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Austin Marathon earns certification from Council for Responsible Sport

The Austin Marathon has earned certification from the Council for Responsible Sport (ReSport) for the 2009 edition of the event held February 15 in Austin, Texas. The marathon earned 25 of a possible 41 credits to qualify for the distinction, the first awarded by the Council in 2009.

Named one of the "10 Greenest Races" in the United States by *Runner's World* magazine, the Austin Marathon used a combination of holistic planning, adherence to defined principles, and creativity to meet the ReSport sustainability standard. Over 11,000 runners participated in the full and half-marathon races through downtown Austin and surrounding communities.

The marathon earned credits from five different categories of environmental and social sustainability, as set forth by the Council for Responsible Sport. A representative of ReSport was in attendance to verify the credits sought by the Austin organizing committee, which provided extensive pre- and post-race documentation of their initiatives. The breakdown of earned credits can be found at ReSport.org.

Marathon organizers produced a more responsible event through a variety of methods. Much of the waste that would otherwise end up in a landfill was diverted to recycling and composting, with less than two pounds per participant of solid waste generated. The event used compostable bowls made of corn to serve post-race soup, installed "Gutter Buddies" in city storm drains to prevent contaminants from reaching Austin Town Lake, provided organic cotton shirts to half-marathon finishers, and generated funds for local charities through its "26 Miles for 26 Charities" program.

"The Austin Marathon works to showcase the best of our city, and we know that includes being environmentally responsible," said Michelle Sandquist, Managing Director and leader of the green initiative. "After having success reducing our environmental impact in 2008, we aimed to take even bigger eco-friendly steps this year; obtaining certification from ReSport was validation that we're heading in the right direction. Striving for a sustainable and environmentally-friendly marathon and half-marathon comes with constant challenges, and we'll continue to make every effort to raise the green bar for our event. We look forward to achieving the next level of certification in 2010."

The Austin Marathon becomes the third major marathon to earn certification from the Council for Responsible Sport. In 2008, the Nike Women's Marathon in San Francisco, Calif. and the ING Hartford Marathon in Hartford, Conn. earned distinction.

The Council for Responsible Sport (**ReSport.org**) is a non-profit organization based in Portland, Oreg. which administers a sustainability certification for sporting events. The ReSport Standard defines a set of credits that provide realistic objectives for event directors and a framework for achieving them. ReSport enables event directors to incorporate environmental and social responsibility into their events while informing participants which events adhere to the standards.

More information on the Council for Responsible Sport, including a directory of certified events, can be found at ReSport.org or by contacting Executive Director Jeff Henderson: jeff@resport.org or (503) 922-1589.