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February 19-26, 2017 Proclaimed American Birkebeiner Week in the State of Wisconsin

Governor Walker Issues Proclamation

Hayward, Wisconsin (February 17, 2017) — The American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation is pleased to announce that Governor Scott Walker has issued [a proclamation declaring February 19-23, 2017 “American Birkebeiner Week” throughout the state of Wisconsin.](#)

The American Birkebeiner is North America’s largest cross-country ski race and draws over 13,000 skiers and an estimated 30,000 spectators to the Hayward, Wisconsin area for the Birkie week of Nordic festivities. Hayward, Wisconsin is located in the northwestern corner of the State with Birkie festivities spanning Bayfield and Sawyer counties, including the communities of Cable, Seeley, and Hayward, Wisconsin.

“We are truly honored and exceedingly proud to receive this proclamation from Governor Walker,” said Ben Popp, Executive Director, American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation. “The ABSF celebrates this distinction with the 13,000 skiers, 2000 volunteers, townships, villages, and communities, who make the Birkie events happen each year - they are the true spirit and passion of this American treasure.”

American Birkebeiner Week Proclamation February 19-26, 2017

- Whereas, the American Birkebeiner, held in Hayward, WI each year, is North America's largest cross-country ski race and contributes to the estimated \$26 million in silent sports revenue generated in Sawyer and Bayfield counties of northwestern Wisconsin each year,
- Whereas, over 13,000 cross-country skiers and tens of thousands of spectators gather in Hayward, WI, each February to celebrate and participate in the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation’s annual week of cross-country skiing festivities including events for all ages and abilities;
- Whereas, the American Birkebeiner is a uniquely American tradition and the sole cross-country ski-race representing the North American continent within the global Worldloppet International Sports Federation;

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- Whereas, over 250,000 skiers have participated in American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation races since 1973;
- Whereas, the 100+ kilometer American Birkebeiner recreational trail was ranked the #1 cross-country ski destination in the United States in 2016; is utilized by an estimated 100,000 visitors each year; and draws tourists to the Northwestern Wisconsin region;
- Whereas, Hayward, WI (population 2318) and the surrounding rural communities, host the world each year as participants from 46 states and 22 countries (in 2016), join in American Birkebeiner “Birkie” festivities.
- Whereas, the American Birkebeiner is celebrating its 44th year and the recent opening of the Tony Wise Museum of the American Birkebeiner, commemorating the race’s origins and legacy;
- Whereas, the 2017 American Birkebeiner cross-country ski race will be celebrating a momentous milestone with the inaugural use of the new American Birkebeiner Trailhead permanent start area;
- Whereas, past and current members of the United States ski team will be gathering in reunion at the 2017 American Birkebeiner, many of whom have represented the United States at the highest level of international competition including the past 15 Olympiads;
- Whereas, the mission of the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation, a 501C3 non-profit organization, is to conduct the finest international cross-country ski competitions; to serve as good stewards of the American Birkebeiner Trail system; and to support a healthy and active lifestyle among people of all ages and abilities;

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About the American Birkebeiner® Ski Foundation

Located near Hayward and Cable, Wisconsin, the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, is known for its signature American Birkebeiner Ski Marathon held each February. Today, the Birkie brand has grown to encompass a year round lifestyle that provides healthy, active events for thousands of outdoor fitness enthusiasts of all levels. From the iconic Birkie ski race to the Birkie Trail Run & Trek, and Fat Bike Birkie race, the ABSF and the Birkie Trail attract skiers, runners, bikers, trekkers, and hikers, from casual day-trippers to elite superstars. *Birkie. Ski. Run. Bike. Live!* Visit www.Birkie.com to learn more.