2026 HELIOS Athlete Guide

Welcome to **HELIOS**, Chase the Sun Running Co.'s fall ultra experience in the heart of Wisconsin's Southern Kettle Moraine Forest. Whether you're tackling the 6-hour, 12-hour, or 20-hour event as a solo runner or relay team, you've signed up for a race that celebrates endurance, grit, and the trail running community.

Set among the rolling hills and colorful autumn woods of McMiller Trails, HELIOS challenges runners to complete as many loops as possible within their chosen time limit. The format is simple: keep moving, manage your effort, and see how far you can go before time runs out. HELIOS features 6-, 12- and 20-hour race options, with runners choosing from three McMiller trail loops throughout the event.

As the fall sun filters through vibrant forest colors and the temperatures cool, you'll share miles, stories, and encouragement with a community of runners who understand that the best adventures happen on dirt. Whether you're chasing a personal record, your first ultra finish, or simply one more lap, we're excited to have you join us.

This guide contains everything you need to know to have a safe, successful, and memorable race weekend. There’s a lot of information, please take the time to read through it and don’t hesitate to reach out if you have any questions. You’ll find a runner’s checklist at the end of this guide.

HELIOS is an invitation to dig deeper, keep moving forward, and discover what you're capable of when the trail gets tough.

Find your trail. Follow the sun. Let's run uncommon.

-Carri & the Chase the Sun Crew

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Saturday, October 10

- 10:30 AM - 11:45 AM | Race check-in
- 11:45 AM | Pre-race briefing
- 11:59 AM | Toast & All races start
- 2:00 PM | Coffee, tea, and hot cocoa, available throughout the race
- 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM | Burgers served
- 5:59 PM | 6-hour race finishes
- 11:59 PM | 12-hour race finishes

Sunday, October 11

- 12:00 AM | Pizza served
- 7:59 AM | 20-hour race finishes
- 8:45 AM | Cabin closes

RACE LOCATION

McMiller Trail Head
S104 W38754 County Rd NN
Eagle, WI 53119

McMiller Trails in Eagle, Wisconsin offer a fast, challenging, and highly runnable trail experience. The course winds through the scenic Kettle Moraine region on a network of wide grassy and dirt trails featuring frequent rolling hills and sustained climbs that reward strong uphill runners. While the terrain is not overly technical, athletes should expect a steady accumulation of elevation gain, making pacing and effort management important throughout the race. The trails are generally smooth with occasional roots, rocks, and uneven footing typical of southeastern Wisconsin trail systems. The combination of flowing singletrack sections, open ski-style trails, and constant elevation changes creates a course that is both accessible to newer trail runners and demanding enough to test experienced athletes.

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RACE FORMAT

The goal of this race is simple: complete as many miles as possible within your chosen time limit of **6, 12, or 20 hours**.

You can participate as a **solo runner** or as part of a **relay team of up to four runners**. Only loops completed before your race time expires will count toward your final mileage. Runners must cross the Start/Finish line before the official cutoff for their race division (6, 12, or 20 hours).

Before the race begins, you'll check in, get your gear organized, and receive a small shot of Fireball (or Hammer if you prefer a non-alcoholic option). We'll raise a glass to friendship, adventure, and the challenge ahead before starting the race together.

Throughout the event, you may choose to run any of our three course options at any time: a **short, medium, or long loop**. All loops begin and end at the main trailhead. Visit the Course Details section for more information about each route.

Relay teams may have only **one runner on the course at a time**. Team members may complete as many or as few loops as they choose, provided only one team member is on course at a time. Relay exchanges are informal and take place in the designated exchange zone. The outgoing runner may not enter the course until the incoming runner has completed their loop.

DNF stands for "Did Not Finish," but we don't really use that term here. Whether you decide to stop after one loop or complete loops right up until the end of your chosen race time (6, 12, or 20 hours), your miles are your miles. Every runner leaves with an official result.

THE TRAILS

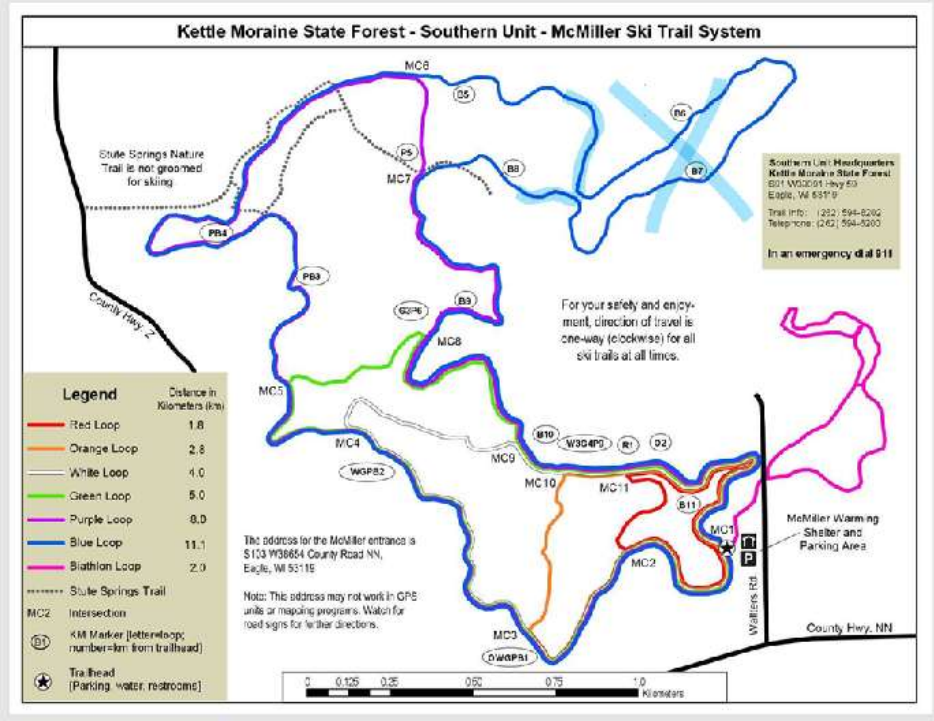
You can choose to run any of our three courses during the race. All courses start and finish at the main trailhead. All distances are “ish” – we use the DNR’s trail maps for the short and mid loop distance/elevation, long course mileage and elevation is estimated since it is a modified route.

- SHORT LOOP COURSE (Green Loop)
    - Distance: 3.1 miles (5 kilometers)
    - Difficulty: Easy
    - Elevation: 160ft of ascent per loop (~52ft per mile)
- MID LOOP COURSE (Purple Loop)
    - Distance: 4.93 miles (8 kilometers)
    - Difficulty: Intermediate
    - Elevation: 551ft of ascent per loop (~112ft per mile)

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- LONG LOOP COURSE (Modified Blue Loop*, distance & elevation are estimated)
    - Distance: 6 miles (9.65 kilometers)
    - Difficulty: Intermediate
    - Elevation: 661Ft of ascent per loop (~110ft per mile)
    - *NOTE: The modified blue loop cuts off B6 & B7 on the map.

Click the link to view the DNR Trail Map. Please note: the legend is in KM, not miles.



TIMING / RESULTS

We keep it old school and low key by design for a lot of our races, including this one. There's no fancy chip timing system here and we like it that way. After each completed loop, report to the timing station and provide your race number (found on your glow-in-the-dark wristband) and the color of the loop you completed.

We have a simple system we use to track laps and calculate results. Our timer will confirm with you your race number and color loop you just completed before you head out onto your next loop. All race results will be available online at www.goldentrailseries.com/helios by 6pm on Sunday, October 11th.

All finishers will be given a handmade wooden finishers medal made by a local runner here in Wisconsin. The top overall male and female finishers will also receive an overall award. Results will be calculated and announced about 15 minutes after each race finishes. Please be sure to check your results with our timers to verify your results prior to leaving.

PARKING AT THE TRAILHEAD

The parking lot at McMiller is large, so you should have no trouble finding a parking space when you arrive. However, the trails remain open to the public during the event. If possible, we encourage participants to carpool to help preserve parking availability for other trail users.

Please help support Wisconsin's beautiful state parks by ensuring your vehicle displays a valid Wisconsin State Park admission pass. If you have an annual pass, please display it according to Wisconsin DNR requirements.

If you do not have an annual pass, you can purchase a day pass at the self-registration kiosk located at the park entrance on race day, or online before arriving at:
https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/parks/admission

The current cost for a day pass is **$13 per vehicle**.

Thank you for helping us be good stewards of our state parks and maintaining positive relationships with all trail users.

DOGS

Leashed dogs are welcome at McMiller Trails and at the race venue. For the safety and comfort of all participants, dogs must remain on a leash at all times.

Please note that dogs are **not permitted inside the shelter or cabin**. Owners are responsible for cleaning up after their pets and ensuring they do not interfere with runners, volunteers, or other trail users.

RESTROOMS

There are restrooms with flushable toilets inside the shelter at McMiller. We frequently check them for toilet paper and paper towels, but please let one of the volunteers know if something is running low. There are no restrooms on course.

AID STATION

Snacks are important, so we'll have lots of snacks for you to choose from at our aid station. The only aid station at this race is located behind the cabin - there are no aid stations on course. Sweet goodies, salty things, candy, soda, water, and Hammer HEED electrolyte drink will be available. We are CUPLESS. Please bring your own cup for the aid station and coffee/tea. You're more than welcome to come inside the cabin for a warm coffee, tea or hot cocoa any time after 2pm.

REQUIRED GEAR

The only required piece of equipment for this race is a **headlamp or other reliable light source**. Headlamps will be required starting at 5:30pm on Saturday until 6:30am on Sunday.

Headlamp Reminder

- Saturday, October 10 sunset: Approximately 6:22 PM
- Sunday, October 11 sunrise: Approximately 6:59 AM

We **strongly encourage** runners to carry a pack or running vest. Wisconsin weather can be unpredictable, so consider carrying a light jacket, extra layer, gloves, or another warm item that can be easily added during your run. Having a few extra essentials with you can make a big difference if temperatures drop or conditions change throughout the race.

We also recommend carrying a **fully charged cell phone** while on the course. In the unlikely event that you become injured or experience an emergency on the trail, a phone can help you contact race staff or emergency services and provide your location.

While we hope it's never needed, carrying a few extra layers and a phone can be invaluable if you find yourself injured on the course and waiting for assistance to reach your location.

DROP BAGS/CREW SUPPORT

Runners may maintain personal gear, nutrition, and extra clothing at their vehicle. 12-hour and 20-hour athletes may erect a tent no larger than 10' x 10' near the shelter. 20-hour athletes will have a designated table inside the shelter. Please check in before setting up your tent so race staff can direct you to the designated tent area.

Spectators are welcome at the trailhead and inside the shelter.

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COURSE MARKINGS

The Wisconsin DNR does an excellent job marking the trails at McMiller. Intersections are clearly marked throughout the course to help runners navigate and track their location.

In addition to the DNR's trail markers, we will place course-marking tape along the route to help guide you. During the evening hours, glow sticks (chem lights) will illuminate the course. Each loop is assigned a color that corresponds to the DNR's trail markings (Green, Purple, or Blue).

Simply follow the glow sticks that match your loop color, and they'll lead you back to the cabin at the completion of your loop.

Please always be mindful of trail conditions. Trail running can be challenging, especially when terrain conditions vary. We encourage you to take your first loop at a comfortable pace to familiarize yourself with the course and adjust to whatever conditions Mother Nature provides on race day.

SAFETY

If you experience an emergency on the course, call 911 first if immediate medical assistance is needed. Then notify race staff as soon as possible. Race staff phone numbers will be provided at check-in and posted at the timing table.

If you withdraw from the race before your race clock expires, please notify race staff or the timing table before leaving the venue.

Cell service is generally available throughout most of McMiller Trails though signal strength may vary depending on carrier and location.

GUN RANGE NOTICE

McMiller Trails is located adjacent to a public shooting range operated by the Wisconsin DNR. The range is typically open from **9:00 AM to 4:00 PM**, and runners should expect to hear gunfire during those hours.

While the sound can be surprising if you're unfamiliar with the area, there is **no safety concern related to race participants**. The shooting range operates in a direction away from the trail system, and the trails and range function safely alongside one another throughout the year.

If this is your first time at McMiller, please be aware that hearing gunshots during the daytime hours is completely normal and expected.

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WEATHER POLICY

We operate under the guidance of the Wisconsin DNR and the National Weather Service. In the event of severe weather or adverse trail conditions, the DNR reserves the right to cancel the event, whether the concern is immediate participant safety or the preservation and integrity of the trails.

We will respectfully follow all DNR recommendations and decisions.

We appreciate your understanding and support as we work to ensure both runner safety and responsible trail stewardship.

CANCELLATION POLICY

We do not offer refunds or bib transfers.

Runners may defer their race entry to the following year's event through September 30, 2026. All deferral requests must be submitted by email. Each runner is eligible for a one-time, one-year deferral.

If the event is canceled by the DNR due to severe weather or trail conditions, registered runners will receive a 50% discount code for next year's race.

If you have any questions, please reach out. We are always happy to work with runners when extenuating circumstances arise.

LOCAL BUSINESSES

- ***Performance Running Outfitters*** (local running store) 2566 Sun Valley Dr. Unit E Delafield, WI 53018
- ***Walgreens*** 212 N Rochester St, Mukwonago, WI 53149
- ***Fleet Farm*** (warm clothes, hand warmers, snacks, etc...) W195S6460 Racine Ave, Muskego, WI 53150

RACE CONTACT

Carri Marlow
414-467-7410
csmeventsllc@gmail.com

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HELIOS Runner Checklist

Race Week

☐ Read the Athlete Guide
☐ Confirm your race division (6, 12, or 20 hours)
☐ Purchase or locate your Wisconsin State Park pass
☐ Charge your headlamp and bring spare batteries (if applicable)
☐ Fully charge your cell phone
☐ Check the weather forecast and pack accordingly
☐ Bring a reusable cup (HELIOS is cup-free)
☐ Consider carpooling if possible

Recommended Gear

☐ Running vest or pack
☐ Headlamp or flashlight (**required**)
☐ Cell phone
☐ Extra layer or light jacket
☐ Gloves and hat/beanie
☐ Nutrition and hydration for extended efforts
☐ Change of clothes and shoes
☐ Blanket or camp chair for downtime
☐ Personal first-aid/blister supplies

Race Morning

☐ Arrive between 10:30 AM and 11:45 AM for check-in
☐ Display your park pass or purchase a day pass at the entrance kiosk
☐ Pick up your glow-in-the-dark wristband/race number
☐ Set up gear and nutrition at your vehicle or trailhead area
☐ Attend the pre-race briefing at 11:45 AM
☐ Get your Fireball shot (Hammer) before the start

During the Race

☐ Carry a light source after dark
☐ Follow the glow sticks matching your loop color after dark
☐ Report to the timing station after every completed loop
☐ Provide your race number and loop color to the timer
☐ Stay aware of trail conditions and other trail users

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☐ Relay teams: only one runner on the course at a time
☐ Enjoy coffee, tea, hot cocoa, burgers, and pizza at the scheduled times

Before You Leave

☐ Verify your results with the timing team
☐ Pick up your finisher award
☐ Remove all personal gear and trash from the trailhead area
☐ Check for any forgotten items in the shelter or cabin
☐ Congratulate yourself on every mile earned!

Remember

✅ Any loop completed before your race cutoff counts toward your mileage.
✅ There is no DNF at HELIOS. Every mile counts.
✅ Find your trail. Follow the sun. Run uncommon. 🌞🏃‍♀️🏃‍♂️