Runners, with race day a little under three weeks away I wanted to let everyone know the final status and fill you in on all the key information you need to know for race day. Below I have broken things up into a number of key sections which should hopefully cover most questions you still might have in your mind. At the height or registrations before deferrals began to come in we had 141 entrants, which is a 40% growth over last year, so we are excited to bring this great race experience to you and many others.

**Deferrals**

Everyone who has deferred should have been removed from the entrant list and not be receiving this email, however if you request slipped through the cracks then please let me know. If you have not deferred to 2015 and you want to remember the deadline is April 10th.

**Overnight Camping**

If you plan to camp overnight then that's great, we look forward to having you! Check the race packet for exact details and let me know if you have any questions. You may arrive after noon on Friday. Please try to arrive before 10PM, however as I know some runners will want to try and get some restless sleep the night before.

**Pre-race dinner**

The pre-race dinner is still on and if you signed up to come then it will be great to see you there. I have attached the reservation list to this email. If you wish to attend please verify that your name is on the list. If you did not initially sign up for the dinner and you still wish to attend then that is fine, please just send me an email to let me know how many people you will be bringing. The plan is for a pasta dinner with plenty of vegetarian/vegan options and if you have other dietary concerns then send me and email and I will let the caterer know. At this point we are looking at a price of $10 per person. After we eat we will have a small panel consisting of myself, our aid station coordinator Bill Susa for general race questions in addition to some returning veterans from last year for can offer their experience. We hope you will be able to gain some useful last minute advice for the race at this Q&A session.

**Weather on race weekend**

It's appropriate as winter seems to be finally releasing it's grip on Maryland to give you a heads up as to the weather you can expect on race weekend. Average lows are around 44F, and highs are around 68F. Last year we had great weather during the day (even slightly hot), only to be hit with cooler and very windy conditions overnight, and then rain on Sunday. That said, you should come prepared for a wide range of condition and pack your drop bags appropriately especially if you will not have a crew.

**Pacers**

We've had a few questions about pacers so I will try to clarify as best as possible. Pacers may start with their runners at the halfway point (Manidokan the first time back). This is mile 58, but for pacing purposes it is considered halfway. After mile 58 you can have as many or as few pacers as you would like, but remember that your crew cannot park at any aid station other than Brunswick , they may only drop off or pick up a pacer briefly.

If you are still looking for a pacer or you know of a friend who wants to pace someone, please look at the [Find a Pacer](http://cocanal100.com/find-a-pacer.php) page of the website.

**Volunteers**

The amount of volunteers we have had this year has been far greater than anything we could have expected. At the last count I believe we had 70-80 people who will be out at one point or another on race weekend helping to get you to the finish line, and many more behind the scenes. If you know someone who would still like to volunteer there is still a chance so have them fill out the form which can be found [here](http://cocanal100.com/volunteers.php).  When you see these volunteers please give them lots of appreciation for being out there.

**Drop Bags**

This is emphasized in the handbook but I need to explicitly say it: your drop bag may be **no larger than half the size of an airplane carryon** (i.e. 11" x 7" x 5"). If you have rather large feet then I suppose maybe we could give you an extension, but otherwise please don't make the volunteer overseeing drop bags send you back to your car to re-pack. With more runners than last year this is essential for making sure there is room for everyone's drop bag at the aid stations. If you have a crew please try to make your Brunswick drop bag as minimal as possible as space constraints there are more severe than at Nolands Ferry. To refresh, drop bags may be placed at the following locations:

Brunswick (miles 27, 48, 68, and 91)

Nolands Ferry (miles 38 and 80)

Camp Manidokan (mile 58)

**Race Packet**

The race packet is attached to this email and can be found on the website. Minor changes might be made as race day approaches, but you can check the front page of the website and any changes will be highlighted there.

**General Course/Race Information**

As you have been told up to this point, the course is almost entirely flat and it is on a hard crushed dirt/gravel towpath. Runners in the past have commented that as the miles go on those small little insignificant gravel rocks on the towpath quickly turn into what feels like large shards of broken glass to your feet. It is recommended you bring a number of different road/trail shoes with adequate cushioning so you can adapt as you see fit.

Unfortunately we will be close to a new moon on race weekend, so lighting will definitely be needed once the sun goes down.

The website contains the exact mileages of all aid stations as well as the distances between them. You can find this information [here](http://cocanal100.com/aid-stations.php) to help with your logistics. Cutoff times are also specified in the same excel file and in the race information packet.

Amenities while on course will include your choice of port-a-pots at each aid station, or you may use the official C&O Canal outhouses. Which one you use can be your own game time decision.

We have no official policy on headphones or other listening devices during the race but you must be aware that you will see hundreds of other people out on the canal during the race and you need to be mindful of your surroundings (e.g passing bikes).

As we get closer and closer to race day I am sure more questions will come into your head. Please don't hesitate to send me an email and I will respond as quickly as possible. I'm looking forward to getting to meet all of you in a few weeks and hopefully help provide you with a great race experience where you can test your limits and push beyond them, and create some stories well worth telling when it's all said and done.

Happy trails,

Lance Dockery

Race Director