



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**THE WILDBIRCH HOTEL NAMED OFFICIAL ANCHORAGE HEADQUARTERS OF THE  
2026 IDITAROD TRAIL SLED DOG RACE®**

*Locally owned lifestyle hotel located in the heart of the Mushing District announces formal sponsorship*

**ANCHORAGE, Alaska – Dec. 8, 2025** – The newly opened [Wildbirch Hotel](#), Anchorage’s first lifestyle boutique property, announces its official sponsorship of the 2026 [Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race®](#), an annual long-distance sled dog race stretching from Anchorage to Nome for an approximate 1,000-mile journey through Alaska. The race is produced by the Iditarod Trail Committee, a 501(C)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to preserve the rich tradition of the Alaska sled dog and the Iditarod Trail.

The Wildbirch Hotel – a JdV by Hyatt property – anchors the burgeoning West Fourth Avenue Corridor, known as Anchorage’s Mushing District. The property overlooks the Iditarod’s ceremonial starting line and will serve as commencement headquarters. Programming, including race-themed food and beverage specials at the hotel’s signature restaurant, Crimson; overnight accommodations with a view of the starting line; as well as musher meet-and-greets will be announced.

“We are honored to announce this formal partnership with the Iditarod® and our sponsorship of the 2026 race,” said Patrick Faas, general manager of The Wildbirch Hotel. “This is an iconic event steeped in rich Alaska history; it’s part of the very fabric of our neighborhood, and we are pleased to support the effort in keeping this special occasion true to its traditions.”

The Ceremonial Start of the 54th Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race® will take place on Saturday, March 7, 2026, in downtown Anchorage. The event kicks off with a tribute to multiple branches of the U.S. Military, followed by a performance from the Kingikmiut Singers and Dancers, who share traditional Inupiat songs and dances from Wales, Alaska. Mushers will depart down 4th Avenue and D Street in three-minute intervals beginning at 10:30 a.m.

The official restart occurs the next day at Willow Lake, about 50 miles north of Anchorage, marking the true beginning of the 1,000-mile race to Nome. Unlike the ceremonial run, the Willow restart is timed and competitive, with mushers navigating Alaska’s extreme terrain, from mountains to frozen rivers, as every second counts toward the standings that will shape the journey to the finish line.

The Wildbirch Hotel brings a modern, authentic, and distinctly Alaskan feel” said Rob Urbach, CEO of the Iditarod. “Their vision to elevate Anchorage’s visitor experience aligns seamlessly with the Iditarod’s legacy and future goals. This partnership supercharges the Iditarod experience for Alaska and the world.”

Offering a truly unique experience as the city’s first lifestyle boutique property and newest hotel lodging option in 20 years, The Wildbirch Hotel is steps from Alaska’s best restaurants, historic sites and cultural attractions, including the Alaska Railroad Depot, Alaska Center for the Performing Arts and Ship Creek’s world-class salmon fishing. The property opened in June 2025 with 252 modern and design-forward guest rooms and suites that incorporate local heritage and the utilitarian charm of camp. The Wildbirch Hotel also offers several food and beverage outlets including Crimson, a signature restaurant serving elevated Alaska favorites; Canteen Coffee Co., a café and retail shop curated with goods from local makers; and the soon-to-open Undertap, an onsite brewery in partnership with local favorite, Midnight Sun Brewing. A communal outdoor deck on the third floor offers cozy fire pits and sweeping views of Mount Susitna and Cook Inlet. Murals throughout the property were commissioned by local Native artists, and other art displays are curated in partnership with the nearby Anchorage Museum – a Smithsonian affiliated center – offering guests authentic cultural immersion.

The Wildbirch Hotel perfectly embodies the rugged charm of the region, while providing guests with elevated accommodations and curated experiences for some of the state’s most notable outdoor activities and attractions. For reservations and more information, visit [www.WildbirchHotel.com](http://www.WildbirchHotel.com).

#### **ABOUT THE WILDBIRCH HOTEL**

The first upscale boutique hotel in Anchorage, [The Wildbirch Hotel](http://TheWildbirchHotel.com) is the ideal base camp for the full spectrum of Alaska adventure. Situated in the heart of the city’s downtown Mushing District, the hotel is steps from Alaska’s best restaurants, historic sites and cultural attractions, including the Alaska Railroad Depot, Alaska Center for the Performing Arts and Ship Creek’s world-class salmon fishing. The new hotel leads the revitalization of downtown Anchorage, with 252 modern and design-forward guest rooms and suites that incorporate local heritage and the utilitarian charm of camp. The Wildbirch Hotel also offers a streetside restaurant and lobby bar, onsite brewery, café and retail shop curated with goods from local makers, as well as multiple communal outdoor decks with cozy fire pits and sweeping views of Mount Susitna and Cook Inlet. Art displays curated in partnership with the nearby Anchorage Museum – a Smithsonian affiliated center – offer guests authentic cultural immersion, while expansive meeting and event spaces provide ample means for connection. The Wildbirch Hotel perfectly embodies the rugged charm of the region, while providing guests with elevated accommodations and curated experiences for some of the state’s most notable outdoor activities and attractions. For more information about the property, a JdV by Hyatt hotel, visit [WildbirchHotel.com](http://WildbirchHotel.com) and follow the property on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

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**ABOUT THE IDITAROD**

The Iditarod Trail Committee is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the heritage of Alaska's sled dogs and the historic Iditarod Trail. Each year, the Committee organizes the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race, a 1,000-mile competition from Anchorage to Nome that challenges mushers and their teams to navigate Alaska's extreme terrain and unpredictable conditions. Recognized internationally for its endurance and tradition, the Iditarod showcases the skill, resilience, and spirit of Alaska's sled dog culture. For more information, visit [www.iditarod.com](http://www.iditarod.com)

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