10k & 15k Route Overview:

Starting this year, both the 10k and 15k will begin in the same direction. As you read the trail description, it is important to reference the Strawberry Hill Nature Preserve trial map. If you follow the trail markings, you will stay on the route. The trail markings in order for the 10k and 15k are: White, Pink, Green, Pink, Blue, Pink, and White. If you plan to run the 15k, you will arrive at the pond and then continue on the Orange Trail located across street from the Pink House and into the Michaux State Forest.

Currently, orange neon mile markers are posted in approximate locations along the 10k section of the route. On race day, the 15k extension will have mile marker posted in the Michaux.

To begin:

Position yourself with the Pink Log Cabin, the pond, and the white fence on your left side. You will run along the road with the white fence on your left side, and will turn left at the end of the fence to run around the far side of the pond. Here you will enter the woods and pick up the White Trail.

Take the white trail until you cross over the first bridge, and continue straight for a few meters until you are forced to turn left onto a straight path, which is still blazed white (this section becomes single track for a minute or so if running). Continue straight on the single track and make a slight left bend then cross over the second and third bridge while ignoring the trail coming from the right. Head up the hill to the kiosk (marked by a ? on the trail map) and turn right over the wide bridge. You will now pick up the Pink Trail after crossing the bridge.

Once on the Pink Trail, the trail is wide and you can easily pass other runners. Follow the pink trail up the hill until it forks and you pick up the Green Trail. Stay to the left and take the Green Trail (the Pink Trail remains part of the 5k route).

In about 1/10th of a mile the green trail will make a sharp horseshoe left. Continue on the green trail up the hill (approx. mile 1), over a gravel road, and continue up a very steep incline. As you begin to descend, keep the woods to your left shoulder and clearing to right; look for green blazes. At the bottom of the hill, turn right at the T intersection and continue up a gradual incline for a bit. Toward the crest (approx. mile 2) you will see a hunting cabin on your left, keep to the right and the path will start a gradual decline. After a few minutes, you will see a trail coming from the left, marked with two sign posts for the green trail. Turn left down the green trail. Watch your ankles as you follow the green markings. Just shortly after mile 3, the trail will make a sharp right turn and drop quickly down some “S” turns. At the bottom of the hill turn left to continue following the green trail. After about half a mile, look for the Pink Trail fork.

Turn on the Pink Trail which quickly starts to bends to the left. Watch out for another trail coming from the right as it is the 5k route (pink as well) joining the 10/15k route; stay left on the Pink Trail which is now more single track again, and meanders down by the stream. The trail will become slightly wider as you leave the stream, and will make a sharp right as you approach a gravel road. If you find yourself on a gravel road, you over shot the turn.

Shortly, after mile 4 on the pink trail, turn left at the kiosk, cross a gravel road, and pick up the Blue Trail. Head up the hill and stay to the left at the first split. As you reach your first plateau, bear slightly to
the right, and go straight. Turn left at the next intersection and head up the hill and bear left again at the next fork. When you arrive at the kiosk, continue straight while keeping the kiosk on your right side (this extension is not marked on the map). Continue straight for @ 100 meters and look for flagging tape which will lead you to the right turn onto the rocky single track. Follow the flagging tape through the single track which will loop you back to the kiosk. This section will be well marked on race day.

As you start to head back down the hill, bank left at the first fork and pass mile marker 5. Continue down the blue trail staying to the left at any fork, over the gravel road, and return to the lower kiosk on the Pink Trail. Turn left at the kiosk to pick up the Pink Trail again. Follow to the T intersection with a bridge on your right and left. Make an immediate left turn over the bridge back onto the White Trail and now you are backtracking toward the start. Follow the trail to the left around the pond (the pond will be on your right shoulder) and you will continue around to the road between the Strawberry Hill Nature Preserve administrative building and the white fence. You will go to the outside of the fence, make a sharp right turn along the road and follow the fence to the Pink Log Cabin. Done.

15k Extension

At this point, those running the 15k will follow the road past the Pink Log Cabin and make a left turn after the parking lot. You will cross over the bridge. Continue straight around/under the gate. Stay straight until you pop out of the woods and you see a fork in the trail. Take the left and go up, up, up, always bearing to the right at any trail intersections. When you start to reach the top of the hill, you will notice some logging activity. Your path turns into a distinct logging road, it will start to descend, it will bear right and continue to descend to an intersection. Turn right off the logging road (if you start going up a hill, you missed the turn) and you will now be heading back toward Strawberry Hill. After 7/10th of mile you will arrive back at the woods. Continue straight on the path back to Strawberry Hill. Here you will pick up the orange trail and will follow the markers to the finish line.