



# POINT TO LA POINTE

## 2.1 MILE OPEN WATER SWIM



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# 2026 SWIMMER INFORMATION

# Point to La Pointe Open Water Swim

Washington Avenue Beach

Bayfield, WI

Saturday, August 1, 2026

<https://www.bayfieldrec.org/point-to-la-pointe.html>

## WELCOME

Welcome to the 20th Anniversary of the Point to La Pointe Open Water Swim.

What started in 2006 with just 24 swimmers has grown into a sold-out event of 650 participants from across the country and beyond. While a lot has changed over the years, the heart of this event has not: a simple but powerful challenge, crossing Lake Superior from Bayfield to Madeline Island.

This event is the largest fundraiser for the Bayfield Rec Center and supports year-round access to fitness, youth programs, and community wellness. Your participation directly makes that possible.

In a time when the world can feel uncertain, there is something grounding about showing up, getting in the water, and moving forward together. We're glad you're here.

**Thank you** for being here and supporting what we do. We hope you enjoy the swim as much as we love hosting it. To learn more about our work, visit us at [www.bayfieldrec.org](http://www.bayfieldrec.org).

## RACE OVERVIEW

Swimming to Madeline Island has long been a legendary challenge in the Bayfield area. What began in 2006 as a small community swimming event with just 24 participants has grown into the **Point to La Pointe**, a premier open water race that now attracts swimmers from around the world and sells out every year.

- Distance: ~2.1 miles
- Start: Washington Avenue Beach, Bayfield, WI
- Finish: Madeline Island (Sunny Slope Rd.)
- Swim lane: 50 yards wide, marked by buoys
- All swimmers must stay within 25 yards of the centerline buoys

## CONTACT & QUESTIONS

Race Director: Ursula Garrison

email: [p2lp@bayfieldrec.org](mailto:p2lp@bayfieldrec.org)

Bayfield Rec Center

140 S. Broad Street # 1146

Bayfield, WI 54814

## **RACE WEEKEND SCHEDULE**

### **FRIDAY – JULY 31, 2026**

**Lakeside Pavilion, Bayfield, WI**

2:00 PM – 8:00 PM

- Packet Pick-Up
- Check-In
- Gear Drop-Off
- Pre-purchased merchandise pick-up

### **SATURDAY – AUGUST 1, 2026**

**Washington Ave. Beach, Bayfield, WI**

**5:00 – 6:00 AM**

- Late Check-In (closes promptly at 6:00 AM) No exceptions

**6:00 – 6:30 AM**

- Gear Drop-Off (U-Haul)
- Race Chip Pick-Up
- Start Line Check-In

**7:00 AM**

- Mandatory Safety Briefing at start

**Race Start Race Start, Washington Ave Beach, Bayfield WI**

- Wave 1 – 7:20 AM
- Wave 2 – 7:23 AM
- Wave 3 – 7:26 AM
- Wave 4 – 7:29 AM
- Wave 5 – 7:32 AM
- Wave 6 – 7:35 AM

### **RACE TIME LIMIT**

All swimmers must complete the race by **10:05 AM**.

Swimmers still in the water at that time will be removed from the course. This cut-off is firm and is in place to ensure the safety of participants and respect the time of volunteers, safety personnel, and emergency services.

Swimmers still in the water at 10:05 AM will be pulled from the course. Please refer to the **“Swimmers off the Water”** section ([page 5](#)) for instructions on retrieving your gear and returning to Madeline Island.

**Awards Ceremony – 12:00 PM**

- Time: 12:00 PM
- Location: Start Beach on Washington Ave., Bayfield, WI
- Rain Location: Lakeside Pavilion

# TRANSPORTATION & PARKING

## Race Morning Parking (Bayfield)

- **No parking at Washington Ave Beach**
- Use designated city parking areas
- If staying nearby, please walk

## Madeline Island

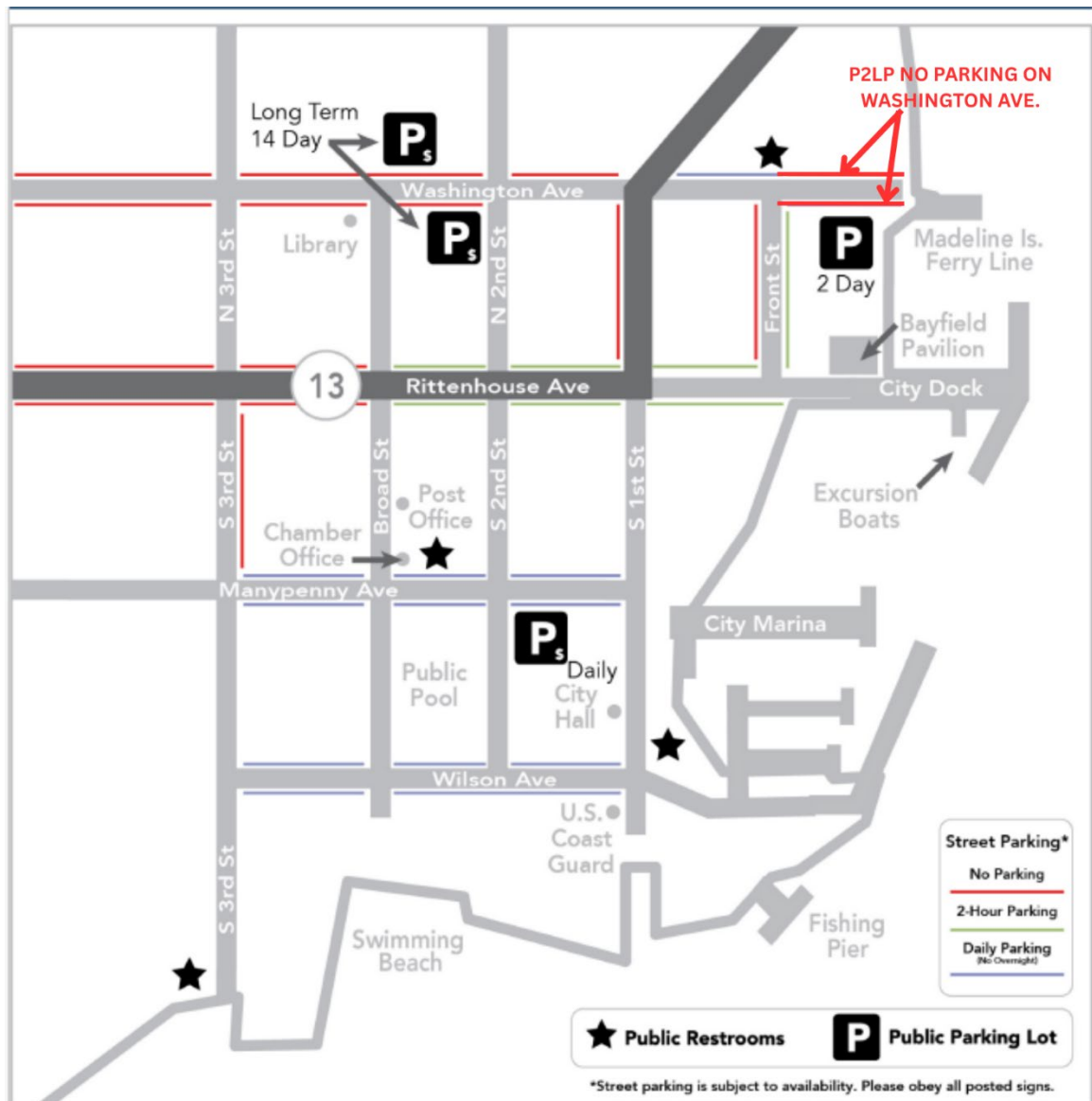
- Limited parking at finish
- Free shuttle buses run between ferry landing and finish line

## Important: Ferry from Madeline Island

If staying on the island Friday night:

- Special ferry: **6:00 AM (not on public schedule)**
- Arrive by **5:45 AM**
- Your ticket is in your race packet

Missing this ferry means missing the race.



### **Restrooms on Race Day**

Porta-potties will be available near the beach on Saturday for participants and spectators at the start line and at the front of the property at the finish line.

### **Parking on Madeline Island**

Parking near the finish line is extremely limited. We strongly encourage all participants and spectators to use the **free shuttle buses** from the ferry landing to the finish area.

The **last shuttle** will return remaining participants and spectators from the finish line back to the ferry landing.

## **RACE SWAG, GOODIES & POST RACE FOOD**

### **Participant Gear & Merchandise**

All registered swimmers will receive a custom 2026 Point to La Pointe hoodie, a staple of the event and a well-earned badge of honor.

Additional merchandise, including T-shirts, hats, and other items, will be available for pre-order through **June 1, 2026**. Quantities are limited, so if you have your eye on something, don't wait too long.

### **Finish Line Refreshments & Waste**

We'll have coffee and light snacks ready for you at the finish line, because you've earned it.

Spectators are encouraged to bring their own food and beverages, preferably in low-waste or reusable packaging.

As always, we ask everyone to be mindful of the island environment. All trash must be packed out by our volunteer team, so minimizing waste whenever possible goes a long way.

### **Participant Gear & Merchandise**

All registered swimmers will receive a special event hoodie as a keepsake. Additional merchandise - T-shirts, hats, and more can be pre-ordered through June 1.

### **Finish Line Refreshments & Waste**

Coffee and snacks will be provided for all swimmers at the finish line. While some food may be available for purchase, spectators are encouraged to bring their own food and drinks in **low-waste packaging**.

**Please remember:** all trash must be packed out by volunteers. Minimizing waste is greatly appreciated!

## **EVENT MUGS**

Event mugs are **not** included in swimmer swag but can be purchased directly from our website. The deadline to order mugs is **June 30, 2026**. A limited quantity will be available for purchase at the event for those who miss the deadline. [Order your Mug Here](#)

## FUNDRAISING PARTICIPANTS

As you know, this event helps power the mission of our organization—and your fundraising efforts are a huge part of that impact. To show our appreciation and add a little extra motivation, we've got something special in store!

The **Top 3 fundraisers** who raise **\$1,000 or more** will receive an exclusive award to recognize their incredible effort and dedication. It's our way of saying thank you for going above and beyond to support the cause! Let's see who rises to the top -good luck and thank you for making a difference!

## SWIMMERS OFF THE WATER

For the safety of all participants, please review the following guidelines carefully:

### Cutoff Time

All swimmers must complete the race by **10:05 AM**. Anyone still in the water at that time will be safely removed and transported back to Bayfield.

### Mid-Race Removals

Swimmers may also be removed from the water at any time if they:

- Show signs of hypothermia
- Appear exhausted, injured, or unable to continue
- Request to be removed

### After Removal

Swimmers removed from the water will be taken to the **Coast Guard Station in Bayfield**. Upon arrival:

- You will be **evaluated** and either released or taken to a medical center if necessary.
- If released, you will wait at the station for transportation back to the Pavilion (where you picked up your race packet) via golf cart.
- At the Pavilion, you will receive dry clothes, sandals, and a ferry ticket to return to Madeline Island.
- **Important:** Turn in your **timing chip at the Pavilion**. Do **not** leave it with a kayaker, safety boat, or Coast Guard member.

After returning your chip, you'll be transported to the ferry line so you can return to the island and collect your belongings.

### Planning Ahead

No one expects to be pulled from the water, but it's essential to be prepared. Please make a **personal plan** in advance with any friends or family attending:

- Decide who will go where if you're removed—will you return to the island, or will they come to Bayfield with your gear?
- This prevents being stranded on opposite sides.

### If You Need to Stop Early

If at any point after starting the race you feel unable to continue:

- **Do NOT return to the beach** on your own.
- Instead, signal a **kayaker** for help. If no kayaker is available and you do return to shore, go directly to the Pavilion and return your **chip anklet**.

If you do **not return your chip**, we will assume you are still in the water, triggering a **full-scale search** by the Coast Guard and the entire safety team—over 100 people could be mobilized.

### **If You Decide Not to Swim**

If you picked up a chip but decide not to swim, **you must return your chip to the Pavilion immediately**. Every year, swimmers who change their minds and leave without informing us cause hours of unnecessary searching.

### **Emergency Contacts**

If we cannot locate you, we will contact the emergency number you provided. Please make sure this contact is someone who will be **available and reachable on race day**.

Thanks for taking the time to review these important details—your safety and the safety of everyone involved is our top priority.

## **FINISH LINE INSTRUCTIONS**

To officially finish the race, swimmers must exit the water and climb a short set of stairs onto the dock. Here's how to navigate the final stretch:

1. **Swim past the RIGHT end of the “L” shaped dock** located at the white house.
2. Continue past the **large orange tetrahedron buoy**.
3. **Turn left** after the buoy and follow the line of **buoys and pool noodles** leading toward the dock.
4. Head for the **yellow staircase** at the dock. You'll need to climb approximately **five steps**, using the handrails on both sides.
5. Your race time will be recorded when you **cross the timing mat** at the top of the stairs on the dock.
6. A team of volunteers will be waiting to **remove your timing chip** once you've crossed the mat.
7. Afterward, please **continue up into the yard** area and **avoid gathering on the dock** to keep the finish line clear for others.

*(Reference photos are included at the end of this document.)*

## **SWIMMERS STAYING ON MADELINE ISLAND**

If you are staying on Madeline Island Friday night, your transportation to the start is a special, unpublished ferry at 6:00 AM Saturday.

- Arrive at the dock by 5:45 AM—this ferry will not wait.
- Your ferry ticket is in your race packet, which must be picked up on Friday at Bayfield Lakeside Pavilion.
- **Missing this ferry means missing the race**, so please plan accordingly.

## **SWIMMING GEAR & AIDS RULES**

- Fins, snorkels, and hand paddles are allowed only in the Non-Competitive Division. They are not permitted in the Competitive Division.
- **Safety buoys are mandatory** for all swimmers. They improve visibility and provide flotation if you need to wait for assistance.
- If you forget your safety buoy, a limited number will be available for purchase during Friday packet pickup.
- Neoprene gloves (with non-webbed fingers) and cold protection booties are allowed in all divisions.

## WETSUITS

Wetsuits are required for all swimmers. If you wish to swim without a wetsuit, **you must apply for a waiver in advance**, demonstrating prior cold-water event experience (62–68°F).

To request a waiver, visit our website, scroll to the Swim Requirements section, and click the Wetsuit tab.

Water temperatures will be announced at the mandatory safety briefing, but waivers will not be granted on race day. If you think you might opt out of wearing a wetsuit due to warm conditions, submit your waiver request now.

## SAFETY

### PERSONAL PADDLERS – UNDER A SPECIAL EXCEPTION

Swimmers may be accompanied by a Personal Paddler under a **special exception**. These paddlers must:

- **Submit a request for approval to the race director via email**
- **Attend the mandatory Paddler Safety Meeting at 6:25 AM** at the race start (Washington Beach).
- **Carry a VHF radio** throughout the event.
- **Return to Bayfield with a Safety Paddler Group** and **check out onshore** at Washington Beach after the race.

## SWIMMERS WITH PERSONAL PADDLERS MUST

- Start in the **last non-competitive wave (Wave 6)**.
- Enter the water from the **north end of the starting area at 6:40 AM**, immediately after the paddler safety meeting.

## GETTING ASSISTANCE DURING THE RACE

If you need help:

- **Raise your hand or your safety buoy** to signal for assistance – a kayaker will approach
- You may rest while holding onto your safety buoy or a kayak, **if no forward movement is provided**.
- If you are unable to continue due to fatigue, cramps, cold, or other issues, a safety paddler will alert a safety boat for removal.

## RECOGNIZING HYPOTHERMIA

If you feel cold and mentally foggy, you may be experiencing **mild hypothermia** – a signal to **stop swimming immediately**. Full hypothermia is a **life-threatening condition**. There's no shame in ending your swim early.

If you need help, **stay where you are and raise your hand**. A safety paddler will come to you and alert a support boat.

## EARLY SIGNS OF HYPOTHERMIA INCLUDE:

- Uncontrollable shivering, numbness
- Loss of coordination (stroke changes, upright swimming)
- Weakness or sluggishness in arms and legs
- Clenched jaw, slurred or slowed speech
- Stiff, claw-like hands with limited control

Listen to your body - **your safety comes first**.

## CHECK-IN & PACKET PICKUP PROCEDURES

**Check-In & Packet Pick-Up – Friday, July 31, 2026 (2:00–8:00 PM)**

### Location: Pavilion

- Check-in stations will be organized by **bib number ranges**: In order to improve the flow of check-ins, each table will now have two stations broken down as follows:
  - Table 1: 1-110 & 111-220
  - Table 2: 221-330 & 331 & 440
  - Table 3: 441-550 & 551-660+
- Bib numbers are assigned based on your reported mile swim speed. You'll receive your number before race day.
- At check-in, go to the station matching your bib range and provide your **Last name**, please be prepared to show ID.

Volunteers outside the Pavilion will also have a list of names and bib numbers.

### Your race envelope will include:

- Numbered swim cap
- Safety whistle
- Labeled trash bag for personal gear (tags available for backpacks)
- Ferry ticket (for return trip from Madeline Island to Bayfield)

- Sponsor goodies and materials

### After Check-In:

- Take your envelope to the **apparel station** to collect your **hoodie**. The size is based on your registration and **cannot be changed** at pickup.
- If you pre-ordered items (mugs, t-shirts, backpacks, etc.), visit the **Pre-Purchased Merchandise Station**. Show your envelope or bib number to claim your items.

## GEAR DROP OFF

Point to La Pointe is a one-way swim, and the finish line is only accessible by boat. We'll transport your personal gear to the finish for you.

- At packet pick-up, you'll receive a **trash bag labeled with your bib number**.
- **Place your towel, shoes, change of clothes, valuables, and return ferry ticket** inside this bag.
- **If possible, bring your gear to packet pick up on Friday** and pack the bag on Friday to save time on race morning.
- If you're dropping off gear on Saturday, it must be in the U-Haul by **6:30 AM** to make the **7:00 AM ferry**. This allows time to unload and organize gear on Madeline Island before swimmers begin arriving at 8:00 AM. Volunteers need time to sort bags by number and set up the finish area.
- Prefer not to drop your gear that early? You're welcome to have friends or family bring it to the island for you. We recommend they also hold onto your phone, keys, or wallet if possible.

## AWARDS

There will be awards for the overall top male and female swimmers, as well as 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place finishers in each age group (male and female).

**Note:** No double-dipping of awards. If a swimmer wins both overall and their age group, they will receive only the higher-value prize.

### AGE CATEGORIES

13-19	30-34	55-59	75-79
20-24	40-44	60-64	80+
25-29	45-49	65-69	
35-39	50-54	70-74	

## WEATHER AND CANCELLATION POLICY

The Point to La Pointe Swim operates under a permit from the U.S. Coast Guard, and **safety is our top priority**. Race organizers, in coordination with the Coast Guard, may **postpone, alter, or cancel the race** under the following conditions:

- **Fog** – The farthest point on the course must be visible from Bayfield.
- **Lightning** – No race will start if there is visible lightning, thunder, or threatening weather on radar.
- **Winds & Waves** – The race will be canceled if waves exceed 2-3 feet or if wind conditions are deemed unsafe or expected to worsen.
- **Water Quality** – Unsafe water conditions may lead to cancellation.
- **Other Safety Concerns** – Organizers may cancel the event at any time for any reason.

If the race **cannot begin by 11:00 AM**, it will be canceled. In some cases (e.g., all-day storms), early cancellation may be necessary.

If conditions become unsafe **during the race**, swimmers will be removed from the water per our Coast Guard-approved safety plan.

### **REFUNDS & INDIVIDUAL CANCELLATIONS:**

There are **no refunds, transfers, or credits** for any reason, including weather-related or personal cancellations. We strongly recommend purchasing **cancellation insurance** to cover unexpected issues that may prevent participation.

Please note that, like all insurance, cancellation coverage requires a **qualifying event** to apply. Deciding not to swim, without a covered reason, will **not** result in a refund from the insurance provider. Check your policy for more information.

### **POST RACE RESULTS**

Live results will be available on our website as they're reported. QR codes will be posted throughout the finish area so you and your supporters can easily check your results. The link, once available will also be posted at packet pickup and on the island.

### **RETRIEVING GEAR**

Once you arrive on Madeline Island, your gear will be waiting at the designated pick-up area—just follow the signs. You may also choose to have a friend or family member hold onto your gear instead of checking it with us.

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

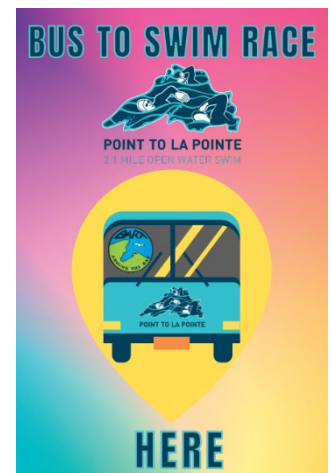
To ensure you receive race updates, please add our email to your safe sender list. If you unsubscribe, you will no longer receive Event communications.

### **ISLAND TRANSPORTATION**

After disembarking the ferry, look for signs indicating shuttle buses to the finish line. This service is available to spectators and to swimmers who were pulled from the race and need to return to collect their gear.

### **INSURANCE**

During registration, you had the option to purchase cancellation insurance from FanShield (an independent provider) in case of injury or another qualifying event prevented you from participating in the race. To file a claim, please contact FanShield directly: <https://www.fanshield.com/file-a-refund-request>.





### **DOGS/PETS AT FINISH LINE**

We love dogs, but the finish line is on private property, generously shared with us by the owners. Out of respect for their wishes, pets are strictly **not allowed at the finish line.**

# Race Day Checklist

## Swim Gear

- Swimsuit
- Wetsuit (*Required unless you've been granted a waiver*)
- Wetsuit lubricant
- Goggles
- Spare goggles
- Anti-fog solution
- Ear plugs
- Silicone cap (*optional – can be worn under your race cap*)
- Race cap (*provided at packet pickup*)
- Personal buoy (*mandatory for all swimmers*)
- Sunblock

## Post-Race Essentials

- Towel and dry clothes (*recommended to pack in your labeled gear bag on Friday*)
- Footwear
- Wallet / Money

## Logistics & Planning

- Ferry ticket (*included in your packet*)
- Emergency plan if you don't finish the race:
  - Do you and your family/friends have each other's phone numbers?
  - Are **you** going back to the island for your gear, or are **they** bringing it to Bayfield?

# 2026 Map of Racecourse



# Start Line



# Finish Line



