



5920 E. Central #205
Wichita, KS 67208-4241
Voice: (316) 258-9602
E-Mail: RD@FlatRock50.org
URL: <http://flatrock50.org>

Dear Race Participant,

September 2011

Once again, we find ourselves knee-deep in preparation for the 17th Annual FlatRock 50/25k's, however, we wanted to take the opportunity to confirm your entry and thank you for supporting the Friends of FlatRock Foundation and ultra-distance events in Kansas! Over 2,100 cumulative hours have now been donated by FlatRock Friends and family members in the last 16 years prepping and maintaining this incredibly beautiful, yet very rugged trail. This coupled with the fact that our dedicated trail-coordinator, (also a 8-time consecutive finisher of the 50K event) Steve Siegele, has spent many weekends on the trail this past summer, painting, mowing, lopping branches, weed-eating etc., means the trail is in excellent shape. A little over a week ago Steve emailed me and stated the trail is in even better shape than last year and compared it to a highway...ha ha! Could it be the year a new course record(s) might be set? I can't wait to see!

Even though we continue to have much success terminating all of the live wasp nests (the size of small pizzas) on the west end of the trail, unfortunately, we are still having trouble sweeping rocks off of the trail as requested by numerous runners over the past several years and, of course, are still (after all these years) trying to get use to the taste of spider webs. As always, in all-ways though, it's shaping up to be a fantastic year to "do the rock," then again, don't forget this is FlatRock, one of the toughest 50 or 25K trail runs in the US...no, not Kansas, the US. Oh yeah...and she likes to "eat her young!" So, don't forget to bring a helmet and maybe some protective eyewear...insect repellent optional.

AID STATIONS FOR BOTH EVENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

50K	50K Cont.	25K
Station #1 (3.4 miles) Full Aid	Station #6 (18.2 miles) Water Only	Station #1 (3.9 miles) Full Aid
Station #2 (7.2 miles) Water Only	Station #7 (20.8 miles) Full Aid	Station #2 (7.7 miles-Turnaround) Water Only
Station #3 (9.6 miles) Full Aid	Station #8 (23.2 miles) Water Only	Station #3 (11.5 miles) Full Aid
Station #4 (12.2 miles) Water Only	Station #9 (27.0 miles) Full Aid	Finish Line—15.5 Miles
Station #5 (15.2 miles-Turnaround) Full Aid	Finish Line—31 Miles	

Drop bag service is available in the 50K (only) at the turnaround. Crew access at #3, #5 & #7 in 50K only. We highly recommend that you carry at least one water bottle with you on the trail in either event.

Enclosed in this PDF document is a FlatRock Trail Description, an Army Corps of Engineers set of Trail Instructions, maps of the Elk City Lake Facility, Outlet Channel Shelterhouse Location, a Course Profile & a list of motels and restaurant information for the closest town of Independence (approx. 7 miles from the staging area). Packet & chip (for timing) pickup starts at 3 PM on Friday evening the 23rd at the Outlet Channel Group Shelterhouse, followed by dinner at 6 PM in the same location. Packet & chip pickup will continue until 8 PM Friday evening. Late packet & chip pickup (for both races) will be from 6 AM - 8 AM, Saturday morning the 24th--**NO PACKET/CHIP PICKUP AFTER 8 AM RACE DAY! NO RACE DAY REGISTRATION, SO SIGN-UP FRIENDS NOW!** Remember, the 50K starts at 7:30 AM and the 25K at 8:30 AM with pre-race briefing 30 minutes before the start of each event.

Once again, the only "formal awards ceremony" we will be holding is to induct and knight our 8th member into the coveted FlatRock "Hall of Pain." All finishers awards will be given upon completion of your particular event...please make sure and get your award before leaving as none will be mailed. All are welcome to stay for our knighting ceremony at 6:30 PM, following the finish of the 50K, and of course, don't forget about the legendary FlatRock Fire (campfire), which over the years has turned into the event following "the event." Many great running tales have been spun and FlatRock lore conjured around this fire while we roast marshmallows, consume our favorite liquids and attempt to keep a handle on the latest "quest for fire boy" who shows up to try and torch the place. We would love to have you be a part of both of these post race activities, so please plan on staying if at all possible.

We look forward to seeing/meeting you this weekend!

In Your Service,

Eric Steele, RD
Friends of FlatRock Founder
Kansas Ultrarunners' Society Founder

FLATROCK TRAIL DESCRIPTION

(Originally written by Randy Albrecht in 1998, revised & updated by Eric Steele in 2006.)

The Flat Rock 50K Trail Run is an out and back course run on the Elk River Hiking Trail. While it is hard to imagine a trail run in Kansas as being difficult, this race will definitely challenge your running ability and put your skills of mental concentration to the test. How tough of a race is Flat Rock? To answer that question we reviewed all 50K race results listed in UltraRunning magazine from October 1997 to September 1998. To eliminate very small events, which may not have a quality field, the study only included races that had at least 20 finishers. Based on either the winners' times or an average of the top three finishers, Flat Rock ranked as the fourth toughest 50K out of the 85 races included in the survey. Only Silver State, Baldy Peaks, and the Western Washington Fat Ass 50K were tougher.

A reasonable argument could be waged that Flat Rock has not had as deep of a field of good runners as other races and is really not that tough. While the race has not attracted as many well-known runners from the east or west coast, several very good runners have taken on "the Rock." Amazingly, only six runners since the inception of this event in 1995 have broken five hours on this course, which is only 1.7 percent of all 345 finishers since the first running in '95. One of these five is 2004 Grand Slam Finisher, Paul Schoenlaub, who managed to break five hours in '03 by just a little over 2.5 minutes.

What makes the Flat Rock trail so tough? Extreme concentration is required when running Flat Rock, as you will take very few steps where there will not be some potential obstacle. Most of these will be in the form of rocks. You will very quickly learn why the race motto here at "the Rock" is **"If you look up...you are going down!"** Buyer beware please. While the trail does not have any long hills, there is an estimated total elevation gain and loss of approximately 3,000 feet for the 50K. Most of these hills are very steep and rocky and are not runnable, unless you can run trails like a mountain goat, due to the treacherous footing. So, please remember to take your time and enjoy the scenery safely...while stopped, or moving slowly and cautiously.

Temperatures in late September in Kansas can vary widely. Heat will more likely be a factor than cold and even though it is always windy in Kansas, you will very seldom feel the breeze on the trail due to the trees. You are encouraged to carry a water bottle during the event and take time to properly hydrate/fuel at the aid stations. Most years only a few leaves are left on the trail by race day, however in some sections, they may conceal the dreaded rocks. Should it ever rain on race day, sections of the trail will be extremely slick, especially those covered with rocks, leaves, and the other water crossings.

The trail is very well marked with blue blazes or ribbons on the trees and a few rocks. If you go more than 50-70 paces without seeing a blue-blaze, blue-tape or a blue painted rock then you have very likely wandered off the trail and simply need to retrace your steps back to where you find blue markings on the trees/rocks. The course is accurately measured and will take you through the "Chautauqua Hills" of southeast Kansas. You will run through unique limestone rock formations, picturesque vistas, and dense hardwood forests as well as a bit of the prairie. While this is not an easy trail race, it is an extremely beautiful and rewarding one. Most importantly, it has been the gateway for many midwestern runners into the sport of ultrarunning/extreme foot races.

Trail Instructions as Printed by the Army Corps of Engineers

Project: Elk City Lake, Independence, KS

Trail: Elk River Hiking Trail

Length: 15 Miles, One-way

Difficulty: Rugged

Type: Hiking

Time: 11 Hours

Marking: Blue Paint Blazes and Mile Markers

Location:

From the east trailhead located 100 yards south of the Elk City Game and Fish Division Office, below the dam, to the west trailhead located on U. S. Highway 160, two miles south of the town of Elk City.

Facilities:

Outlet Channel Public Use Area (below dam): designated campsites (camping fees charged April -October), restrooms, drinking water. Oak Ridge Public Use Area (along trail): designated campsites, restrooms, no drinking water. The only drinking water available on the trail is at the east trailhead. Three gravel roads between the trailheads provide vehicle access in the vicinity of the trail for those desiring to establish water caches or walk only a portion of the trail.

Trail Features:

The trail treats the hiker to an adventure in the southeast Kansas' "Chautauqua Hills" region, characterized by wooded, gently rolling hills with a flavor of the Ozarks. Following the variable terrain of the lake's undeveloped northwest shoreline, the trail passes through dense hardwood forests as well as a bit of the prairie. The high rock bluffs along its route provide picturesque vistas of the lake and river area from atop the unique rock formations, crevices and overhanging outcroppings from below. During wet seasons, small, clear creeks flowing over the large limestone rocks add a refreshing dimension to the natural landscape.

Safety:

Before your hike, check weather conditions and let a friend or relative know of your planned time of departure and return. Carry ample drinking water to last the duration of your hike. Water filtration systems are not recommended. Beware of loose rock and high ledges. Sturdy boots with heavy socks are recommended for traversing the rocky terrain. Know your own physical potential and set your walking distance and pace accordingly. Carry a complete first aid kit and know first aid techniques. Use a good insect repellent for mosquitoes, ticks and chiggers. Snakes including the poisonous copperhead inhabit the trail area. Watch your step and observe them at a distance! Learn to identify the poisonous plants such as poison ivy and avoid them. These plants can cause allergic skin reaction. Since the trail area is open to public hunting, hikers are encouraged to wear bright colored clothing of hunter's blaze orange during appropriate hunting seasons.

Rules and Regulations:

Primitive camping is permitted only in the general areas located directly to the west of the three gravel access roads between the trailheads. Campers should register at one of the trail register boxes on the trail near the trailheads. Day hikers are also encouraged to register. Ground fires are prohibited. Backpacking stoves are recommended. Pack out all trash or waste generated during your hike and properly dispose of it. Title 36 Rules and Regulations apply.

For More Information, Contact:

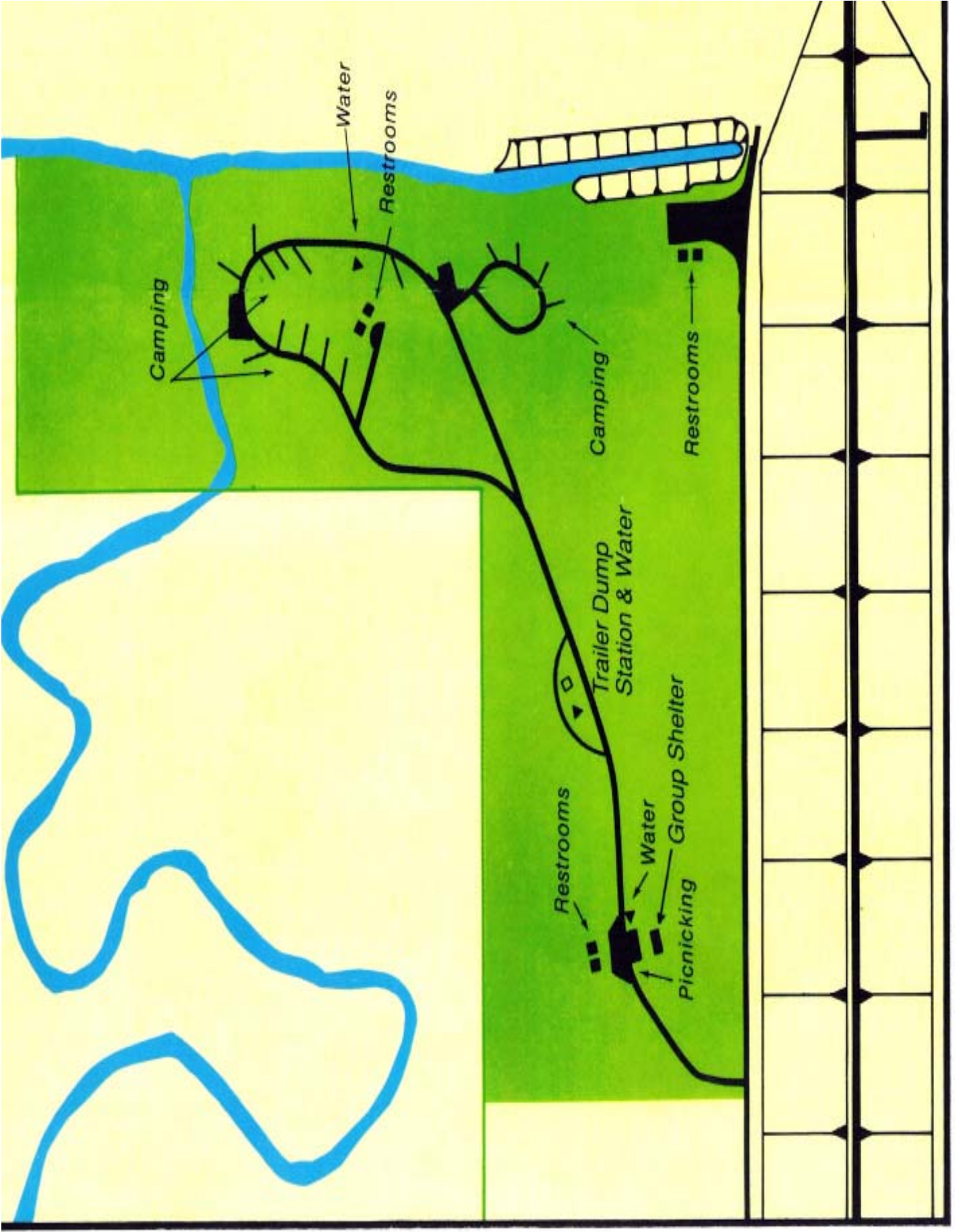
Lake Manager

Corps of Engineers, Big Hill Lake Office

P.O. Box 426

Cherryvale, Kansas 67335-0426

PH: (620) 336-2741



OUTLET CHANNEL C-7