



ATHLETE GUIDE



Dear Racers:

Thank you for registering for our Backcountry Wilderness Half Marathon! We are excited for a fun and positive race day in the beautiful [HRCA Backcountry Wilderness Area](#). We're lucky to have such amazing trails right here in our own backyard, and we're grateful you've chosen to enjoy them with us.

This athlete guide has all the information you will need to get ready for the race. Please take the time to carefully read this document and share any important details with your friends or family.

Before the race starts, you'll need to pick up your timing chip/bib, race t-shirt, and other goodies. You can do this on Tuesday, 10/27, Wednesday, 10/28, or on the day of the race. It is a good idea to arrive early so you have plenty of time to get your things, get organized, and warm up before our 9:00 am start time.

I want to mention some of the important people who help make this event possible: the emergency response team from [Douglas County Search and Rescue](#) (DCSAR). This non-profit, all-volunteer group is not only the beneficiary of this race but a critical component of our success. DCSAR provides rescue and emergency response services to our runners on race day, as well as all citizens of Douglas County throughout the year. They're amazing! [Consider supporting their work by making a donation](#).

On behalf of our race staff, volunteers, and support team, we want to thank you for joining us. We are so excited that you will be a part of our 2026 season finale! Don't hesitate to reach out with questions.



Alyssa Kempesta
Highlands Ranch Race Series Director
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IMPORTANT RACE INFORMATION

RACE DAY

- Saturday, October 31, 2026
- Rocky Heights Middle School, 1033 Monarch Blvd, Lone Tree, CO 80124
- Starting line: Follow dirt trail on south side of middle school parking lot to reach start/finish line
- Race start time: 9:00 am; to avoid congestion, there will be multiple corrals based on your estimated pace. Each corral will start a few minutes apart.

The race is chip-timed so your time only starts when you cross the starting line mat. Gun time does not affect your overall time.



PACKET PICKUP

- Early packet pickups (preferred!)
 - Tuesday, October 27, 2026; 11 am - 2 pm
[Runners Roost Lone Tree, 9994 Commons St #230, Lone Tree, CO 80124](#)
 - Wednesday, October 28, 2026; 3 – 7 pm
[Living the Dream Brewing, 9150 Commerce Center Cir #300, Highlands Ranch, CO 80129](#)
- Race-day packet pickup
 - Saturday, October 31, 2026; 7:30-8:45 am
[Rocky Heights Middle School](#) parking lot

RACE DAY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

7:30 am	Packet pickup opens outside Rocky Heights Middle School
8:30 am	Bag check opens
9:00-9:15 am	Race start by assigned corrals
10:15 am	Estimated arrival of first finishers
11:00 am	First awards ceremony (overall plus completed age groups)
12:00 pm	Grigs Rd Pavilion (approx. 8.9 miles)
12:00 pm	Second awards ceremony (remaining age groups)
1:15 pm	Finish line cutoff time
1:30 pm	Estimated conclusion of event

COURSE INFORMATION

The Backcountry Wilderness Half Marathon course has spectacular views! The course is a single loop made up of 100% dirt, gravel, or singletrack trail. The course will be completed counterclockwise. Runners will have the potential to view wildlife along the way, as well as soak in the amazing vistas. [Full course map available online.](#)

Aid stations will be available at the following approximate miles:

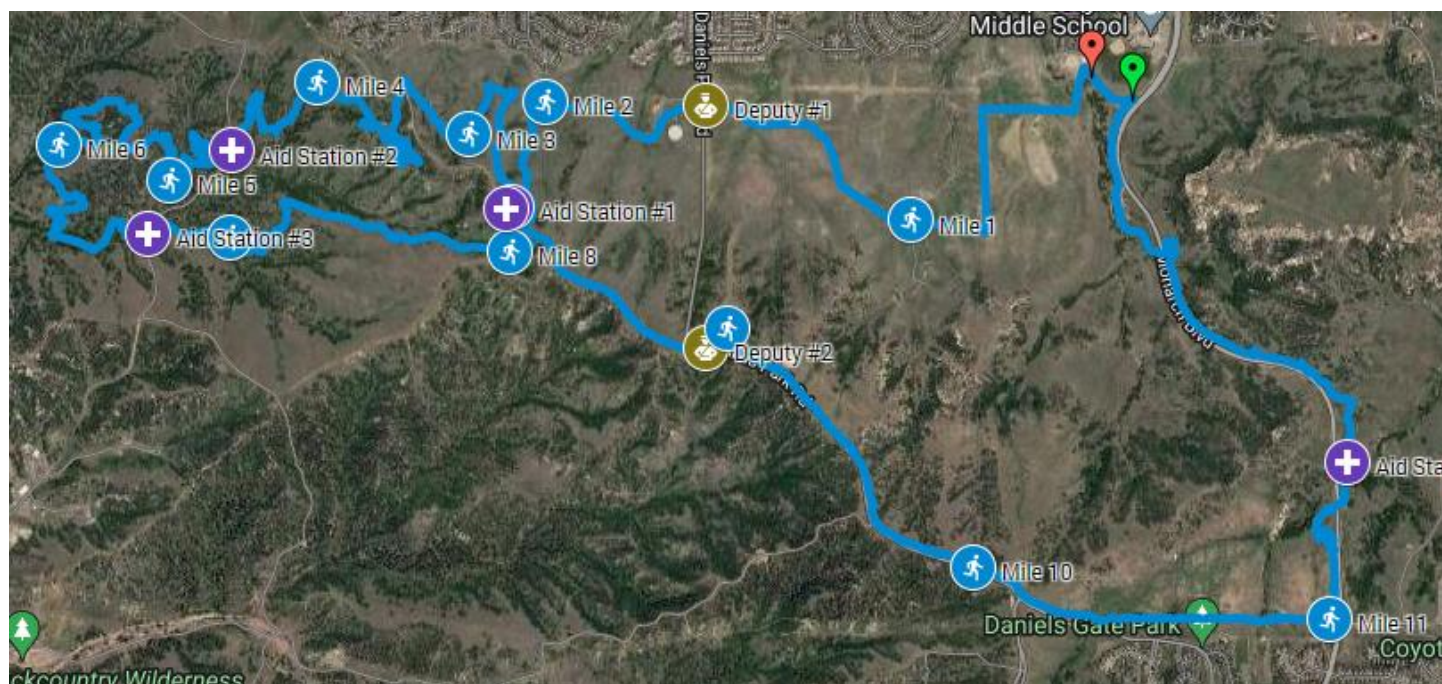
#1 – Mile 2.5	Water, sports drink
#2 – Mile 4.5	Water
#3 – Mile 6.8	Water
#4 – Mile 8.2	Water, sports drink, nutrition
#5 – Mile 11.5	Water

In our effort to respect the trails and follow the principles of “leave no trace,” we are reducing trash left on the trails by not providing cups for all runners. **Carrying a hydration system is advised** and we can help you refill it throughout the race.

The Backcountry Wilderness Half Marathon is challenging, and singletrack trails can make it difficult for emergency vehicles to reach participants directly. In case of emergency, medical teams from [Douglas County Search and Rescue](#) will be available at most aid stations and throughout the course.

To keep participants safe, and avoid exposure, two race check in points and cut off times will be enforced:

Grigs Road Pavilion (approx. 8.9 miles)	12:00 pm
Finish (13.1 miles)	1:15 pm



RACE TIMING

Official race timing will be performed by [Colorado Race Timing](https://www.coloradoracetiming.com). This race will use chip-based technology to ensure times are most accurate. The chip will be located on the back of your bib and will automatically activate once you have crossed the starting mat and record your time once you cross the finish line mat. Bibs must be worn to have times recorded. It is recommended that athletes wear their bib on the front of their body with the number clearly visible. Questions about timing? Contact Simon at simon@crtiming.com.

AWARDS

Overall top 3 male, female, and nonbinary finishers will receive a cash prize in the following amounts:

- First place: \$600
- Second place: \$400
- Third place: \$200

Age group awards will be given to the top 3 finishers in the following age groups:

- 19 and under
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60+



PARKING

Free parking is available for runners and spectators in the Rocky Heights Middle School parking lot and the west parking lot of Rocky Canyon High School. SPACE IS LIMITED! Please carpool or take a ride share service when possible.

Follow the gravel trail at the south end of the Rocky Heights Middle School parking lot to the race start.

RESTROOMS

Porta potties will be available at the start/finish of the race in the south end of the Rocky Heights Middle School Parking lot.

Additional on-course restrooms are available at approximate miles 1.6 and 8.9.



ATHLETE TRACKING

The Backcountry Wilderness Half Marathon offers free athlete tracking and progress alerts on race day through RaceJoy! For spectators to track a runner, the runner must be running the RaceJoy app so be sure to download before race day.

Running with RaceJoy includes:

- GPS-based progress alerts at mile points on the course for current pace and estimated finish time
- Live tracking so friends and family can follow your performance – they'll see a blue dot moving along the course from home or at the race site!
- NearMe proximity alerts notify spectators when you are drawing near.

No official race timing information is provided through RaceJoy. All official timing will be done by Colorado Race Timing.

How to track someone:

1. Search "Backcountry Wilderness" in the search bar
2. Select the "I want to track someone button"
3. Search by name or bib number and push the orange plus sign to begin tracking them

RACEJOY.NET/DOWNLOAD



PREPARATION AND WEATHER

The Backcountry Wilderness Half Marathon takes place in November... but Colorado in November can mean anything from 5°-75°! Runners should prepare to wear any of the following:

- Layers
- Sun protection (hat with brim, sunscreen, or sunglasses)
- Warm hat or gloves

Our race also takes place well above sea level, with a top peak of 6,400 feet. For those not acclimated to the elevation, you can expect significant challenges. Racers will need to stay hydrated – before, during, and after the race, and should expect to drink twice the amount of water they consume on a run at sea level.



BAG CHECK

The Backcountry Wilderness Half Marathon will have one bag check at the start/finish line. Using bag check service allows athletes to bring items they might need before or immediately after the race and leave it in a central location for quick access.

A tag for bag check will be provided at packet pickup. Before the race begins, athletes should attach the tag to their gear bag for identification purposes and check it in at the bag check station. Race staff will watch over your bag until you finish the race and return to claim your belongings. Bag check will be available from 8:30 am-1:15 pm Any items not claimed at this time will be taken back to HRCA facilities and unavailable until the following work week.

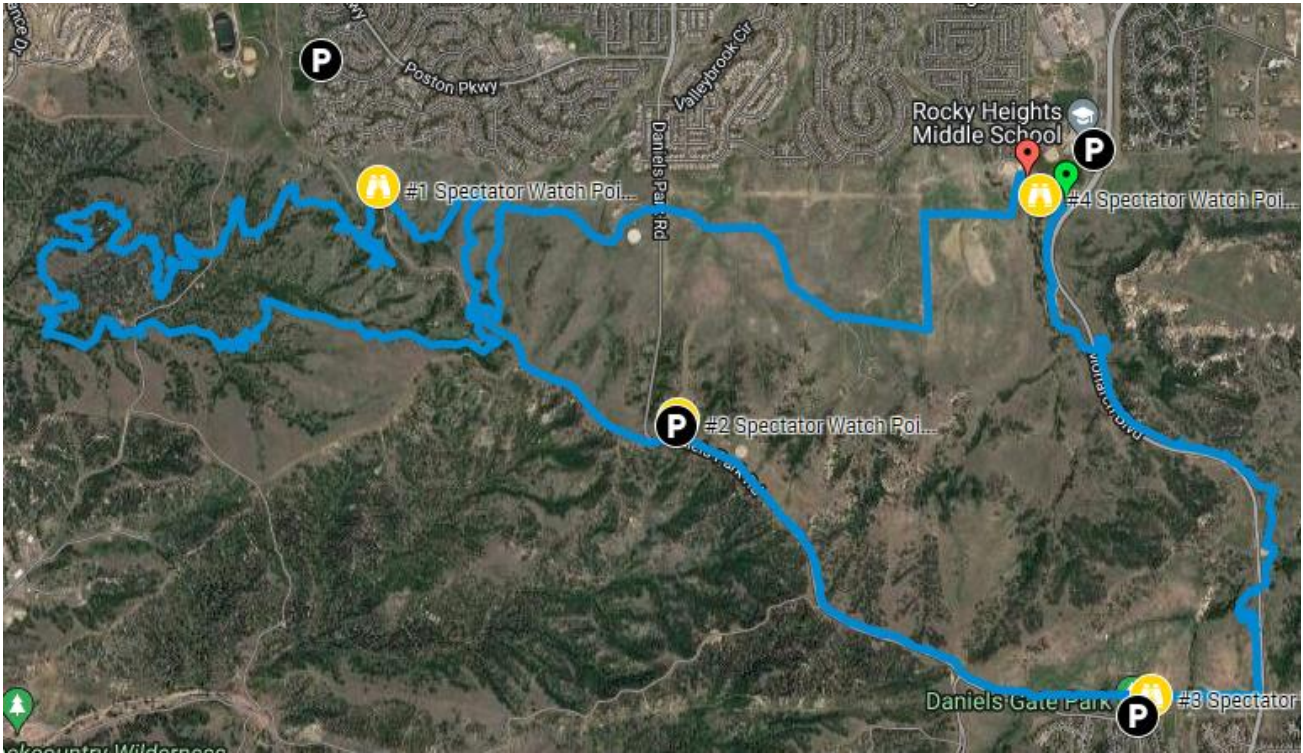
Bag check items may include sunscreen, special food or drink, sandals or clean socks, etc. Some runners may feel comfortable leaving valuables like cell phones or car keys, but doing so is at your own risk. Athletes should make that personal decision for themselves.

SPECTATORS

The Backcountry Wilderness Half Marathon is a beautiful and challenging course and one that is fun to share with family and friends! Because of the remote nature, our trail race is not always accessible by everyone. Below are a few great spectator spots along our course. These recommended parking locations are not reserved for our race. Please be respectful of neighbors or other park users.

Map Location	Course Location	Directions
Spectator Watch Point #1  39.51337, -104.95663	Mile marker: 3.2 Estimated time: 9:15-10:15 am	Park at Red-Tail Park, walk approx. 1 mile uphill to the intersection of the East/West Trail and HRCA "Cowboy Up" Trail. There are restrooms at Red-Tail Park.
Spectator Watch Point #2  39.50421, -104.94133	Mile marker: 8.9 Estimated time: 9:50 am-12:00 pm	Park at Grigs Road Pavilion, wait for runners to reach you, or walk either direction on the East/West Trail and move away from the parking lot.
Spectator Watch Point #3  39.49337, -104.91723	Mile marker: 10.6 Estimated time: 10:00 am-12:30 pm	Park at Daniels Gate Park, follow the trail at the north east corner of the parking lot north to the East/West Trail.
Spectator Watch Point #4  39.51307, -104.9229	Finish line Estimated time: 10:15 am – 1:15 pm	Park at Rocky Heights Middle School or Rock Canyon High School, follow paths south to our start/finish line area. There are restrooms in the dirt parking lot on the south side of Rocky Heights Middle School.

SPECTATOR MAP



THANK YOU TO OUR 2026 SPONSORS!



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PET EVOLUTION

PHYSIO ROOM

**TIMBERLINE
PODIATRY**

**303 DENVER
CHIROPRACTIC**

ONUS IV BAR

**PORCUPINE
PAINT**

**SOUTHWEST
PEDIATRIC
DENTISTRY**

STRETCH LAB



**ULTIMATE
LONGEVITY
CENTERS**

**VITALITY
CHIROPRACTIC**