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**Iditarod Trail Committee**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Steve Watkins, Tara Cicatello withdrawn from 2018 Iditarod**

**Anchorage, Alaska** — Veteran Iditarod musher Steve Watkins (bib #59), of Topeka, Kansas, and rookie Iditarod musher Tara Cicatello (bib #44), of Buffalo, New York, were withdrawn from the 2018 Iditarod race at 7:05 p.m. today at the Unalakleet checkpoint.

While both Watkins and Cicatello wished to continue the race, race marshal Mark Nordman made the decision based on rule 36 of the official Iditarod race rules regarding competitiveness. Both mushers and their race teams are in good health.

Watkins had 12 dogs in his team and Cicatello had 13 dogs in her team at the time of the withdraw.

“Both Tara and Steve faced very tough conditions along the Yukon River, which led to them falling behind in the race field,” said Iditarod race marshal Mark Nordman. “Due to this distance behind the rest of the field, it unfortunately was not feasible to keep the infrastructure in place to support their race efforts going forward.”

Watkins and Cicatello are spending the night at the Unalakleet checkpoint and being well taken care of by the local Unalakleet community.

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