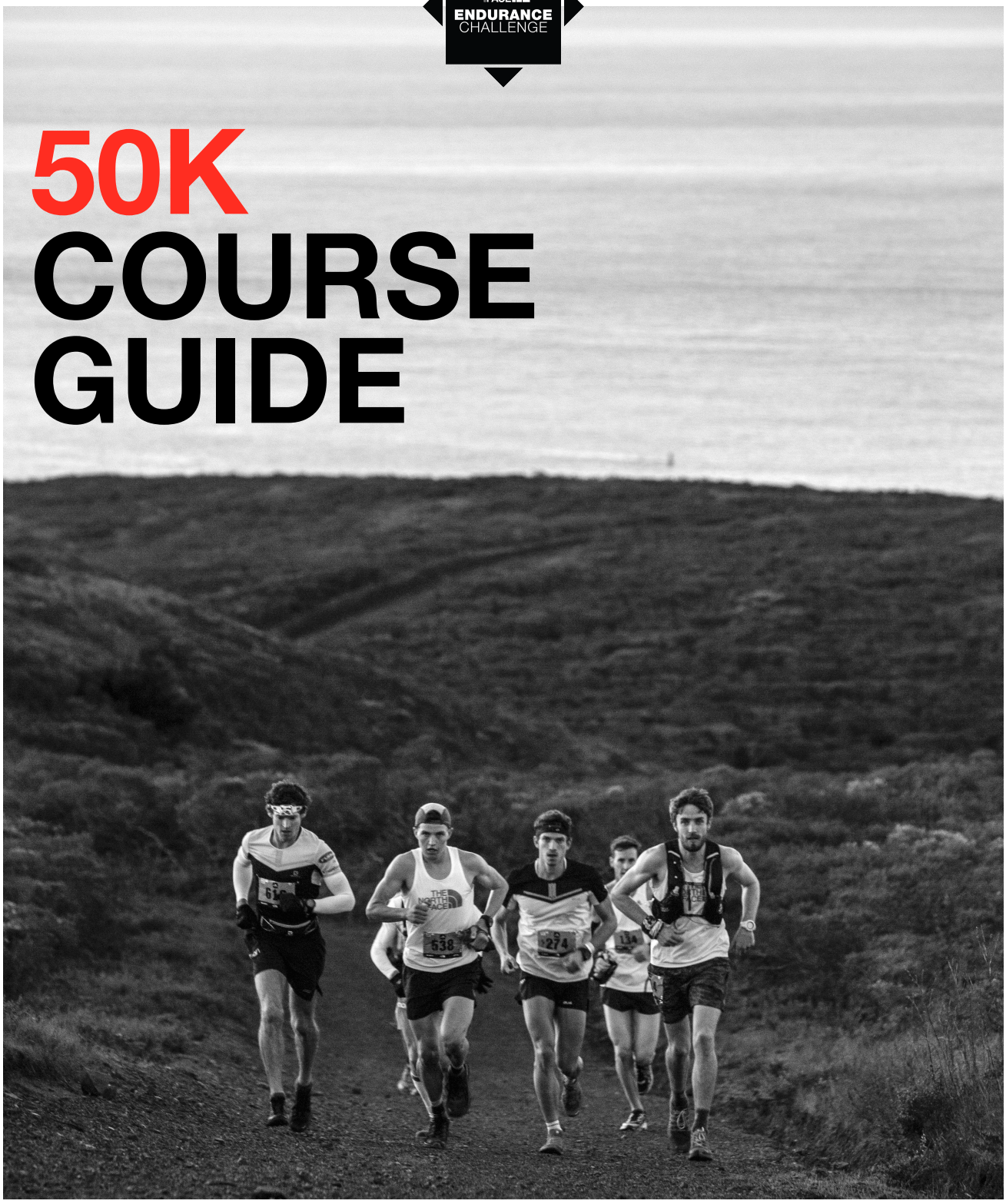
50K COURSE GUIDE



IMPORTANT UPDATES *(02/01/2019)*

- **New Great Falls Park Entry Fee Update**

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RACE DAY CHECKLIST

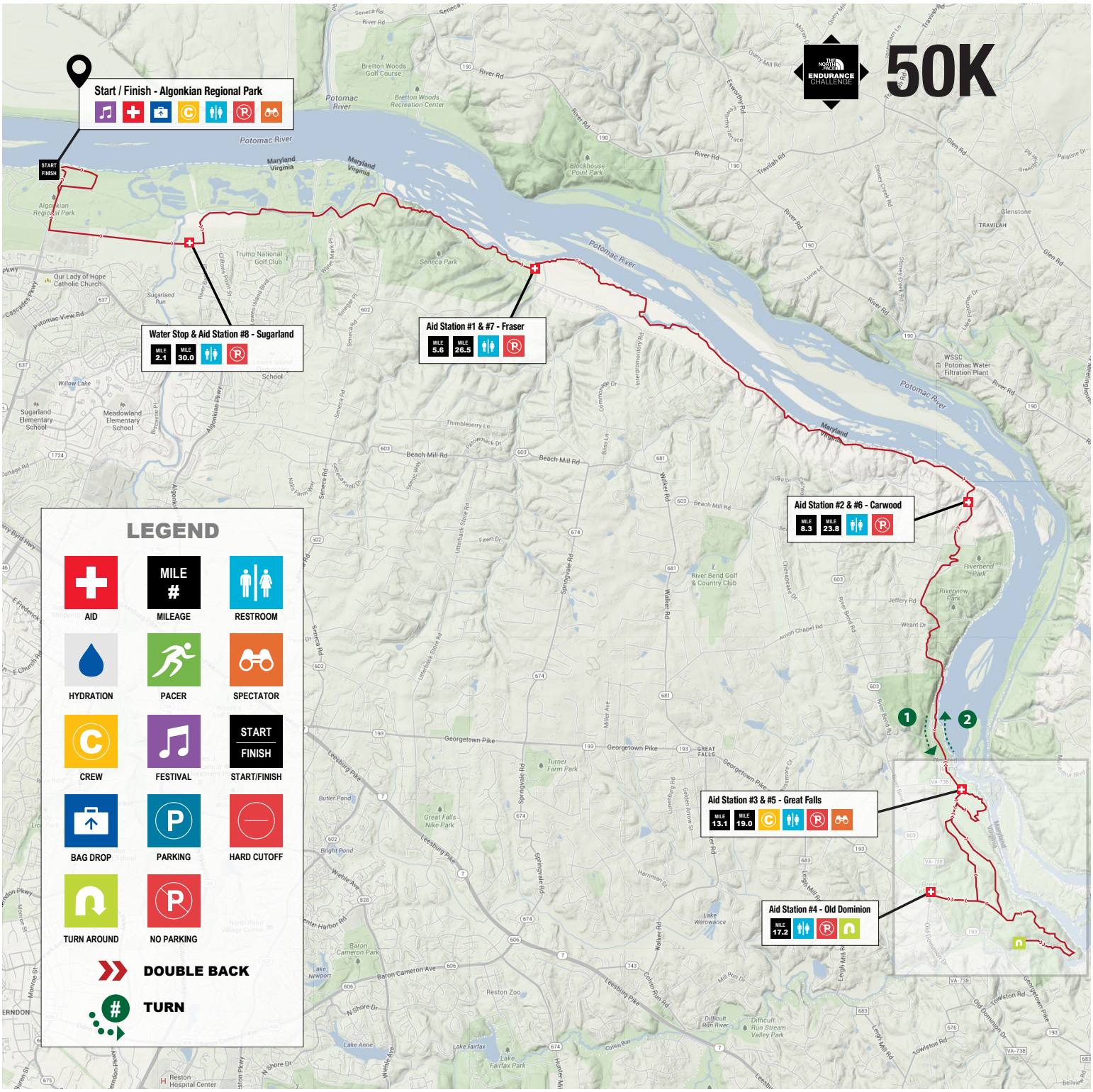
PRE-RACE PREPARATION

- Review the shuttle and parking information on the website and make a plan for your transportation to the start area. Allow extra time if you are required or planning to take a shuttle.
- Locate crew and spectator accessible Aid Stations on the course map and inform your family/friends where they can see you on-course. Review the crew and spectator information section of this guide for crew rules and transportation options.
- If your distance allows, make a plan with your pacer to meet you at a designated pacer aid station. Review the pacer information section of this guide for pacer rules and transportation options.
- Locate the designated drop bag aid stations and prepare a gear bag for the specific drop bag location(s). Review the drop bag information section of this guide for more information regarding on-course drop bag processes and policies.
- Pick up your bib and timing device at a designated packet pickup location.
- Attend the Pre-Race Panel Discussion for last-minute questions and advice from TNF Athletes and the Race Director.
- Check the weather forecast and plan clothing and extra supplies accordingly for both you and your friends/ family attending the race and Finish Festival. It is typically colder at the Start/Finish area than it is in the city.
- Make sure to have a hydration and fuel plan in place to ensure you are properly nourished throughout your race. See the Aid Station Menu for details on the hydration and fuel options available on-course.

WHAT TO BRING

- Directions and/or map to race start, parking location or shuttle pickup location
- Bib, timing device and safety pins
- Bibs should be worn on the front where they will be clearly visible to assist aid station volunteers tracking your progress on the course, and to ensure you will have some great photos of your achievement! Photos will be available a few days after the race, and can be found at www.ultraracephotos.com/tnfec.
- Headlamp or flashlight (MANDATORY for all 50 Mile participants)
- Change of clothes and shoes for the Finish Festival
- Appropriate clothing based on the weather forecast (jacket, pants, gloves, head cover, rain jacket, etc.)
- Appropriate equipment based on the weather forecast (umbrella, poncho, blanket, etc.)
- Bag to store your belongings at the Finish Festival
- Water bottle or hydration pack
    - TNF Endurance challenge is cupless at each course aid station and at the start/finish line festival.
- Required medications, inhalers or EpiPens
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses or hat
- Anti-chafe gel
- Watch/GPS device (remember to charge the night before)
- Cell phone (limited cellular reception at Start/Finish area) or camera
- Cash for food and beer
- I.D. for beer garden
- Ibuprofen or pain reliever (this will not be distributed to any individual by event staff, volunteers or medical teams)
- Game face

COURSE MAP



COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Potomac Heritage Trail covers what is widely known as the marquee section of the event: up to three miles of tiptoeing and hopping along bluffs high above the Potomac River. Portions of undulating trail in the river basin offset the time it takes to cover this section.

GREAT FALLS PARK COURSE MAP

GREAT FALLS PARK COURSE DESCRIPTION

Participants will complete the Great Falls Loop one (1) time before heading back on the Potomac Heritage Trail towards Carwood Aid Station and the Finish Line.

COURSE RATING, ELEVATION PROFILE & PACE CHART

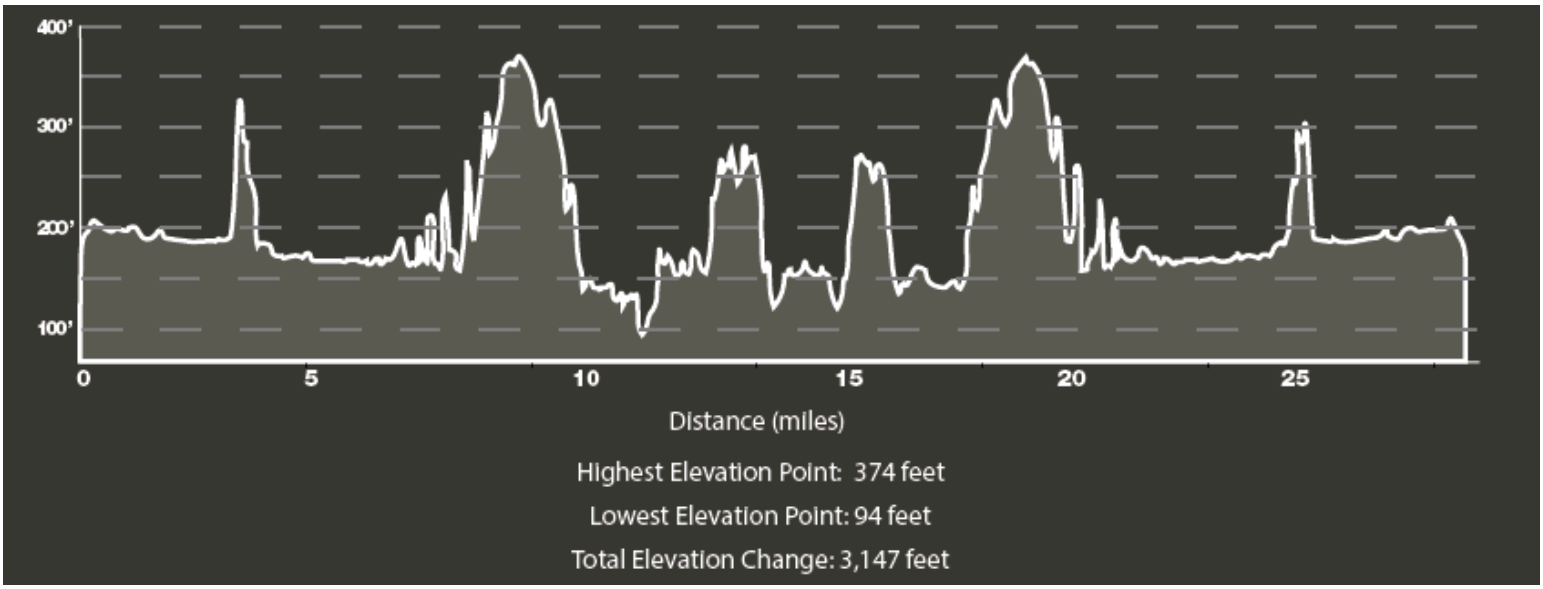
OVERALL DIFFICULTY: ★★★★★

TECHNICAL TERRAIN: ★★★★★

ELEVATION CHANGE: ★★★★★

SCENERY: ★★★★★

				Pace	0:08:00		0:12:32		0:17:04	
Aid Station	Name	Mile	Next Aid	Lead Runner		Middle Runner		Last Runner		Crew
Start	Algonkian Regional Park	0.0	2.1	0:00:00	7:01 AM	0:00:00	7:02 AM	0:00:00	7:03 AM	Yes
Water Stop	Sugarland	2.1	3.5	0:16:48	7:17 AM	0:26:19	7:28 AM	0:35:50	7:38 AM	No
Aid #1	Fraser	5.6	2.7	0:44:48	7:45 AM	1:10:10	8:12 AM	1:35:33	8:38 AM	No
Aid #2	Carwood	8.3	4.8	1:06:24	8:07 AM	1:44:00	8:46 AM	2:21:37	9:24 AM	No
Aid #3	Great Falls	13.1	4.1	1:44:48	8:45 AM	2:44:09	9:46 AM	3:43:30	10:46 AM	Yes
Aid #4	Old Dominion	17.2	1.8	2:17:36	9:18 AM	3:35:32	10:37 AM	4:53:28	11:56 AM	No
Aid #5	Great Falls	19.0	4.8	2:32:00	9:33 AM	3:58:05	11:00 AM	5:24:10	12:27 PM	Yes
Aid #6	Carwood	23.8	2.7	3:10:24	10:11 AM	4:58:14	12:00 PM	6:46:04	1:49 PM	No
Aid #7	Fraser	26.5	3.5	3:32:00	10:33 AM	5:32:04	12:34 PM	7:32:08	2:35 PM	No
Aid #8	Sugarland	30.0	1.7	4:00:00	11:01 AM	6:15:55	1:17 PM	8:31:51	3:34 PM	No
Finish	Algonkian Regional Park	31.7	-	4:13:12	11:14 AM	6:36:36	1:38 PM	9:00:00	4:03 PM	Yes
Hard Cut Off	**Algonkian Regional Park**	**All 50K racers need to be through the Finish Line by this time**							**4:03 PM**	



CUTOFF POLICY

In accordance with parameters agreed to by **ALL permitting properties** and for the safety of all runners, volunteers and race staff, any runner that is off pace to complete their distance by the designated course cutoff may be pulled at any time by the Race Director.

Please be aware that **9 Hour(s)** is considered a hard cutoff time. All runners will be expected to carry the slowest official finishing pace for the entirety of the course.

If the runner fails to do so and is significantly behind pace, the race staff reserves the right to pull ANY runner from the race at ANY time and at ANY point on the course.

Wave start times are accommodated in the cutoff times.

TURN-BY-TURN DIRECTIONS

Start to Water Stop - SUGARLAND (2.1 miles):

- As you cross under the red arch, loop around the soccer field and turn onto paved road
- Straight on golf cart path
- Left on Potomac Heritage Trail near park entrance
- Left on Potomac Heritage Trail (look for white emblem PHT sign)
- Continue on the Potomac Heritage Trail into Aid Station #1

The start begins on a grassy field with a spectacular view of the Potomac River on your left. After looping around the soccer field, turn onto the golf cart path. This winding narrow path carves through a number of fairways before leading runners to the Potomac Heritage Trail which begins with a wide path of crushed rock. The sharp left turn onto a wide and grassy path through the woods is marked by a short post on the left with a white PHT emblem. Now things start to get interesting as the Potomac Heritage Trail (marked by turquoise trail blazes) guides runners through narrowing single-track and dense riverside forest.

Water Stop to Aid Station #1 - FRASER (5.6 miles):

- Continue following the Potomac Heritage trail towards Aid Station #2

The trail carries runners near and away from the river making this low lying section pass quickly. Beware there may be a few logs to hop over and keep an eye out for giant Blue Heron and perhaps a passing herd of deer.

Aid Station #2 - CARWOOD (8.3 miles):

- Continue following the Potomac Heritage Trail towards Aid Station #3

Aid Station #3 - GREAT FALLS (13.1 miles):

- Continue to follow the Potomac Heritage Trail
- Right at Potomac Heritage Trail re-route through Riverbend Park
- Left at fork around the left side of the pond
- Right at next fork
- Cross Jeffrey Road
- Right onto Meadow Trail
- Half way around the meadow take a right on to a newly cut trail
- Cross the entrance to Riverbend Park
- Hop onto the trail parallel to Jeffrey Road
- Cross Potomac Hills Street
- Left on the trail where Jeffrey Road takes a sharp right
- Right on Weant Drive
- Quick left on single-track trail, this is part of Bootlegger Trail which will have “red blazes” indicated
- Left on dirt road
- Left on single-track at the red wooden sign
- Right on Potomac Heritage Trail.
- Follow trail past the Great Falls Visitor Center
- Left on fist footbridge on the left
- Right on main footpath towards Aid Station #4

The Potomac Heritage Trail will twist and turn runners through miles of secluded flood plain. Little dips and turns will keep runners engaged, not to mention some nettles should runners stray off trail. Runners can look forward to a few steep but short hill climbs where the mighty Potomac River has chewed away the shoreline and diverted the trail to higher ground. It’s hard to believe it’s so close to Washington DC! A quick diversion around Riverbend Park on single track, open meadow, fire road and a steep little downhill puts runner back on the Potomac Heritage Trail. As runners near Great Falls Park, the trail will widen and improve. Just past the Visitor Center, take a quick left across a short footbridge and continue down the path until the Aid Station appears on the left. There may be a few logs to hop over but most of this section is fast and fun.

Aid Station #4 - OLD DOMINION (17.2 miles):

- Continue on the same trail past the Aid Station
- At the fork, take a right onto Old Carriage Road
- At next fork, bear left and continue on Old Carriage Road for another mile
- At next major trail intersection, take a left on the Ridge Trail
- At next fork, bear right and continue on the Ridge Trail
- The trail will turn into Difficult Run Trail and head out towards Route 193 and the turn around at the washout
- Double back on Difficult Run and Ridge Trail to Old Carriage intersection
- Cross intersection and continue on Ridge Trail (passing Swamp Trail intersection) to Aid Station
- Old Dominion Aid Station will be located just inside the park just before the gate

Wide-open and smooth fire roads will carry runners downriver towards the Virginia border and a stretch of water named Difficult Run. This section of the course is not very technical but offers some great views of the Potomac River.

Aid Station #5 - GREAT FALLS (19.0 miles):

- Double back on Ridge Trail until Swamp Trail intersection
- Take a left onto Swamp Trail
- At next fork, bear left and continue on Swamp Trail
- At next intersection, take a left onto Old Carriage Road
- At next intersection, take a right onto Matildaville Trail
- At Potomac Canal Trail Connector, make a right to River trail
- At River Trail, make a left
- Follow River Trail to the next Aid Station

This section contains some really fun trails while carve through Swamp Trail then twist and turn through the new revived course through Matildaville and the short section of the River Trail. Pay attention to the quick up and downs and rocky sections that await. Runners should try to sneak a peak of the Mather Gorge and the Potomac River. This completes the Great Falls Loop.

Aid Station #6 - CARWOOD (23.8 miles):

- Right out of the Aid Station on main trail
- Left on first footbridge on the left
- Right on the Potomac Heritage Trail past the Visitor Center
- Left on Bootlegger Trail before the dam (indicated by red blazes)
- Right on gravel road
- Right on single-track
- Right on Weant Drive (dirt road)
- Left at the first trail
- Right on trail along the shoulder of Jeffrey Road
- Cross Potomac Hills Street
- Cross the entrance to Riverbend Park
- Hop on the newly cut trail towards the meadow
- Left onto Meadow Trail
- Left across Jeffrey Road
- Straight down the trail towards the pond
- Bear right at the pond
- Left turn onto Potomac Heritage Trail
- Follow Potomac Heritage Trail to next Aid Station

A quick diversion around Riverbend Park and then it back onto the Potomac Heritage Trail as runners twist and turn through miles of secluded flood plain. Little dips and turns will keep runners engaged, not to mention some nettles should runners stray off trail. Runners can look forward to a few steep but short hill climbs where the mighty Potomac River has chewed away the shoreline and diverted the trail to higher ground.

Aid Station #7 - FRASER (26.5 miles):

- Make a left out of the Aid Station on the Potomac Heritage Trail
- Continue on the Potomac Heritage Trail to the next aid station

This is a new aid station location for those that have run this race in the past. Enjoy the extra support as runners make their way back to Fraser aid station and eventually the finish.

Aid Station #8 - SUGARLAND (30.0 miles):

- Follow Potomac Heritage Trail to next Aid Station

This section of the course will be mostly flat and in the shade.

Aid Station #8 to the FINISH (31.7 miles):

- Continue following the Potomac Heritage Trail (gravel road)
- Follow the gravel road to the golf cart path
- Take a right on the golf cart path
- At the end of the path, continue on short paved road
- Cross the soccer field parking lot and turn left down gravel road
- The finish line will be visible from the parking lot
- Congratulations!

IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION

- All runners will be tracked through every aid station. It is crucial that your bib number is recorded by a volunteer for each pass through.
- When entering an aid station, call out your bib number to the volunteers tracking runners.
- Your race bib must be worn on the front of your body outside of your clothing so that it is visible.
- If you are unable to finish the course, please notify event staff at the nearest aid station that you will not be continuing on the race course. The race staff will then notify the race director and arrange transportation if needed.
- If you see a potentially injured runner on course, please get the runner's bib number and report the situation to the aid station captain at the following aid station.
- Share the trail! Many of our course sections are run on single-track trails. If a faster runner is approaching you and would like to pass provide the opportunity for that runner to safely pass.
- To ensure that all participants complete the proper course, a volunteer will be marking race numbers bib at the following locations:
    - **Great Falls Park Aid Station**
    - **Difficult Run Turn Around**
    - **Old Dominion Aid Station**
- If you **DO NOT** have the appropriate markings upon finishing the race, you are not eligible for any awards.
- The North Face Endurance Challenge is going cupless. Be sure to bring your HydraPak SpeedCup provided at packet pick up or your own bottle/hydration device. Water cups will not be provided.

GEAR CHECK

FINISH LINE GEAR BAGS

- Runners will be able to leave bags at the Finish in the Gear Check tent.
- Finish Line gear bags must be tagged with the perforated tag located at the bottom of your race bib.
- Race staff will assist with adhering the tag to your bag if needed.
- Gear bags cannot exceed 10 pounds.
- Overweight or bulky bags will not be accepted.
- Coolers will not be accepted.
- Runners may only drop one bag at the Finish.
- Gear bags will not be refrigerated.
- Unmarked bags will be available at the Gear Check Area and can be retrieved with description.
- The North Face and Endurance Challenge are not responsible for lost or stolen gear bags or property.
- Gear bags could be exposed to the elements. Contents should be weatherproofed.
- Gear bags are subject to search by race staff if necessary.
- **Gear bags will be available for pickup at the Finish Festival until Sunday at 12:30 p.m.**
- **Gear bags not picked up at the Finish Festival will be available at The North Face - GEORGETOWN store for one-week following the race.**
- Gear bags WILL NOT be mailed.
- All unclaimed gear bags will be disposed of at the end of the week.

RECOMMENDED FINISH LINE GEAR BAG ITEMS

POST RACE CLOTHING

shirts
shorts
socks
sandals
rain gear
gloves
warm gear

RECOVERY FUEL

recovery bars
recovery powders
snacks
water bottle / hydration device

FIRST AID

antacids
ibuprofen/aspirin
lip balm
blister protection
analgesics
towels
eye drops
antibiotic ointment

Finish Line Gear Bag Tag

AID STATION INFORMATION

The North Face Endurance Challenge believes that their runners should be fueled with proper nutrition and hydration for a successful day on the trails.

Eight (8) aid stations are located along the 50K course (see course map for mileage and location). Each aid station consists of the following amenities and menu:

- Medical Tent with accessible DNF transportation
- Toilet facilities
- Menu (V=Vegan; GF=Gluten Free):
  - Salty Snacks:
    - Chips *V GF*
    - Pretzels *V*
    - Saltines
  - Fruit:
    - Oranges & Bananas *V GF*
  - Sweet Snacks:
    - Skittles *V*
    - M&Ms *GF*
  - Peanut Butter & Jelly Sandwiches
  - Potatoes & Salt *V GF*
  - Vegetable Broth *GF*
  - Hammer Gels *V GF*
  - Hammer HEED Electrolyte Hydration *GF*
  - Soda:
    - Cola & Mountain Dew *V GF*
  - Water *V GF*

THE NORTH FACE ENDURANCE CHALLENGE IS GOING CUPLESS

As part of a continuing effort to reduce waste and lessen our race footprint, The North Face Endurance Challenge Series is partnered with HydraPak to be a cupless event. Cups will NOT be available at aid stations or finish line festival for water or electrolyte drink at any of our events. A very limited number of cups will be available for soda and broth upon request.

Each registered runner will receive a HydraPak SpeedCup for re-use at aid stations throughout their race and at the finish line festival. The lightweight and flexible HydraPak SpeedCup is designed to tuck anywhere and easily fill up on a run.

AID STATION NOTIFICATION

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

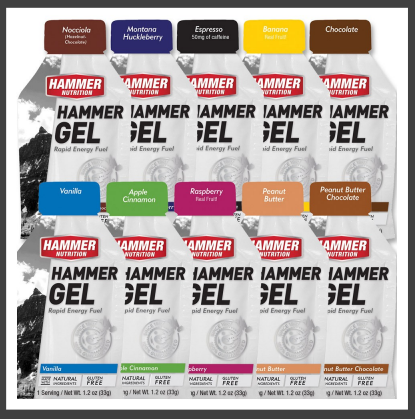
Per our permit with National Park Service, single-serve portions are required at the following Aid Stations:

- **Great Falls Park Aid Station**
- **Old Dominion Aid Station**

Please note the following requirements at these Aid Stations:

- No cut fruit - Only whole pieces
- Individual packaged food items including: Chips, Pretzels, Candy, etc.
- No Energy Gels
- No prepared food including PB&J (Event will provide an alternative)

AID STATION ITEMS



HydraPak

HAMMER NUTRITION®

RACE REFUELING BY HAMMER NUTRITION

DO'S AND DON'TS

- **Don't try to "carbo load" the night before**
- **Don't try to load water or sodium in the days before**
- **Don't worry about not sleeping much on Friday night**
- **DO get a good night's sleep Thursday night**
- **DO maintain normal hydration and caloric intake in the days prior**
- **DO attend the panel discussion on Thursday night**

NIGHT BEFORE RACE:

Eat clean, eat until you're satisfied, and then call it a night. For dinner, consume complex carbohydrates, some high-quality protein, and low-to-no saturated fat. Make sure your meal is low in sodium, and be sure to drink sufficient (but not too much) amounts of water. Skip the alcohol, fatty foods, and dessert… save those "rewards" for after the race.

RACE MORNING:

- **Finish all calorie consumption 3 hours prior to your race start.** This puts your body in the ideal physiological state to use its stores of on-board fuel efficiently, while also utilizing the vast amount of calories from body fat stores more effectively.
- If you don't plan on being up to eat 3 full hours before race start, sleep in and skip breakfast.

Breakfast should consist of 400-500 calories from low-fiber carbohydrates, protein, and fat.
Read all about pre-exercise fueling here: https://www.hammernutrition.com/pre-exercise

DURING THE RACE: ***REMEMBER: Less is Best!***

- **Calories –** 120 to 180 per hour
- **Fluids –** 16 to 28 ounces per hour
- **Electrolytes –** 1-3 Endurolytes Extreme per hour (supplies 300 mg of salt per capsule)

SOURCE: https://www.hammernutrition.com/less-is-best

CALORIC INTAKE: The goal of caloric intake is to consume the least amount necessary to maintain energy levels where you want them to be hour after hour. For the majority of athletes, this represents an intake of 120-180 calories per hour. You can always add more!

Calories in Hammer fuels at the aid stations:

- Hammer Gel = 90 calories
- HEED = 5 calories per fluid ounce

SOURCE: https://www.hammernutrition.com/caloric-intake

FLUID INTAKE: Avoid overconsuming! Most athletes can assimilate a maximum of 20-25 ounces per hour. Lighter athletes or cooler temperatures require even less—only 12-16 ounces per hour. Heavier athletes or hot temperatures may require up to 28 ounces per hour.
SOURCE: https://www.hammernutrition.com/hydration

ELECTROLYTE INTAKE: To maintain the optimal performance of many important bodily functions—including muscular performance—regular dosing with a balanced, full-spectrum blend of electrolytes is required.
SOURCE: https://www.hammernutrition.com/electrolytes

AFTER THE RACE:

- **"Refill the tank" ASAP with Recoverite.** Consumed within the first 30 minutes after the race, Recoverite is the convenient and effective way to resupply your body with complex carbohydrates, whey protein isolate, and a full spectrum electrolyte profile.

SOURCE: https://www.hammernutrition.com/recovery

For complete articles on these five topics, be sure to download your FREE copy of ***5 Secrets of Success*** at https://www.hammernutrition.com/5sos

COURSE MARKING

RIBBON MARKINGS

- Each distance will follow a unique color of marking that corresponds to the participant's bib color.
- Any time runners do not see their race color among the ribbons hung on the trails, they should take it as an indication that they are no longer on their race course. They should return to the last place they saw ribbon matching their race.
- For portions of the course that will be impacted before sunrise or after sunset, reflective tape and/or glow sticks will be placed alongside course markings.

FLAG MARKINGS

- As needed, ribbon markings will be replaced by flag markings.

SIGN MARKINGS

- All Endurance Challenge racers will follow the white directional signage arrows on-course.
- In the event that the course is marked with a colored arrow instead of a white arrow, runners should follow the sign color that corresponds to the color of their race bib.
- Locations where this may occur include when the race distances split and at trail intersections.

AID STATION SIGNAGE

- At each aid station, runners will find a sign featuring the current mileage and the distance to the next aid station (see bottom image).

RUNNING WITH GPS WATCHES

We understand that runners will be equipped with a wide variety of GPS watches. These watches should only be used as a guide for measuring your distance throughout your respective trail race. Please be cautioned that satellite reception, tree coverage and other factors will impact the accuracy of the distance displayed on your watch and that the distance of your course will vary depending on the type/model you wear.

SAMPLE MARKINGS

CREW/SPECTATOR INFORMATION

CREW/SPECTATOR INSTRUCTIONS

- A crew member is defined as any individual who provides material support to a runner during the race
- Crew/Spectator must follow all rules and regulations set forth by The North Face Endurance Challenge
- Crew/Spectator members must comply with all instructions from event staff and volunteers at all times
- Failure to comply will result in disqualification of the runner

RULES FOR CREW/SPECTATOR

- Crew/Spectator access is only permitted at designated aid station locations (see pace chart and map)
- Crews must check-in with the aid station captain for direction on where to assist runners
- Crews may only assist runners within a **100ft** radius of the designated aid stations
- A traffic cone will signify the allowable parameters for crew assistance
- Crews are limited to one vehicle per runner at designated aid stations
- No smoking is allowed at any of the aid stations
- Littering of any kind is strictly prohibited
- Runners are responsible for the actions of their crew

CREW/SPECTATOR ACCESSIBLE LOCATION

Great Falls Aid Station

- First Pass Mileage: 13.1
- Second Pass Mileage: 19

CREW/SPECTATOR TRANSPORTATION

- Parking is NOT available at any parking lot adjacent to the Start/Finish Area at Algonkian Regional Park. All Endurance Challenge participants and spectators are required to park at the Loudoun Tech Center parking lot and take the event shuttle to the Start/Finish area.
- Parking is available at designated Aid Stations: Great Falls Aid Station
  - **A $15.00 Vehicle Pass is required and the pass is good for the seven (7) consecutive days for one vehicle. Motorcycles will be charged $10.00. Vehicle Pass can be purchased at the Great Falls Park entrance.**
- Vehicles parked at aid stations not designated as accessible aid stations may be ticketed and/or towed by park officials.
- **SEE COURSE MAP FOR PARKING AVAILABILITY**