

Date: August 10, 2012

To: USMS Zone Chairs

Cc: USMS President
USMS Vice President of Programs
USMS Vice President of Local Operations
USMS Executive Director
USMS LMSC Development Committee Chair
USMS Long Distance Committee Chair
USMS Open Water Committee Chair

From: Lynn Hazlewood, Chair, USMS Open Water Committee

FORMING 2013 USMS ZONE OPEN WATER SERIES AND CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

We encourage and ask for your help in establishing annually designated Zone Open Water Series and Championship events for your USMS Zone in 2013 (see Enclosure 1).

We believe this idea provides an opportunity to promote and grow USMS open water swimming participation, education, competition, and membership. Further, this idea is consistent with our USMS mission, vision, goals, and core objectives. With this in mind, we are proposing a set of minimum eligibility parameters to assist each USMS Zone with forming a Zone open water series and championship events of multiple swim distances.

To spur more open water education, we are proposing a \$500 USMS Open Water Clinic Grant for USMS-sanctioned open water clinics that are conducted in conjunction with your USMS Zone open water championship events.

We invite your review feedback on improving the proposal in Enclosure 1, and encourage you to implement starting in your 2013 open water season. We realize there are some established Zone and LMSC open water series and/or championship events; however, we hope you will share your experiences with us and the other Zones. For example, has your Zone established or plan to establish a Zone open water swim series and/or championship events in 2013? If so, please let us know how your Zone (or some LMSCs within your Zone) implements and what parameters or criteria are used to govern? If not, we encourage you to consider starting-up in 2013.

Please consider this proposal leading-up to and in your Zone meetings during the September 12-16, 2012 USMS Convention in Greensboro, NC.

We look forward to working with you to promote and grow USMS open water swimming.

If you have any questions, please contact Lynn Hazlewood at OpenWater@USMS.org.

Respectfully,

Lynn Hazlewood
Chair, USMS Open Water Committee

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Enclosure 1

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FORMING 2013 USMS ZONE OPEN WATER SERIES & CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS Proposed Minimum Eligibility Parameters

USMS Mission Statement: To promote health, wellness, fitness and competition for adults through swimming.

USMS Vision Statement: USMS will be the premier resource for adult aquatic fitness in the United States and will make fitness through swimming available for as many adults as possible.

USMS Goals & Objective: To offer adults the opportunity to participate in a lifelong fitness and/or competitive swimming program.

CORE OBJECTIVES: Service the membership. Educate the membership. Build the membership. (2012 USMS Rule Book, page ix).

Task Objective: Promote and grow USMS open water swimming participation, education, competition, and membership. One opportunity starting in 2013 is for the 8 USMS Zones to establish annual USMS Zone Open Water Series and Championship events in conjunction with open water education Clinics.

Proposed Minimum Eligibility Parameters:

1. All Zone and LMSC open water education Clinic and competition events shall be USMS-sanctioned.
2. Current USMS Rule Book applies to open water education Clinic & competition events & participants.
3. USMS-sanctioned open water education clinics conducted in conjunction with the USMS Zone open water championship events are eligible to receive a \$500 USMS open water Clinic grant.
4. Participants shall be USMS members with current annual USMS registrations or One-Event (OEVT) registrations prior to participating in an open water education Clinic and/or competition swim.
5. USMS OEVT member registrants swimming in an eligible Zone open water event are not eligible for any USMS or Zone scoring, record, rank, and/or award.
6. Participants using USMS Category I or II swimwear are eligible for separate Zone scoring & ranking.
7. USMS Zone open water series and championship events occur annually.
8. Each Zone designates their annual Zone open water series and championship event(s) from each of their LMSC's existing or new events.
9. Each Zone and LMSC rotates their designated open water event(s) on an annual basis (if possible).
10. Zone open water series and championship events may consist of one or more swims of any distance.
11. Zone Championship events may occur over multiple days at the same venue or different venues (e.g., open water swim festivals).
12. Each Zone open water series and/or championship schedule is made public by a certain advance date preceding their calendar year open water competition season.
13. A Zone open water series consists of four or more USMS-sanctioned competitive open water swim events that are designated by each participating LMSC of the same USMS Zone.
14. Each Zone uses a uniform method of participant gender age group finish place scoring and rank for determining Zone open water series and championship event award winners, based on competition and/or participation. Example: competition points are based on the current USMS All Star points assignment from 1st to 10th finish place (i.e., 22, 18, 16, 14, 12, 10, 8, 6, 4, 2). Zero points are assigned for gender age group finish places greater than 10th place.
15. For Zone open water series competition, each Zone:
 - A. Establishes a minimum number of Zone open water series events that a participant shall swim to be eligible for Zone scoring, ranking, and awards.
 - B. Assigns zone points to participants who start and finish an eligible Zone open water series event, with the idea of encouraging event participation.
16. Uniformly formatted Zone open water event results are provided by the Event Director to USMS for inclusion in a database that will be used to determine applicable USMS open water swimmer national awards (USMS program currently under development).