



With a heavy heart, we must **cancel** the 2020 Rio Del Lago 100-mile race scheduled for November 7-8. I am so sorry.

You can be assured the NorCalUltras team worked tirelessly to craft adjustments to how the race might be conducted this year. We created COVID-19 protocols that would keep our participants safe. We went to great lengths to instill confidence in the State and public health officials so that we could secure approval to proceed with the event. In the end, it appears that California's record-breaking wildfire season extinguished our final opportunity to seek approval for the modified 2020 Del Lago 100-mile race.

Frustrating. Exasperating. Discouraging. Disappointing. Heart-breaking. Exhausting. Pick your adjective or expletive.

The Rio Del Lago 100-mile entrants are a naturally low-risk population absent typical comorbidity risks (e.g. heart conditions, pulmonary disease, etc.). Already sparsely distributed in an ultramarathon, the physical distance between runners in a 100-mile race increases by the hour.

In the end, we were simply unable to avoid the dreaded "nonessential" tag. Our sense is that the State and public health officials have a natural disinclination to approve a "nonessential" event, despite the positive economic and mental health benefits such an event might garner. Moreover, we imagine State officials were reticent to approve the 2020 Rio Del Lago 100 event as it could bring a criticism regarding why this event was approved and others are still on hold.

I could go on about the extensive efforts we made with the State to keep the 2020 Rio Del Lago 100 race alive, but it might sound like one of those sad race reports leading to a DNF result, so we will spare you further details. Rather, in the spirit of ultrarunning, we will focus on what's next.

"If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward." - — Martin Luther King Jr.

Calendar year 2020 feels like we are stranded on that Tom Hanks island from the movie "Cast Away". He thought he was going to die there. He was never going to get off that island. He had power over nothing. Yet he came around to the mindset "And I know what I have to do now. I've got to keep breathing, because tomorrow the sun will rise. Who knows what the tide could bring?"

So that's what we are going to do. NorCalUltras is determined to keep moving forward. We are going to keep breathing. Keep pushing. Relentless forward motion. Who knows what 2021 could bring?

I'm sure we will run our events with a renewed appreciation. It is the possibility of loss that makes things precious. I predict the NorCalUltras 2021 DNF rates will reach an all-time low. Calendar year 2020 taught us a painful lesson about assuming "there's always the next race".



NorCalUltras **WILL** conduct the Rio Del Lago 100 pending the State approval. The timing remains uncertain. However, we are tentatively projecting to secure approval for a race date in February 2021. However, as a practical matter, most participants need a reasonable period of time to plan and prepare. Without confirmed events, sustaining training enthusiasm is a challenge. Persistent smoke likely further degraded the efforts of even the most hardcore ultrarunners.

Moving to February 2021 increases the odds of event approvals from the State while also giving the runners the necessary runway to prepare. To this end, NorCal Ultras is in the planning stage for a series of 25K/50k December/January events. These events would comprise a "Road to Rio Del Lago 100" race series designed to help participants rebuild up to the hundred-mile distance.

For pre-registered runners that signed up as a paid entrant for Rio **BEFORE 4/12/2020**, NorCalUltras will roll forward your entry to the 2021 Rio Del Lago OR if another early January/February Rio race can be staged. Alternatively, paid runners may elect to have their entry fee used for any other applicable NorCalUltras event. If you were on our Rio 2020 wait list, no money was taken as the wait list was simply a "spot holder." If you have any questions, please email me – julie@norcalultras.com

NorCalUltras would like to thank Assemblyman Kevin Kiley and his office, Bridget Powers, City of Folsom, Greater Folsom Partnership, City of Auburn and all our elected Folsom and Auburn officials who supported us tirelessly. We look forward to working with Auburn Recreation District, Folsom State Parks and Auburn State Parks on our future races.

Sincerely,

Julie Fingar

Owner

