their coach is responsible for notifying the meet referee of any disability before the race.

ENTRIES:

- **Event Website:** <https://watermanecochallenge.com>
 - All entries must be submitted online via the RunSignUp registration portal.
 - All swim entries must comply with the seed time requirements described above.
- **Entries Open (online only):** Sunday, February 15
- **Individual Event Entries Close:** Saturday, July 18, 8:00 AM
- **Cumulative Time Relay Entries Close:** Saturday, July 18, 8:30 AM
- **Entry Limits:** One swimming race + one running race + one paddleboard race per person.
- **Entry Caps:** Swimming races are limited to ~550 participants in total across all three distances. Entries are first-come, first-served. Any or all events may close early if needed to manage the meet timeline.

ENTRY FEES: The entry fees listed below are nonrefundable under any circumstances, including cancellation. Registrations are not transferable between individuals. Optional event registration insurance is available via RunSignUp during the online registration process. Credit card charges will appear as “WatermanEcoChalle.” National governing body membership requirements, including Single-Meet or One-Event membership options, are detailed in the ELIGIBILITY section above.

Entry Fee Schedule:

EVENT	EARLY BIRD ENTRY FEE February 15 – April 15	REGULAR ENTRY FEE April 16 – July 16
5K Run	\$45	\$60
5K Walk	\$45	\$60
10K Run	\$60	\$75
400 Meter Swim	\$40 ¹	\$50 ¹
1 Mile Swim	\$45 ^{1,2}	\$60 ^{1,2}
5K Swim	\$75 ^{1,2}	\$90 ^{1,2}
3 Mile Paddle	\$45	\$60
6 Mile Paddle	\$60	\$75
Eco Challenger: 5K Run + 1 Mile Swim + 3 Mile Paddle	\$110 ^{1,2}	\$140 ^{1,2}
Ultimate Challenger: 10K Run + 5K Swim + 6 Mile Paddle	\$140 ^{1,2}	\$175 ^{1,2}

¹Individuals of any age who are not current members of USA Swimming or U.S. Masters Swimming and choose to purchase a Single-Meet Open Water membership from USA Swimming (per the directions in the ELIGIBILITY section above) will be credited \$25 upon providing their membership number to the meet organizers.

²The entry fee for individuals age 18 or older who are not current members of U.S. Masters Swimming or USA Swimming includes a USMS One-Event (OEVT) membership at no extra cost (\$20 value).

CHANGING EVENTS OR DIVISIONS: Before or during check-in, swimmers may request to transfer between the Non-Wetsuit and Wetsuit divisions of the swim event they entered and/or from their event to a shorter-distance swim event. Other event registration transfers are generally not permitted; any exceptions require the event director’s or entry coordinator’s approval.

CUMULATIVE TIME RELAYS: For USA Swimming and U.S. Masters Swimming teams, a coed cumulative-time relay competition will be offered for each individual swim event. Cumulative time relays are for recognition only and do not constitute a separate race, wave, or heat. Each relay consists of three swimmers (at least one female and one male) from the same USA-S or USMS team competing in the same individual swim event; each swimmer may participate in only one relay. Relay times are determined by summing the official individual finish times of the three swimmers. Relay age groups will be based on the combined competition ages of the three swimmers, determined as of the July 18 event date. All relay entries must be submitted online via RunSignUp by 8:30 AM, Saturday, July 18. Single-Meet and One-Event membership swimmers are not eligible for this relay competition.

Relay Age Groups (sum of the swimmers’ ages):

- **5K swim:** 33-51, 52-117, 118-179, 180+
- **1-mile swim:** 27-51, 52-117, 118-179, 180+
- **400-meter swim:** 36 & under

TEAM POINTS COMPETITION SCORING:

- Only Non-Wetsuit USA Swimming and U.S. Masters Swimming participants with a team affiliation are eligible to score team points.
- Team standings are determined by total points earned across all individual events and cumulative time relays within the Non-Wetsuit Division.
- Eligible swimmers score points for the team listed in their USA Swimming or USMS member record. USMS New England Masters Swim Club (NEM) members affiliated with different workout groups or with no workout group may record an official relay time by forming a non-scoring NEM relay.
- Swimmers competing in the Wetsuit Division, those registered as Unattached (no team affiliation), and those entered under a One-Event or Single-Meet membership are not eligible to score team points.
- For individual events, separate overall results will be tabulated for Men (all ages) and Women (all ages). Within each sex, the top 20 eligible Non-Wetsuit finishers score points based on overall order of finish as follows: 20 points for 1st place, 19 points for 2nd place, and so on down to 1 point for 20th place.
- For cumulative-time relays, the top six relays in each age group score points as follows: 40-32-24-16-8-4.
- There is no limit on the number of scoring relays a team may enter in any relay age group.

MEET RESULTS: Overall, age group, wetsuit, and non-wetsuit individual results for each swim event and overall team points standings will be posted onsite and online at <https://my.raceresult.com/380005/results>. In addition to these comprehensive results, separate USA Swimming-only and USMS-only results files will be generated from the same race data and submitted and/or published in accordance with the sanction reporting requirements of each national governing body and the instructions of New England Swimming and the New England LMSC.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION:

A brief ceremony to bestow individual and team swim competition awards in the **Non-Wetsuit Division** will take place at ~11:45 AM. Depending on the event timeline and other operational considerations, certain awards will be presented during the ceremony and others will be available for pickup at the awards table. Swimmers in the **Wetsuit Division** will receive official finish times and placements but are not eligible for awards or team points.

Non-Wetsuit Division Awards:

- Presented during the post-swim ceremony:
 - Top three overall female and male finishers in each swim event.
 - Top three overall cumulative time relay teams in each swim event.
 - Special recognition of the cumulative time relay team with the highest combined age across the 1-mile and 5K relay events.
 - Top-scoring USA Swimming team (if three or more teams).
 - Top-scoring U.S. Masters Swimming team (if three or more teams).
- Announced and available for pickup at the awards table:
 - Top three female and male finishers in each individual event for the 12 & under, 13-14, 15-17, and 18-29 age groups.
 - First-place female and male finishers in each individual event for all other age groups.
 - First-place cumulative time relay awards in each relay age group. Additional age-group relay awards may be presented based on the number of relay entries.

RULES & ATHLETE ATTITUDE: Current USA Swimming and U.S. Masters Swimming rules and regulations will govern the meet and athlete conduct. Intentional obstruction, interference, or intentional contact with another swimmer may be deemed Unsporting Conduct (Impedance) and lead to disqualification. Swimmers shall maintain clearance from other swimmers except at the start, turn, and finish or where the course or race conditions dictate otherwise. It is important that swimmers keep a cool head while in the water, as there may be ocean currents, a significant number of swimmers, and inadvertent contact with other swimmers.

SAFESPORT / MAAPP: All applicable adults participating in or associated with this meet acknowledge that they are subject to and must comply with the USA Swimming [Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy](#) (MAAPP) as a condition of participation. Reasonable best efforts will be made to implement MAAPP-compliant procedures appropriate to a USA Swimming-sanctioned swim competition conducted as part of a larger multisport event at a public state beach.

- **Athlete Protection Training (APT):** Except for Single-Meet members, all other USA Swimming participants age 18 or older must have completed [Athlete Protection Training](#). This requirement does not apply to the U.S. Masters Swimming participants.
- **Recording Devices:** Use of audio or visual recording devices, including cell phones, is not permitted in restrooms or changing areas.
- **Deck Changing is Prohibited:** Changing into or out of a swimsuit, in all or part, when wearing just one suit is limited to private or semi-private spaces such as a bathroom, locker room, or designated changing area.
- **One-on-One Interactions:** Except in emergencies, one-on-one interactions between an adult and a minor event participant must be within an observable and interruptible distance of another adult. Event personnel may conduct sweeps of bathrooms and changing areas to ensure compliance.
- **Reporting Violations:** Observed or suspected MAAPP violations should be reported to New England Swimming SafeSport Chair Susan Pascale-Frechette, this meet's SafeSport coordinator, onsite or at (401) 965-0813, or via one of the reporting options listed at <https://www.usaswimming.org/protect>.

DRONES: Operation of a drone or any other flying apparatus over the event venue or swim course is prohibited except for FAA-licensed commercial drone operators engaged by the event organizers with the consent of USA Swimming and the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management Bureau of Natural Resources.

EQUIPMENT & SWIMWEAR: Every swimmer must wear the official event cap, their assigned timing chip ankle band, and a safer swimmer buoy approved by the event and issued or inspected at check-in. Failure to return the ankle band or swimmer buoy may result in a replacement fee. Swimmers may bring and wear their own safer swimmer buoy if it complies with the buoy requirements listed below. Swimmers must bring their own swimsuit and goggles. One- or two-piece and full-coverage swimsuits made of swim-appropriate materials are permitted. Wetsuits, neoprene buoyancy suits, and other rubberized buoyant suits are permitted in the Wetsuit Division only; swimmers competing in the Wetsuit Division are not eligible for awards and will not score team points. Fins, paddles, and other non-compliant equipment are prohibited. All equipment is subject to inspection and approval.

Safer Swimmer Buoy Requirements: All swimmers are required to use an inflatable, tow-behind safer swimmer buoy that adheres to the following specifications: a volume of 12–20 liters, a maximum diameter of 14 inches, a leash not exceeding 24 inches in length, a high-visibility color, and a single passive buoy. Buoys must fit securely at the waist. Noncompliant equipment must be corrected or replaced before the start; swimmers unable or unwilling to comply will not be permitted to swim and may be disqualified. The meet referee and safety director retain final authority over all equipment decisions based on race-day conditions, safety considerations, or operational needs.

CHECK-IN: In-person positive check-in is required. Check-in will open on Saturday, July 18, at 7:00 AM and close at 8:30 AM. Check-in will include identity verification, USA Swimming or U.S. Masters Swimming membership verification, waiver completion, confirmation of swimmer number and start wave, body marking, and distribution of timing chips, event caps, and safer swimmer buoys. Swimmers whose membership cannot be verified before or during check-in will be scratched without refund.

PARTICIPANT TRACKING: Redundant swimmer tracking via RFID timing chip ankle bands, body marking, finish line video, and electronically and manually verified swimmer checkout. Every swimmer must wear the colored event cap corresponding with their race and a compliant safer swimmer buoy.

MANDATORY SWIMMER BRIEFING: All swimmers must attend the mandatory swimmer briefing that will take place at 8:40 AM to review the swim course and race protocols.

WARMUP/COOLDOWN: Warmup/cooldown with safer swimmer buoys will be supervised by a USA Swimming member coach in a designated, lifeguard-patrolled area and only during times approved by the event director and safety director. Swimmers found on the swim course or in the warmup area outside approved times or found entering any adjacent body of water without lifeguard supervision may be scratched from the meet. Warmup and cooldown details will be circulated to all participants before and during the event via email and the event website, signage and announcements.

SAFETY AUTHORITY & EVENT CANCELLATION: The event director, safety director, and meet referee reserve the right to reject or modify any entry, reassign a swimmer to a shorter distance, adjust wave placement, or remove a swimmer from the course for safety or operational reasons. **If conditions are deemed unsafe, races may be canceled, suspended, delayed, or the course modified. The event may be rescheduled to Sunday, July 19.** A decision regarding rescheduling or cancellation will be made as early as practicable on race morning and communicated via the event website, Facebook page, and email to registered participants.

SAFETY ASSETS:

- Comprehensive Safety Operations & Communication Plan.
- Narragansett Fire Department medical director and paramedics and Rhode Island DEM police officers.
- Onsite medical tent, NFD-staffed Gator EMS vehicles with skid units, multiple AED and oxygen units.
- Life Safety Solutions LLC staff serving as event director, safety director, and EMT safety coordinators.
- Central safety command stationed in the pavilion tower, coordinating with event staff, lifeguards, officials, timing personnel, and state and municipal agencies.
- Minimum 1:25 lifeguard-to-swimmer ratio, including surf-certified lifeguards on jet skis (with sleds), kayaks, boards, and beach stations.
- DEM and municipal safety boats will secure the outer perimeter to keep other vessels clear of the course.
- **Medical Facility:** South County Hospital (5.7 miles).
- **Fire Station:** Narragansett Fire Station #2 (1.5 miles).

EVENT AMENITIES & PARKING:

- **T-Shirts:** An event T-shirt is included in the entry fee. Register by July 1 to guarantee your shirt and size. Extras can be purchased during online registration or onsite at the event while supplies last.
- **Refreshments:** [Salty's Burger & Seafood](#) concessions, event sponsor snacks, hydration stations.
- **Parking:** Regular state beach parking rates apply. Season passes will be honored. Rhode Island resident day parking \$7. Non-RI resident day parking \$14. Senior resident \$3.50. Senior non-resident \$7. Parking rates are set by the State of Rhode Island and subject to change.