



Run Wild Missoula P.O. BOX 1573 Missoula, Montana 59806

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Missoula Wins Runner Friendly Community Designation

MISSOULA – Missoula is one of a handful of runner friendly communities in the nation, according to a recent 5-year designation bestowed by the Road Runners Club of America, a national distance running organization. Run Wild Missoula announced at its Annual Meeting of Members last night that Missoula has been awarded the *Runner Friendly Community*® designation.

Missoula met the program's criteria, which includes community infrastructure, community support, and local government support for running. Missoula has an infrastructure that can foster physical activity in a safe environment; a proven track record that organizations and businesses work together to promote running as a healthy exercise and sport; and there are positive relationships between the running community and local government.

Run Wild Missoula applied for the designation five months ago, which included creating a You Tube video (<http://www.youtube.com/user/MissoulaMarathonFilm?blend=8&ob=5#p/u/0/8Jrini80VGw>), filling out a lengthy application and getting letters of support from race directors, business owners and government officials.

"In 2010, after the Missoula Marathon won the award for the Best Overall Marathon in the country from Runner's World magazine, the event doubled in size, bringing thousands of runners, walkers, and spectators to the community," Mayor John Engen wrote in his letter of support. "A study on the economic impact of the event and found that it pumped \$1.3 million into the economy."

The goals of the Runner Friendly Community program are to shine a national spotlight on communities that stand out as runner-friendly and to provide incentives and ideas for communities to work towards becoming runner friendly communities. Runner friendly communities can increase the quality of life, improve physical activity for residents as outlined in the National Physical Activity Plan, and provide for increased economic impact for the community.

While runners do not require a lot of expensive equipment, there are several ways that local communities can invest to ensure that running is safe, affordable, accessible, and enjoyable for anyone that wants to run.

Other communities that won the designation include Allen Park, MI; Carson City, NV; Decatur, IL; Knoxville, TN; Lawrence, KS; Lynchburg, VA; Reading, PA; Salem, MA; and The Woodlands, TX. Learn more about the program included detailed information about these and other Runner Friendly Communities at <http://www.rrca.org/programs/runner-friendly-community/>

About Run Wild Missoula: Run Wild Missoula is the non-profit running club which organizes the Missoula Marathon and a dozen other annual races, several training programs, seminars, social events and clinics. For more information visit www.runwildmissoula.org.



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About the Road Runners Club of America: The mission of the RRCA is to promote the development and growth of running clubs and running events throughout the country and to support the common interests of runners of all abilities during all stages in life. Through the RRCA, we provide a national infrastructure for the development of adult and youth running clubs and events that have boomed into a robust sporting activity.

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