

The USAFA Adventure Guide

Finn Westenfelder



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To Restricted Cadets

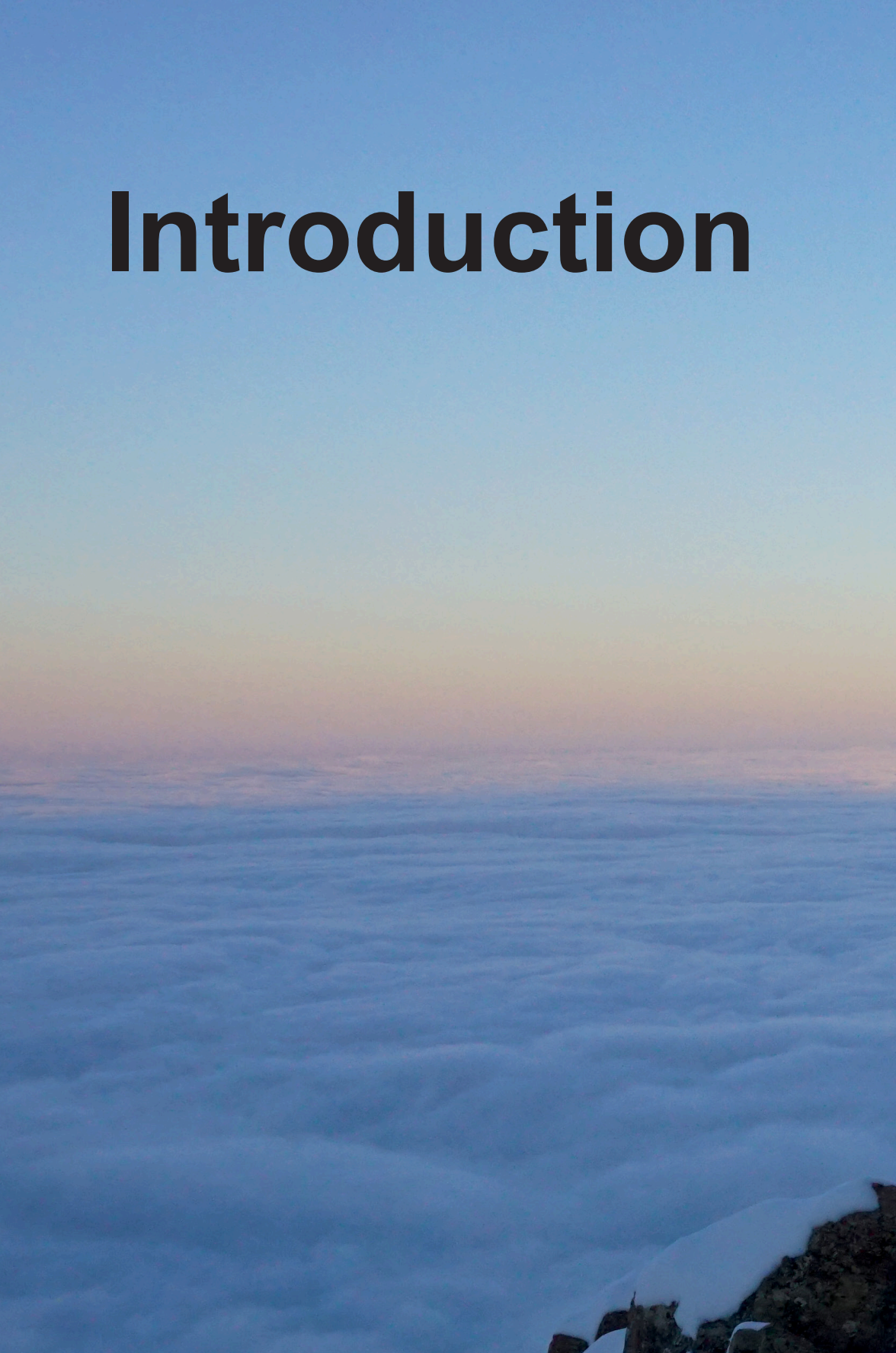
Back Cover Photo: Eagle's Peak Canyon - Jenna Breeden

Cover Photo: Nate Bean on Dragon Lady (5.10+) - Jenna Breeden

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Please contact finnwestenfelder@gmail.com with any questions about this guidebook.

Introduction





Finn Westenfelder enjoying an inversion and full moon on Eagle's Peak - Zach Marien

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Zach Marien on Tunnel Cereal (5.8) - Jenna Breeden

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Austin Cooner for recording his time climbing on base and taking the time to pass his knowledge on to me. I would like to thank Hayden Richards for having the vision to establish multiple climbing areas and providing the equipment, expertise, and time to make this vision a reality. Lastly, I would like to thank Seth Konig, Nate Bean, and Zach Marien for the countless hours they spent with me exploring Pike National Forest and the many great adventures we had. Without these people, this guidebook would not exist.

Safety and Legal Considerations

The activities described in this book are dangerous and could result in injury or death. Take all precautions and evaluate your ability. The author assumes no responsibility for injury or death resulting from the use of this guidebook. Do not rely on information or difficulty ratings as these are completely subjective. If you are unwilling to assume full responsibility for your safety, do not use this guidebook.

Writing a guidebook for activities on and nearby a military installation is complicated. Some areas are off limits to civilians while other are off limits to base personnel. The inclusion of activities in any restricted area is for educational and historical purposes. Current regulations can be determined by contacting the 10th Security Forces Squadron. It is your responsibility to know the rules and follow them.

About the U.S. Air Force Academy

The U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA) borders the Pike National Forest and offers access to a large range of climbing on Pike's Peak granite. While you can find better climbing in other parts of the Front Range, development by the USAFA Mountaineering and Climbing teams over the past decade has established solid climbs at a variety of grades.

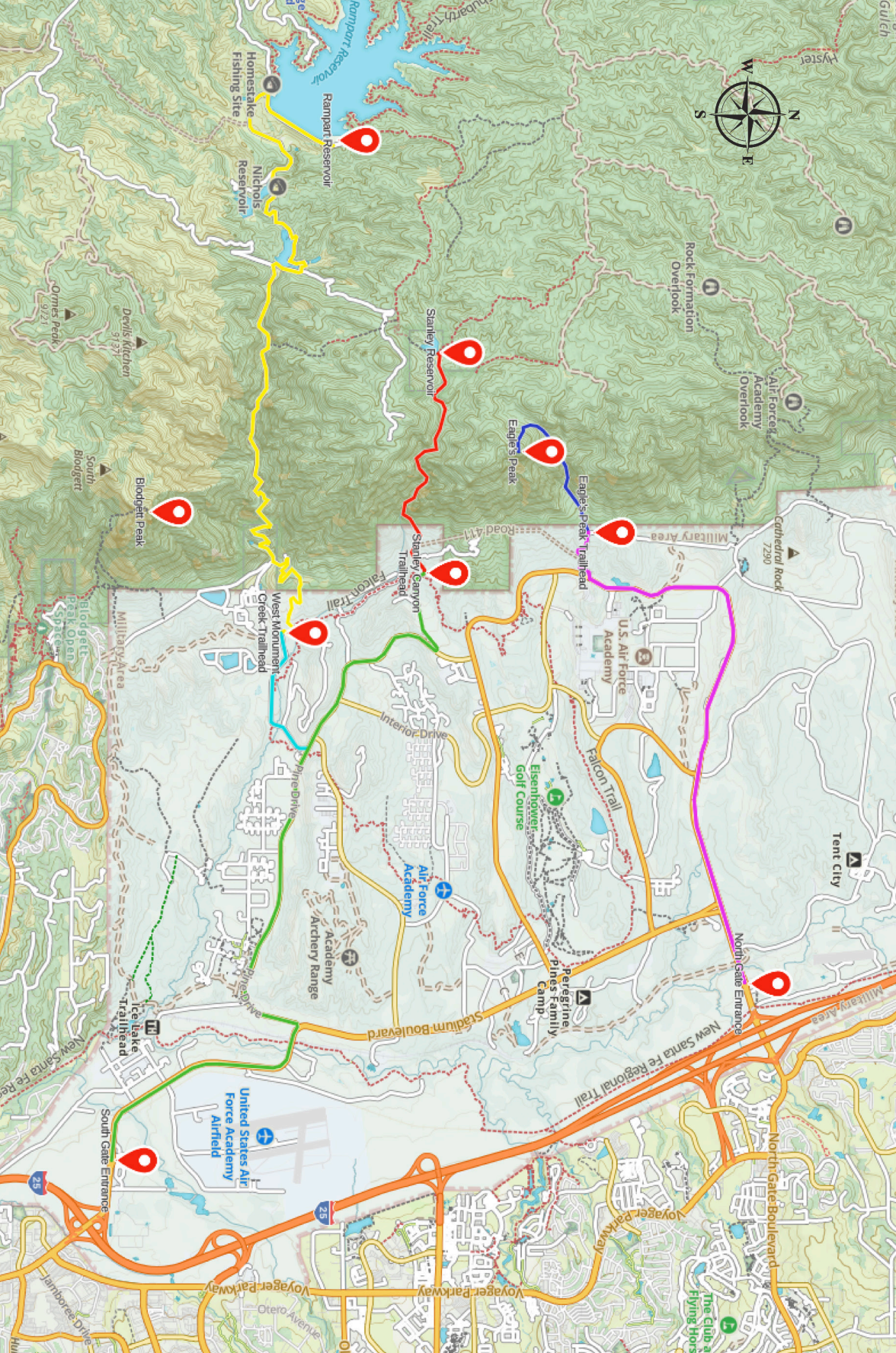
A short hike from the Eagle's Peak or Stanley Canyon trailhead are splitter cracks at the Perch, boulder problems at Robert's Ridge, multi-pitch trad at Falcon Spires, and slabby sport routes at the Nirvana Wall and Adventure Wall. There are fun options for anyone on base. For adventurous climbers, other areas in West Monument Creek, Stanley Canyon, and Eagle's Peak provide good training for bigger alpine objectives with long approaches, chossy rocks, and potential for bad weather.

Scope of this Guidebook

This guidebook began as a rock climbing guide, but quickly expanded to include bouldering, ice climbing, mountain biking, skiing, highlining, trail running, and fishing. The Academy borders Pike National Forest and stretches from Blodgett Peak to Jack's Valley, providing ample space for outdoor activities. Everything in this guidebook is located on the USAFA installation or in the adjacent national forest.



Caleb Kimpler believes in safety first — Finn Westenfelder



Driving Directions

From Interstate-25 take Exit 156 (North Gate) or Exit 150 (South Gate). The South Gate entrance is open to visitors from 5:30 am to 10:00 pm every day. At the entrance all vehicle occupants need to display photo identification. Your vehicle may be searched by Security Forces. Weapons and marijuana are not permitted on the installation. More information about driving on base can be found at www.usafa.edu/visitors/getting-on-base/.

Trailhead Directions

There are three main trailheads at USAFA, the Eagle's Peak trailhead, the Stanley Canyon trailhead, and the West Monument Creek trailhead.

The Eagle's Peak trailhead is most easily accessed from the North Gate entrance. From North Gate, follow North Gate Boulevard (which turns into Academy Drive) for 4.1 miles. Make a right turn on Road 106, drive 0.5 miles, and stop at the trailhead sign. You can park anywhere along the dirt road. This route is marked with a pink line on the map. The Eagle's Peak trail (Goat Camp Creek trail) is 1.3 miles long with 1,800 feet of elevation gain. The hike is strenuous, and the trail is poorly maintained, but the summit of Eagle's Peak offers stunning views of USAFA and Colorado Springs. The trail is marked with a dark blue line on the map.

The Stanley Canyon trailhead is most easily accessed from the South Gate entrance. From South Gate, drive 2 miles on South Gate Boulevard and make a left turn onto Pine Drive. Follow Pine Drive for 4 miles and make a left turn onto Road 411. Then follow Road 411 for 0.6 miles and park in the parking lot. This route is marked with a green line on the map. The Stanley Canyon trail (707) is 2.1 miles long with 1,400 feet of elevation gain. Unfortunately, the reservoir at the top of the trail was drained in 2017, but the hike still offers good views of Colorado Springs. The trail is marked with a red line on the map.

The West Monument Creek trailhead is most easily accessed from the South Gate entrance. From South Gate, drive 2 miles on South Gate Boulevard and make a left turn onto Pine Drive. Follow Pine Drive for 2.4 miles and make a left turn onto West Monument Creek Road. Then follow West Monument Creek Road for 1.1 miles and park at the pull-off on the side of the road before the gated entrance to the water treatment plant. This route is marked with a light blue line on the map. To access the West Monument Creek trailhead, hike on the Falcon trail for 0.15 miles and make a left at the junction with a connector trail. Follow the connector trail for 0.8 miles until it meets West Monument Creek Road. Then walk down the road for 0.3 miles and take a right turn to arrive at the West Monument Creek trailhead. Hiking on the Falcon trail and connector trail is necessary due to the gated entrance of the water treatment plant. The West Monument Creek trail (713) is 7.4 miles long with 2,700 feet of elevation gain. While you can take the trail all the way to Rampart Reservoir, most people only hike the first few miles. The trail is marked with a yellow line on the map.

Seasons and Weather

The Air Force Academy experiences all four seasons, with the early Fall and late Spring months being best for outdoor activities. April and May are the best Spring months for climbing with consistent temperatures and little rain. Frequent afternoon thunderstorms and hotter temperatures in June, July and August require additional planning. September and October are the best Fall months for climbing as the temperatures start to decline. Climbing during the winter months is intermittent and route dependent. Skiing and Ice Climbing are possible in February and March if there are big storms and consistently cold temperatures. During these months, ice forms on the Stanley Canyon and Eagle's Peaks trails and does not completely melt until May. This complicates access to many of the climbing areas and wearing micro spikes is recommended.

Topography and Geology at the Academy

The physiography of the Academy generally consists of a series of west-to-east trending ridges interspersed by valleys. Valley streams drain astward into Monument Creek. Gentle southwest-trending slopes drain toward Monument Creek from the areas East of the Academy. The western boundary of the west-to-east traveling mesas and valleys is formed by an abrupt, north-south trending ridge of sedimentary rock, with the steep slopes of the Rampart Range forming the visual and physical backdrop to the Academy. Elevations range from 6,376 feet above mean sea level (AMSL) at Monument Creek near the South Gate to 7,800 feet AMSL at the base of the Rampart Range at Stanley Canyon.

The dominant physiographic feature and geologic influence in this area is the Pikes Peak batholith, a huge mass of magma that pushed its way upward through existing rock approximately one billion years ago. The resultant rock type, reddish-pink Pikes Peak granite, is prevalent. An associated formation, the Dawson Arkose, underlies much of the Academy and is visible at several areas, especially along Monument Creek where it is exposed and in several picturesque geologic monuments known locally as "hoodoos," including Cathedral Rock on the western end of Jacks Valley. These formations consist of sandstones that have been created by the weathering of the Pikes Peak Granite. - *MCW Landscape Assessment*

Rating Systems and Gear Notes

This guidebook uses the Yosemite Decimal System for climbing routes and the V-scale for bouldering routes. An additional safety rating of G, PG, PG-13, or R may be assigned to routes. Route quality is assessed using a four-star rating. For trad climbs, a standard rack is defined as a double rack of Black Diamond C4 Camalots ranging from size 0.4 - 3 and a set of Black Diamond stoppers ranging from size 1-13. Additional pieces of protection are noted when necessary.

USAFA Climbing History

The mountains and rock formations surrounding the U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA) have attracted climbers for the better part of the last century. In the 1940s, U.S. Army climbers of the 10th Mountain Division were stationed at Camp Carson, South of Colorado Springs. These climbers left their mark on Garden of the Gods, using Army angle pitons to establish first ascents in the area. The same type of pitons have been found at Stanley Canyon, Eagle's Peak, and West Monument Creek, providing evidence that climbers of that era explored the rocks surrounding USAFA.

The Academy was founded in 1954 and moved to its permanent location North of Colorado Springs in 1958. That year, Howard Whitfield ('60) and Charles Holman ('60) founded the Academy's Mountaineering Club with the help of Army Captain A. G. Christen. The club's original members climbed in cleated sole boots with nylon ropes and pitons. They frequented routes near USAFA and across the Rocky Mountain Front. One of the original club members, Bruce Hinds ('61), was an experienced climber and skier from the Denver area. Whitfield, Holman, and Hinds were among the first academy cadets to do technical climbing and skiing on Longs Peak, The Flatirons, Berthoud Pass, and the Sangre De Cristo Mountains.

The USAFA Mountaineering Club still exists today, and a passion for climbing has continued for decades among cadets. Numerous bolts, pitons, slung blocks, and fixed ropes dating from the 1960s to the early 2000s document exploration in the Pike National Forest bordering USAFA. As a result of cadet exploration in the area, two peaks just South of the Academy were named "Eagle's Peak" and "Mt. Harmon". These names began as unofficial nicknames used by cadets and were officially listed in Robert Ormes "Guide to the Colorado Mountains" in 1973.

Eagle's Peak became central to rock climbing at USAFA, and the first documented climbing in the area refers to the peak's iconic East face. A short description of on base activities in the 1990 USAFA yearbook simply says, "The climb up the East face of Eagle's Peak appealed to the daring". In 1996, Mark Anderson and Mike Anderson ('99) established a route up the center of the East face. Another party climbed a similar route in the late 1990s. Old bolts and other fixed gear are evidence that the face of Eagle's Peak was explored by multiple climbers in the 1990s and early 2000s. Unfortunately, the lure of the peak led to a death and two nearly fatal accidents, resulting in the closure of the face to all USAFA personnel.

The first accident on Eagle's Peak occurred on Tuesday, October 12th, 1982. That day Fourth-Class Cadet Anthony Trujillo ('86) fell to his death while hiking alone. He initially planned to hike with two other cadets, but they withdrew from the trip. When Trujillo failed to return from the hike, a C-130 with infrared sensors and over 150 people, including upper-class cadets set out to search for him. His body was recovered from a ravine at the bottom of the face on Friday, October 15th. Details of the accident are unclear, but an autopsy conducted by El Pas County's deputy coroner revealed Trujillo fell nearly 600 feet.

The second accident on Eagle's Peak occurred on Sunday, June 2nd, 1997. That day, Fourth-Class Cadet David Garay ('00) decided to hike to the top of Eagle's Peak for the first time. Before departing alone at 11 am, he told his roommate to expect him back before 11 pm. Garay summited around 4 pm, and instead of returning via the trail, he decided to work his way down the face without any climbing equipment. Following a series of 3 ft ledges, Garay made it 50 ft from the bottom of the cliff. When the ledge ran out, he slipped and fell to the slabs at the base, fracturing his jaw and the bones around his right eye. Garay slipped in and out of consciousness for the next 17 hours as he tried to work his way down the mountain. He was discovered early the next morning by Security Forces and airlifted by a Blackhawk to the hospital. After a month of recovery in the hospital, Garay returned to USAFA. He was fortunate to graduate and went on to fly the F-15 Eagle and F-16 Fighting Falcon.

In 2004, Eagle's Peak was permanently altered when Judson Babcock ('04) and Luc Chandou ('04) painted "04" onto a flat slab in the middle of the face. The number represented the graduating class of 2004 and is fabled as one of the greatest spirit missions (displays of class or squadron pride) of all time. The intention was to use washable paint that would wash off in the next thunderstorm, but an overlooked complication resulted in 20-year exterior latex paint being applied to the rock. The two cadets hiked the paint and supplies to the top of the peak and descended on a rappel anchored to a tree above the "04", painting as they descended. A second rappel pitch was accomplished from a narrow ledge halfway down using an existing piton. The cadets were taken into custody by Security Forces, including the 10th Security Forces Squadron Commander, who were waiting at the trailhead. Despite the spirit mission taking place Thursday, May 27th, only 6 days before the 2004 graduation, the two cadets graduated on time (thanks to their incredible commanding officer, Major Dave Morrissey) after agreeing to pay for the cleanup operation which a local climbing outfit accomplishing using paint stripper. Unfortunately, the paint stripper permanently scarred the rock leaving a faint "04" on the face that can be seen from USAFA on clear days.

The third accident on Eagle's Peak occurred in April of 2006. While specific details are unclear, Thomas Avolio ('08) was hiking alone near the face of Eagle's Peak without climbing equipment when he fell 200 ft, likely from the gully at the top of the East face. He was rescued from a ledge at the base after 5 hours and suffered a traumatic brain injury, broken wrist, dislocated ankle, optic nerve damage, and puncture wounds. Avolio was airlifted by a Blackhawk helicopter to the hospital, where he lay in a coma for over 3 weeks. He survived and was readmitted to the academy in early 2008 by the Secretary of the Air Force. Avolio was fortunate to graduate and was commissioned in 2009. As a result of this accident, the face of Eagle's Peak was declared an off-limits area to all USAFA personnel.

The closure of Eagle's Peak resulted in the development of new climbing areas in the early 2010s. In 2012, Austin Cooner ('15), Jason Copeland, and other members of the USAFA Climbing Team established the Roberts Ridge bouldering area, putting up over 50 problems. Cooner also documented the first trad climbs at the

Punishment Wall, Exemplar Tower, and the Adventure Wall. Additionally, Cooner and Copeland published “A Guide to Climbing at USAFA”, the first guidebook for the area. The areas covered in Cooner’s guidebook saw further development by Hayden Richards (‘13).

After Cooner graduated in 2015, climbing development at USAFA lay dormant until 2020. That year, the graduating class of 2020 was restricted to the base installation due to the Coronavirus pandemic. This led Ben Roberts (‘20) and Trey Walker (‘20) to explore climbing opportunities in Pike National Forest. The pair discovered an undocumented set of bolts in Stanley Canyon. The rock below it was climbed many times and found to be quality granite deserving a ground-up ascent. With a hand drill, Roberts and Walker established “Shred Bread” as the first sport route on base. In the span of a few weeks, the pair crafted several other routes in the vicinity, ultimately naming it “Nirvana Wall” for its tame approach and worry-free allure amidst the pandemic.

Shortly after establishing the Nirvana Wall, Roberts and Walker worked with Hayden Richards (who had returned to USAFA as an instructor) to establish a new route up Exemplar Tower’s West buttress. They also explored an undocumented ridgeline, which they named Restriction Ridge, with the intention of establishing a multi-pitch route traversing its entirety. Although the pair’s time at USAFA was cut short due to the pandemic, their exploration set the stage for further development in the Eagle’s Peak and Stanley Canyon areas.

In the Fall of 2020, Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder (‘23) began further development at the Nirvana Wall. Recognizing the potential for more climbing areas on base, Richards and Westenfelder established over 70 routes at the Nirvana Wall, the Adventure Wall, Falcon Spires, Exemplar Tower, and the Punishment Wall over the next two years. The work led by Richards transformed climbing at USAFA and encompasses the majority of development in the area.

During the same period, Westenfelder and Seth Konig (‘22) climbed multi-pitch trad routes in new areas, including Restriction Ridge, Cascada, and the Perch. Konig also established the first ice and mixed climbs at USAFA in the Winter of 2021. In the Fall of 2022 and Spring of 2023, Nate Bean (‘23) and Westenfelder established new multi-pitch trad routes, finished project routes, and improved the safety of old routes by cleaning loose rock and installing bolts where necessary.

There is ample room for more development at USAFA, with numerous unclimbed faces and undiscovered areas. I hope that climbing development continues and more cadets find joy in the climbing opportunities close to base. I would like to thank Howard Whitfield, Austin Cooner, Ben Roberts, Hayden Richards, Mike Anderson, and Judson Babcock for contributing to this history writeup. Further, I recognize that this information is far from complete. Gathering details on the history of climbing at USAFA is difficult due to the quick turnover of cadets and faculty. If you have any corrections or additional information for anything in this guidebook, please contact Finn Westenfelder at finnwestenfelder@gmail.com.



Members of the 1973 USAFA Mountaineering Club - USAFA Yearbook Archive



The "04" on Eagle's Peak - Judson Babcock



Finn Westenfelder bolting a new project - Micah Pugh



Nate Bean, Hayden Richards, Finn Westenfelder, Sam Donnellan, and Seth Konig

Future Contributions

There is near unlimited potential for more rock climbing and bouldering at USAFA. Ideas for future developers are discussed on the first page of each climbing area. There are also countless unexplored faces and boulders in Pike National Forest. When putting up routes, developers should only place bolts where necessary, preferring trad climbs when possible. Further, due to the nature of the rock at USAFA, developers are encouraged to rappel routes and clean loose rock before attempting them ground up. As of June 2023, this guidebook is the most up to date source for climbing at USAFA. Any new routes should be posted on mountainproject.com. Ice and mixed climbers should ensure that their routes do not damage previously established climbing routes. Skiers and mountain bikers should ensure their routes do not violate any land management regulations.

Other References

A Guide to Climbing at USAFA - Austin Cooner and Jason Copeland
Hiking the USAF Academy - Jim Head and Donna Head



A unique tree in Stanley Canyon - Jenna Breeden



Seth Konig bolting the anchor for Splitter (5.9) at The Perch - Finn Westenfelder

Rock Climbing

A close-up photograph of a rock face, showing a diagonal crack or crevice running from the lower left towards the upper right. The rock has a textured, brownish-orange surface with some darker, possibly wet or mineral-rich, areas. The text "Rock Climbing" is overlaid in a large, white, sans-serif font, centered in the upper half of the image.



Zach Marien climbing Crucifixion (5.11) - Seth Konig

Punishment Wall



Kadyn Craige on the FA of Tunnel Cereal (5.8) - Finn Westenfelder

Punishment Wall

Location: 39.00363, -104.90977

Aspect: West facing

Prominence: 60 feet

Approach Distance: 0.53 miles

Approach Elevation Gain: 430 feet

Description

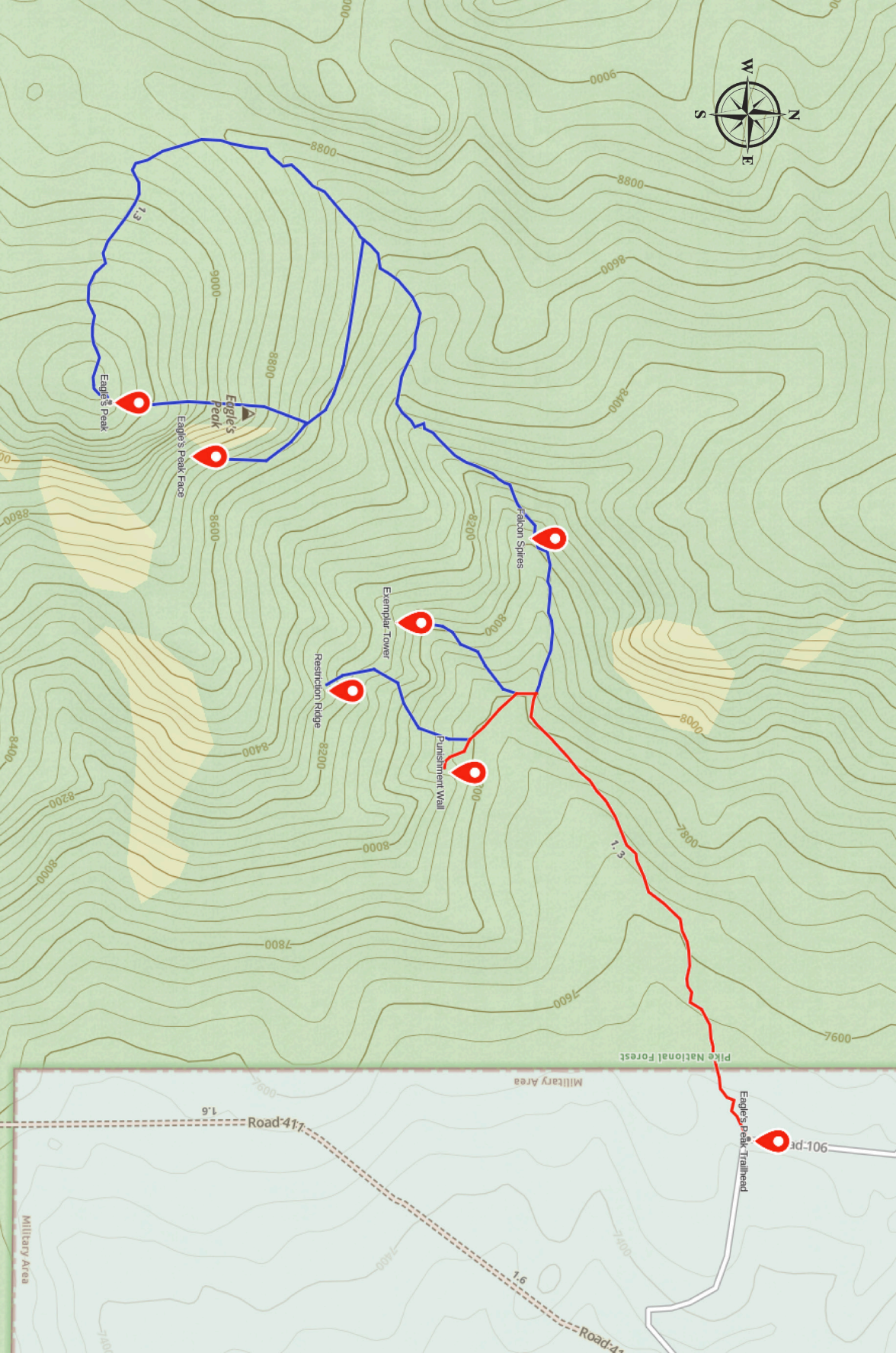
The Punishment Wall is a west facing cliff a half mile up the Eagle's Peak trail. The crag has the highest concentration of difficult sport and trad climbing on base and one of the easiest approaches. This is the spot to go if you are looking to get in some laps after class. The rock is of decent quality but watch for loose blocks, especially at the top of routes. The Punishment Wall was first developed by Gabe Hagan, Hayden Richards, and Austin Cooner in the spring of 2012. The routes are named after punishments that cadets may receive during their time at USAFA. There is potential for more development on the far south end of the wall, which appears unclimbed. The far north side of the formation also has potential for longer routes that finish on the north pinnacle. It may be possible to climb a route just right of Centurion, but the setter should ensure this route does not interfere with Centurion or Demerit.

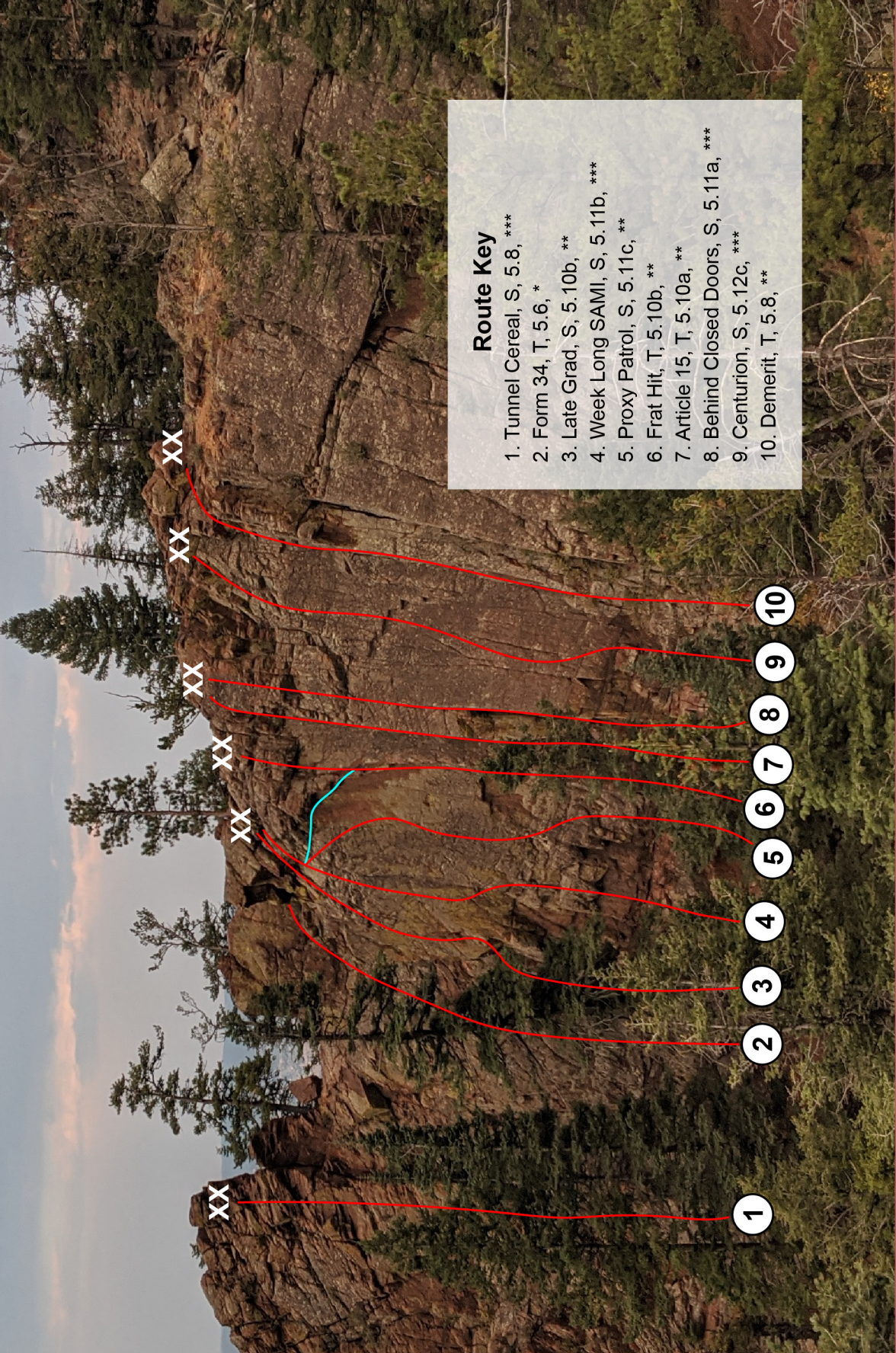
Approach

From the Eagle's Peak trailhead hike 0.42 miles until you reach a level section of trail that is next to Goat Camp Creek. The creek may be dry in summer months, but the creek bed should be obvious on the south side of the trail. Cross at the point where the trail comes closest to the creek and follow a trail into a clearing. There is a primitive shelter built against a tree in the clearing. Walk past the shelter in the southeast direction (southwest trail is for Exemplar Tower), following cairns and a faint trail to a rock field below Punishment Wall. Scramble up the rock field to reach the base of the routes. To the south of the wall is a walk up with fixed ropes that can be used for setting top ropes. A .gpx file with the exact approach route can be found on *mountainproject.com*

Descent

There are bolted anchors at the top of all sport routes that can be used for descent, or you can walk down by the fixed ropes at the south end of the wall. All routes can be descended with a single 70 meter rope.





Route Key

1. Tunnel Cereal, S, 5.8, ***
2. Form 34, T, 5.6, *
3. Late Grad, S, 5.10b, **
4. Week Long SAMI, S, 5.11b, ***
5. Proxy Patrol, S, 5.11c, **
6. Frat Hit, T, 5.10b, **
7. Article 15, T, 5.10a, **
8. Behind Closed Doors, S, 5.11a, ***
9. Centurion, S, 5.12c, ***
10. Dementit, T, 5.8, **

1. Tunnel Cereal, S, 5.8, ***

Length: 50 feet

FA: Kadya Craigle and Finn Westenfelder, Oct. 2022

Description: This is one of the best moderate sport routes on base. Start up easy terrain and gain the face with good holds. Use the arete about a third of the way up the route to pass a blank face (crux). After the crux find jugs on the ledges all the way to the top. The anchor is below the true summit, but you can climb to the top and clip a single bolt with your PAS. After standing on the top, downclimb back to the anchor. This route is in memory of the great Mitches Heist of 2022 and the punishments that followed.

Location: The leftmost bolt line on the wall. This route is the only one left of the large gully in the center of the formation.

Protection: 7 quick draws.

2. Form 34, T, 5.6, *

Length: 40 feet

FKA: Gabe Hagan, 2012

Description: This is the leftmost route on the main wall, right of the gully that separates Tunnel Cereal from the other climbs. Scramble up to a short crack with good gear and then climb on good holds to a left facing gully at the top. The gully ends behind Late Grad and an anchor can be set on a boulder or tree.

Location: The leftmost route on the main wall. Look for the shorter section of wall with continuous 5.6 terrain.

Protection: Standard rack.

3. Late Grad, S, 5.10b, **

Length: 50 feet

FA: Nate Bean, Mar. 2023

Description: This is the leftmost sport route on the wall. Start up easy terrain and gain a slanting slab. Transition around and onto the arete using a cool foothold feature. Continue up the arete with hard moves at the top. The final bolt and anchor are shared with Week Long SAMI and Proxy Patrol.

Location: The leftmost sport route on the main wall. Start left of an overhang and look for bolts on the arete.

Protection: 8 quick draws.

4. Week Long SAMI, S, 5.11b, *****Length:** 50 feet**FA:** Nate Bean, Mar. 2023

Description: Head up easy terrain at the bottom to gain a ledge. Pull a hard move above the ledge onto the face. Continue up with thin moves (crux towards the top) until you reach the arete of Late Grad. Pull over the arete to the anchor. The final bolt and anchor are shared with Late Grad and Proxy Patrol.

Location: The bolt line just right of Late Grad. Start under the overhang.

Protection: 8 quick draws.

5. Proxy Patrol, S, 5.11c, ****Length:** 50 feet**FA:** Nate Bean, Apr. 2023

Description: This route is similar in style and difficulty to Week Long SAMI. Start on easy terrain and pull over the bulge. Gain the face and work your way up and slightly right on sustained thin hands and feet to a large hold. From here, move up and left into the seam and follow it until forced left at the top. The crux is a fun sequence with a big move off small pockets near the middle of the climb. The final bolt and anchor are shared with Late Grad and Week Long SAMI.

Location: The bolt line just right of Week Long SAMI, close to the leftmost dihedral with a crack.

Protection: 8 quick draws.

6. Frat Hit, T, 5.10b, ****Length:** 50 feet**FKA:** Austin Cooner, 2012

Description: This is a fun route navigating a dihedral to a thin crack and finally face climbing with solid jugs to a stellar top out. The first crux is getting established in the dihedral. Clipping the first bolt of Proxy Patrol is recommended because gear is poor. The second crux is the thin crack below the first roof. At the second roof, don't follow the crack and pull over the roof. Find two gear placements and decent holds as you head up directly to the route's main anchor. Alternatively, at the second roof, follow the thin crack as it becomes vertical. Climb the last moves of Proxy Patrol to the shared anchor. The variation goes at 5.10d.

Location: The leftmost dihedral with a thin crack.

Protection: Standard rack.

7. Article 15, T, 5.10a, **

Length: 50 feet

FKA: Austin Cooner, 2012

Description: This follows the wider crack just right of Frat Hit. It has consistent jamming and gear all the way up. This is one of the best trad routes at the wall.

Location: The hand crack just right of Frat Hit.

Protection: Standard rack.

8. Behind Closed Doors, S, 5.11a, ***

Length: 50 feet

FA: Hayden Richards, 2012

Description: This route follows the dihedral to the right of Article 15 and the face above it. Start with easy climbing to the dihedral. There is good finger jamming in the dihedral and the face above has powerful slab moves. The crux is moving from the dihedral onto the face. Finish on good holds at the top.

Location: The bolt line in the dihedral just right of Article 15.

Protection: 8 quick draws. The route can be done on gear, but there is no protection above or below the dihedral.

9. Centurion, S, 5.12c, ***

Length: 50 feet

FA: Zach Lorch, 2020

Description: The test piece of Punishment Wall. This route goes up the blank face on the right side of the wall. Start up easy terrain and stand on a shaky block to reach the base of the steep face. Pull up using side pulls and a foot ledge. Find finger jams and toe jams in the parallel vertical seams. The seams are sustained all the way to the top. Stay right and avoid bailing into the gully at the top left. Find better holds and slightly easier moves to reach the two bolt anchor.

Location: The rightmost bolt line on the wall. Just left of Demerit.

Protection: 10 quick draws.

10. Demerit, T, 5.8, **

Length: 50 feet

FKA: Gabe Hagan, 2012

Description: A good lead for new climbers, this route navigates the low-angled, wide crack on the right side of the cliff. The crack is sustained hands and there are ample foot and hand holds on either side of the crack. Finish at the two bolt anchor.

Location: The rightmost crack on the wall, in a large dihedral.

Protection: Standard rack.



Austin Cooner projecting Centurion (5.12c) - Unknown

Exemplar Tower



Zach Marien halfway up Curt's Crack (5.11)

Exemplar Tower

Location: 39.00313, -104.91201

Aspect: North and West facing

Prominence: 150 feet

Approach Distance: 0.56 miles

Approach Elevation Gain: 720 feet

Description

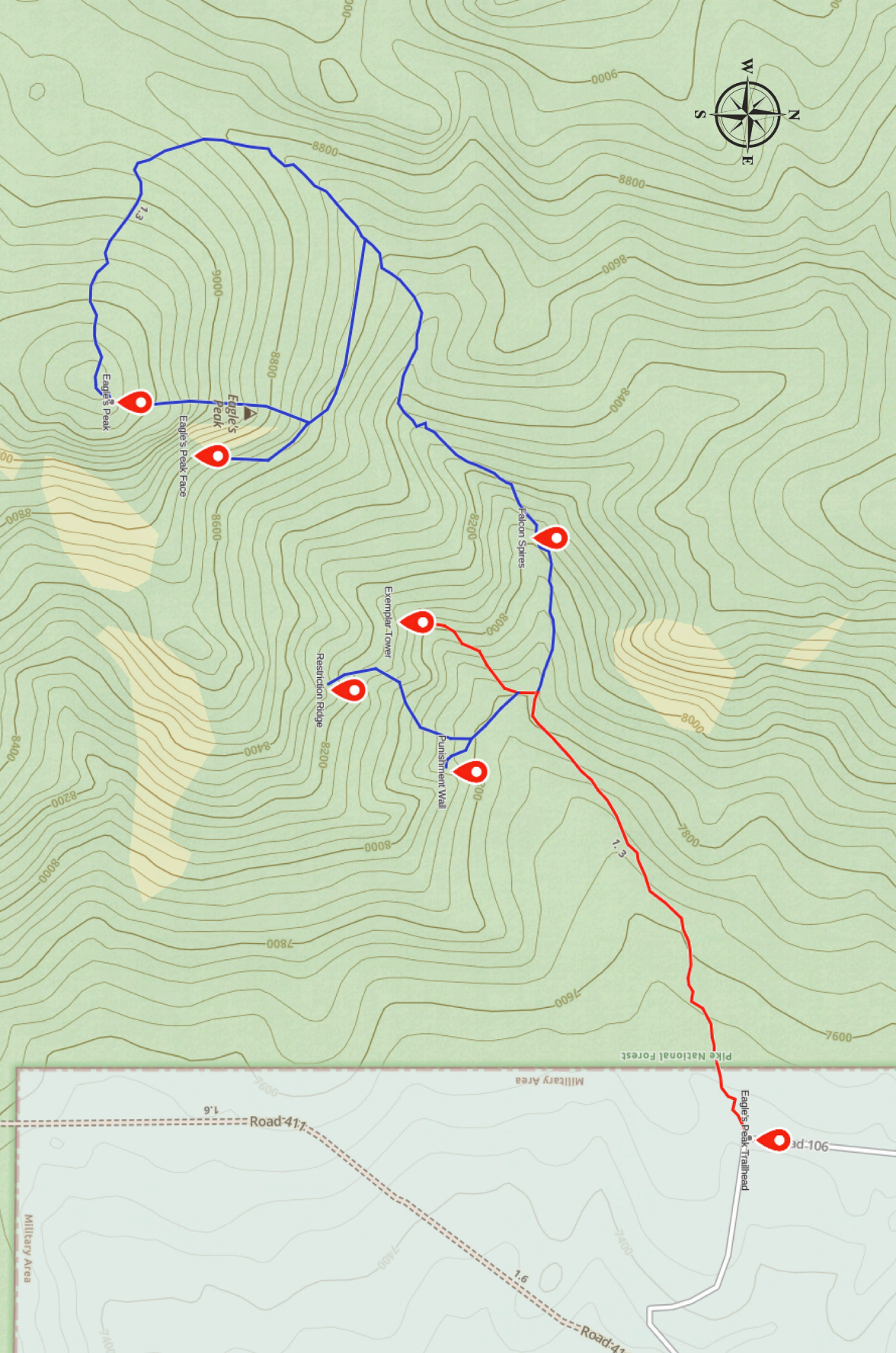
Exemplar Tower is the black and green monolithic north facing tower below the main face of Eagle's Peak. The tower is home to multipitch trad routes and offers a great view of USAFA from the top. Rock quality is questionable on some routes and there is an abundance of moss. Climbers should approach the less popular routes on Exemplar Tower with caution. The area was first documented by Austin Cooner in Spring of 2012 but an unfinished bolt ladder up the face of the formation is evidence of much earlier development. There is potential for more development on the north and west faces of the formation. A sport route directly up the north face may be possible at a hard grade. There are also ample unclimbed cracks on the west face that deserve ascents. The routes are named after USAFA Class Exemplars.

Approach

From the Eagle's Peak trailhead hike 0.42 miles until you reach a level section of trail that is next to Goat Camp Creek. The creek may be dry in summer months, but the creek bed should be obvious on the south side of the trail. Cross at the point where the trail comes closest to the creek and follow a trail into a clearing. There is a primitive shelter built against a tree in the clearing. Walk past the shelter in the southwest direction (southeast trail is for Punishment Wall), following cairns and a faint trail until you see a fixed rope. Follow the fixed rope up a scree field and regain the trail. Follow more cairns to a rock field below Exemplar Tower. Scramble up the rock field to reach the base of the tower. It is possible to hike to the top of Exemplar Tower by hiking south and gaining the formation from the back, but this is not recommended. A .gpx file with the exact approach route can be found on mountainproject.com

Descent

There is a shared rappel anchor at the top of Orville, Wilbur, and Wright of Bros. If you climb to the summit, descend with two rappels down the Curt's Crack route. All rappels can be completed with a single 70 meter rope.





Route Key

1. Orville, T, 5.8+, **
2. Wilbur, T, 5.8, ***
3. Wright of Bros, T, 5.8, **
4. Leo's Ladder, T, 5.4
5. Curt's Crack, T, 5.11, ***
6. Hap, T, 5.6, **
7. Thor, T, 5.6

1. Orville, T, 5.8+, **

Length: 50 feet

FKA: Austin Cooner, May 2012

Description: This funky crack/face climb navigates the greenish section of the tower on the far left. Start in the corner, then go up the vertical crack to a section of face. The climb finishes with the crack that separates a detached block at the top. Rap from a two-bolt anchor at the top or continue up Leo's Ladder to the summit. This route is named after Orville Wright.

Location: 39.00299, -104.91180. This is the furthest east route on the north face.

Protection: Standard rack.

2. Wilbur, T, 5.8, ***

Length: 50 feet

FKA: Austin Cooner, May 2012

Description: This route has quality crack and face climbing. Start the same as Orville but follow the left-facing corner and trend to the right upper crack system ending on a small pinnacle. Rap from a two-bolt anchor at the top or continue up Leo's Ladder to the summit. This route is named after Wilbur Wright.

Location: 39.00299, -104.91180. Wilbur starts the same as Orville, the furthest east route on the north face.

Protection: Standard rack.

3. Wright of Bros., T, 5.8, **

Length: 35 feet

FKA: Austin Cooner, May 2012

Description: This route follows the easy crack system just right of Wilbur. The crux is crossing over into the left into the upper crack. Rap from a two-bolt anchor at the top or continue up Leo's Ladder. This route is named after the Wright Brothers.

Location: 39.00299, -104.91180. Start next to a tree on top of the mossy detached block to the right of Wilbur.

Protection: Standard rack.

4. Leo's Ladder, T, 5.4

Length: 80 feet

FKA: Nate Bean and Finn Westenfelder, Aug. 2022

Description: From the anchor at the top of Orville, continue up the easy terrain on the east corner to the top of Exemplar Tower. Most of this route is scrambling, but there are some fifth class moves. Look for the anchor at the top of Curt's Crack at the top. This route is named after Colonel Leo K. Thorsness.

Location: Start at the anchor above Orville, Wilbur, and Wright of Bros.

Protection: Standard rack.

5. Curt's Crack, T, 5.11, ***

Length: 150 feet, 2 pitches

FKA: Hayden Richards, Sep. 2020

Description:

P1 - Start in the wide chimney to gain a bushy ledge. Walk right to the base of a finger crack and follow it to a ledge with a bolted anchor. The crux is about halfway up with a hard transition between pockets in the crack and holds on the face. Alternatively, instead of starting in the wide chimney on the left, start on the face 30 feet below the main crack. The gear is limited, but the holds on the face are solid. The direct start goes at 5.7 PG13 and small nuts are recommended for pro.

P2 - Follow blocky terrain to the top. There are three distinct ledges with face climbing in between. Staying far right makes the climbing easier, but the rock quality is worse. There is a bolted anchor at the top.

This route is named after General Curtis E. Lemay.

Location: 39.00309, -104.91198. Look for the thin crack that goes up the north face. Start in the wide chimney or on the face directly below the main crack.

Protection: Standard rack. Small nuts for the direct start.

6. Hap, T, 5.6, **

Length: 130 feet, 2 pitches

FKA: Gabe Hagan, Austin Cooner, and Margaret Weingart, May 2012

Description: This is a good multipitch climb up the west face of Exemplar Tower. While there is some loose rock and moss, the gear is generally good, and this is a fun climb for a new leader.

P1 - Scramble up easy terrain to a hand crack/face climb. Set up a belay on a semi-ledge that fits about 3 people.

P2 - From the ledge, move up on the finger crack/face climb and use the left arete for help. Then trend right for more fun climbing, and boulder the blocks at the top of the tower.

This route is named after General Henry "Hap" Arnold.

Location: 39.00291, -104.91231. This route starts on the far north side of the west face of the tower. From the approach trail, go up the rough creek bed until you hit the west face. The start is next to a tree at the base of the first dihedral that continues up the tower.

Protection: Standard rack.

7. Thor, T, 5.6

Length: 90 feet

FKA: Caleb Kimpler and Will Mockel, Jun. 2020

Description: Start on the arete of the second north face and continue up using holds on the north and west faces. When the arete turns into an overhang transition fully onto the north face and top out using cracks. This route is named after Colonel Leo K. Thorsness.

Location: 39.00278, -104.91227. Hike along the west face of Exemplar Tower past Hap until you reach a north facing section of rock. Start on the arete of the north face.

Protection: Standard rack.



Nate Bean on Curt's Crack (5.11) - Finn Westenfelder



Will Mockel on Thor (5.6) - Finn Westenfelder

Restriction Ridge



Finn Westenfelder on the FKA of The Burl (5.10) - Seth König

Restriction Ridge

Location: 39.00220, -104.91099

Aspect: North facing

Prominence: 50-75 feet

Approach Distance: 0.64 miles

Approach Elevation Gain: 820 feet

Description

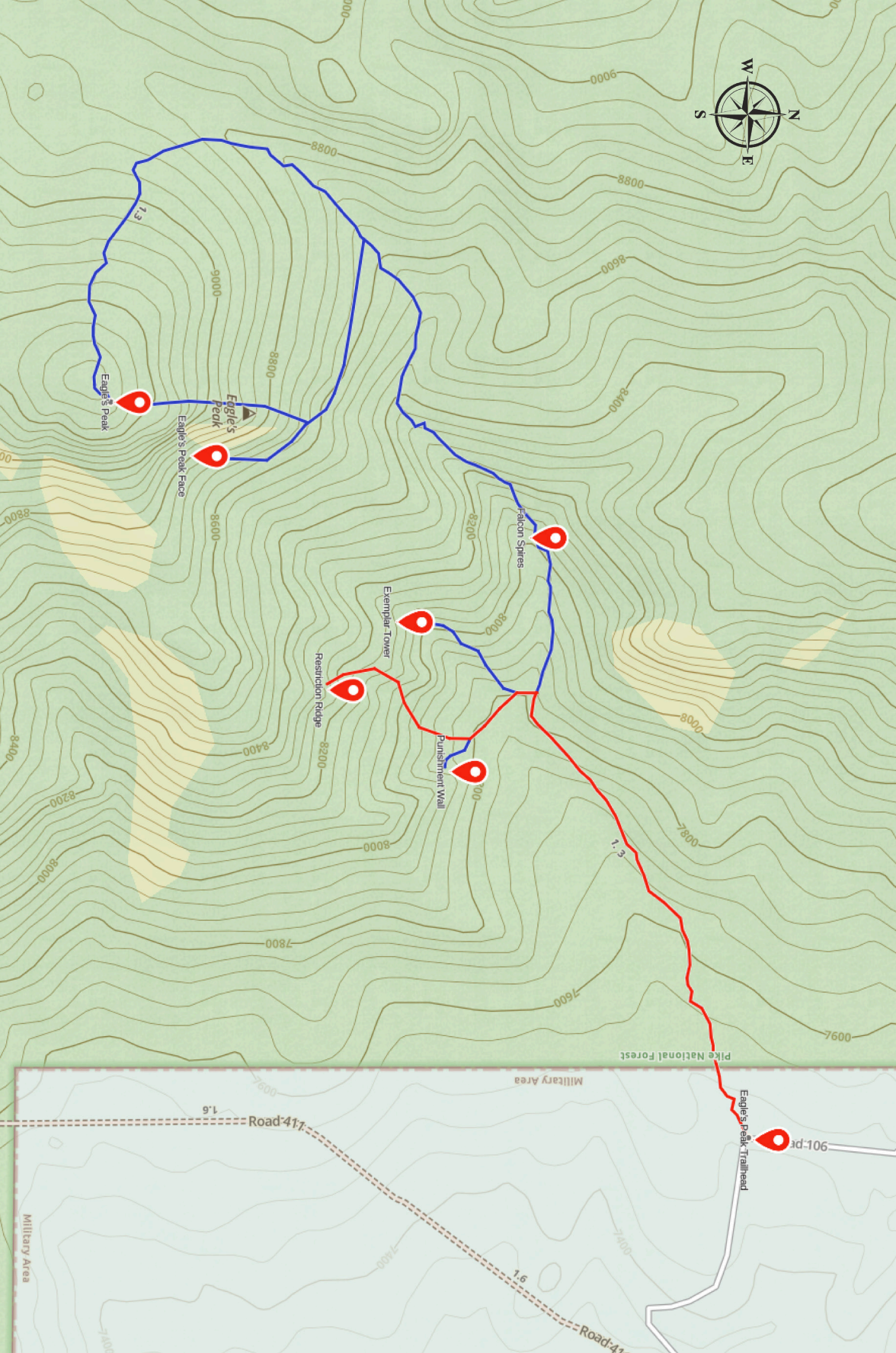
Restriction Ridge is the long snaking ridgeline located to the west of Punishment Wall and to the east of Exemplar Tower. The ridge is composed of a series of north faces increasing in height towards the south. There are routes up each face that can be treated as individual routes or as pitches in a long linkup. The rock on Restriction Ridge is some of the most dangerous on base with loose blocks at the top of almost every climb. The area may clean up over time, but safer climbing can be found at Exemplar Tower. Restriction Ridge was first documented by Ben Roberts in 2020, but a fixed nut on one of the climbs is evidence of earlier exploration. The routes are named after the probations cadets may be placed on while at USAFA. There is potential for more development on some of the north faces of this formation. Some pitches could benefit from a bolt or two for added protection and other faces have potential for full sport climbs. Despite this potential, other areas deserve more development before this one.

Approach

From the Eagle's Peak trailhead hike 0.42 miles until you reach a level section of trail that is next to Goat Camp Creek. The creek may be dry in summer months, but the creek bed should be obvious on the south side of the trail. Cross at the point where the trail comes closest to the creek and follow a trail into a clearing. There is a primitive shelter built against a tree in the clearing. Walk past the shelter in the southeast direction (southwest trail is for Exemplar Tower), following cairns and a faint trail to a rock field below Punishment Wall. Scramble up the rock field and past the Punishment Wall. Restriction Ridge should be visible in the southwest. Hike southwest, taking the path of least resistance through the trees until you reach the base of the ridge. You can hike along the west side of the ridgeline to reach the base of each pitch. A .gpx file with the exact approach route can be found on *mountainproject.com*

Descent

There are no bolts on Restriction Ridge. It is possible to descend from of the climbs by finding a gully along the ridge and hiking down to the west side of the ridgeline.



Route Key

1. Quarantine, T, 5.7
2. Athletic Probation, T, 5.10
3. Academic Probation, T, 5.9 PG13
4. Honor Probation, T, 5.8
5. Alcohol Probation, T, 5.8
6. Conduct Probation, T, 5.6
7. Hygiene Probation, T, 5.7



1. The B.U.R.L., T, 5.10, **

Length: 800 feet, Grade II

FKA: Finn Westenfelder and Seth Konig, Oct. 2021

Description:

This route was first envisioned by Ben Roberts. The B.U.R.L. (Ben's Ultimate Ridge Link-up) links all the faces on Restriction Ridge. The goal of the link-up is to traverse the entire ridgeline, climbing the seven main rock faces along the way. There is no set way to climb the faces, though most have obvious crack systems that are the easiest way to the top. Plan for the route to take 8 hours trailhead to trailhead.

The route has great views of USAFA and some good finger cracks; however, you should be prepared for loose blocks on the ridgeline and crumbly rock on some of the faces.

P1. Quarantine, 5.7, (39.00312, -104.91075) - Climb the crack system to the top. Scramble along the ridge to the base of P2.

P2. Athletic Probation, 5.10, (39.00228, -104.91093) - Climb the hand cracks to the zig-zagging finger cracks at the top. This is the best pitch on the route. Rappel to the base of P3.

P3. Academic Probation, 5.9 PG13, (39.00207, -104.91129) - Start in the left dihedral working up and to the right to the finger crack. Gear placement is limited. Rappel to the base of P4.

P4. Honor Probation, 5.8, (39.00190, -104.91116) - The hand crack in the left corner is the easiest route up. The face has no gear placement, but it goes on TR around 5.11. Rappel to the base of P5.

P5. Alcohol Probation, 5.8, (39.00194, -104.91144) - Climb the hand crack in the chimney to finger cracks at the top. A stuck offset nut was found on this pitch, so the FA is unknown. Downclimb to the base of P6.

P6. Conduct Probation, 5.6, (39.00163, -104.91153) - Climb the broken blocks to the top. Downclimb to the base of P7.

P7. Hygiene Probation, 5.7, (39.00147, -104.91179) - Scramble up the kitty litter at the bottom to sketchy blocks at the top. This is not a great pitch to finish out the route. Be careful.

Descent: Descend via a steep, west-facing gully off the summit. Follow the base of the ridge back to the start and reverse the approach.

Location: 39.00312, -104.91075. Follow directions to the base of Restriction Ridge.

Protection: Standard rack, one BD #4.



Seth Konig at the top of Restriction Ridge - Finn Westenfelder

Falcon Spires



Will Mockel on Dragon Lady (5.10+) - Sam Dornellan

Falcon Spires

Location: 39.00466, -104.91328

Aspect: North facing

Prominence: 150 feet

Approach Distance: 0.56 miles

Approach Elevation Gain: 580 feet

Description

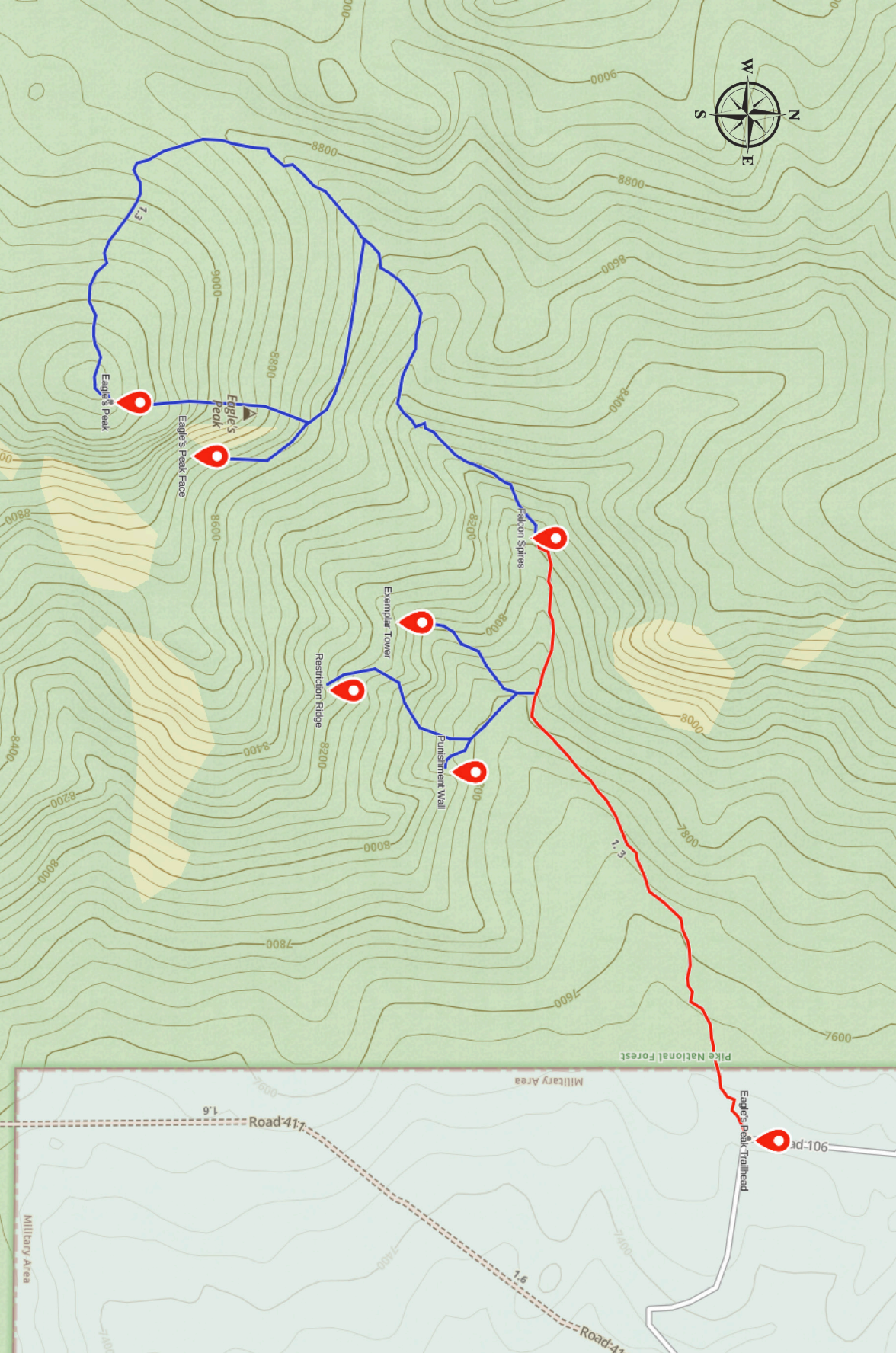
The Falcon Spires are two north facing spires next to the Eagle's Peak Trail. This area is home to my two favorite routes on base and has a great summit. If you only have time for one route after class, this is the spot to be. The rock is of decent quality with the only questionable part being an overhanging block at the top of the first pitch. Treat this massive block with caution. In addition to rock climbing, there is a high line that can be rigged from the top of Falcon Spires discussed in the slacklining section of this guidebook. The area was first described by Scott Rice on Mountain Project and routes are named after Air Force aircraft nicknames. Notably, since all the ways up the first pitch meet at the same ledge, and all the ways up the second pitch start from that ledge, each pitch is listed as a separate route. There is potential for more development in the Falcon Spires area. Just west of the main formation is another spire that does not currently have any routes. A route up the west face of the main formation may also be possible. The top part of the spire looks extremely difficult, only offering a small seam on the overhang. Lastly, a sport route to the left of Fat Albert could be a better route to the top of the west spire in the main formation.

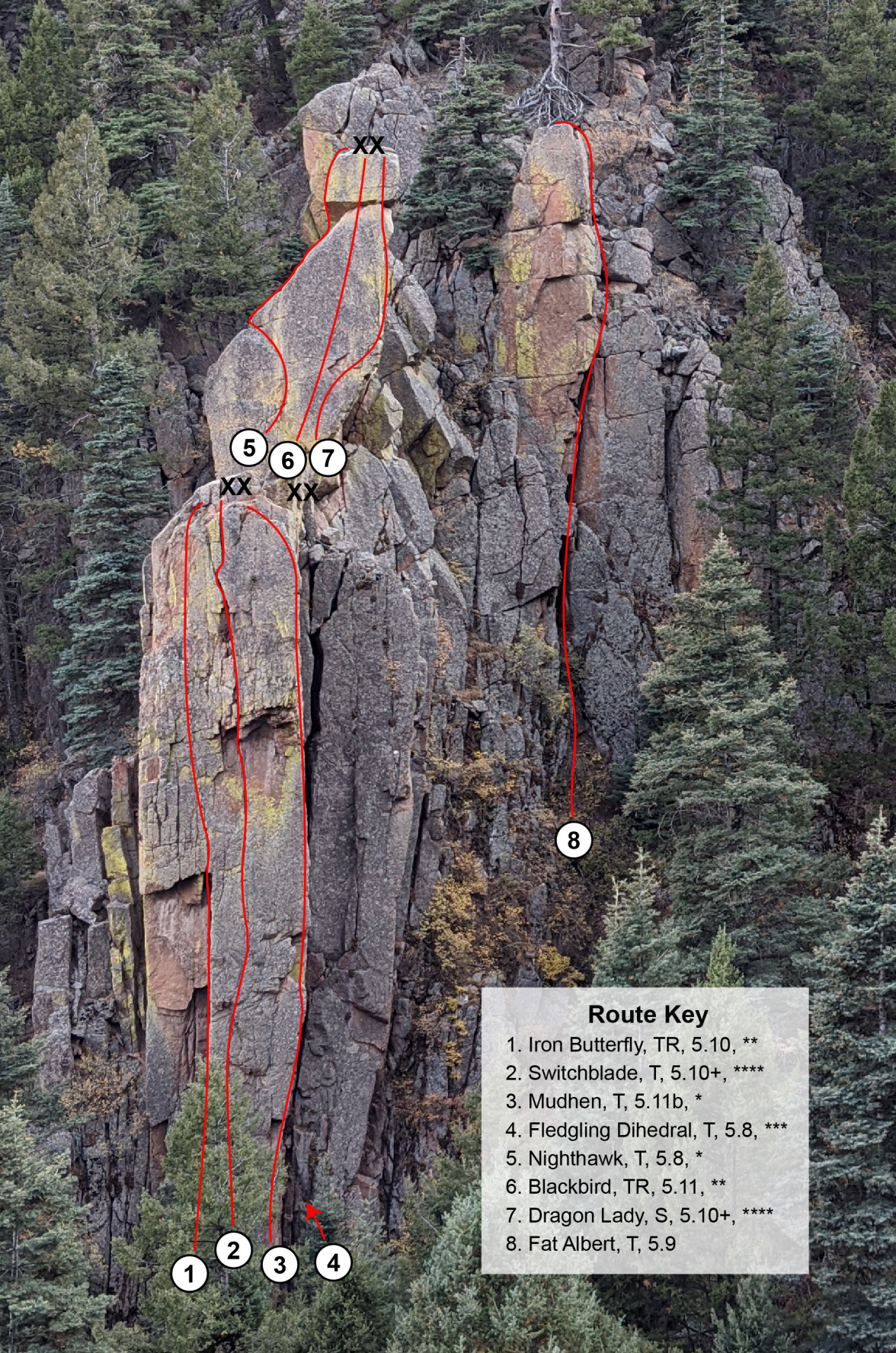
Approach

From the Eagle's Peak trailhead hike 0.56 miles until you see the spires on the south side of the trail. Cross the Goat Camp Creek gully and scramble up a short slope to the base. This is one of the simplest approaches on base. It is possible to hike to the top of the first pitch of Falcon Spires by scrambling up the gully on the east side of the formation and doing a low fifth class traverse on the side of the formation, but this is not recommended. Hiking up and around the west side of the formation is also possible, but not recommended. A .gpx file with the exact approach route can be found on *mountainproject.com*

Descent

The easiest descent uses the bolted anchors at the top of Dragon Lady and Switchblade. All rappels can be completed with a single 70 meter rope. Reversing the scramble up the east side of the formation is not recommended.





Route Key

1. Iron Butterfly, TR, 5.10, **
2. Switchblade, T, 5.10+, ****
3. Mudhen, T, 5.11b, *
4. Fledgling Dihedral, T, 5.8, ***
5. Nighthawk, T, 5.8, *
6. Blackbird, TR, 5.11, **
7. Dragon Lady, S, 5.10+, ****
8. Fat Albert, T, 5.9

1. Iron Butterfly, TR, 5.10, **

Length: 100 feet

FKA: Hayden Richards, Sep. 2020

Description: The route starts below the easternmost overhang on the north facing side of the main spire. The first half of the route follows the arete. The crux is getting around the overhang. After the overhang, climb the finger width crack to the top. This route can probably go on gear but may need a bolt or two at the bottom.

Location: This is the left most route on the formation. Look for an overhang on the east side of the north face and start on the arete below it.

2. Switchblade, T, 5.10+, ****

Length: 100 feet

FKA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, Sep. 2020

Description: Combining this route with Dragon Lady is my favorite climb on base! The route follows the main crack up the north face. It starts as hands and narrows to fingers. There are two bolts in the middle where the crack runs out. This section of face climbing is the crux. Get back into the expanding crack and chimney up the body width section at the top. There are good holds for the top out. Be cautious of the roof on the upper right side of this climb. The route was cleaned, and this mega block appears stable, but it should be treated with caution.

Location: Start at the base of the crack that goes up the middle of the north face.

Protection: Standard rack. Two quick draws for the bolts.

3. Mudhen, T, 5.11b, *

Length: 80 feet

FKA: Scott Rice, Oct. 2010

Description: This route follows the western arete on the north face. There is little gear placement, so this route is better done as a top rope climb.

Location: Start at the western arete on the north face, just right of Switchblade and left of Fledgling Dihedral.

Protection: Standard rack. Small nuts are helpful throughout.

4. Fledgling Dihedral, T, 5.8, ***

Length: 100 feet

FKA: Will AR., 2003

Description: This is the obvious dihedral just west of the north face of the formation. Start in the dihedral using good ledges to pullup into the crack. Jam the wide crack to a good stance, then finish on the west facing side of the dihedral. Look for

a piton about midway up on the west facing side. The route has cleaned up with multiple ascents but watch for loose blocks. This is the easiest way up the first pitch of Falcon Spires.

Location: Start in the large dihedral to the right of Mudhen.

Protection: Standard rack. One quick draw for the piton.

5. Nighthawk, T, 5.8, *

Length: 40 feet

FKA: Will AR., 2003

Description: This route starts at the top of the first pitch. There is a single bolt for the belayer to anchor in to. Follow the crack under the flake up to a secondary ledge, and then scramble up the slanted, mossy face. The anchor is on the north side of the spire. The rock in the crack is like kitty litter. Do your best to get in gear early and clip the large piton.

Location: Start at the top of pitch one. This is the leftmost route.

Protection: Standard rack. One quick draw for the piton.

6. Blackbird, TR, 5.11, **

Length: 40 feet

FKA: Hayden Richards, Sep. 2020

Description: This route starts at the top of the first pitch. Climb directly up the north face on very thin hands and feet to the top. This route can be done using the bolts for Dragon Lady, but it is best done on top rope.

Location: Start at the top of pitch one. This route goes directly up the face.

7. Dragon Lady, S, 5.10+, ****

Length: 40 feet

FA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, Sep. 2020

Description: My favorite route and possible the best at USAFA! This route starts at the top of the first pitch. There is a single bolt for the belayer to anchor in to. Stand on the highest point below the north face and high clip the first bolt. Find two crimps and a foot hold and pull up onto the face. This committing move is the crux and is well protected. Continue up and right to the arete. Find decent slopers at the top to pull yourself onto the summit block.

Location: Start at the top of pitch one. This is the rightmost route.

Protection: 5 quick draws.

8. Fat Albert, T, 5.9

Length: 60 feet

FKA: Will Mockel, Jul. 2020

Description: Currently the only route up the southwestern spire. Follow the body width chimney to a stance between boulders. Climb around the backside of the formation to reach the summit. The crack is very dirty and requires a mix of chimneying and face climbing.

Location: Start at the base of the bushy body width crack on the southwest spire.

Protection: Standard rack. Big pieces are helpful throughout.



Jenna Breeden on Switchblade (5.10+) at sunset - Finn Westenfelder



Andre Birkner, Rita Nelson, Casey Couch, Finn Westenfelder, and Seth Konig enjoying Falcon Spires

Eagle's Peak



The face of Eagle's Peak - Jenna Breeden

Eagle's Peak

Location: 39.00096, -104.91449

Aspect: Northeast and Southeast

Prominence: 450 feet

Approach Distance: 1.32 miles

Approach Elevation Gain: 1,800 feet

Description

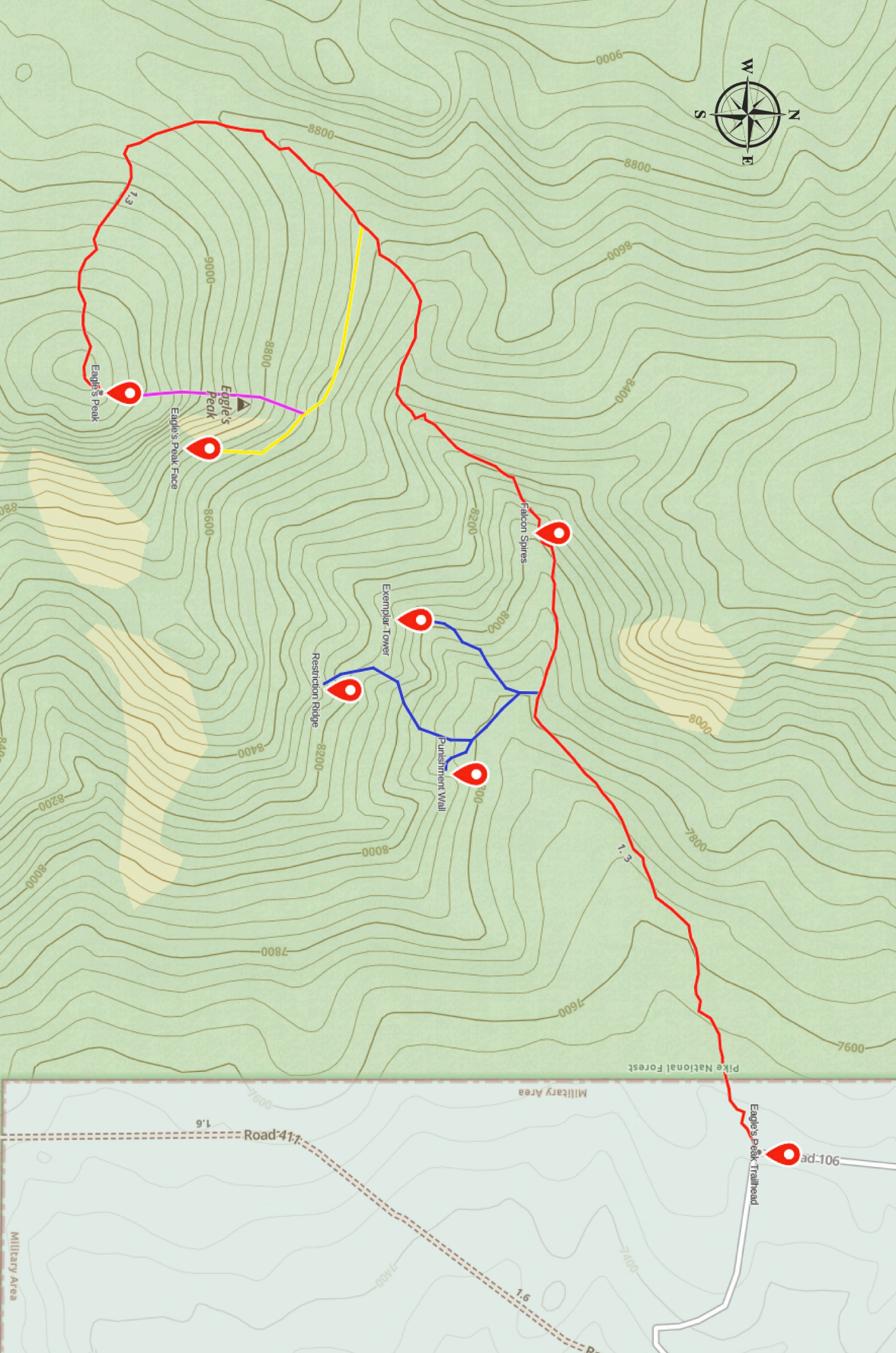
The east face of Eagle's Peak is the iconic face that forms the backdrop of the Academy. The face can be seen easily from Colorado Springs and has a rich climbing history. Currently, the face of Eagle's Peak is off limits to all USAFA personnel. Information on climbing the face is included in this guidebook for historical purposes and for climbers that are not affiliated with USAFA. For more information on the closure of the face, refer to the history section of this guidebook. The rock on Eagle's Peak is poor quality with loose blocks, lots of moss, and runout gear placements. There have been numerous accidents on the face and the routes should be treated with caution. The first known ascent of Eagle's Peak via the east face was completed by Mark Anderson and Mike Anderson in 1996. However, old pitons are evidence of much earlier ascents. Out of all the areas in this guidebook, Eagle's Peak has the most potential for new routes.

Approach

From the Eagle's Peak trailhead hike 1.32 miles up the trail to reach the summit. This trail is difficult and poorly maintained but offers an amazing view of USAFA and Colorado Springs. From the summit hike down a steep gully to reach the top of the east face. The gully is filled with loose rocks and should be descended with caution. Alternatively, hike 0.88 miles from the trailhead and side hill, maintaining your elevation at roughly 8,600 feet until you reach a large rock field. This rock field runs along the north ridge of the face. Scramble up the rock field and go east at the top to reach the gully. The rock field is marked with a purple line on both maps. To reach the base, do not hike up the rock field and instead continue side hilling at roughly 8,600 feet until you reach low angle slabs of rock below the face. Climb up these slabs to reach the base of the climbs. This route is marked with a yellow line on both maps.

Descent

There are no bolts on Eagle's Peak, so the simplest descent option is topping out the face and descending via the Eagle's Peak trail. You can also hike down the rock field to the northwest of the face as described in the approach. With two 70 meter ropes it is possible to do one double rope rappel from a tree in the gully above the face to reach the base. From the base you can follow a gully northeast to Exemplar Tower and regain the Eagle's Peak trail, but taking one of the routes described in the approach section is easier. Lastly, it is possible to descend via fourth and low fifth class climbing on the southeast face, but this route is far more dangerous than other options.

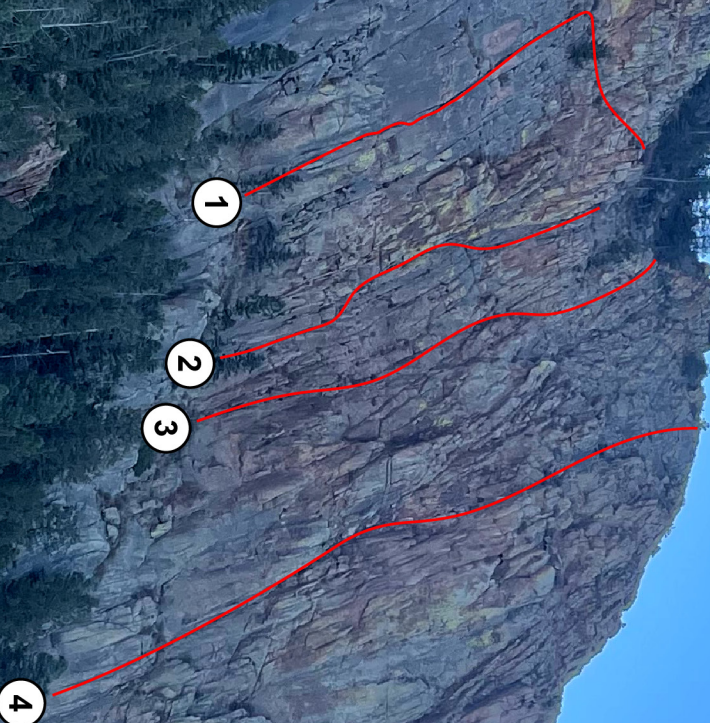


Route Key

- Eagle's Peak Trail
- Base Approach
- Rock Field
- Gully Above Face
- Scramble Above Routes



- Route Key**
1. The '04 Crack, T, 5.10, ***
 2. Moss and Choss, T, 5.9
 3. Andersons' Route, T, 5.7, **
 4. Aquila, T, 5.8, **



1. The '04 Crack, T, 5.10 , *****Length:** 300 feet**FA:** Unknown**Description:** Gain the crack with difficult slab moves at the bottom. There is no gear until you reach the crack. Continue up the dirty low angle crack to a tree. At the tree, go up and right on easy terrain to the top, avoiding the dangerous roof.**Location:** Start on the main ledge above the lower slabs, directly below the crack on the '04 face.**Protection:** Standard rack, one BD #4, one BD #5.**2. Moss and Choss, T, 5.9****Length:** 220 feet**FA:** Unknown**Description:** Stem up a wide gully at the base to gain a small ledge. Continue up and left on lower angle terrain to a large ledge shared with the Andersons' Route. Find a crack in the left corner of a slightly overhung red slab and follow the crack to a ledge just below the gully at the top. Pull an easy boulder move above the ledge to reach the gully.**Location:** Start on the main ledge above the lower slabs at the rightmost tree.**Protection:** Standard rack, extra small nuts.**3. Andersons' Route, T, 5.7, ******Length:** 230 feet**FKA:** Mark Anderson and Mike Anderson, 1996**Description:** Start in a wide crack and continue up into lower angle blocky terrain. Follow this blocky terrain past the ledge at the top of Moss and Choss, passing a tree on the left. Top out above the gully on a small ridge.**Location:** Start in the wide crack just to the right of Moss and Choss.**Protection:** Standard rack.**4. Aquila, T, 5.8, ******Length:** 480 feet**FA:** Unknown**Description:** Climb the lower slab section with little gear. Reach a ledge even with the base of the other routes and continue up a left leaning crack until you reach another ledge. Chimney up a bushy section and go left to avoid an overhung face on the right. Continue up easier blocky terrain to the top of the north ridgeline.**Location:** Start below the lower slabs at the lowest point along the approach to the base.**Protection:** Standard rack.

The Perch



Finn Westenfelder on Splitter (5.9+) - Seth König

The Perch

Location: 38.99524, -104.90977

Aspect: East facing

Prominence: 110 feet

Approach Distance: 1.1 miles

Approach Elevation Gain: 1,200 feet

Description

The Perch is a prominent west facing cliff on Mt. Harmon that can be recognized by its shear face and splitter cracks. It is home to the best single-pitch crack climbing on base. The rock is the best quality out of any area in this guidebook and there is potential for sport climbs on the face of the formation. The only downside is the brutal approach with nearly 1,000 feet of elevation gain in a quarter of a mile. The first known ascent of the Perch was completed by Mike Anderson in the late 1990s.

Approach

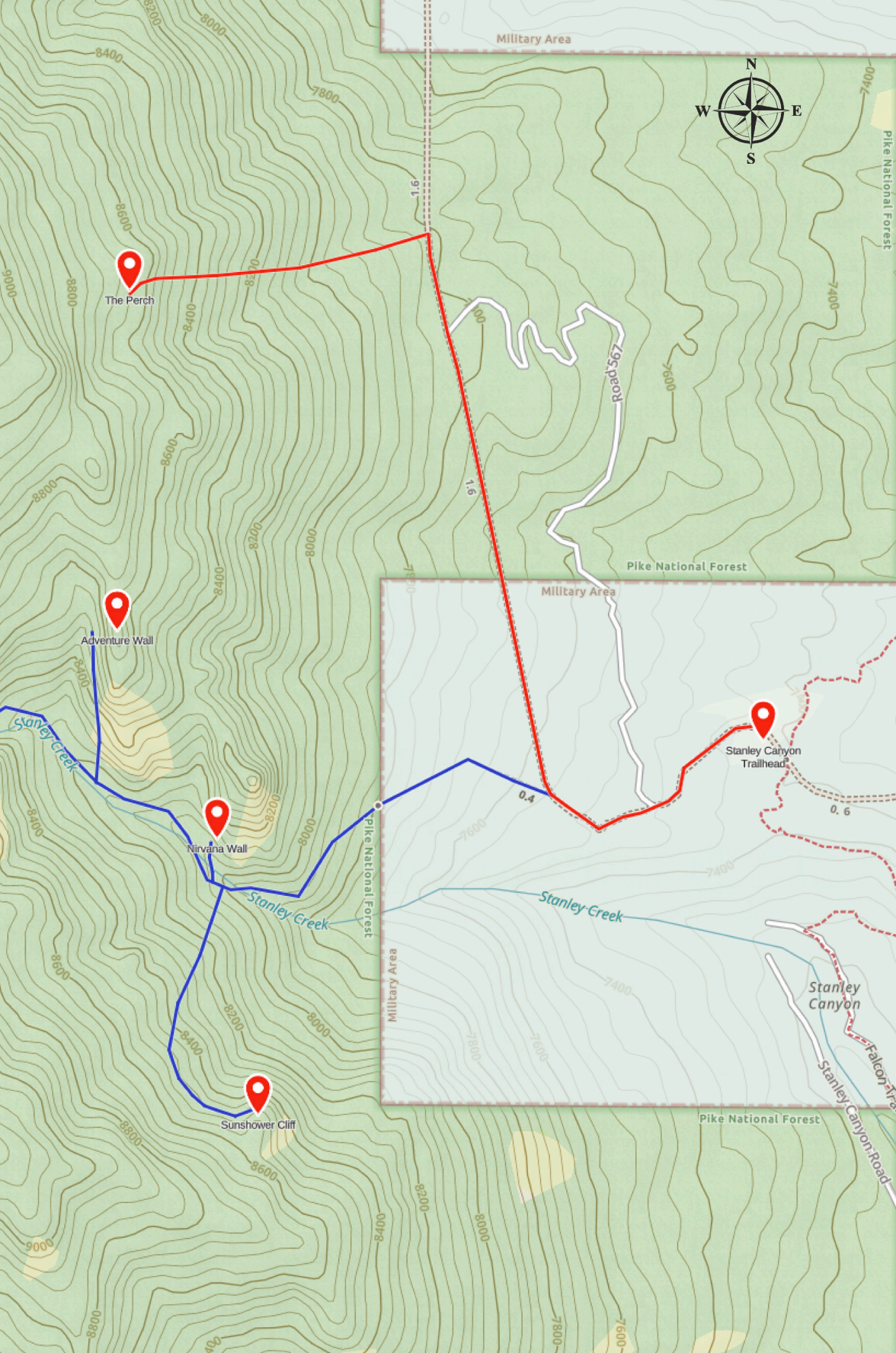
From the Stanley Canyon trailhead, hike 0.25 miles on Road 411 to the start of the Stanley Canyon trail (707). Instead of hiking up the trail, continue hiking Road 411 for 0.55 miles. At this point you are directly below The Perch. Turn to the west and scramble up nearly 1,000 feet of scree for 0.29 mile to reach the base of the formation. A .gpx file with the exact approach route can be found on *mountainproject.com*

Descent

Rappel with a single 70 meter rope from the anchor at the top of Crucifixion or Splitter. You can also hike around the formation using a gully on the north side. Reversing the approach is the best way to hike down, but still brutal.

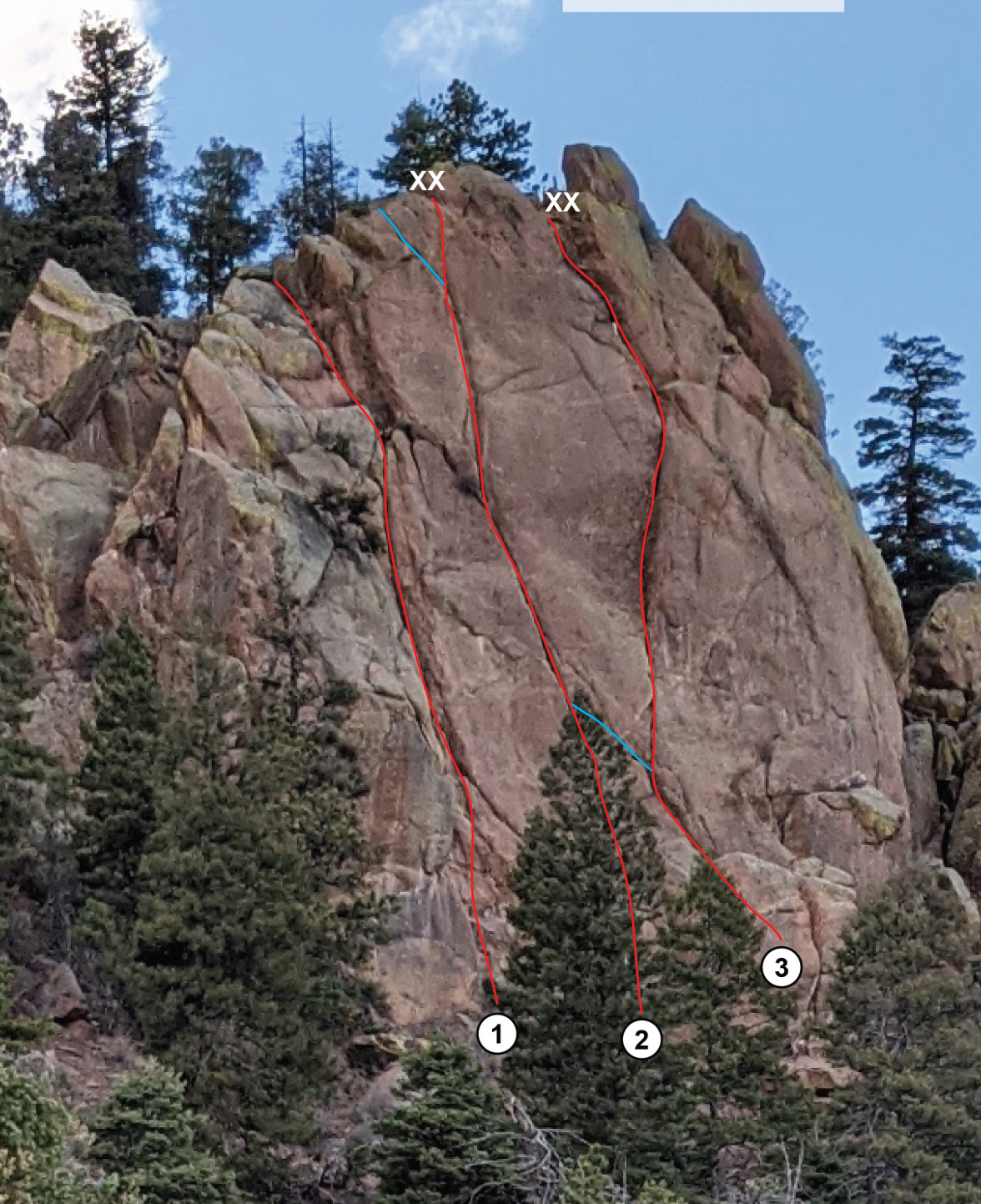


A cross found at the top - Finn Westenfelder



Route Key

1. Ratatouille, T, 5.8, **
2. Crucifixion, T, 5.11, **
3. Splitter, T, 5.9, ***



1. Ratatouille, T, 5.8, **

Length: 50 feet

FKA: Seth Konig, Nov. 2020

Description: Go up the off width and use the small crack to the left as needed. Go to the right of the block in the crack. Once on top of the block, follow the hand crack to the top of the crack and a large ledge. You can top out, but it is more of a scramble through brush and loose rock. A top rope can be set from a stout tree, but it will require around 30m of rope to extend the anchor over the lip.

Location: This route starts at the leftmost side of the Perch. There is a wide off width crack at the start with a large block above the off width.

Protection: Standard rack.

2. Crucifixion, T, 5.11, **

Length: 90 feet

FKA: Mike Anderson, 1999

Description: This route is named after a cross cemented at the top of the Perch. The bottom of the route starts by climbing around a small overhang and getting established in the hand width crack. The bottom section can be skipped by traversing from Splitter on two parallel cracks. The crack stays consistent for the next few moves but begins to widen and is body width towards the top. Once the crack ends, transition to using holds on the face and the seam. This is the crux and there is limited gear placement at the top. It is possible to skip the crux by taking a crack that angles left just below the top out.

Location: Look for the crack between Ratatouille and Splitter. Start below the overhang.

Protection: Standard rack.

3. Splitter, T, 5.9, ***

Length: 110 feet

FKA: Mike Anderson, 1999

Description: The route starts on an easy sloping ledge beneath the main crack. As the crack becomes vertical, the difficulty increases. The face is featured next to the crack with good footholds. Midway up the route, the crack runs up the middle of a 90-degree corner. There is a good place to rest before laybacking up this section. The crack turns horizontal towards the top and requires some armbars and use of small footholds on the polished face.

Location: Splitter is the rightmost crack. Start at the angled ramp.

Protection: Standard rack.



Seth König climbing Cruifixion (5.11) - Finn Westenfelder

Nirvana Wall



Caleb Kimpler descending Pump Pasta (5.9) - Sam Donnellan

Nirvana Wall

Location: 38.98766, -104.90822

Aspect: Southwest facing

Prominence: 70 feet

Approach Distance: 0.67 miles

Approach Elevation Gain: 730 feet

Description

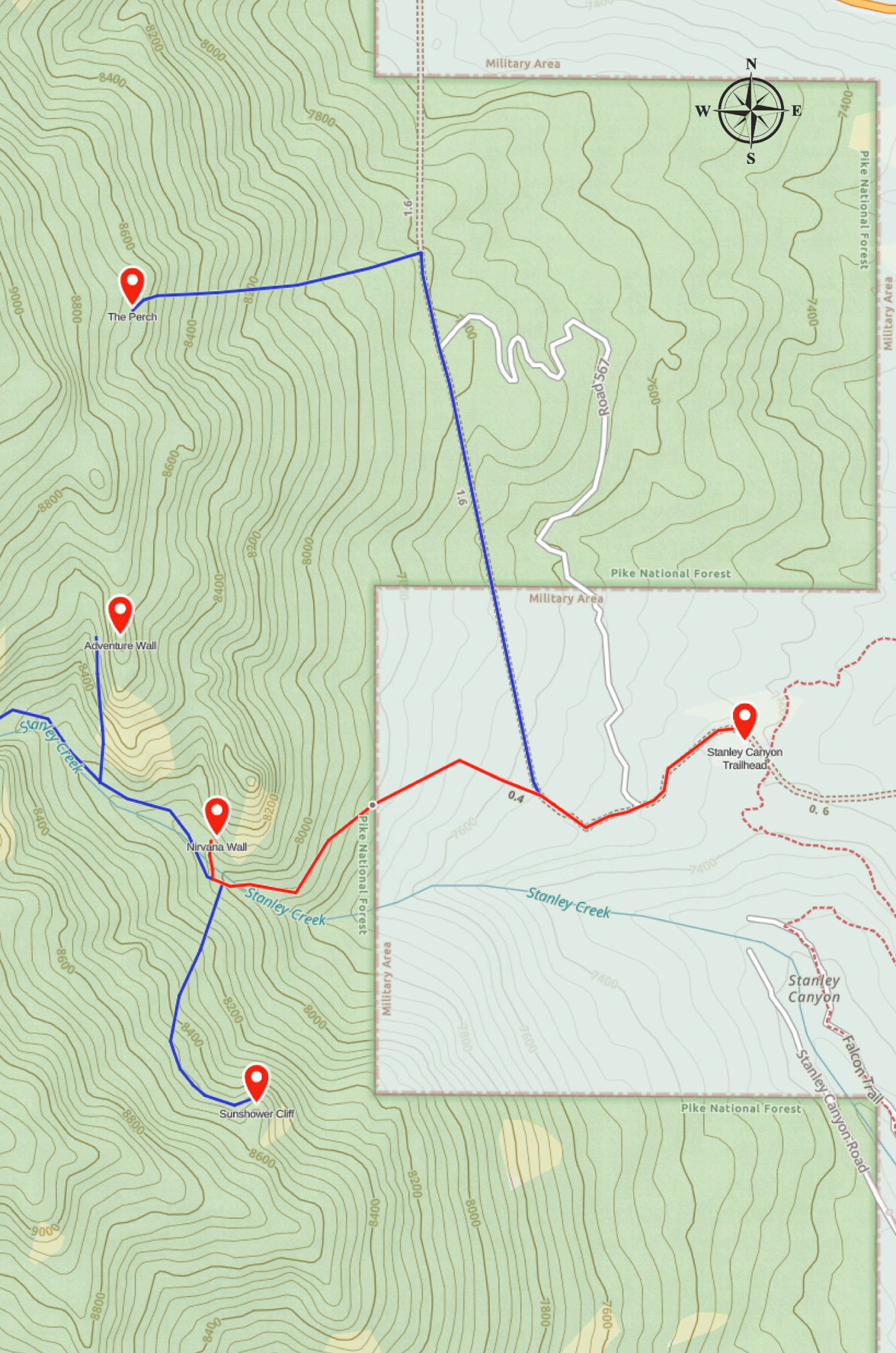
The Nirvana Wall is a southwest facing cliff a little over a half mile up the Stanley Canyon Trail. This crag has the most climbs out of any area on base with the difficulty ranging from 5.0 to 5.12. The area is ideal for beginners who want to learn to climb outdoors and includes a mock multipitch route for practice. The rock is good quality, and most of the routes are slab climbing. The only thing to watch out for is the kitty litter rock at the top of the cliff. The area was first developed by Ben Roberts and Trey Walker in the Spring of 2020. Their development in this area kick started the development of other areas all over base, ultimately leading to the development of this guidebook. The history section has more information on the initial development of Nirvana Wall. There is potential for more development on the north end of Nirvana Wall. After Truly Hell, the wall becomes taller, and the rock quality worsens. This area could have longer and more difficult routes than the lower wall but has yet to be explored. Further development at Adventure Wall would likely be better than extending Nirvana Wall and could fill the need for harder sport routes in this area.

Approach

From the Stanley Canyon trailhead, hike up the trail for 0.64 miles and look for a fixed rope in a steep gully on the right side of the trail. The base of the Nirvana Wall is visible from the trail. Follow the fixed line to the base. The easiest way to reach the top of the cliff is by scrambling up Piton Pilsner (5.0). A .gpx file with the exact approach route can be found on *mountainproject.com*

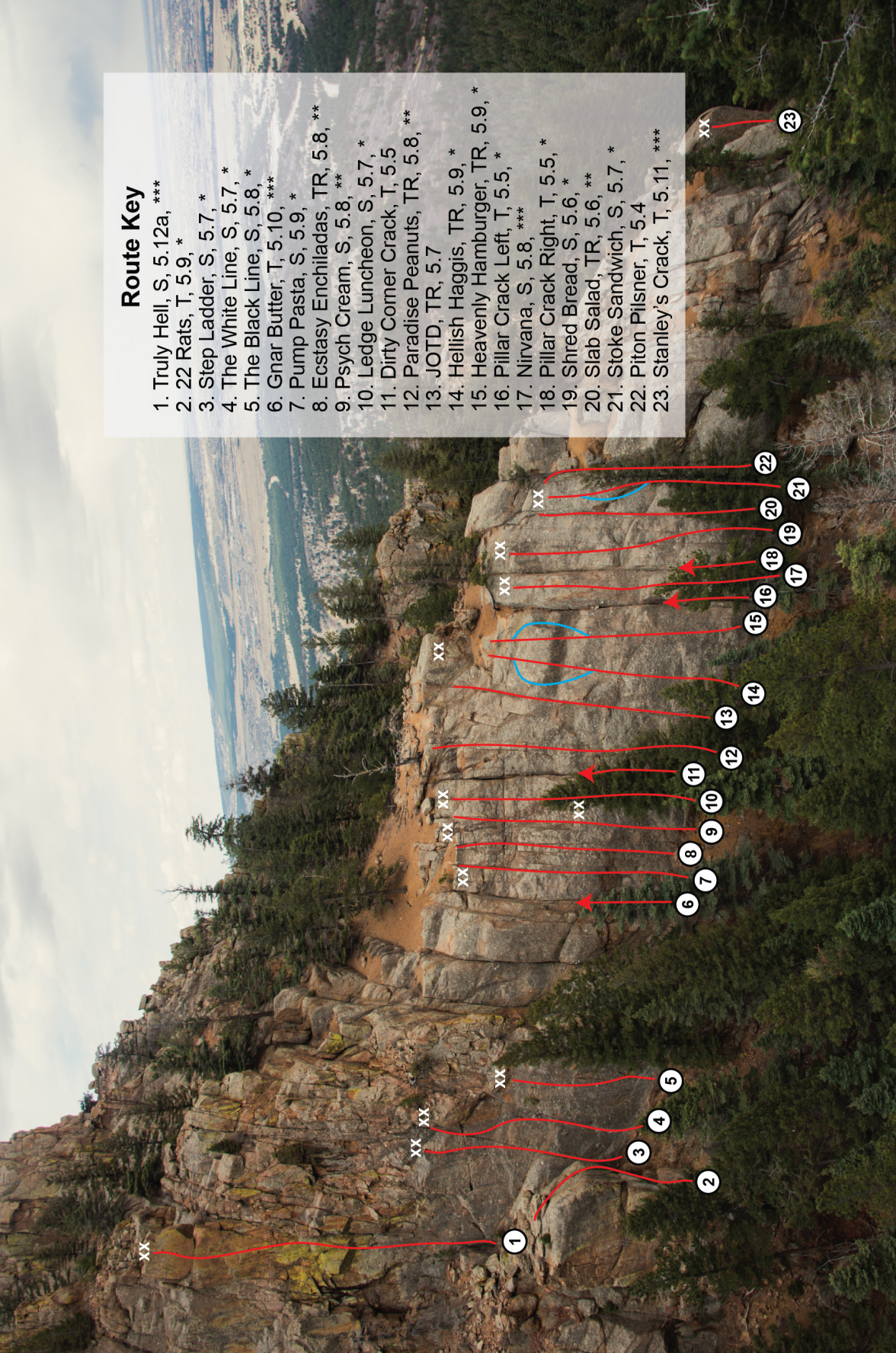
Descent

There are bolted anchors at the top of all sport routes that can be used for descent, or you can reverse Piton Pilsner (5.0). All routes can be descended with a single 70 meter rope. It is possible to walk off the backside of Nirvana Wall into a gully on the west side, but this is not recommended.



Route Key

1. Truly Hell, S, 5.12a, ***
2. 22 Rats, T, 5.9, *
3. Step Ladder, S, 5.7, *
4. The White Line, S, 5.7, *
5. The Black Line, S, 5.8, *
6. Gnar Butter, T, 5.10, ***
7. Pump Pasta, S, 5.9, *
8. Ecstasy Enchiladas, TR, 5.8, **
9. Psych Cream, S, 5.8, **
10. Ledger Luncheon, S, 5.7, *
11. Dirty Corner Crack, T, 5.5
12. Paradise Peanuts, TR, 5.8, **
13. JOTD, TR, 5.7
14. Hellish Haggis, TR, 5.9, *
15. Heavenly Hamburger, TR, 5.9, *
16. Pillar Crack Left, T, 5.5, *
17. Nirvana, S, 5.8, ***
18. Pillar Crack Right, T, 5.5, *
19. Shred Bread, S, 5.6, *
20. Slab Salad, TR, 5.6, **
21. Stoke Sandwich, S, 5.7, *
22. Piton Pilsner, T, 5.4
23. Stanley's Crack, T, 5.11, ***



1. Truly Hell, S, 5.12a, ***

Length: 115 feet

FA: Nate Bean, July 2021

Description: The bottom half of the route has good footholds and hand holds. The first crux is about halfway up the route at a small overhang. There is a good rest spot above the overhang, and the top half of the route has a series of small ledges. The second crux is getting established in the finger crack at the top. There is a two bolt anchor with rap rings at the top.

Protection: 12 quick draws.

2. 22 Rats, T, 5.9, *

Length: 50 feet

FKA: Micah Pugh and Remi Vail, Mar. 2021

Description: 22 Rats climbs a great off width chimney using lots of chicken wings and jamming your entire body. The crack is a large split in a boulder. A top rope can be set from the highline anchors at the top.

Protection: Standard rack and BD #4, #5, and #6. Cord to extend the anchor.

3. Step Ladder, S, 5.7, *

Length: 70 feet

FA: Seth Konig, Jan. 2020

Description: This climb has two big steps. The bottom has a couple of fun crack moves, and the top is slabby. It is best used as an access route to get to the base of Truly Hell. There is a two bolt anchor with rap rings at the top.

Protection: 5 quick draws.

4. The White Line, S, 5.7, *

Length: 60 feet

FA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, 2021

Description: The White Line is a fun sport route to the right of the Step Ladder. The crux is towards the top of the route. It climbs like a staircase with a few bulges. The base of the route is marked by a large white streak on the rock. There is a two bolt anchor with rap rings at the top.

Protection: 5 quick draws.

5. The Black Line, S, 5.8, *

Length: 40 feet

FA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, 2021

Description: The Black Line is a fun, short sport route to the right of The White Line. The route is marked by a black vein in the rock. Follow the seam to the top.

Protection: 3 quick draws.

6. Gnar Butter, T, 5.10, ***

Length: 90 feet

FKA: Trey Walker, 2020

Description: Gnar Butter ascends a spicy, steep hand/finger crack, a great crack climb for Nirvana Wall. The protection goes in well, but make sure the rock is solid. The crux is the first 2/3 of the route. Pull the overhang, and cruise up 5.6 terrain to the two bolt anchor.

Protection: Standard rack.

7. Pump Pasta, S, 5.9, *

Length: 70 feet

FA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, 2020

Description: Start on the low arete and follow the seam to the top. The first clips are the hardest. There are good moves on the steep terrain at the bottom and the climbing gets easier at the top. There is a two bolt anchor with rap rings at the top.

Protection: 6 quick draws.

8. Ecstasy Enchiladas, TR, 5.8, **

Length: 70 feet

FKA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, 2020

Description: Climb the slab between Pump Pasta and Psych Cream. Start on steep slabs and follow dual seams to the top.

9. Psych Cream, S, 5.8, **

Length: 70 feet

FA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, 2020

Description: This is a great route for new leaders to practice multipitch climbing. Start on steep terrain and finish in an easy shallow crack. There is a set of bolts midway up this route and at the top. There is a good shelf below the first set of bolts to practice top belaying.

Protection: 6 quick draws.

10. Ledge Luncheon, S, 5.7, *

Length: 70 feet

FA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, 2020

Description: Follow a seam to the top. This route can also be done as a mock multipitch like Psych Cream. There is a set of bolts midway up this route and at the top. There is a good shelf below the first set of bolts to practice top belaying.

Protection: 6 quick draws.

11. Dirty Corner Crack, T, 5.5

Length: 70 feet

FKA: Finn Westenfelder, 2020

Description: As the name implies, this crack is very dirty. It is a good first trad route with easy hand jamming and lots of good ledges to fiddle with placements.

Protection: Standard rack.

12. Paradise Peanuts, TR, 5.8, **

Length: 80 feet

FKA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, 2020

Description: This route follows the seam to the right of the dirty crack. Sling a boulder or use the dead tree to set a TR anchor.

13. JOTD, TR, 5.7

Length: 100 feet

FKA: Ben Roberts, 2020

Description: Climb the easiest corner/seam directly under the anchor. Continue past the left of the bulge to stay true to the grade. A top rope can be set from the Hellish Haggis anchor.

14. Hellish Haggis, TR, 5.9, *

Length: 70 feet

FKA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, 2020

Description: Follow the face up to the left side of a large bulge. The route can be made easier by going completely around the bulge on the left side (5.8 variation). There is a two bolt anchor with rap rings at the top.

15. Heavenly Hamburger, TR, 5.9, *

Length: 70 feet

FKA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, 2020

Description: Follow the face up to the right side of a large bulge. The route can be made easier by going completely around the bulge on the right side (5.8 variation). There is a two bolt anchor with rap rings at the top.

16. Pillar Crack Left, T, 5.5, *

Length: 70 feet

FKA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, 2020

Description: This ascends the left crack on a distinct pillar where the wall increases in height. It has good ledges to practice trad placement but the crack is full of bushes.

Protection: Standard rack.

17. Nirvana, S, 5.8, ***

Length: 70 feet

FA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, 2020

Description: Follow the face in between the two pillar crack routes. The route is steep at the top with slabby moves all the way up. There is a two bolt anchor with rap rings at the top.

Protection: 8 quick draws.

18. Pillar Crack Right, T, 5.5, *

Length: 70 feet

FKA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, 2020

Description: This ascends the right crack on a distinct pillar where the wall increases in height. It has good ledges to practice trad placements. There are limited placements at the bottom.

Protection: Standard rack.

19. Shred Bread, S, 5.6, *

Length: 90 feet

FA: Ben Roberts, Apr. 2020

Description: Shred Bread is a fun first lead! Climb a boulder problem start to easy slab climbing with an airy finish. Trust your feet! There is a two bolt anchor with rap rings at the top.

Protection: 6 quick draws.

20. Slab Salad, TR, 5.6, **

Length: 60 feet

FKA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, 2020

Description: Follow the first seam to the left of Piton Pilsner. Transition to the crack system at the top.

21. Stoke Sandwich, S, 5.7, *

Length: 90 feet

FA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, 2020

Description: One of the best sport routes for beginners. The route is low angle at the bottom and top with a short steeper section in the middle. There is a two bolt anchor with rap rings at the top. Following a left crack in the middle of the face makes for an easier 5.6 variation.

Protection: 5 quick draws.

22. Piton Pilsner, T, 5.4

Length: 90 feet

FKA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, 2020

Description: Climb the band of rock with a solid piton about 15 feet up. Climb past the chockstone and tree to a 2 bolt anchor at the top of Shred Bread. This is the best way to the top if you want to scramble up and set top ropes.

Protection: Light rack.

23. Stanley's Crack, T, 5.11, ***

Length: 30 feet

FKA: Austin Cooner, 2012

Description: Start the route with a mantel up on to the slab at the start of the crack. Then proceed to lie back and lock your way up the crack until it is no more. Finish by grabbing a small crimp directly underneath the bolts. There is a two bolt anchor with rap rings at the top.

Location: 38.98704, -104.90810. This route is located around the south end of Nirvana Wall, not on the main wall.

Protection: Standard rack with small nuts.



Ben Roberts bolting Shred Bread (5:6) - Trey Walker

Adventure Wall



Finn Westenfelder on Shackleton's Slabs (5.11-) - Nate Bean

Adventure Wall

Location: 38.99054, -104.90999

Aspect: West facing

Prominence: 250 feet

Approach Distance: 0.94 miles

Approach Elevation Gain: 1,130 feet

Description

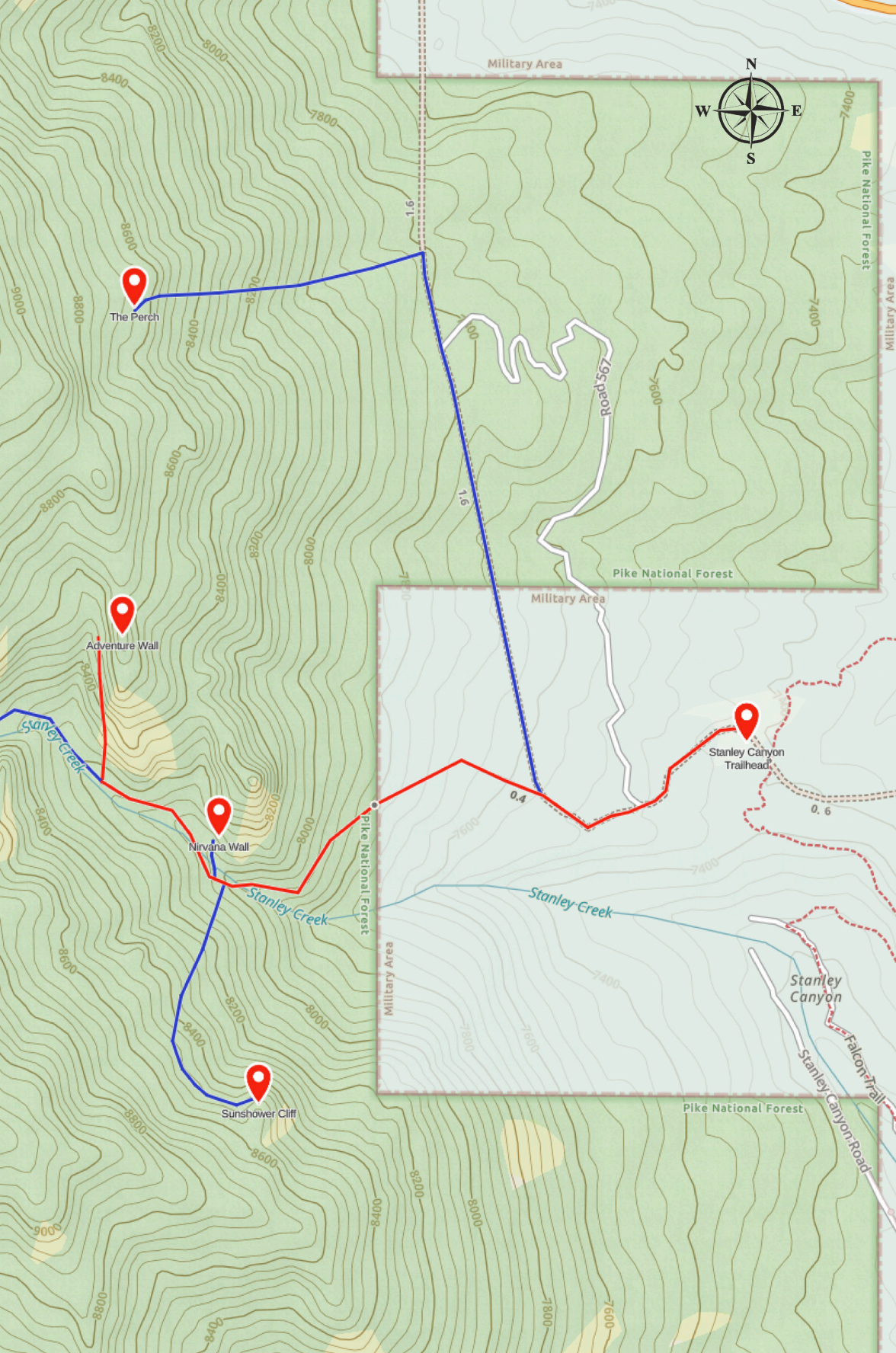
The Adventure Wall is a 300 foot west facing cliff in Stanley Canyon. The area offers longer and more difficult climbing than Nirvana Wall. Adventure Wall is home to the only multipitch sport route on base, Shackleton's Slabs (5.11-). The rock is good quality, but like Nirvana Wall you need to watch for kitty litter at the top of the routes. Currently, only the north and south ends of the wall have seen development. The tallest and most intriguing middle section of the cliff has potential for further development. Reaching the top of this middle section appears difficult, even from the top of other routes. It will likely require a short pitch of fifth class climbing from the ridge. After reaching the top, cleaning loose rocks on rappel would be best. The majority of this section looks like it would need bolts for sport routes, but some cracks to the right Shackleton's Slabs have potential for trad climbs. The first known ascent of Adventure Wall was completed by Austin Cooner in 2012, but a fixed nut and old bolt are evidence of earlier ascents.

Approach

From the Stanley Canyon trailhead, hike up the trail for 0.80 miles and look for a fixed rope in a steep gully on the right side of the trail. The base of the Adventure Wall is visible from the trail. Follow the fixed line to the base. The easiest way to reach the top of the south end of the cliff is by scrambling up low fifth class slabs. The easiest way to reach the top of the north end of the cliff is by hiking along the base of the wall for 0.15 miles until you reach a fourth class gully that goes to the top. A .gpx file with the exact approach route can be found on *mountainproject.com*

Descent

There are bolted anchors at the top of all sport routes that can be used for descent. All routes can be descended with a single 70 meter rope. You can also descend by reversing the low fifth class at the south end of the formation, but this is not recommended.



Military Area



The Perch

Adventure Wall

Nirvana Wall

Sunshower Cliff

Pike National Forest

Military Area

Stanley Canyon Trailhead

Stanley Creek

Stanley Canyon

Pike National Forest

Stanley Canyon Road

Pike National Forest

Military Area



The Adventure Wall – Jenna Breeden

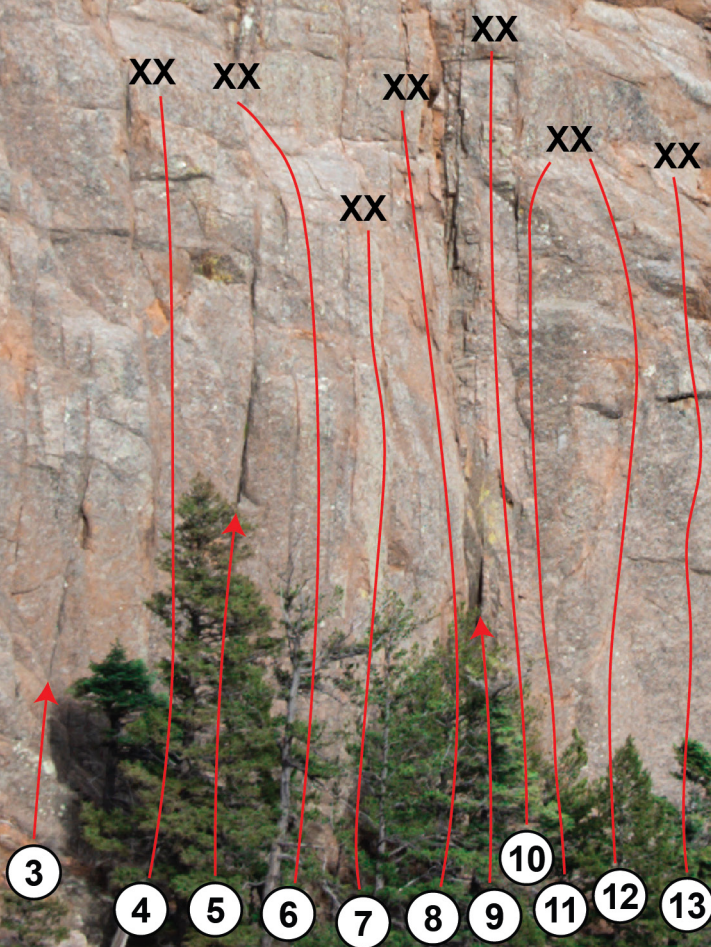


Route Key

1. Shackleton's Slabs, S, 5, 11-, ***
2. Norman's Notch, T, 5, 9, *

Route Key

- 3. Florine's Finger Crack, T, 5.10+, **
- 4. Purja's Push, S, 5.10, **
- 5. Hilaree's Hand Crack, T, 5.9, *
- 6. Messner's Seams, S, 5.9, **
- 7. Potter's Pullup, S, 5.11, *
- 8. Kain's Corner, S, 5.8
- 9. Gadd's Gully, T, 5.8
- 10. JoJo's Jugs, S, 5.7, ***
- 11. Earhart's Arete, S, 5.9 **
- 12. Hill's Highstep, S, 5.10, *
- 13. Tommy's Tiptoes, S, 5.12, **



1. Shackleton's Slabs, S, 5.11-, ***

Length: 190 feet, 2 pitches

FA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, May 2021

Description: This is the first multi-pitch sport route at USAFA. The challenging climbing and views from the top make up for the hike to the route. This route is named after Ernest Shackleton.

P1 (5.10+, 110 feet) - The route starts on a shelf about 10 feet off the ground. A bolt for the belayer to clip into is next to the first bolt of the route. The pitch is divided into two sections by a ledge, which offers a good place to rest.

P2 (5.11-, 80 feet) - Follow the face above the second ledge straight up and enjoy the views at the top.

Location: 38.99021, -104.91052. The leftmost route at Adventure Wall. Walk along the base for approximately 1/8th of a mile.

Protection: 12 quick draws.

2. Norman's Notch, T, 5.9, *

Length: 170 feet, 2 pitches

FKA: Seth Konig, Ethan Haley, and Finn Westenfelder, Nov. 2020

Description:

P1 (5.7) - Climb up the obvious crack with bushes at the bottom. The crux is near the top with a steep crack. It can be avoided by traversing to the left. Build a belay on the ledges after you pull the steep section. This pitch has lots of loose rock.

P2 (5.9) - Follow the same crack up towards the chimney. Take the wide finger crack on the left up the left side of the chimney. Keep following the hand cracks up to a ledge with a steep and short boulder above it. Pull this boulder to gain the sand ridgeline. There is an old nut and a new piton you can belay/rap from. Beware of all the loose rocks on top of the ridge when belaying your second up. The rest of the route is solid with good placements. When rappelling, you can make it to a tree below your first belay station if you have a 70m rope. You can rappel off that to avoid leaving additional gear. This route is named after Norman Clyde.

Location: 38.98932, -104.91043. The large notch in the middle of the wall with blocks sitting at the top. Start in the crack just left of a tree.

Protection: Standard rack.

3. Florine's Finger Crack, T, 5.10+, **

Length: 70 feet

FKA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, May 2021

Description: This route goes up a shallow finger crack just left of the inset face. The crack is shallow and could be cleaned. Some gear placements are runout. This route is named after Hans Florine.

Protection: Standard rack, mainly small pieces.

4. Purja's Push, S, 5.10, ****Length:** 70 feet**FA:** Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, May 2021**Description:** Find crimps up a face on an inset panel. The crux is towards the middle. At the top pull over a bulge on the right or make easier moves left. Finish at the bolts above Florine's Finger Crack. This route is named after Nirmal Purja.**Protection:** 8 quick draws.**5. Hilaree's Hand Crack**, T, 5.9, ***Length:** 70 feet**FKA:** Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, May 2021**Description:** Follow the shallow hand crack to the top. The crack is shallow and thin at the bottom. At the top clip a bolt and pull over a bulge to get to the anchor. This route is named after Hilaree Nelson.**Protection:** Standard rack and one quick draw.**6. Messner's Seams**, S, 5.9, ****Length:** 70 feet**FA:** Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, May 2021**Description:** Follow fun seams that spread apart. The hardest part is spanning moves at the top. Finish at the anchor for Hilaree's Hand Crack or Potter's Pullup. This route is named after Reinhold Messner.**Protection:** 8 quick draws.**7. Potter's Pullup**, S, 5.11, ***Length:** 70 feet**FA:** Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, May 2021**Description:** This route starts below a small roof and turns into a pleasant but shallow finger crack. Stick clipping the start is recommended. The anchor is below the ledge where Kain's Corner finishes. This route is named after Dean Potter.**Protection:** 8 quick draws.**8. Kain's Corner**, S, 5.8**Length:** 70 feet**FA:** Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, May 2021**Description:** Follow the left angled ramp to the high anchors above the ledge. The hardest part is the start with poor rock. It is possible to transition left to the Potter's Pullup anchor. This route is named after Conrad Kain.**Protection:** 8 quick draws.

9. Gadd's Gully, T, 5.8

Length: 90 feet

FKA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, May 2021

Description: The large gully separating Kain's Corner and JoJo's Jugs. The rock in the gully is poor and placements are runout. It is best to finish at the anchor above JoJo's Jugs. This route is named after Will Gadd.

Protection: Standard rack.

10. JoJo's Jugs, S, 5.7, ***

Length: 80 feet

FA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, May 2021

Description: The easiest route at Adventure Wall and one of the best. Follow the arete just right of Gadd's Gully using good holds. This is the best way to set a top rope for the harder routes on the face to the right. This route is named after Joe Josephson.

Protection: 8 quick draws.

11. Earhart's Arete, S, 5.9 **

Length: 50 feet

FA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, May 2021

Description: A slightly harder route than JoJo's Jugs, this route goes up the face on slabby holds. Finish on a ledge to an anchor shared with Hill's Highstep. This route is named after Amelia Earhart.

Protection: 6 quick draws.

12. Hill's Highstep, S, 5.10, *

Length: 50 feet

FA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, May 2021

Description: A thin route up the face on decent holds. Avoid the bulges to keep the grade. Find good feet! This route is named after Lynn Hill.

Protection: 6 quick draws.

13. Tommy's Tiptoes, S, 5.12, **

Length: 50 feet

FA: Hayden Richards and Finn Westenfelder, May 2021

Description: Another thin route up the face with poor feet. The crux is pulling the first bulge. There is another difficult bulge just below the anchor. This route is named after Tommy Caldwell.

Protection: 6 quick draws.



Hayden Richards at the top of Shackleton's Slabs (5.11-) - Finn Westenfelder

Sunshower Cliff



Will Mockel belaying on Downpour (5.9) - Finn Westenfelder

Sunshower Cliff

Location: 38.98385, -104.90750

Aspect: North and West facing

Prominence: 150 feet

Approach Distance: 0.91 miles

Approach Elevation Gain: 1,100 feet

Description

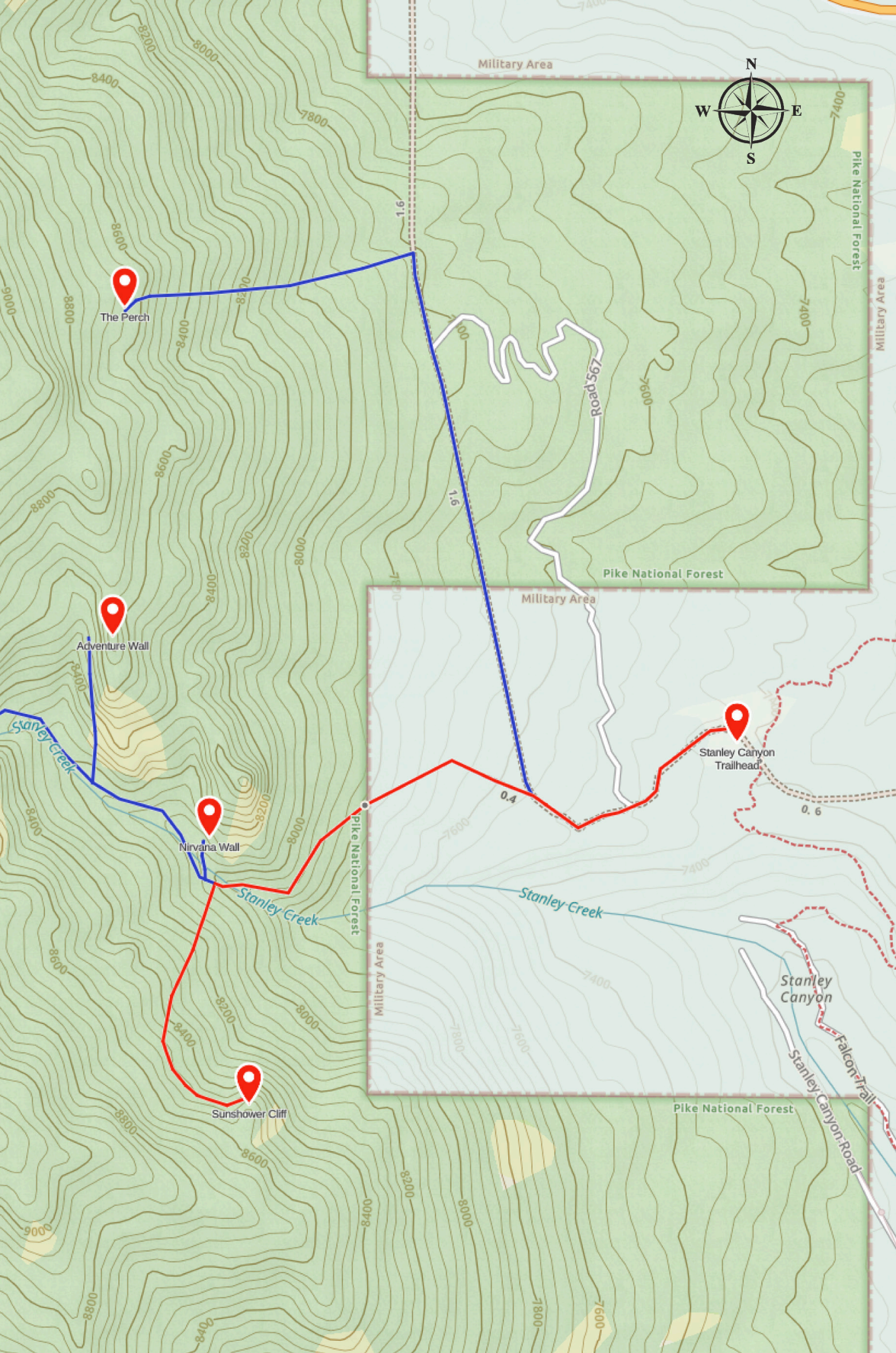
Sunshower Cliff is a unique formation on the south side of Stanley Canyon. The area is hard to access but has good crack climbing and great views of the canyon. The north face of the formation can be clearly seen from the first rest stop before the Stanley Canyon trail turns west and heads into the canyon. The rock is of poor quality, and there are plenty of loose blocks that should be treated with caution. The first known ascent of Sunshower Cliff was completed by Finn Westenfelder and Will Mockel in the Summer of 2020, but an old tat rappel anchor at the top is evidence of an earlier ascent. The area is named after the phenomenon in which rain falls on a sunny cloudless day. There is potential for more development all over Sunshower cliff. There are multiple unclimbed cracks on the north, east, and west faces. A multipitch sport climb up the triangular shaped faces on the north side was discussed but never put up.

Approach

From the Stanley Canyon trailhead, hike up the trail for 0.64 miles until the point where the trail is closest to the creek. Cross the creek and bushwhack to the south until you reach the base of the formation. There is no established trail, so take the path of least resistance. This is one of the worse approaches on base. A .gpx file with a decent approach route can be found on *mountainproject.com*

Descent

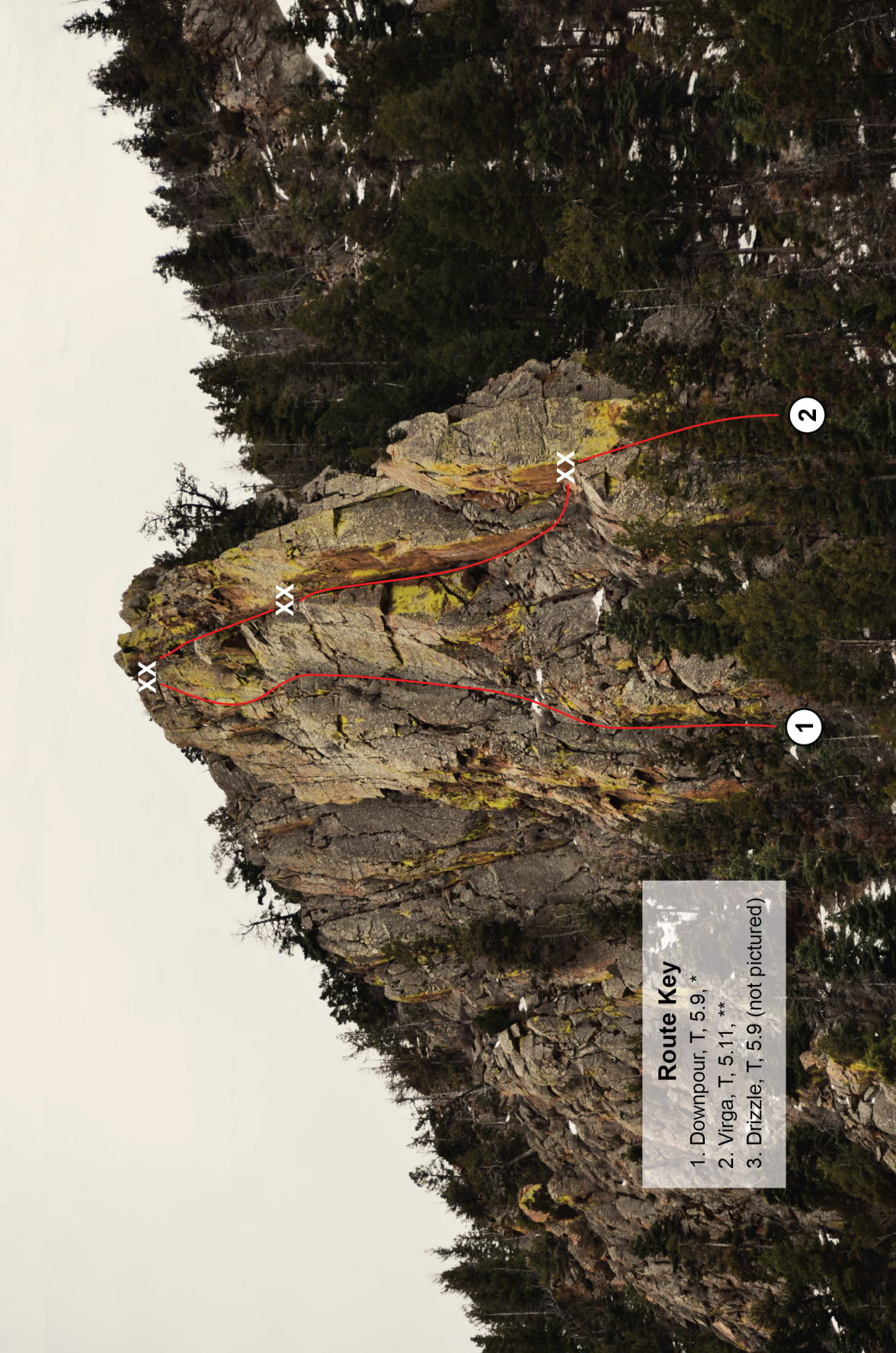
The easiest descent uses the bolted anchors on Virga. The top set of bolts is located on a north facing block right before the knife edge ridge drops off into a gully. It is best to do all three rappels with a single 70 meter rope due to the awkward position of the route. While you could do less rappels with double 70 meter ropes, they are likely to get stuck or pull down loose rocks. Alternatively, you can hike off the back of the formation. From the summit, hike southwest and then wrap around the west side of the formation to get back to the base. Reverse the approach to get back to the Stanley Canyon trail.



Route Key

1. Downpour, T, 5.9, *
2. Virga, T, 5.11, **
3. Drizzle, T, 5.9 (not pictured)

1. Downpour, T, 5.9, *
2. Virga, T, 5.11, **
3. Drizzle, T, 5.9 (not pictured)



1. Downpour, T, 5.9, *

Length: 200 feet

FKA: Will Mockel and Garrett McGaha, Jul. 2020

Description: Start at the base of a large overhang. Climb to the right around the overhang then slowly traverse left, following a good crack system. The route tops out about 20 feet below the true summit on a ledge. You can set a belay at the ledge and then scramble to the summit.

Location: 38.98401, -104.90747. Start at a large overhang at the base of the east face.

Protection: Standard rack.

2. Virga, T, 5.11, **

Length: 290 feet

FKA: Nate Bean and Finn Westenfelder, May 2023

Description:

P1 (5.9+ 100 feet) – Start at the base of the north face on a ledge. It is possible to start below this ledge for full value. There is a bolt at the base of the route to protect the crumbly moves before you enter the crack. Climb the crack to a large ledge with a bolted belay. Walk along the ledge and move the belay to the bottom of pitch 2.

P2 (5.11 120 feet) – Climb the burly crack that starts as fists, becomes body width, and ends as hands. The body width section is the crux and may require some hard off-width climbing. Exit the crack to small slanting ledge with a two bolt anchor.

P3 (5.6 80 feet) – The final pitch is a scramble up a gully with lots of loose rocks. There are a few tenuous moves towards the top and the gear is sparse. This pitch is only worth it if you want to reach the summit. The anchor is slightly below the true summit and you can scramble to the top.

Location: Start at the base of the north face. Look for a bolt at the start of the first pitch.

Protection: Standard rack, two BD #4s and two BD #5s.

3. Drizzle, T, 5.9

Length: 100 feet

FKA: Will Mockel, Jul. 2020

Description: Drizzle follows a 90 degree corner all the way to the top. The crack takes gear and there are good holds on both faces but may require cleaning some moss.

Location: 38.98366, -104.90765. The highest elevation corner on the east facing side of Sunshower Cliff.

Protection: Standard rack.



Nate Bean and Finn Westenfelder on the FKA of Virga (5.11) - Jenna Breeden

Cascada

A high-angle photograph capturing a person rappelling down a steep, light-colored rock face. The person is positioned in the lower center of the frame, wearing a light blue shirt, dark shorts, and a white helmet. They are leaning back, with their arms extended against the rock. To the left of the rock face, a stream flows over a series of large, brown, rounded boulders. The water is dark and turbulent as it cascades over the rocks. On the far left, a dense evergreen tree stands on a patch of brown earth. The background is filled with more rocks and some green foliage. The overall scene is rugged and natural.

Seth König on the FKA of Bush Line (5.9) - Finn Westenfelder

Cascada

Location: 38.97022, -104.90742

Aspect: West facing

Prominence: 170 feet

Approach Distance: 0.68 miles

Approach Elevation Gain: 540 feet

Description

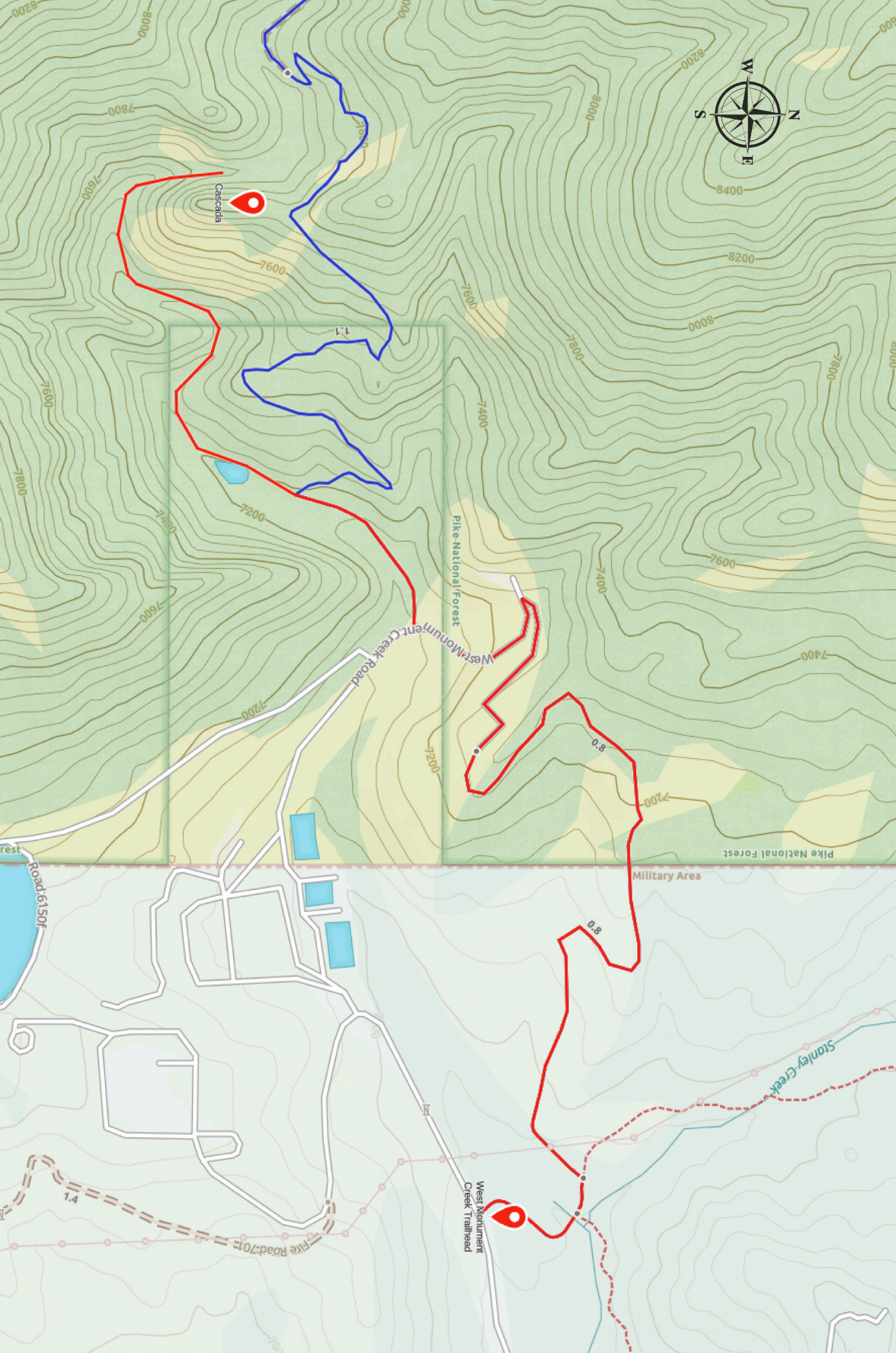
Cascada is a 300 foot west facing cliff tucked in the West Monument Creek drainage. The area offers the longest multipitch trad routes on base for USAFA personnel. While there are longer routes on Eagle's Peak, Cascada offers similar quality climbs without the risk of breaking the rules. There are loose blocks on all the routes and climbs should be treated with caution. Further, before putting up a new climb it is best to rappel the route and clean it. There is ample room for more development on Cascada with routes at a range of grades. Specifically, the south end of the wall has a series of crack systems that look like difficult 2-3 pitch trad routes. The area could also benefit from bolted anchors at the top of some climbs. The first known ascent was completed by Finn Westenfelder and Seth Konig in the Fall of 2020, but numerous pitons dating back to the 1960s are evidence of earlier ascents.

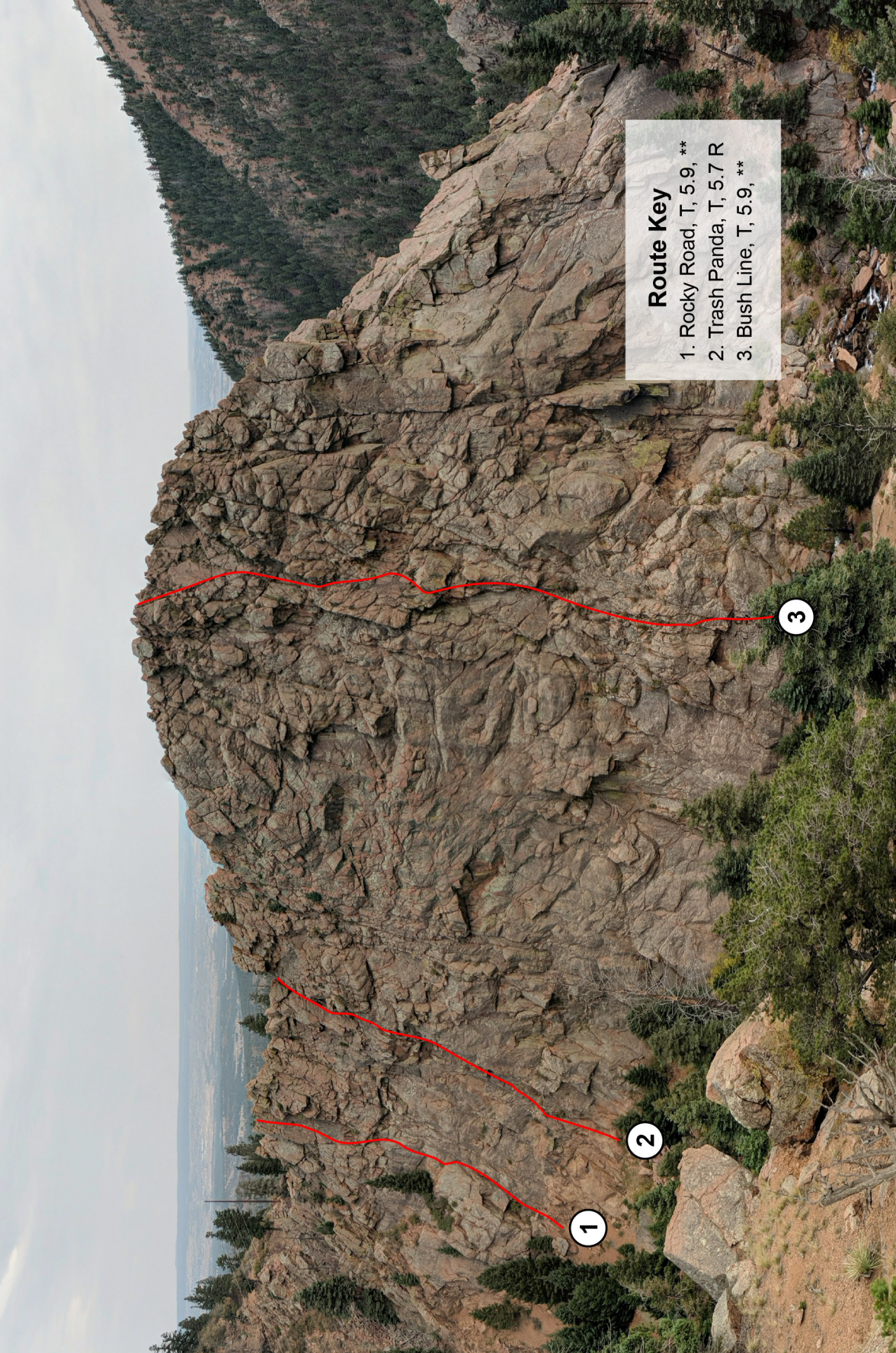
Approach

From the West Monument Creek trailhead hike up the West Monument Creek trail (713) for 0.18 miles until the trail turns to the north. Instead of hiking north, continue following the creek for 0.45 miles to reach the base of the wall. The trail alongside the creek is faint so take the path of least resistance. Alternatively, to reach the top of Cascada follow the West Monument Creek trail for 0.80 miles until you see the top of the formation. Turn south and hike off the trail to the base of the east side of Cascada. The climb up this side is low fifth class, but roping up is strongly recommended because the top of the formation is loose and a fall off the west face would be fatal. A .gpx file with the exact approach route can be found on *mountain-project.com*

Descent

There are no bolts on Cascada, so the best descent option is topping out and climbing off the east side of the formation. Down climbing the north side of the short east face is low fifth class but still dangerous. The descent should be planned out in advance and taken with caution. Alternatively, you can rappel off the old pitons on the face, but this is strongly discouraged. Adding a rappel anchor at the top for the east face would be beneficial.





Route Key

- 1. Rocky Road, T, 5.9, **
- 2. Trash Panda, T, 5.7 R
- 3. Bush Line, T, 5.9, **

1. Rocky Road, T, 5.9, **

Length: 150 feet, 2 pitches

FKA: Seth Konig, Finn Westenfelder, Ethan Haley, Oct. 2020

Description:

P1 (5.6) - Start all the way to the left of the wall at a crack that goes straight up to a large ledge with a tree on it. Follow the crack up to ledge, and belay from the tree.

P2 (5.10) - From the tree, go slightly right and go straight up towards a roof. Go up the chimney. There still may be some loose rocks in the chimney that will shower down on your belayer, so be alert. Make a committing traverse around the roof. Follow a wide finger crack straight up to the top.

Location: Go to the end of the road and look for a large ledge with a large pine on top of it. The route starts at the right side of this ledge.

Protection: Standard rack. Small gear is nice for the second pitch.

2. Trash Panda, T, 5.7 R

Length: 165 feet, 2 pitches

FKA: Seth Konig, Finn Westenfelder, Ethan Haley, Oct. 2020

Description:

Despite the easy grade, this is not a good first trad lead. There is minimal gear, committing moves, and loose rock. However, if you like long runouts and loose blocks, then this might be the route for you.

P1 (5.7) - Start at a large boulder below a large roof about 2/3 of the way up the wall. Follow a crack straight up to the ledge, and then go slightly right and up a short off width. Above the off width, there is a large ledge to belay from. Back the pin up with a small cam in one of the pockets above the pin.

P2 (5.7) - Traverse to the right of the roof. There are minimal gear placements. Pull up over a smaller roof to the right of the main roof and go up the easy gully. Climb the easy chimney before topping out.

Location: Go to the next obvious crack to the right of Rocky Road. It starts at a large boulder.

Protection: Standard rack. Small gear is nice for the second pitch.

3. Bush Line, T, 5.9, **

Length: 270 feet, 3 pitches

FKA: Seth Konig, Finn Westenfelder, Oct. 2020

Description: This route got its name from the significant number of bushes removed from the cracks. At the 3rd pitch, there are some old pitons that trended off to the right of this route providing evidence that the route was climbed before.

P1. (5.9) - Follow a prominent crack through some small roofs to a large ledge. It is best to belay from the opposite side of the creek.

P2 (5.9) - Trend slightly right towards the base of the large arete with a huge block sticking out above. Go straight up the arete, and tunnel up through a short off width section formed by the large overhanging block. Belay from a small ledge on top of the large block.

P2 variation (5.8) - When the arete is reached, go up around the right side. Continue up a nice crack to the right of the overhanging block. Belay from the small ledge atop the overhanging block.

P3 (5.8) - Trend slightly left up the face and around to the start of the left-facing dihedral. Follow the dihedral up about 30 feet before going left up a prominent crack. Top out on the ridge. There are many loose blocks up near the ridge. Be aware when building the final anchor.

Location: On the west side of the creek (opposite side from the wall), there is an old trail with a large cairn. Turn towards the creek at the cairn and look for the downed tree in the creek. Start on the lone boulder just downstream from the downed tree and to the left of the prominent crack/roof.

Protection: Standard rack.



Monument Creek - Finn Westensjeld



Seth König on the FKA of Bush Line (5.9) - Finn Westenfelder

Other Areas



1. I'm Too Tired, T, 5.10c/d, ***

Length: 35 feet

FKA: Austin Cooner, 2012

Description: This obvious crack dissects two large granite blocks on a freestanding appearing face on the north side of the Eagle's Peak trail. The crack is large and almost off width, requiring arm bars and a few good hand jams higher up. The crux is establishing yourself in the crack.

Location: 39.00548, -104.91188. Hike up the Eagle's Peak trail for 0.50 miles stopping after the turn off for Punishment Wall but before Falcon Spires. Scramble up the rock field to the route.

Protection: Standard rack. There is a two bolt rap anchor at the top.

2. Sleepyhead, T, 5.7, *

Length: 25 feet

FKA: Finn Westenfelder, Sep. 2021

Description: Sleepyhead is a short but fun trad route following a left facing crack up a small triangle shaped rock. It is a good warm-up for I'm Too Tired. This can be done as a boulder problem, but the landing is sketchy.

Location: 39.00536, -104.91188. Follow the approach for I'm Too Tired. This is lower down on the rock field just south of I'm Too Tired.

Protection: 3-4 pieces from BD size 1 to 3.

3. The Great Roof, S, Project

Length: 40 feet

Description: The Great Roof is a formation with a large roof on the north side of Eagle's Peak Canyon. The only current route goes up the center of the roof on the west side of the formation. This route looked feasible when bolting but a large block fell from the roof during the bolting process, removing key holds. The new grade is likely harder than 5.12.

Location: 39.00585, -104.91209. Hike up the Eagle's Peak trail for 0.50 miles stopping after the turn off for Punishment Wall but before Falcon Spires. Scramble up the rock field and continue past I'm Too Tired. The rock field merges with a gully to the west. Hike up the gully until you see a large overhanging roof on the east side.

Protection: 12 quick draws.

4. Down Under: Aussie, T, 5.8**Length:** 50 feet**FKA:** Caleb Kimpler, Jun. 2020

Description: Down Under is the largest face on the east side of Mt. Ansel (the peak just north of the Eagle's Peak Trail). Climb up the continuous crack system on the northmost side of the face. This is a short climb with good holds. There are some bushes growing from the main crack, but the rock is stable. There is a cluster of trees at the top that can be used to set a top rope.

Location: 39.00634, -104.91129. From the Eagles Peak trailhead, hike 0.50 miles to the rock field below The Great Roof. Hike up to The Great Roof and continue to the northeast past the Shaft boulder. You can reach the base of the formation by rappelling off a tree at the top with a single 70 meter rope.

Protection: Standard rack.**5. Hatchling's Peak: Dive Bomb, TR, 5.10, *****Length:** 50 feet**FKA:** Finn Westenfelder, Nov. 2020

Description: This climb goes straight up the overhanging face on the south side of Hatchling's Peak. There is a good ledge to rest at halfway up. Be prepared to take a huge swing when you fall. You can set a TR anchor on a tree at the top. If you extend the anchor over the edge, be wary of rubbing when you fall and swing.

Location: 39.00372, -104.92127. Hatchling's Peak is located to the Northwest of Eagle's Peak. Follow the Eagle's Peak trail for just over a mile to the aspen grove. At the end of the aspen grove, turn to the north, and hike until you reach a saddle. The south-facing side of Hatchling's Peak should be visible from the saddle.

6. Hatchling's Peak: The Nest, TR, 5.8, ***Length:** 40 feet**FKA:** Will Mockel, Jul. 2020

Description: The route starts with good holds and works up to a large overhang. The best way to top out is by using a slanted ledge at the base of the overhang and a crack above on the right-hand side. A top rope can be setup from a tree behind the route.

Location: 39.00368, -104.91998. Follow the directions for Dive Bomb. From the saddle, head towards the meadow and look for an overhanging block on the east cliffs.

7. The Staff Tower: Wing King, TR, 5.6**Length:** 150 feet**FKA:** Caleb Kimpler, Aug. 2020**Description:** Wing King goes up a slight overhang at the base, around a wedged boulder, and up a crack to reach the top. The route is dirty with multiple bushes and the poor rock quality is not worth the hike.**Location:** 38.99776, -104.91305. The Staff Tower is the chossy formation just south of Eagle's Peak. This route is located in the middle of the east facing side of the Staff Tower. From the Eagle's Peak trailhead, hike until you are about 500 feet from the summit. Instead of continuing up the trail, contour around the backside of the peak. Look for a saddle as you head south. From the saddle take a narrow rock field to the east to reach the top of the formation.**8. The Backside: Altair, TR, 5.6, *****Length:** 50 feet**FKA:** Finn Westenfelder, Apr. 2021**Description:** Altair is a short route with lots of good handholds and ledges. The hardest section is the steep part at the top. There are multiple trees on top of the cliff that can be used for TR anchors. The hike to the Backside formation is long and the climbing isn't worth it.**Location:** 38.99599, -104.91705. The route starts at the tallest part of the Backside cliff on South Peak. The Backside offers secluded rock climbing for those looking to explore areas off the beaten path. The approach is approximately 1.5 miles with 1900 feet of elevation gain, so hauling up gear is a workout. From the Eagle's Peak trailhead, hike until you are about 500 feet from the summit. Instead of continuing up the trail, contour around the backside of the peak. South Peak is visible to the southwest. Look for a saddle as you head south. At the saddle turn west and scramble to the summit of South Peak. The top of the Backside formation is the ridge southwest of the summit. A .gpx trail can be found on *mountainproject.com***9. Unknown Bolted Climb, S****Description:** There is a bolted sport route on the southern rock face. The route setter is unknown.**Location:** 39.02020, -104.93862. Follow Schubarth Road until it comes to a fork with Hay Creek Road. Follow Hay Creek Road to the GPS coordinates.

10. El Diablo and the Magic Man: Lightning to the Throttle, T, 5.7 X, ****Length:** 60 feet**FKA:** Luke Negley, Cole Miller, Jun. 2019

Description: Climbing Cathedral Rock is prohibited. The formation is on protected Native American land located directly behind the USAFA firing range and the rock is extremely bad quality. Entering this area is very dangerous and information is only included in this guidebook for historical purposes. Lightning to the Throttle ascends the giant east facing chimney that splits “El Diablo” into two pieces. Climb and stem the chimney to a hand crack 15 feet below the summit. Then make an airy step over to one side of the chimney and top out on the climber’s right side. There is no anchor on the true summit but there is a rap station 10 feet below. Simul rappelling off either side is also possible.

Location: 39.02928, -104.90113. Cathedral Rock.**Protection:** Standard rack.**11. The Lookout: The Kracken, T, 5.7, ******Length:** 40 feet**FKA:** Seth Konig, Aug. 2021

Description: This route starts off as a finger crack and progresses to hands then fists and finally slightly off width at the top. It is a good place to practice crack climbing. You can rig a top rope from a two bolt anchor at the top.

Location: 38.98717, -104.9062. The Lookout is a small rock outcropping a half mile up the Stanley Canyon Trail. You can easily walk to the top from the trail. The Kracken is an obvious crack on the north side of The Lookout. It can be seen on the trail before it turns west and heads into the canyon proper.

Protection: Standard rack.**12. The Nub, T, 5.0****Length:** 500 feet

Description: The Nub is the prominent rock formation just north of the entrance to Stanley Canyon. The wall faces east and there is potential for climbing on the east face. The easiest way to the top ascends a south facing gully that splits the Nub in half at the top. The west summit is higher, but the east summit offers better views and exposure. Reaching either summit requires a 20 foot pitch of fourth/low fifth class climbing.

Location: 38.98848, -104.9073. From the Stanley Canyon trailhead hike a half mile until you reach the cave on the side of the trail (Goblin boulder). Scramble to the north to reach the base of the south facing gully.

Protection: Light rack.



I'm Too Tired (5.10) - Jenna Breeden



The Great Roof - Finn Westerfelder



Unknown Bolted Climb - Jaden Clunie



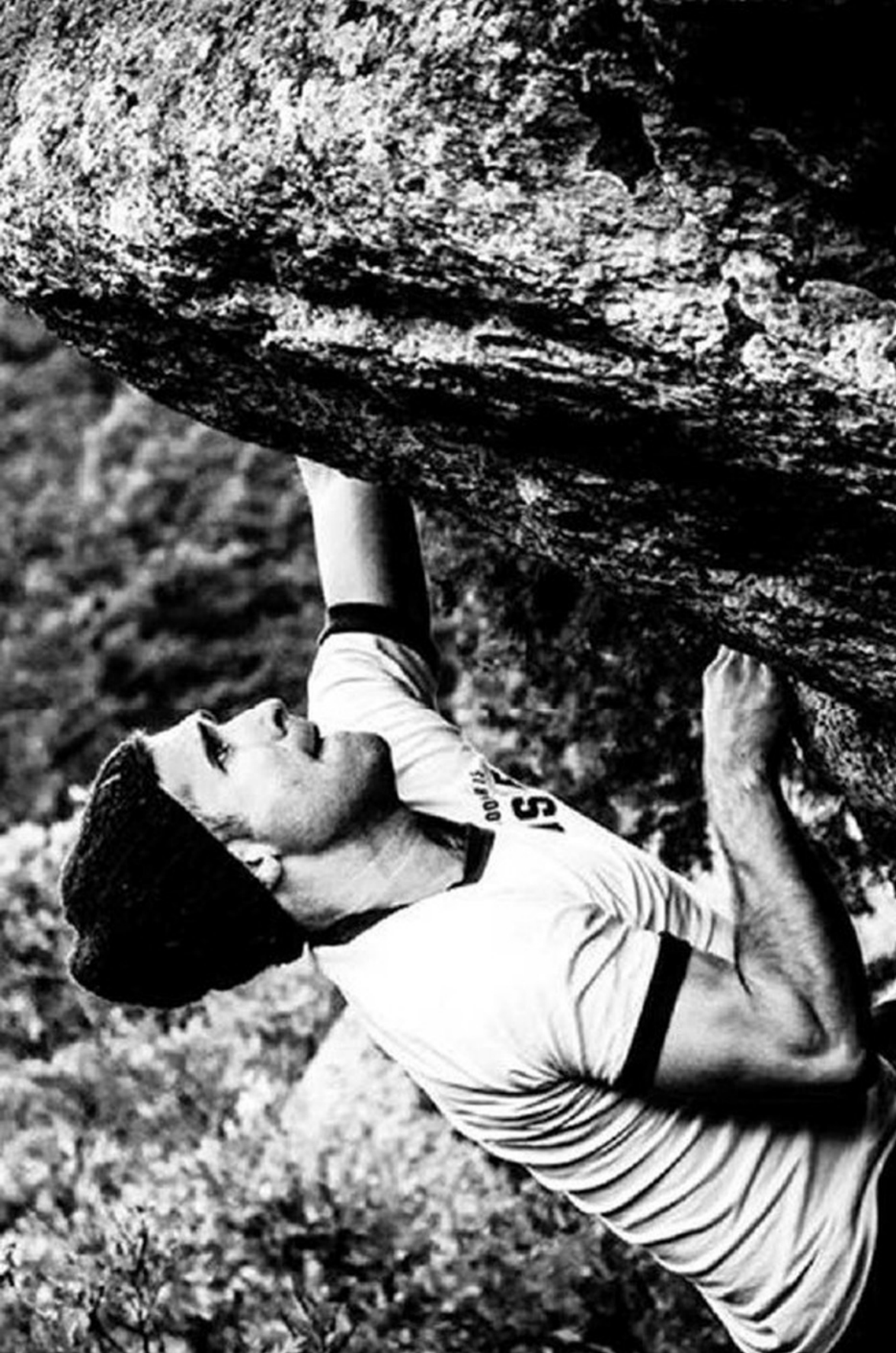
The Kracken (5.7) - Jenna Breeden



Ryan Self on Lightning to the Throttle (5.7 X)



Seth Konig and Zach Marien on The Nub - Finn Westenfelder





Bouldering

by Austin Cooner and Jason Copeland

Austin Cooner on Anaconda (V7+) - Josh Jordan

Robert's Ridge



Zach Ankiel on Direct Fire (V5) - Austin Cooner

Robert's Ridge

Location: 39.01062, -104.90746

Approach Distance: 0.52 miles

Approach Elevation Gain: 350 feet

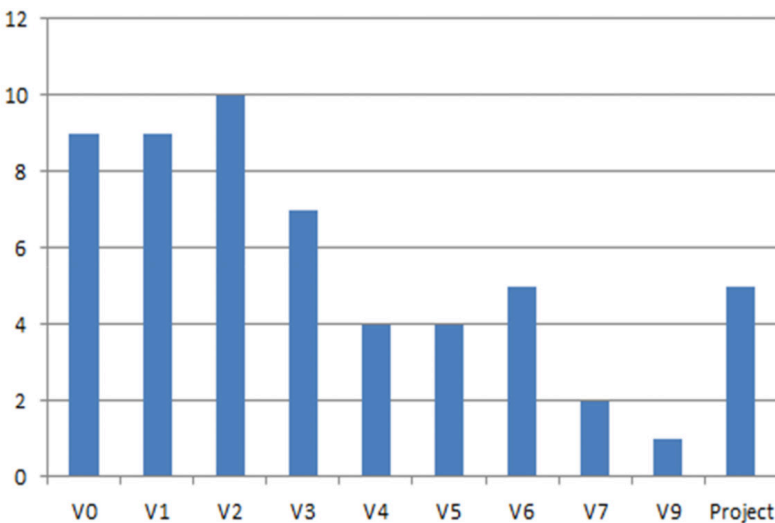
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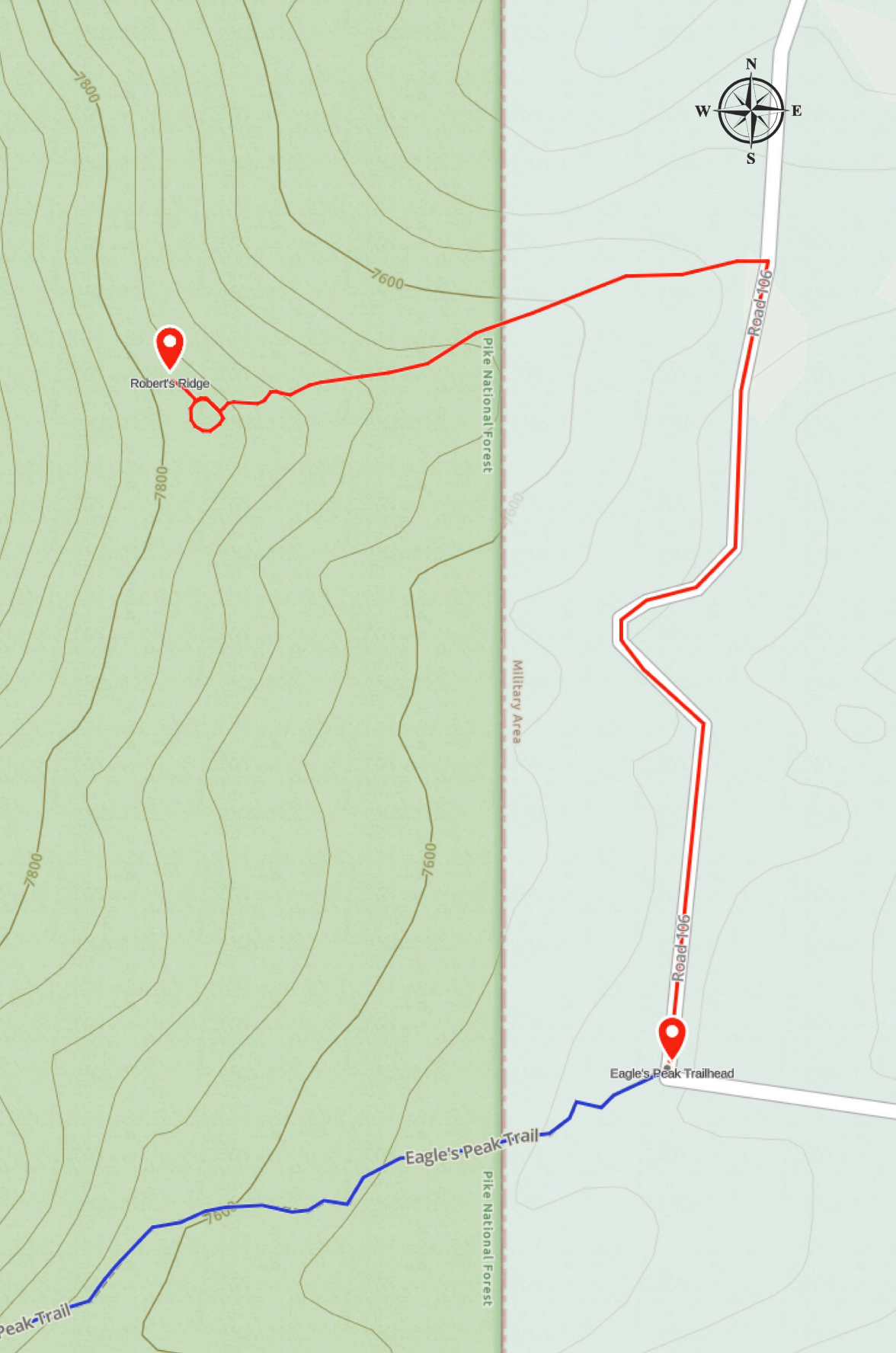
Roberts Ridge is a bouldering area only 15-20 minutes away from the Cadet Area. The problems are usually short 1, 2, or 3 move wonders with sharp crimps, slopers, and easy top outs. The rock is typical Pike's Peak granite so watch out for lichen and choss. The area hosts 50+ problems from V0 to V9 and several unclimbed projects in the V7-V12 range. This area was first documented in 2013 by Austin Cooner and Jason Copeland in "A Guide to Climbing at USAFA" but there is evidence of climbers in the area as far back as 1997. Unfortunately, cadets in recent years have used the Pit boulder as a cave for camping and have not followed leave no trace ethics. If you find trash or campfires at Robert's Ridge please help cleanup to keep this bouldering area nice.

Approach

From the Eagle's Peak trailhead, hike north for 0.31 miles along Road 106. There is a large cairn on the west side of the road marking the trail for Roberts Ridge. The trail has faded in recent years and the abundance of Gambel Oak in the area makes it more of a bushwhack. A .gpx file with a good approach route can be found on mountainproject.com

Number of boulders by grade:





Robert's Ridge

Eagle's Peak Trailhead

Pike National Forest

Military Area

Eagle's Peak Trail

Pike National Forest

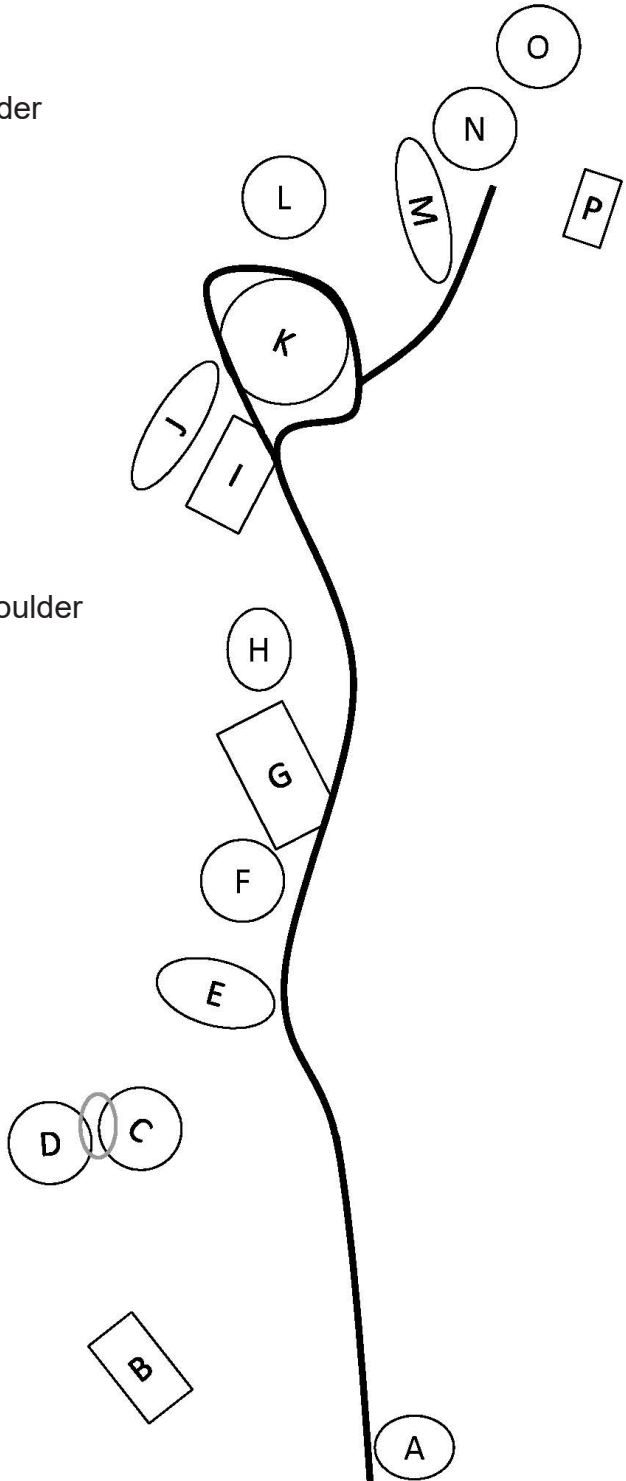
Road 106

Road 106

Peak Trail

Overview Map

- A:** Crash Landing Boulder
- B:** Crack Rock
- C:** '97 Boulder
- D:** Which Boulder?
- E:** First Boulder
- F:** Suicide Slab
- G:** The Pit Boulder
- H:** Crescent Rock
- I:** Spaceship Earth
- J:** Takur Ghar
- K:** Piton Rock
- L:** Afganistanimation Boulder
- M:** Shark Rock
- N:** Fifi Boulder
- O:** Mini-slab Boulder
- P:** Backside Boulder



A: Crash Landing Boulder

Location: 39.01055, -104.9064

1. Comin' In Hot!, V3

Description: Sit start using two good holds and a funky foot placement under the short overhanging face. A couple powerful moves should get you to the top.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

B: Crack Rock

Location: 39.01035, -104.90636

2. What A Rush, V4, *

Description: Start on underclings on the far left of the east face and climb up on flattened holds. Fun topout. Bottom left rock is off as is the crack, until the topout.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

3. Crack Pipe, V1-

Description: The obvious dirty crack.

FKA: Zach Ankiel ('16)

4. Crack Head, V1

Description: The obvious right arête.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

5. Better Than Crack, V0, *

Description: The easy north face, good warmup.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

C: '97 Boulder

Location: 39.01041, -104.9066

6. Pauci Fideles (The Faithful Few), V2+, *

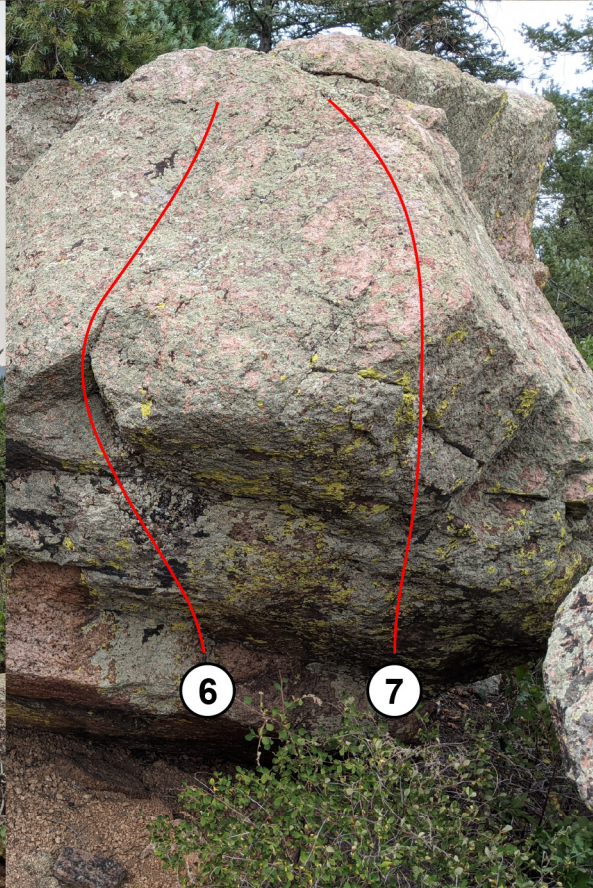
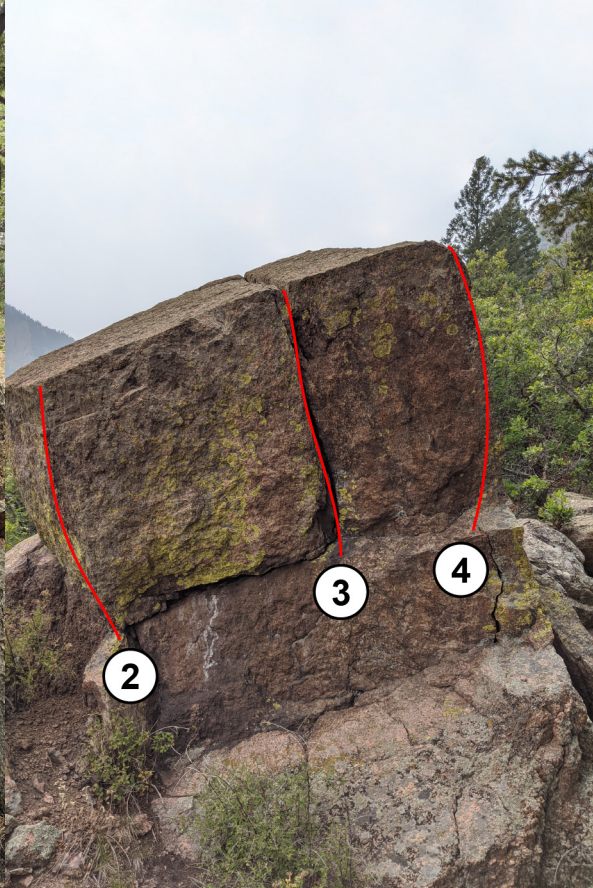
Description: Sit start on a good right hand and an undercling. Slap slopers to get over the bulge!

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

7. XXXIX, V1

Description: Start low on the east corner and follow it up.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)



D: Which Boulder? (north)

Location: 39.01029, -104.90653

8. Who?, V1+

Description: Start left on a crimp, right on the corner. Follow the gentle corner up.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

9. What?, V2

Description: Start low on two good holds, make a big move to a sidepull feature. Watch out for the lack of feet!

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

E: First Boulder

Location: 39.01046, -104.90671

10. First There, V2

Description: Start low on two good holds, make a big move and stand up.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

F: Suicide Slab

Location: 39.01044, -104.90673

11. Suicide Slab, V0

Description: The obvious highball slab.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

12. Resiliency, V2

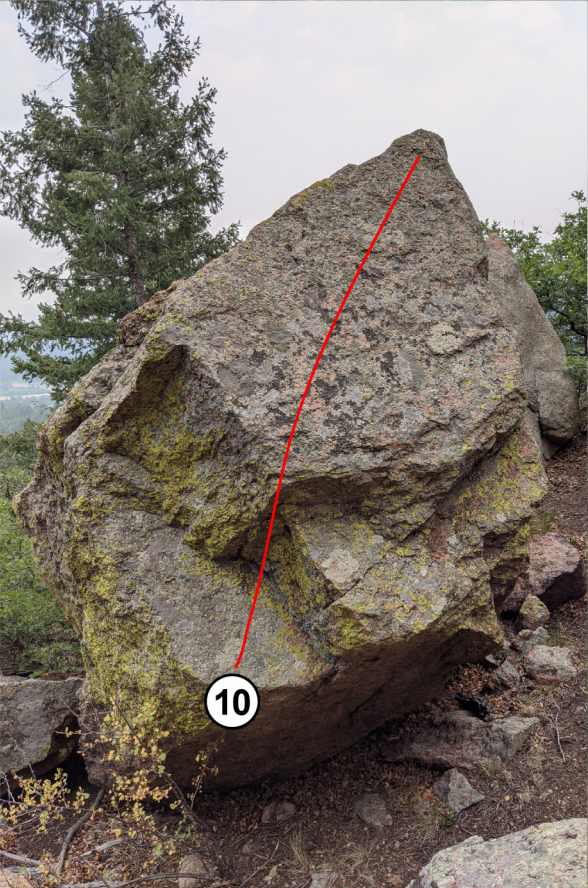
Description: Stand start on a good sloper right hand, left hand pushing on the lower block.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

12a. Resiliency Sit Start, V6+, *

Description: Start matched on two bad sloper/crimps on the block feature and fire for the arête.

FKA: Dominick Speranza ('17)



G: The Pit

Location: 39.01044, -104.90681

13. Why Bother, V1

Description: Thin slab face.

FKA: Max Krasnov ('15)

14. Anaconda, V7+, ***

Description: Start left hand on a good undercling and right hand underneath on the white ripple. Squat on the boulder underneath and begin. Pull the increasingly difficult moves following the overhanging prow and squeeze tight. Watch out for the sharp hold, it bites back.

FKA: Dominick Speranza ('17)

15. Unknown, V4

Description: Start with both hands in the far left corner and feet on the boulder underneath. Traverse right to the jugs then keep going around to step off onto the far right boulder.

FKA: Grant Simmons ('16)

16. The Roof Crack, Project

Description: Probably the hardest way to move 15 feet at the Academy.

17. The Other Roof Projects, Project

Description: A sit start to #13 or #14

G: The Fire Pit

Location: 39.01044, -104.90681

18. Small Arms Fire, V3

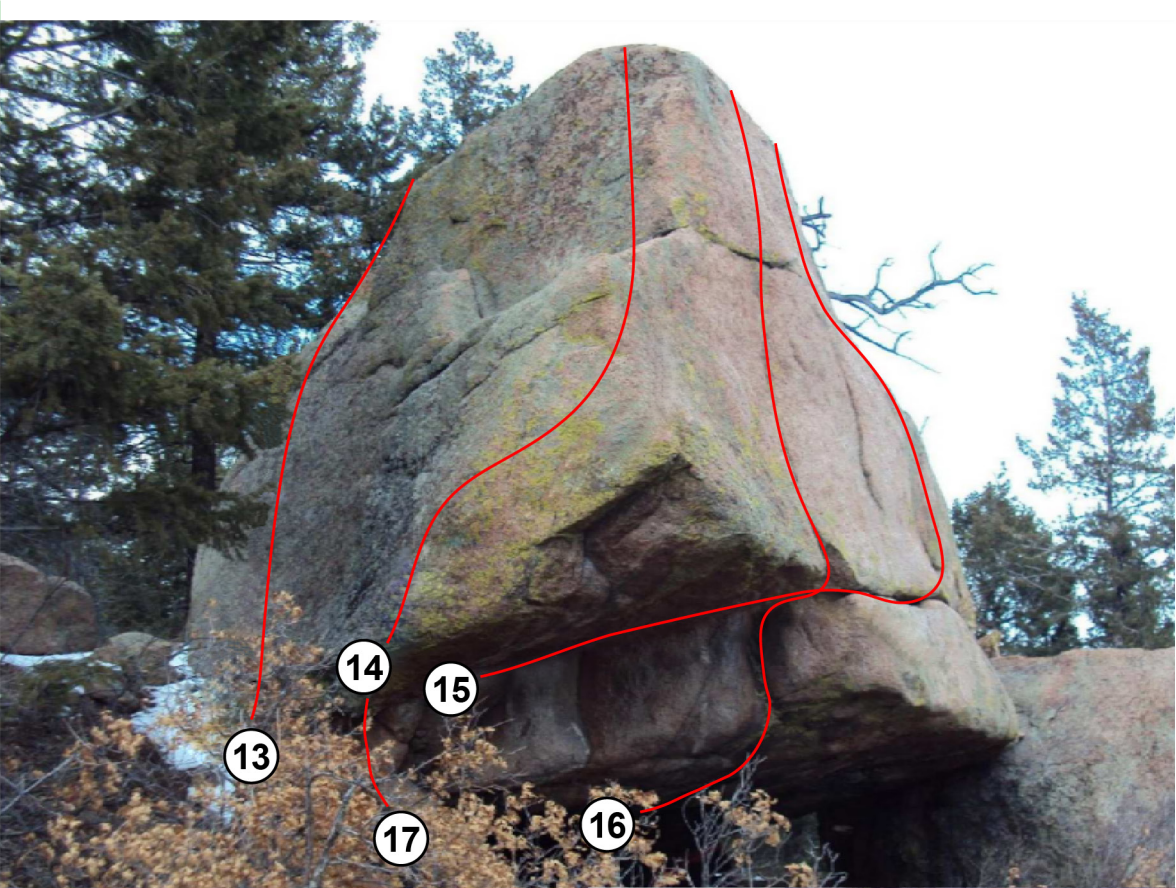
Description: Start matched on good edges and good feet. Traverse right to a small crimp then work up to a jug on top of the corner. From there mantle on the ledge and pull another move to top out.

FKA: Jason Copeland, Grant Simmons ('16)

19. Direct Fire, V4/5, ***

Description: Climb the moderate dihedral to the roof then work to the jugs at the lip. Committing last moves on good holds.

FKA: Jason Copeland



20. Project

Description: Climb the featureless corner. Hard.

Fire Starter: A sit start version to any of the above routes. Adds moves to “Small Arms Fire” or “Direct Fire” but not difficulty.

G: Left of The Fire Pit

Location: 39.01044, -104.90681

21. Project

Description: Sit start low on two good edges. Move up and right on good holds. Make a huge throw to an incut, half to quarter pad 3 finger crimp. Throw for the pinch and balance your way to the top. Somewhat highball. Hard.

H: Crescent Rock

Location: 39.01038, -104.90691

22. Crescent Moon, V6+

Description: Start on the jug rail then top out on sharp crimps and a weird sloper sidepull.

FKA: Manchild

I: Spaceship Earth (east)

Location: 39.01042, -104.9072

23. Alpha Centauri, V4, *

Description: Sit start on two opposing sidepull crimps then traverse left.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15) & Max Krasnov ('15)

24. Orion, V5

Description: Same start as #14 but dyno straight up after the left hand undercling/pinch.

FKA: Jason Copeland

25. Andromeda, V3

Description: Same start as #14 but work into the obvious crack to the right.

FKA: Max Krasnov ('15)



I: Spaceship Earth (west)

Location: 39.01042, -104.9072

26. Spaceship Earth, V0

Description: Sit start on the obvious jug on the arête. Several contrived variations exist.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

27. Stardust, V9

Description: The traverse project. Sit start on a low sidepull/undercling feature in the left alcove. Traverse right to the arete.

FKA: Dominick Speranza ('17)

28. Event Horizon, V7, **

Description: Stand start, using the left arête and a small hold around the corner. The. crux is getting established on the arête itself.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

29. Eclipse, V5, **

Description: Start on a small crimps in the center of the face and deadpoint (or use small features) to gain the left arete, following it to the top.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

J: Takur Ghar Corridor

Location: 39.01035, -104.90723

30. Corridor Arete, V1

Description: Easy Arete. Right block is off.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

31. Crystal Feature, V0, *

Description: Climb straight up to the neat crystal crimp.

FKA: Zach Ankiel ('16)

32. Corridor Problem, V0, ***

Description: Traverse right and then topout. A fun and excellent introduction to bouldering.

FKA: Unknown

J: Takur Ghar (east)

Location: 39.01035, -104.90723

33. Shahi-Kot, V6, **

Description: Sit start, right hand undercling, left hand crimp and throw big to another crimp, following more crimps to an easy topout.

FKA: Dominick Speranza ('17)

33a. Project

Description: Sit start on two pinches. Throw for the slopercrimp and balance up.

J: Takur Ghar (south)

Location: 39.01035, -104.90723

34. Takur Ghar, V2, *

Description: Takur Ghar Mountain, Afghanistan is where Roberts ridge is located. Sit start on a small two hand jug. Short, fun and powerful.

FKA: Jason Copeland

34a. Taker GAAARR, V2+

Description: Traverse from the start of Takur Ghar to the left corner then top out.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

K: Piton Rock Slab

Location: 39.01046, -104.90728

35. Right Slab, V1

Description: Start on any of the holds at head height then go straight up.

FKA: Jason Copeland

36. Path of Least Resistance, V0+, *

Description: Start on "Right Slab" then move left to finish on "Left Slab".

FKA: Jason Copeland, Grant Simmons ('16)

37. Left Slab, V0

Description: A good intro to tall boulder problems. Start on the good horizontal at head height the follow the holds up and slightly right.

FKA: Jason Copeland



38. The Terd, V1-, ***

Description: A unique feature gives this route a variety of entertaining poo names (Fecal Matter, The Phantom Shitter, Terd Burglar, etc..). Watch out! One day the terd will break off on someone's hand. Start on "Left Slab" then make a blind reach around the corner to the "Terd". Control the swing around the corner then climb up.

FKA: Jason Copeland

39. South Face Traverse, V3

Description: Multiple start variations on the far left blocky corner. Work to the jug then traverse the span of slopey hands and thin feet to finish on "The Terd".

FKA: Jason Copeland

K: Piton Rock (north)

Location: 39.01046, -104.90728

40. Chapman, V6, *

Description: Tsgt Chapman, USAF CCT killed on Roberts ridge. The first route worked at Roberts Ridge. Sit start with the left hand on the arête and right on an "imaginary" pinch. Work up the corner to the undercling then top out.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

41. Cunningham, V6

Description: SRA Cunningham, USAF PJ Killed on Roberts Ridge. Start both hands on the flake jug then move straight up to a hard top out. Problem used to go out left, but after a broken hold, going right is your only option.

FKA: Dominick Speranza ('17)

42. Air Force Cross, V5

Description: Start on "Cunningham" then cross over to finish on "Chapman".

FKA: Grant Simmons ('16)

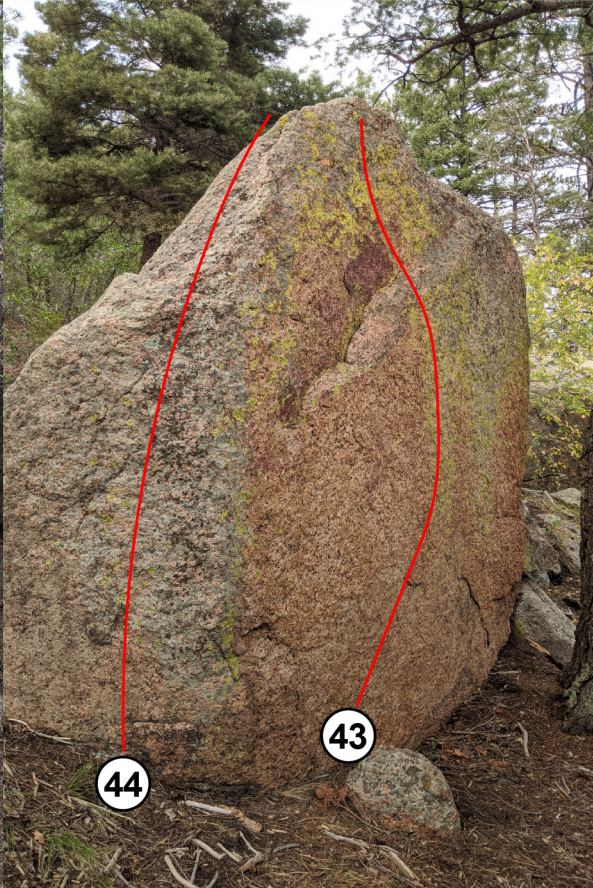
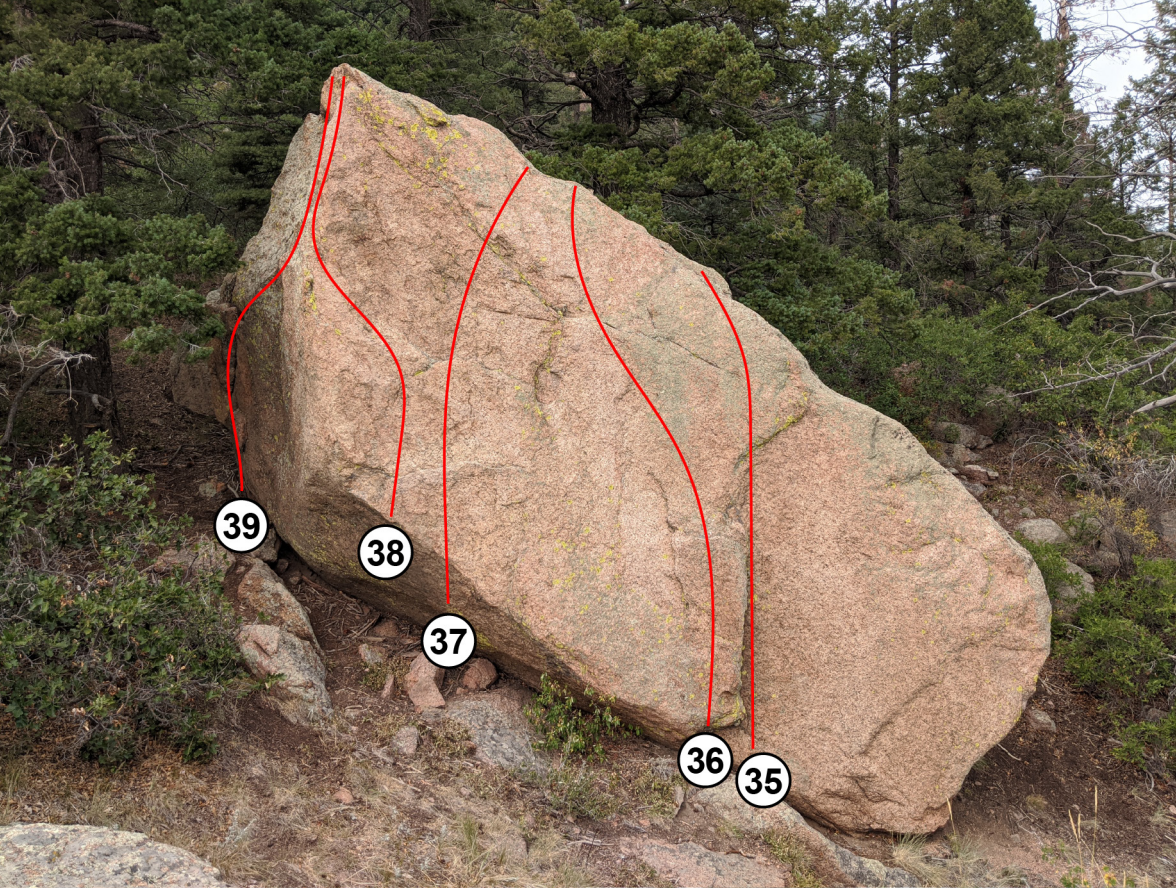
L: Afganistanimation Boulder

Location: 39.01045, -104.90736

43. Afganistanimation, V1

Description: A simple, slightly contrived problem. Start on the bottom left side of the slanted ramp. Follow the ramp, then aim for the peak for full effect.

FKA: Jason Copeland, Ryan Silva, Rob Vasta



44. Johnny Chimpo, V1

Description: Another contrived problem. Sit start on the corner left of Afganistanimation. Move up to a big sloper on the corner. Try to link into Afganistanimation for extra fun.

FKA: Jason Copeland

M: Shark Boulder

Location: 39.01052, -104.90737

45. Shark Bite, V0

Description: Start on the large two hand hold near the bottom of the crack. Traverse to the right then top out. The farther right you go the easier it is.

FKA: Swee (Singapore AF)

46. Mako, V2, *

Description: The call sign for the SEAL teams on Takur Ghar. Same start as “Shark Bite” then climb up the left side of the boulder. Don’t let your fingers get stuck in the crack.

FKA: Mr. Copeland, Ryan Thompson (‘14), Cal Morgan (‘14)

N: Fifi Boulder

Location: 39.01054, -104.90744

47. Fifi, V2

Description: PO 1st Class Neil Roberts’ nickname. Start on a large left hand sidepull/undercling, with feet on a small slab. Climb the easy face then look over the top for a fun surprise.

FKA: Jason Copeland, Ryan Thompson (‘14), Cal Morgan (‘14)

47a. Fifi Direct, V3, **

Description: Stand start in the middle of the face with two sidepulls at full arms length and climb straight up. Watch out for the dab!

FKA: Austin Cooner (‘15)

N: Fifi Boulder (northwest)

Location: 39.01054, -104.90744

48. Figure It Out, V3, **

Description: Start on a good left sidepull and a bad right hand. Use surprisingly good slopers to get to the top of the overhang. Would be mega classic if not for the annoying rock behind you.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15) & Josh Jordan ('15)

49. Out of the Frying Pans and into the Fire, V5+, *

Description: Sit start on two terrible crimps and make a big move up to a positive, but super sharp hold. Fight your way to the finish!

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

O: Mini-slab Boulder

Location: 39.01059, -104.90748

50. Minigun, V3

Description: A short slab on very small holds.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

51. Minime, V2

Description: Start standing on the ledge and climb the slab without using your hands. Gimmick.

FKA: Austin Cooner ('15)

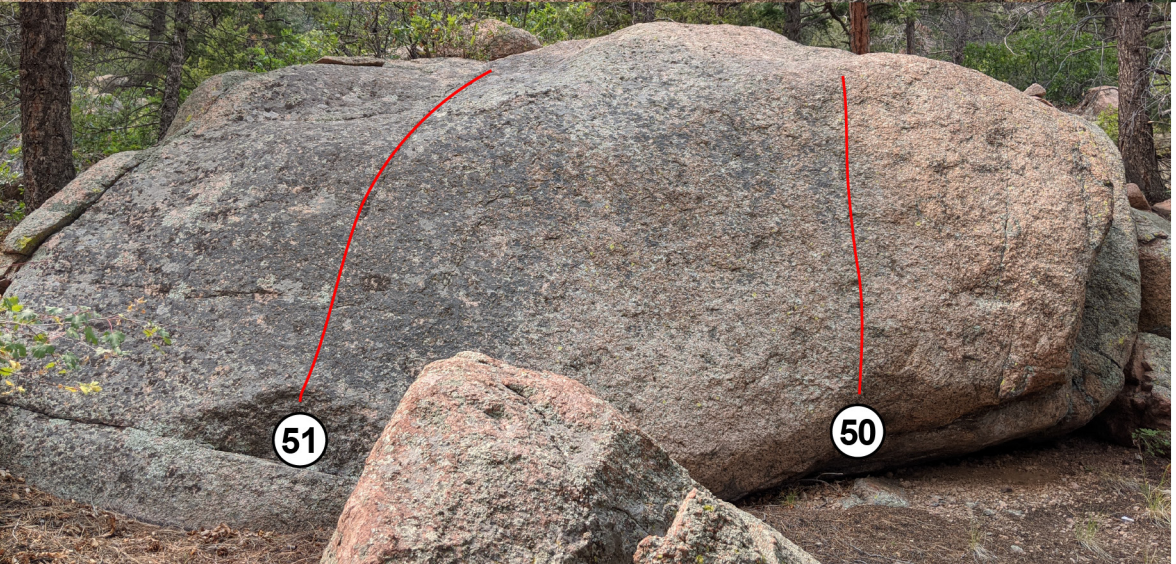
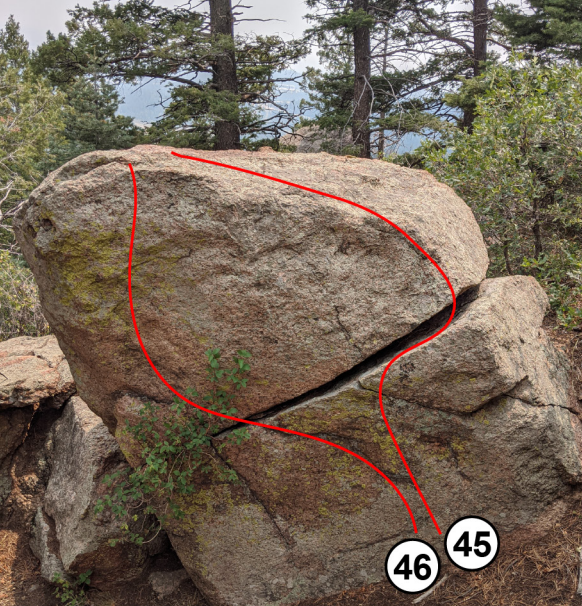
P: Backside Boulder

Location: 39.01056, -104.90741

52. Backside, V3, *

Description: Start on an incut hold and a sloper. Climb right up the prow of the boulder on decent slopers.

FKA: Josh Jordan ('15)



Other Areas



Ryan Self on Goblin (V5) - Luke Negley

1. The Shaft, V1 R**Length:** 25 feet**FKA:** Finn Westenfelder, Sep. 2021

Description: Climb up the south facing side of the formation. This is probably one of the most scenic boulder problems overlooking USAFA, but I would steer clear. It's a highball, and the entire top block is loose. It's bound to come down at some point and could crush a car.

Location: 39.00573, -104.91147. Hike up the Eagle's Peak trail for 0.50 miles stopping after the turn off for Punishment Wall but before Falcon Spires. Scramble up the rock field to the climbing route I'm Too Tired, then continue up to the right.

2. The Egg: Scrambled Up, V0, ***Length:** 15 feet**FKA:** Finn Westenfelder, Jul. 2020

Description: This is the easiest route to the top of the Egg Boulder. Climb/scramble up the west face.

Location: 39.00327, -104.91676. Hike up the Eagle's Peak trail for 0.81 miles. The Egg boulder is right next to the trail.

3. The Egg: Yoked, V3, ****Length:** 15 feet**FKA:** Finn Westenfelder, Jul. 2020

Description: Yoked is located on the south-facing side of The Egg. Start with your left hand on the sharp 90-degree ledge, your right hand on the edge of the south-facing side, and your feet in the crescent-shaped ledge. Throw your right hand up to a hold on the edge, match your left foot with your left hand, stand up on your left foot, and pull up to the top.

Location: 39.00327, -104.91676. Same approach as Scrambled Up.

4. Magic Camp: Abracadabra, V2, ****Length:** 10 feet**FKA:** Juan Uribe, Aug. 2021

Description: Abracadabra is a balancey climb up the north side of the boulder with desperate footholds. The first two moves are the crux. Once you get your hands on the top, it's smear for the top out. The fall zone is a bit sketchy so pads are recommended.

Location: 39.00448, -104.91086. The boulder is just before the clearing with the Punishment Wall and Exemplar Tower trails. Follow the Eagle's Peak Trail for 0.41 miles and cross the creek to reach the boulder.

5. Punishment Wall: Recondo, V1 PG13, **

Length: 15 feet

FKA: Jesse Montgomery, Sep. 2016

Description: Start with both hands on a large edge on the lower left side of the boulder. Make a large reach to traverse up and to the right over the tallest part of the boulder. Pads and a spotter recommended.

Location: 39.00372, -104.90987. This is the large boulder right before you reach the base of Punishment Wall. Follow the Punishment Wall approach.

6. Midway, V6, ****

Length: 15 feet

FKA: Austin Cooner, 2014

Description: This route goes up the North face of the boulder and stares directly at you as you turn left off the Stanley Canyon Trail. Stand start on the shelf to the left. Traverse right on ok crimps and navigate a somewhat committing top out. Classic, but a fall into the rocky creek would not be fun.

Location: 38.98854, -104.91352. From the Stanley Canyon trailhead, hike up the trail for 1.02 miles. The boulder is right next to the creek about 30 feet off the trail.

7. Goblin, V5, **

Length: 15 feet

FKA: Luke Negley and Ryan Self, May 2018

Description: Start at the back of the cave and slap up the blocks until a good jam in the roof, then proceed to top out the boulder on good jugs.

Location: 38.98677, -104.90717. From the Stanley Canyon trailhead, hike up the trail for 0.5 miles. After the overlook there is an obvious cave on the right side of the trail.

8. Sneaker Send, V0, *

Length: 20 feet

FKA: Erika Gallus, 2021

Description: This is the short formation next to the Sijan ECP. There are good holds at the top on all sides and the route is relatively easy to reverse.

Location: 39.004581, -104.895022. Walk from the Sijan ECP down Faculty Drive and into the woods to reach this boulder.



The Shaft (V1 R) - Finn Westenfelder



Nate Bean on Sneaker Send (V0) - Erika Gallus



Jesse Montgomery on Recondo (V1)



Midway Boulder (V6) - Austin Cooner



Ice Climbing

by Seth Konig

Seth Konig mixed climbing at the Nirvana Wall - Zach Marien

Ice Climbing

Introduction

Ice climbing at USAFA is a fickle and rare game. The climate is too dry to produce consistent flows except in the creek bottoms. Unfortunately, these drainages are not steep enough to form anything more than ice bouldering. Many 10-15 foot flows exist in the major drainages of West Monument Creek, Stanley's Canyon, and Eagle's Peak Canyon. These flows will not be covered in this guidebook, but they consistently show up year to year so get out there and explore! What USAFA lacks in pure ice climbs, it more than makes up for with chossy rock just waiting to be scratched up by ice tools. Current dry-tool specific development has been limited, but much more potential exists. Of note, do not dry tool established rock climbing routes, unless ice is present on the route.

Ideas for the Future Ice Aficionado

The potential for future Ice and Mixed climbing at USAFA is tremendous. However, conditions must be closely followed. After a snow storm, ice can be seen clinging to many south facing cliffs. Unfortunately, it doesn't stick around long once the sun comes out, so timing is imperative. A good melt-freeze cycle can also produce some almost protectable ice in the back of squeeze chimneys and gullies. If looking for future mixed FA's then a good place to start is in Stanley Canyon. The higher cliffs, deep clefts, and abundant shaded south facing terrain seem to give it the best concentrations of mixed lines. For those looking to pull on some dry choss, then the East Face of The Nub offers potential for multi-pitch dry tooling routes, without the fear of defacing USAFA's next classic rock climbing route.



Chap's Flow (WI2) - Finn Westenfelder

Misery Wall

Location: 38.99165, -104.91297

Aspect: West facing

Prominence: 50 feet

Approach Distance: 0.6 miles

Approach Elevation Gain: 730 feet

Description

The Misery Wall is a west facing cliff in a gully immediately East of Nirvana wall. It is a little over a half mile up the Stanley Canyon Trail. There's a large scoop out of the bottom of the wall forming a chossy overhang perfect for mixed climbing training.

Approach

From the Stanley Canyon trailhead, hike up the trail for 0.55 miles. Before you walk up the waterfall slabs and reach the boulder containing Stanley's Crack (5.11), look for an obvious gully on the right side of the trail. Hike up this gully until you reach a slab topped by a scoop on the right. The anchors for Exfoliator (M8) are in a notch in the ridge line.

Descent

There is a bolted anchors at the top of the Exfoliator (M8). There is also a walk off if you hike north along the ridge until a jumble of boulders allows you to scramble back down into the gully.

1. Exfoliator, TR, M8, *

Length: 50 feet

FA: Seth Konig, Aug. 2022

Description: Start up the slab below an obvious roof. Traverse right underneath a point in the roof. Reach high for some edge and scramble your feet up. Use the intermittent crack to do the final pull over the roof. Follow the gully/notch to the anchors up easier ground.

Location: Follows a direct line through the middle of the roof below a prominent notch.

Protection: TR with 2 bolt anchor.



Exfoliator (M8) - Seth König

Nirvana Wall

Location: 38.98766, -104.90822

Aspect: Southwest facing

Prominence: 70 feet

Approach Distance: 0.67 miles

Approach Elevation Gain: 730 feet

Description

The Nirvana Wall is a southwest facing cliff a little over a half mile up the Stanley Canyon Trail. The Southwest aspect of the wall allows it to form ice on the slabs under the right conditions, but the ice quickly falls off after an afternoon of sun.

Approach and Descent

See the information under Nirvana Wall rock climbing.

1. Squidward, T, M5, ***

Length: 90 feet

FA: Seth Konig, Feb. 2021

Description: Start up the slab below an obvious bulge split by a crack. If the route's in then the crack at the bulge will be filled with icicles. Enter the crack and use a variety of pick and tool torques to ascend the crack. Below the bulge, a cheeky stein pull can be used to get up high enough to swing into the roots of the icicles. This is one of the few routes at USAFA where you can actually swing your tools. After the bulge the crack eases. Follow it to a 2 bolt anchor.

Location: Follows the crack of the rock climbing route Gnar Butter, 5.11.

Protection: Standard rock rack.

2. Round House, S, M3, **

Length: 85 feet

FA: Seth Konig, Feb. 2021

Description: Just to the left of Squidward (M5) is an obvious mini corner. Follow the thin ice up this corner onto the upper slab. These upper slabs are the crux in crampons. Tops out at a 2-bolt anchor

Location: Follows the bolt line for the rock climbing route Psych Cream, 5.8.

Protection: 8 quickdraws.



Zach Marten on Round House (M3) - Seth Konig

Exemplar Tower

Location: 39.00313, -104.91201

Aspect: Northwest facing

Prominence: 150 feet

Approach Distance: 0.56 miles

Approach Elevation Gain: 720 feet

Description

The lower west face of Exemplar Tower sports some fine mixed climbs in the dihedrals. These routes face Northwest for the most part so the snow sticks around longer and can approach neve or ice consistency if the proper melt-freeze cycle kicks in. The approach gully also holds a short 15 feet step of ice to practice your swings in.

Approach

See the information under Exemplar Tower rock climbing.

Descent

These routes top out the slope that leads to the base of Curt's Crack, 5.11. Simply talus hop down the slope to the North to return to your packs at the base.

1. Thor's Hammer, T, M4, **

Length: 60 feet

FA: Seth Konig, Feb. 2022

Description: Ascend a crack up a prominent left facing dihedral. Near the top a bulge kicks out and the angle steepens. At the top, make use of the exquisite turf sticks.

Location: The first major dihedral on the lower west face of Exemplar Tower.

Protection: Standard rock rack.

2. Chap's Crack, T, M4, **

Length: 65 feet

FKA: Seth Konig, Feb. 2022

Description: Ascend a lower snow apron, or neve if you're lucky, into a left facing corner. About halfway up, a mini roof is encountered, either come out right onto the face or pull the mini roof and continue up the corner.

Location: Follows the second major dihedral, immediately uphill of Thor's Hammer, M4, on the lower West face of Exemplar Tower.

Protection: Standard rock rack.

3. Chap's Flow, T, WI2, *

Length: 15 feet

FKA: Seth Konig, Feb. 2022

Description: In the bottom of the gully leading to Exemplar Tower, the stream bed flows over a 15' tall cliff. This produces Chap's Flow, a fine and consistent ice flow.

Location: As you hike up to Exemplar Tower, an obvious ice flow will appear to your right. It's about 400 yards below Exemplar Tower.

Protection: 1 ice screw if you really need it.



Chap's Crack - Seth Konig



Micah Pugh on Chap's Flow - Jenna Breeden

South Gate Ice

Location: 38.9742, -104.83177

Aspect: West facing

Prominence: 60 feet

Approach Distance: 0.25 miles

Description

The low angle bluffs above Monument Creek near South Gate hold USAFA's only pure ice climbs. These flows all face west. The main flows are clustered to the south of the bridge on South Gate Boulevard. A smaller set of flows is clustered north of the bridge. Conditions can be scouted from the bridge or where South Gate Boulevard meets Pine Drive.

Approach

Park at the Airfield parking lot near the A-10 static display. Walk west across South Gate Boulevard. Once across the road, walk South about 100 yards and scramble through the bushes down to the creek shore. Walk up the creek until you reach the base of the flows.

Descent

These routes top out on the slope. Simply belay from a shrub to bring your follower up and walk back to your car.

1. Officer Barbrady, WI2-, ***

Length: 40 feet

FKA: Seth Konig, Jan. 2021

Description: Start by climbing the steeper step up to a brushy low angle ice slab. Continue up this slab to the final short headwall. Either top out or lower off some screws or a V-Thread.

Location: Officer Barbrady is the first flow encountered as you approach the South Gate Boulevard bridge from the south.

Protection: 2-3 stubby ice screws.



A photograph of a forest floor. In the foreground, there is a tree stump with a jagged top and a large, reddish-brown rock. The ground is covered with dry leaves and twigs. In the background, there are several tall, thin trees with green needles, likely evergreens. The lighting is soft, suggesting a shaded forest environment.

Mountain Biking

by Zach Marien



Rocky Pollotta on PHD - Zach Marien

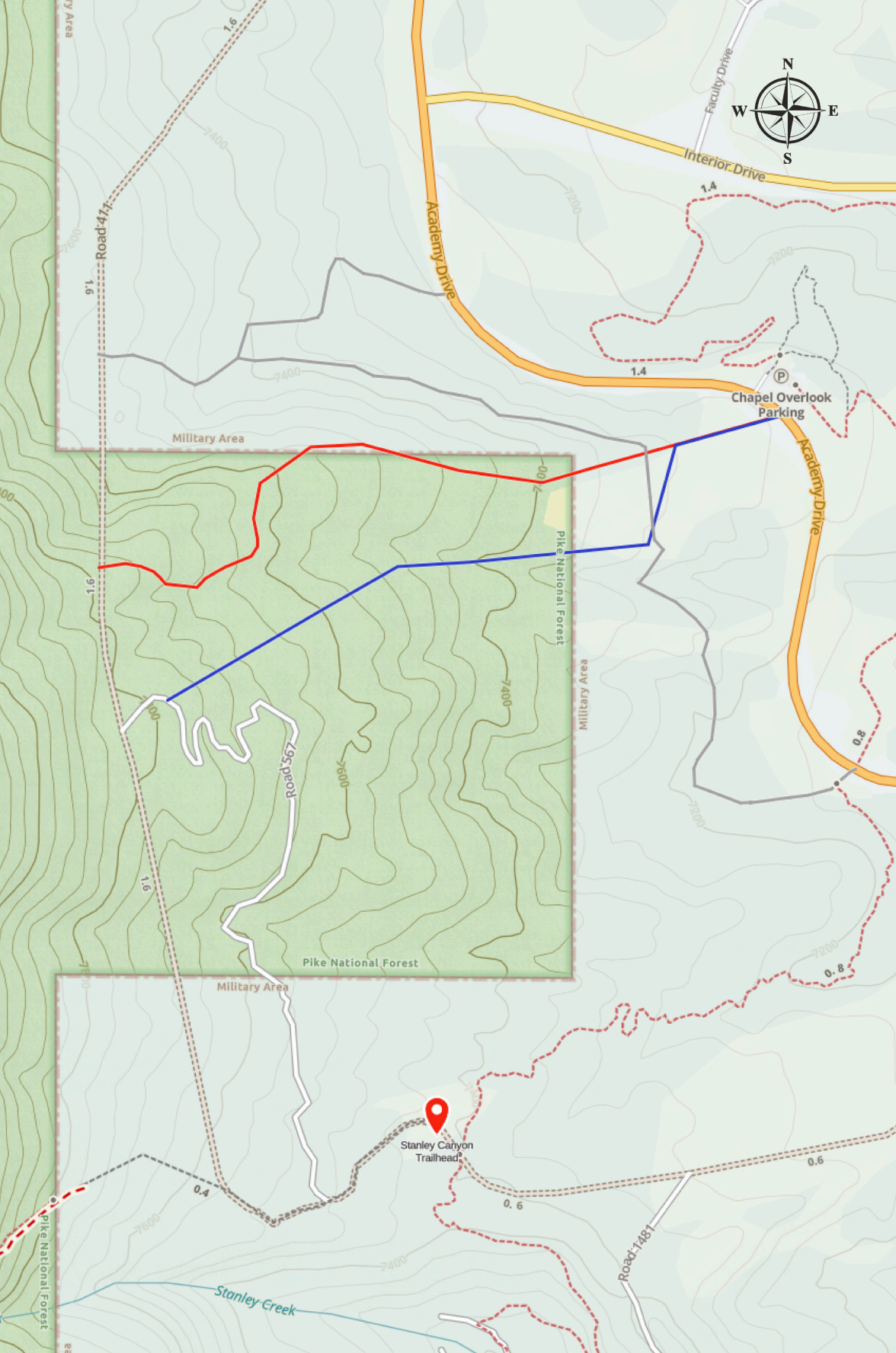
Mountain Biking

Mountain biking at the Academy has a rich yet convoluted history. It was not until recently that mountain biking was a generally accepted sport at the Academy. However, marks from remnants of various bootleg trails stemming from the early 1990s can be found throughout the installation. In terms of sanctioned trails, the Falcon Trail is the only option. Interestingly, this trail was originally built as an unsanctioned trail by cadets but has been maintained by Boy Scout troops and professional companies since the early 1990s. The Falcon Trail is a 13 mile loop that covers many of the regions of the Academy grounds.

The Academy has been home to a large quantity of relatively short downhill mountain bike trails. The trails range from 0.5-1.5 miles with 500-1000 feet of descent. Most unsanctioned mountain bike specific trails stem from RD 567 or RD 411, generally at the top of the hill affectionately known as “Papa Bear” by cadets. Unfortunately, these trails are constantly changing due to disagreement with land management authorities so all information provided in this section should be double checked with persons currently knowledgeable with the situation. As with any unsanctioned trails, especially on contested land, great attention must be taken to limit the visibility of trail use. Additionally, there is inherent risk accrued by riding unsanctioned trails and the Air Force Academy is no exception. Out of respect for all of those involved with the mountain bike community at the Academy and their constant efforts to improve riding on base, please take great care to limit impact on and exposure to the trails on base.

The trails vary greatly in terms of condition and difficulty. At the time of this writing, there are two maintained bike trails: Belly of the Beast and PHD. Belly of the Beast should be considered to be blue/black in terms of difficulty while PHD is a true double black. In this region, at least 3 other unsanctioned mountain bike specific trails have existed in recent history but were closed by land management authorities. This has been the case for all mountain bike trails at the Air Force Academy since the emergence of mountain bike riders among the cadet population. It is very difficult to find direct accounts of the history of mountain biking at the Academy as trail networks have always remained secret and closely guarded. Most serious trail building endeavors began in the early 2000s. Trails that have existed within the last 5 years of the writing are PhD, Belly of the Beast, Whacker, PH Downhill and Voodoo. All of these trails have undergone different phases, Whacker is generally considered to be the most historic with a version existing prior to 2010. The trail was completely destroyed by land management agencies in coordination with a local Boy Scout troop in mid 2019.

Overall, mountain biking has had an incredibly complicated history at the Academy, and while it is difficult to document exactly what exists at any given time, odds are very high that there is at least one well-maintained trail on base that will rival any of the other offerings, sanctioned or unsanctioned, in the Colorado Springs area.



PhD.**Start:** 38.99698, -104.90453**Length:** 0.8 miles**Descent:** 700 feet**Map:** Red route. Access using Road 567.**Description:**

PhD was built starting in early 2020 and was considered finished in late 2022. The trail was planned, started and managed by Zach Marien ('23). Primary builders of the trail were Kyle Latzke ('21), Collin Jensen ('23) and Rocky Pollotta ('22). The trail starts at the top of Papa Bear, just before the gulch at the high point of RD 411.

The trail starts on the top of a small rocky ridge, the entrance is subtle but a bit of inspection will reveal a rocky trail descending the ridge line. The trail then turns right and enters a technical bit with a steep fall-line chute into a roughly 6-8ft drop then to a berm with an optional whale tail style jump leading almost immediately into a medium sized jump over a log. Carrying speed through this section will allow enough speed to flow up a short hill into the middle section of the trail.

The next section is fast with sweeping corners through the woods, eventually leading to a fast step down into a large steep right-hand hip quickly followed by a long and low gap. The jumps in this section are committing but ride similar to expected, the comfortable speed of the trail is plenty to clear the gaps of these jumps. The following section is rocky but technically easy with several fun turns with deep, well-supported berms. After a short, loose, steeper section, the trail leads to a fast drop into a big landing and berm quickly followed by a small jump then tight trees. The trees are tight but the dirt is good and each of the corners are designed to allow the rider to pass quickly and safely through the trees. In this section is a small step down gap requiring the rider to remain alert and capable of carrying adequate speed through tight trees.

The last section of the trail offers two options. To the left is a very steep and long fall line chute into a large bench cut berm and a committing step up gap. This is a very committing, difficult section of trail which should only be ridden by riders with ample experience riding steep lines and technical jumps. A wreck on this section could be very consequential. The other option is to the right. This is a much easier section on a fast but meandering trail through high brush. This trail is one of the most complete trails to have existed on base with a very high density of features and diverse terrain including flow and technical sections. This trail should only be attempted by very experienced riders who are comfortable with steep terrain and large, technical jumps.



Zach Marien and Kyle Latzke working on PHD - Collin Jensen

Belly of the Beast

Start: 38.99513, -104.90336

Length: 0.7 miles

Descent: 700 feet

Map: Dark blue route. Access using Road 567.

Description:

Belly of the Beast was finished around 2018 after several iterations. The trail was built by members of the base community, not cadets. However, Zach Marien ('23) and Joe Way ('20) were involved with building several features and general maintenance. Additionally, at the time of writing, there are loose plans to improve and remodel this trail so the following description may differ from the actual trail.

This trail has a much rougher overall theme and has less developed features. The trail starts on the right side of RD 657 on the outside of the last left hand turn before the intersection with RD 411. The trail starts with a relatively steep entry into a sharp, loose right turn at the bottom. The trail then traverses down, following the valley with several turns but no notable surprises or large features. The trail eventually comes to a sharp, off-camber left turn and comes to an open area within the trees with several options. On the far left, there is a rock face wall ride type feature while the inside (right) line is much faster. This then leads into the fastest section of the trail with a wide open fall line downhill ending in a short step down, right hand berm and a punchy, short uphill. The ascent is immediately followed by a techy downhill then into a bit of a weird section where short downhills are followed by tight turns, short uphill or flat sections. The trail finishes with a very narrow eroded off camber section and a steep final pitch down to an open meadow leading to an access road. At this road, take a left up the hill, where, at the high point there may or may not be a short, fast connecting trail with a large, bike park style jump eventually leading to Academy drive near the chapel overlook trailhead.



Kyle Latzke on PHD - Zach Marien



Zach Marien on Belly of the Beast

An aerial photograph of a vast, snow-covered mountain range at dusk. The foreground shows a steep, snow-laden slope with dark evergreen trees. In the middle ground, a winding road or path cuts through the forested hills. In the far distance, a city with numerous lights is visible under a sky with soft, colorful clouds from the setting or rising sun.

Skiing

by Seth Konig



Zach Marien skiing Blodgett Peak - Seth Konig

Skiing

Introduction

As improbable as it seems, skiing at USAFA can be legit. However, it is all about timing and wind direction. Currently, all the skiing development has occurred on the East Face of the North Ridge of Blodgett Peak. This face holds a variety of terrain, much of it is serious, requiring multiple mandatory airs. Adding more spice to the skiing is the snow coverage. It can be nearly impossible to tell if your next turn will be powder bliss or a free base grind. As a result, best practice is to keep your speed in check and stay light on your toes. In addition to Blodgett Peak, it is possible to ski the Flatiron and Papa Bear with enough snow. Additionally, a big storm may make a descent down the south gully of Eagle's Peak possible.

A Note on Scouting and Conditions

Unsurprisingly, finding good skiing at USAFA can be a tricky endeavor. Keeping track of the snowpack will increase your odds of success. The conditions on the East Face of the North Ridge of Blodgett Peak can be scouted from 2 locations. The first is as you come up Community Center Drive, just as you pass the gas station you will be able to see the entire face laid out in front of you. The second location is from the West Monument Creek trailhead. Drive up West Monument Creek Road until the water treatment plant gate. Look up and slightly south and you will be able to see most of the face above you. It is best to do your visual scouting in between the storms, so you can get an idea of how the snowpack is holding up. Immediately post storm, even the sharkiest pile of rocks looks skiable from a distance. Once you've determined there's some snowpack built up, the second piece of the puzzle is finding the right storm to polish the face up. Surprisingly, the storms with the best snow don't always create the best conditions. Far more important than snow fall totals is the wind direction. A W-NW wind will deposit the snow onto the east face resulting in the best conditions.

East Face of the North Ridge of Blodgett Peak

Location: 38.96659, -104.90149

Aspect: East facing

Prominence: 800 feet

Approach Distance: 2.5 miles

Approach Elevation Gain: 1500 ft

Description

The East Face of the North Ridge of Blodgett Peak holds the best skiing potential on base. The face features several proper rock-walled couloirs and a small open bowl. The east facing aspect combined with the steep nature of the face allow a shallow snowpack to develop between sporadic storms. When conditions align, the face offers some surprisingly good skiing. However, even during the best conditions, rocks are just below the surface so ski conservatively.

Approach

Drive up West Monument Creek Road until the water treatment plant gate blocks further passage. On your right is a small dirt turnout. Park here and walk down the hill to join the Falcon Trail. Head west on the Falcon Trail until you reach an open meadow with some power lines after about .75 miles. Join the West Monument Creek Trail and continue to the west. Follow the trail through the water treatment plant and head up the creek until you reach a chain link fence. Walk through the fence and continue up the creek until you reach a small shack on the left side of the creek. Cross the creek here and head up the large scree slope to gain the crest of the North Ridge. Follow the North Ridge up until the terrain on your left opens up. A small group of pine trees marks the top of the Poop Chutes.

Descent

From the skiable snow line, continue down through the trees until you intersect a dirt road near the water treatment plant. Walk north on the road until you regain the West Monument Creek Trail.

1. The Poop Chute, 40 degrees, ***

Length: 500 feet

First Descent: Seth Konig and Zach Marien, Feb. 2022

Description: The Poop Chute follows a rock walled couloir straight down the middle of the face. The top is a wide-open mini bowl that offers some of the best turns on base. This bowl funnels down into the gut of the couloir. About halfway down, the first 4' mandatory air appears. Below this the Poop Chute tightens to just barely wider than ski length, until a final 7' mandatory air spits you out onto the lower apron. Be careful on this lower apron as it is often significantly thinner than the rest of the chute.

Location: The Poop Chute drops directly down from a small stand of pine trees on the North Ridge. When looking at the face from below it is almost dead center, and the furthest left of the skiable couloirs on the face.

2. Deception Bowl, 30 degrees, **

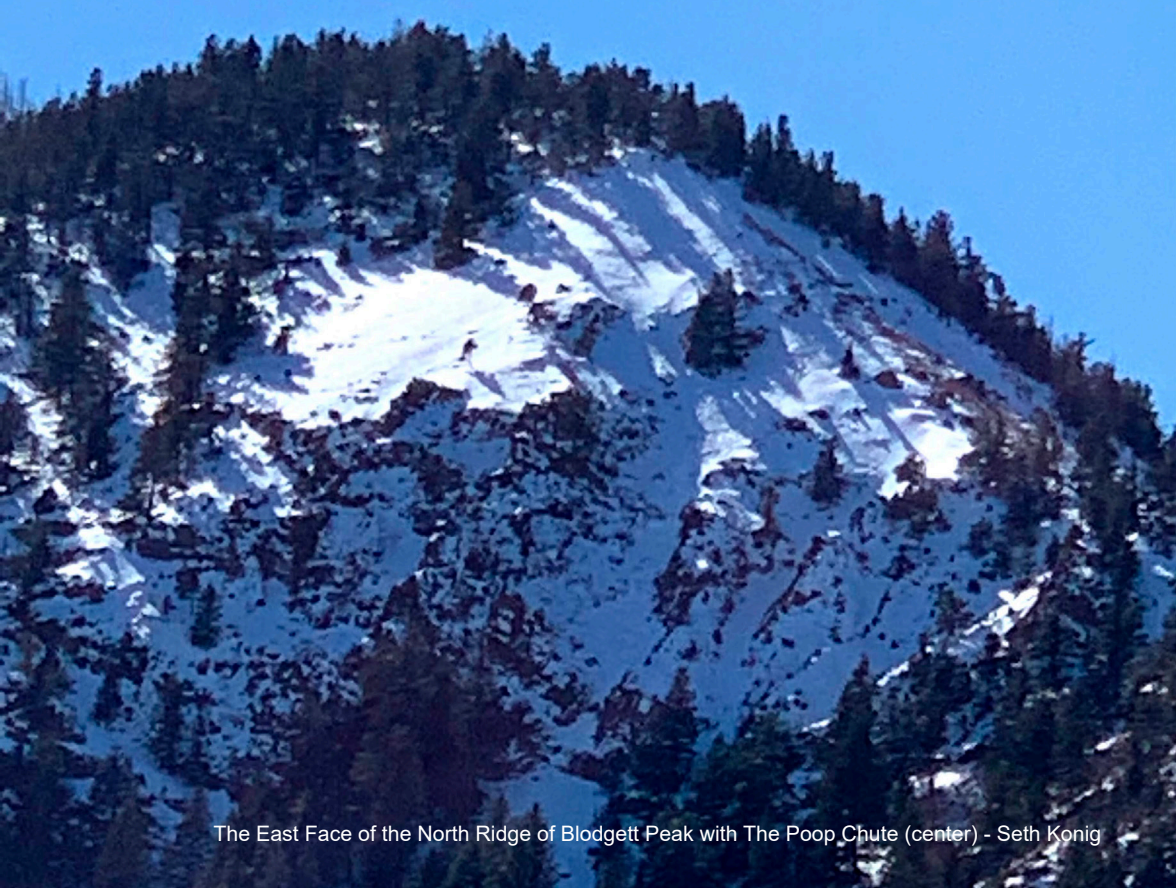
Length: 400 feet

First Descent: Seth Konig, Zach Marien, and Finn Westenfelder, Mar. 2022

Description: Deception bowl is a small bowl on the right side of the face. There are several trees and rocks scattered throughout the bowl breaking it up into several mini zones. The snow cover in Deception Bowl is often thinner than the adjacent chutes, so a big snowfall is important to hit this one in condition.

Location: Deception bowl starts about 200 feet to the right of The Poop Chute. The full extent of the bowl can't be seen from any road, but as you hike up the ridge it is the first area encountered.





The East Face of the North Ridge of Blodgett Peak with The Poop Chute (center) - Seth Konig



Zach Marien dropping into The Poop Chute - Seth Konig



Looking down into lower Deception Bowl - Seth Konig



Zach Marien and Seth Konig on a Blodgett Peak dawn patrol - Finn Westenfelder



Slacklining



Slacklining

There are tons of places to set up a slackline on base. From the dorm quads to the aspen grove on Eagle's Peak, any place with two trees will do. There are also four sets of highline anchors on base. Make sure you have the proper gear and experience before rigging!

Eagle's Peak Canyon Highline

Length: 250 feet

Height: 150 feet

Tensioning Anchor: 39.00412, -104.91488

Static Anchor: 39.00464, -104.91429

Description: This is the best highline on base and the most difficult. The highline has an amazing position over the Eagle's Peak trail and gives a great view of USA-FA. Tensioning from the south anchor is easiest because the bolts are at head level and there is room to walk around on a ledge below the bolts. The north anchor is the best spot to rest between attempts because the cliff is bigger. The easiest way to get a tag line across is by throwing a line from each anchor down to the middle (they will land near the trail) and tying them together.

Approach: From the Eagle's Peak trailhead, hike 0.61 miles up the trail. This is one of the narrowest parts of the canyon and two cliffs should be visible on both sides of the trail. Scramble up the gully on either side to reach the anchors on top of the cliffs. Each anchor has three bolts, without quick links.

The Perch Highline

Length: 80 feet

Height: 50 feet

Tensioning Anchor: 38.99557, -104.90971

Description: The Perch highline is the highest elevation highline at USAFA but the approach is a beast. This is the least recommended highline because the other lines are far more accessible. This highline uses a bolted anchor and a tree for anchors. Tensioning from the bolted anchor is easiest, since the tree is on the side of a steep gully.

Approach: From the base of The Perch, scramble up the rock field to the North and gain the rock formation to the Northeast. There are three bolts with quick links on the formation. The second anchor point is a tree directly across from the bolted anchor. The tree anchor should be placed about 10 feet up the trunk to create a level line.

Falcon Spires Highline

Length: 200 feet

Height: 100 feet

Tensioning Anchor: 39.00456, -104.91316

Static Anchor: 39.00512, -104.91337

Description: The Falcon Spires Highline goes across the Eagle's Peak trail from the top of the first pitch of Falcon Spires to the other side of the canyon. The line offers good views of USAFA and is partially visible from the trail below. However, I recommend doing the Eagle's Peak Canyon Highline instead because it is only slightly more difficult and has a far better position. Tensioning from the top of Falcon Spires is the easiest, but also possible from the north anchor.

Approach: From the Eagle's Peak trailhead, hike 0.56 miles up the trail until you reach Falcon Spires. The South anchor point is on top of the first pitch of Falcon Spires. You can reach this anchor by climbing the first pitch or by scrambling up the slope on the east side of Falcon Spires and climbing low 5th class to the top. A tagline can be thrown across the canyon to the rock field from this anchor. The North anchor point is on a rock towards the top of the rock field. Scrambling to this anchor from the trail is relatively easy. Each anchor has three bolts, without quick links.

Nirvana Wall Highline

Length: 90 feet

Height: 50 feet

Tensioning Anchor: 38.98795, -104.90856

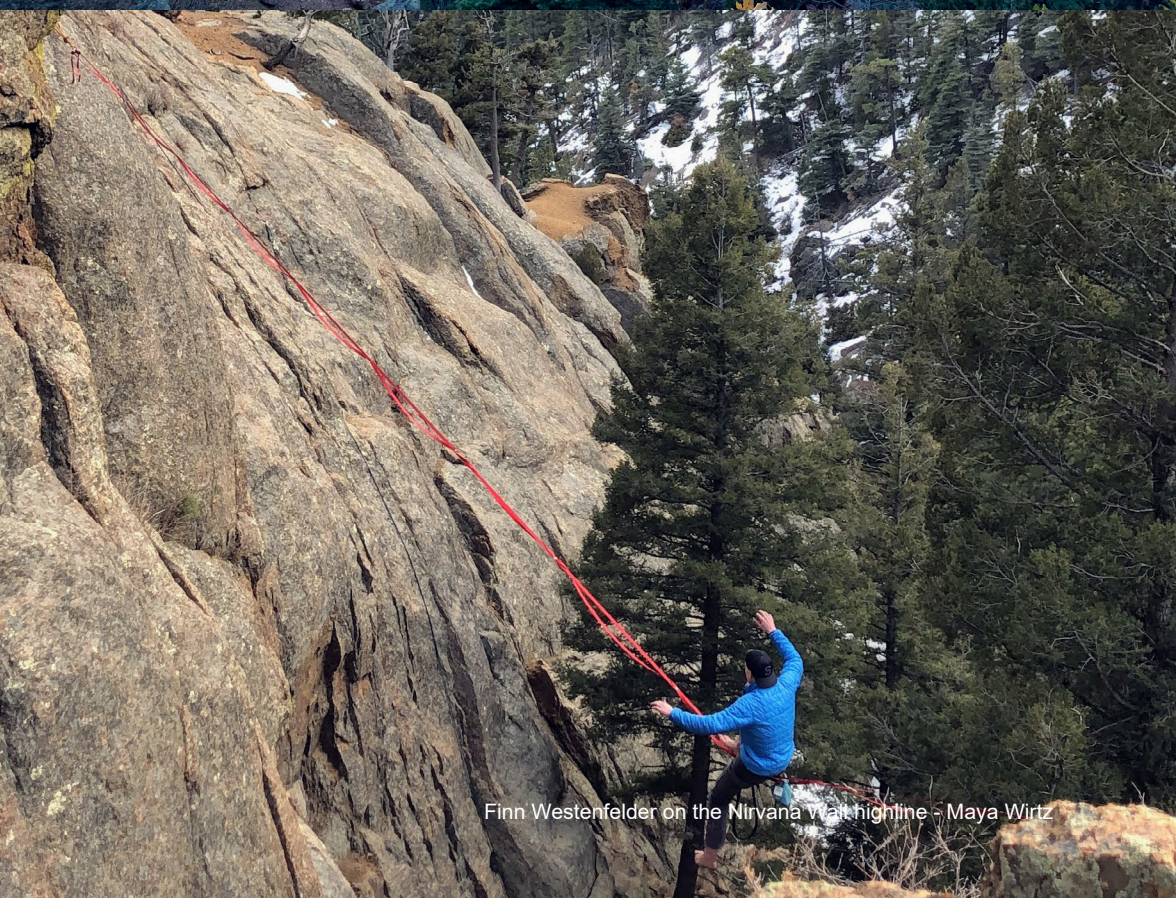
Static Anchor: 38.98782, -104.90831

Description: The Nirvana Wall highline is the easiest to rig and the best highline for beginners. If you are a confident longliner, this is the place to start. Tensioning from the northwest anchor is easiest because there is the most space to walk around. Since this highline gets close to the sloping cliff wall at the southeast end, only about 75 feet are safe to walk.

Approach: From the Stanley Canyon trailhead hike 0.65 miles and scramble up the scree field on the right side of the trail to reach the base of the Nirvana Wall. The northwest set of bolts is located on a pillar near the base of Truly Hell. The southeast set is to the left of the Gnar Butter anchor. The northwest anchor can be accessed by climbing the Step Ladder (5.7 sport) and walking up and around to the top of the pillar. The easiest way to reach the southeast anchor is by climbing the route Pump Pasta (5.10 sport). The person climbing can take the tag line across without too much difficulty. Each anchor has 4 bolts, without quick links.



The Eagle's Peak highline - Finn Westenfelder



Finn Westenfelder on the Nirvana Valt highline - Maya Wirtz



Finn Westenfelder slacklining in the Eagle's Peak aspen grove - Maya Wirtz



The Perch highline - Finn Westenfelder

Trail Running

by Zach Marien





Zach Marien running Eagle's Peak - Finn Westenfelder

Trail Running

Trail running has been a popular activity throughout the history of the Academy. On base, the Falcon trail, Santa Fe trail, Stanley Canyon trail, and Eagle's Peak trail are well known and frequently used. However, many other routes exist. The Academy has been host to a number of very accomplished runners and the explosion in popularity of Ultra Running is evident. Like many of the projects in this book, the routes have been pursued during periods of restriction when cadets are only allowed on base and in the neighboring national forest. The following section details several routes preferred by Zach Marien ('23). However, this is certainly not a comprehensive list as there are nearly infinite possibilities which exist stemming from the Academy. In terms of access to the National Forest from the Air Force Academy grounds, there are three options. Starting from the north, there is an unnamed trail beginning near the intersection of Road 1557 and Norther Boundary Road in Jack's valley. The trail ultimately leads to FS 311A and FS 313. Moving south, Stanley Canyon (707) allows the most direct access to the National Forest and Rampart Reservoir. A small note, Stanley Canyon offers the only uninhibited access to Rampart Reservoir. Finally, at the southern end of the base, West Monument Creek trail (713) offers access to the National Forest through Colorado Springs Utility's extensive system of private property containing three reservoirs. Be aware that they do not take kindly to trespassing. The routes to follow will stem from these points, going deep into the National Forest.

Rampart Reservoir

Distance: 16 miles (out and back)

Elevation Gain: 3,245 feet

Description:

This run is almost certainly the most common of the routes listed and is seen as a rite of passage by many at the Academy. The route starts in the cadet area, following the Falcon trail until the Stanley Canyon trailhead where it takes TR 707 to Stanley Reservoir. At this point, the route traverses left onto TR 721, a well-maintained road. This section is short, and the route quickly takes a right onto Trail 722. This turn is not immediately obvious but is marked by a stack of large boulders. Follow this trail until a marked intersection with the Schubarth Trail, stay left to descend to the reservoir.

Note: This run can be extended to the Farish Camp from the intersection with Schubarth Trail or the No Name trail stemming from TR 722. This extension adds a 7 mile out and back to the Farish property. Another option is to follow the Rampart Reservoir trail (TR 700) around the reservoir, this trail contours around every inlet and peninsula of the lake and ultimately intersects with Schubarth Trail at the western side of the lake.

Mt. Herman Loop

Distance: 37.2 miles

Elevation Gain: 5,049 feet

Description:

This loop offers an enjoyable 40-mile excursion, following many of the notable landmarks in the area and offering great views of Pikes Peak and the Rampart range. The loop starts in the cadet area, continues via the Falcon trail to TR 707 up to the Stanley Reservoir. At the reservoir, the route goes right onto TR 721, a very nice trail with smooth, soft dirt and not much activity. The trail eventually intersects RD 307, continue left on the road until a big intersection with TR 721. This trail leads to the Farish camp facilities which include campsites, cabins, and lodges. At the other end of the camp, find RD 312, eventually leading to Rampart Range Road, go right on Rampart Range Road until the intersection with FS 315 which meanders through forest and rock formations with many opportunities for expansive views. This road intersects with FS 320, where a right turn will lead to Mt Herman and a lot more people. Several options exist at this point including a descent on Mount Herman Road (FS 320) or TR 715, either option leads to a trailhead parking lot. At this point, the route goes through Monument to the Santa Fe trail. Take the Santa Fe trail to the Air Force Academy, enter through North Gate and finish with a touch of torture on the seemingly never-ending pavement of North Gate Boulevard.

Pikes Peak

Distance: 35.5 miles (one way)

Elevation Gain: 12,320 feet

Description:

Yes... It is possible to get to the top of Pikes Peak from the Air Force Academy with only about 100 yards of pavement the entire time. This run is very difficult but well worth it, the views are spectacular and it's a very interesting approach to such a classic mountain. From the Academy, take Stanley Canyon to RD 303 and traverse across, near Colorado Springs Utility's Northfield Reservoir, this road connects with Rampart Range Road (RD 300), follow Rampart Range Road south almost all the way to Manitou Springs, the road is generally mild with a very cool descent with entirely unobstructed views of Pikes Peak. At mile 20, take a right onto a small, unnamed trail into Manitou Springs. Run on the road through Manitou Springs downtown, taking a left toward the incline. At the incline trailhead, take either the incline or the Barr trail, remain on the Barr trail until the summit.

Northern Boundary Loop

Distance: 11.5 miles

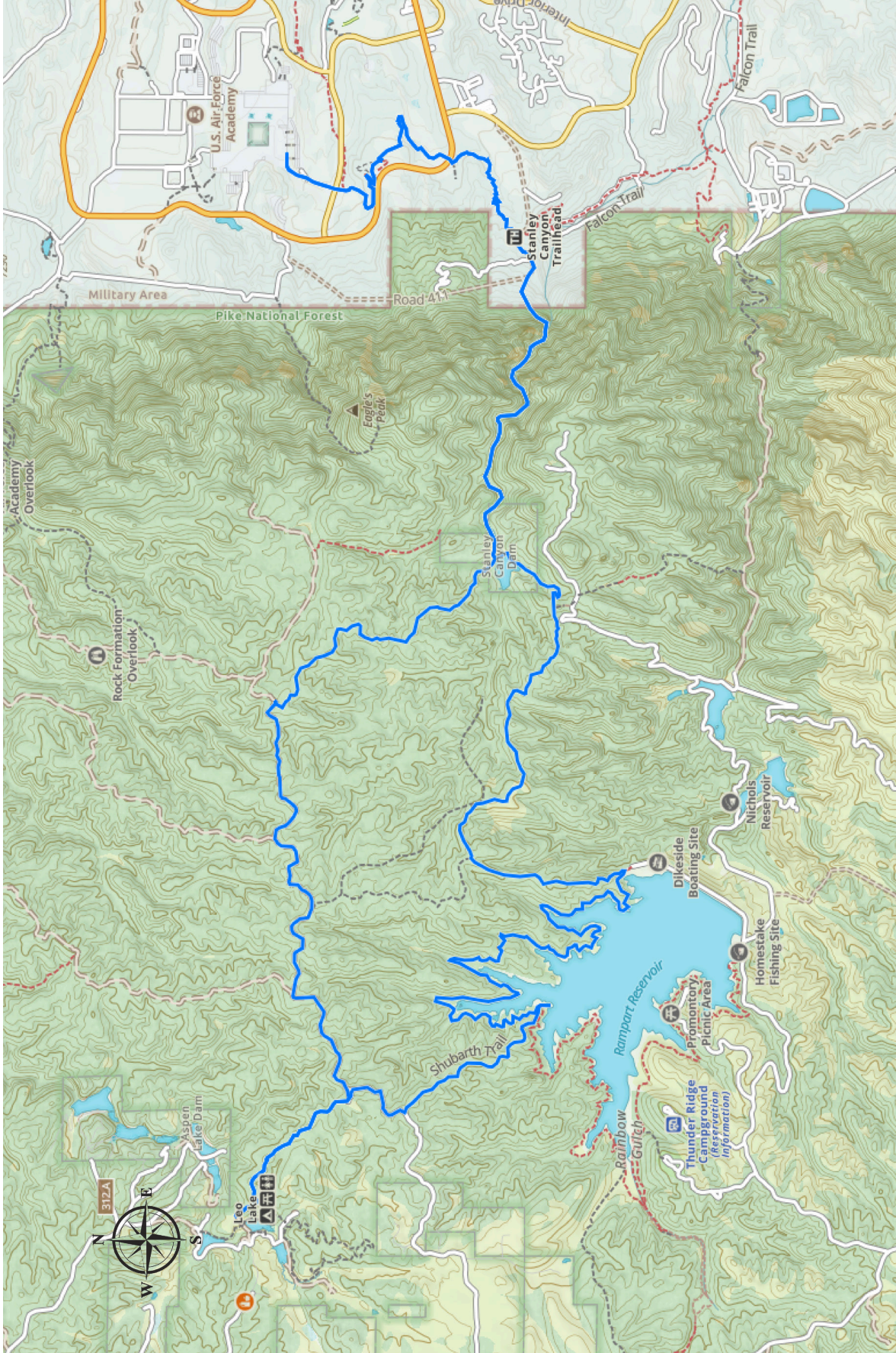
Elevation Gain: 1,400 feet

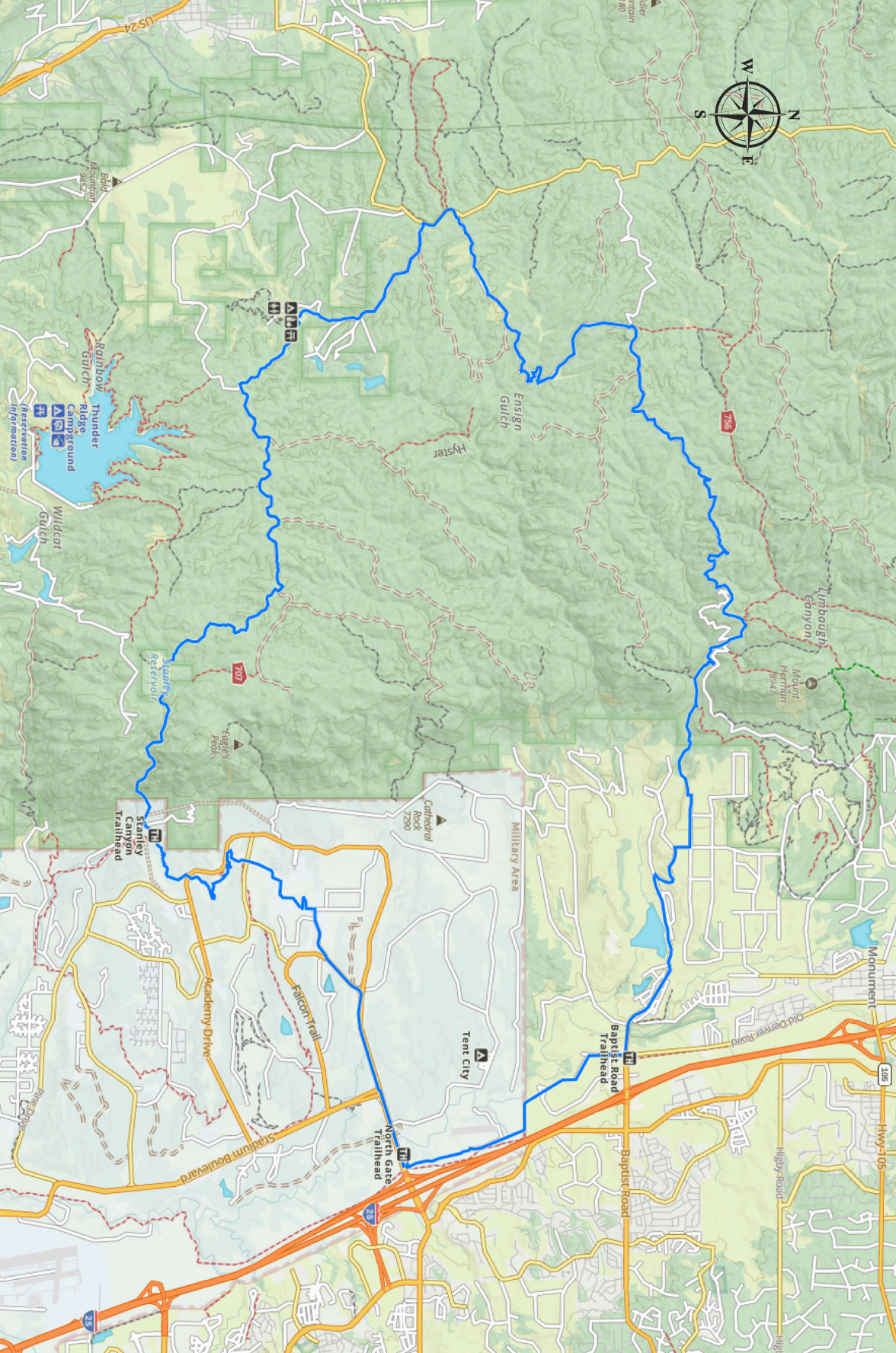
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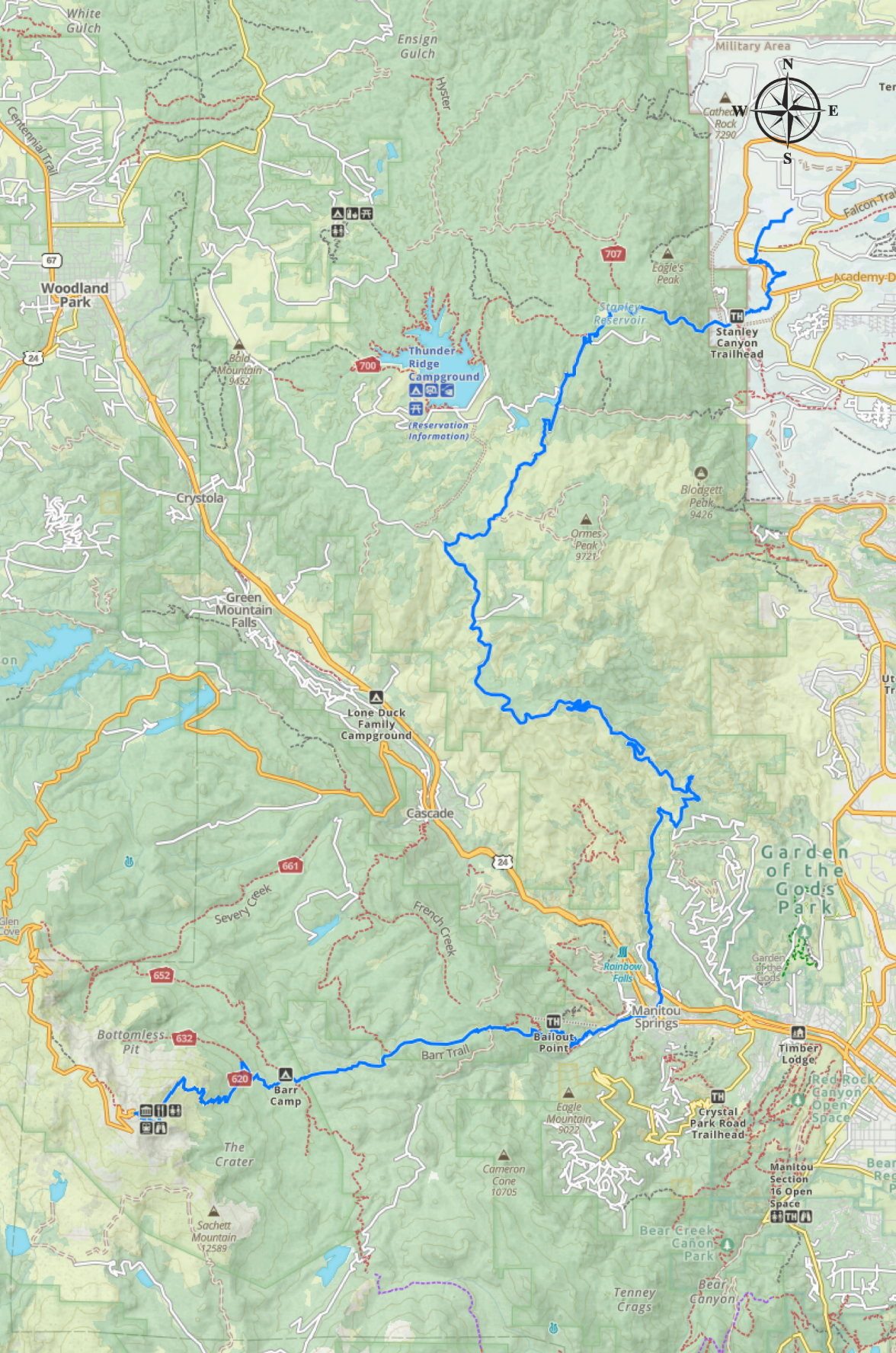
From the visitor's center, follow Road 106 to the intersection with Road 1557. This section of the route is very hilly on a steep rutted road. Follow Road 1557 as it wraps around the back side of Cathedral Rock and meets with the Northern Boundary Road. Follow the Northern Boundary Road around Jack's Valley until you see Tent City and the Big Bad Basic Arena. Take some time to reminisce about Basic Cadet Training and then take the short connector Road 1583 to the main Jack's Valley Road. Follow Jack's Valley Road to North Gate Boulevard and enjoy the long slog back to the Cadet Area.



Along the trail to Rampart Reservoir - Zach Marien









Air Force Academy Overlook

Cathedral Rock
7290

U.S. Air Force Academy

Tent City

North Gate Trailhead

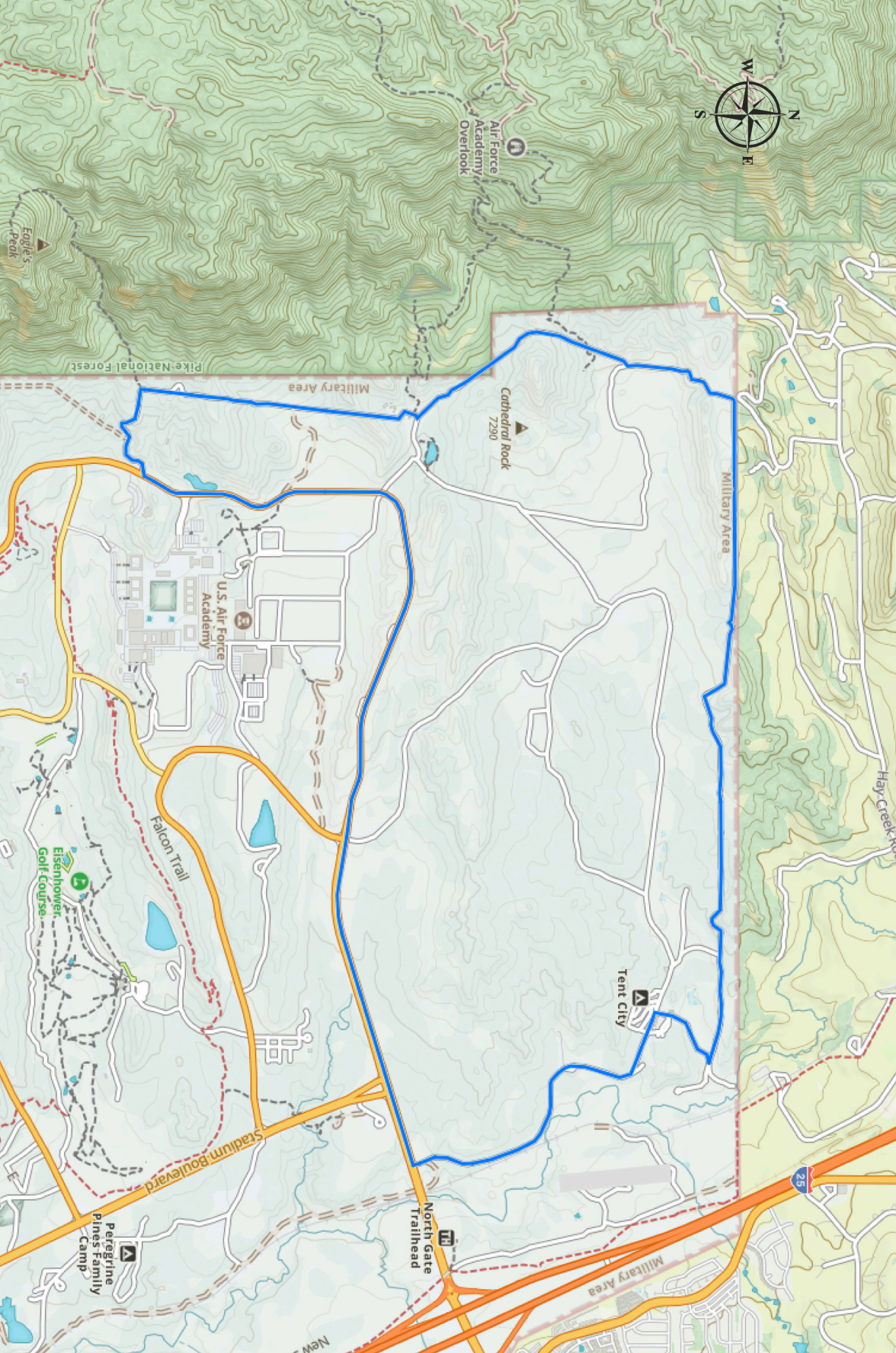
Falcon Trail

Eisenhower Golf Course

Petragrine Pines Family Camp

Pike National Forest

Eagle's Peak

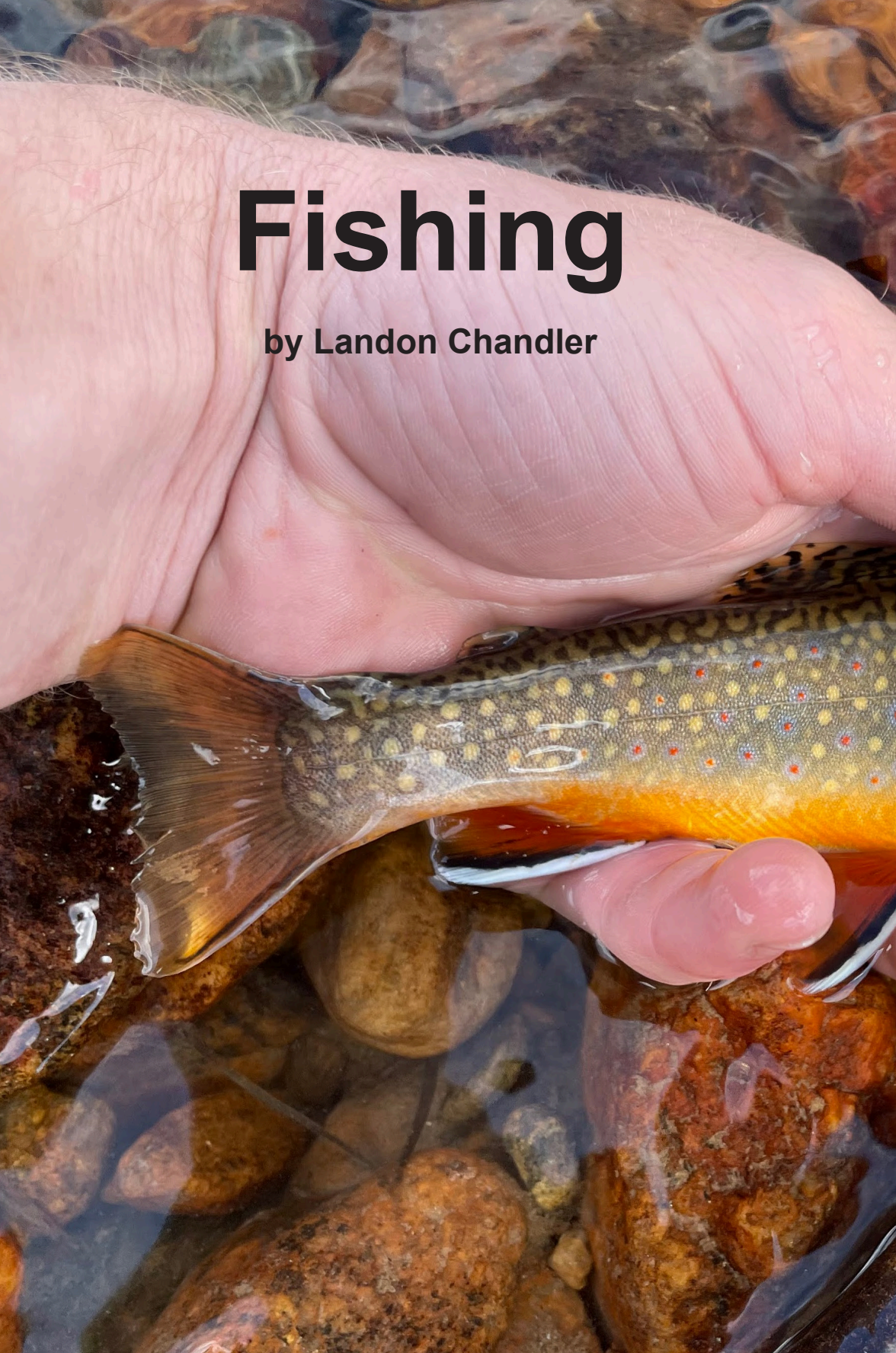




Finn Westenfelder after a run to Rampart Reservoir - Will Mockel

Fishing

by Landon Chandler





A brook trout in West Monument Creek - Finn Westenfelder

Fishing

Ice Lake: 38.95784, -104.83539

Deadman's Lake: 39.02423, -104.89959

West Monument Creek: 38.97247, -104.90115

Description

There are three main fishing spots at USAFA, Ice Lake, Deadman's Lake, and West Monument Creek. Ice Lake and Deadman's Lake are stocked and are decent for spinner and fly fishing. West Monument Creek has small fish, and you will likely only have success with a light fly rod. The West Monument Creek microecosystem is somewhat harsh and the fish here will bite pretty much any fly at the right time of year. Fishing here is fun as long as you don't expect to catch anything big. The best months to fish at USAFA are May through August.

Access

Ice Lake

From the South Gate entrance, follow South Gate Boulevard for 2 miles and turn left onto Pine Drive. Follow Pine Drive for 0.4 miles and turn left. The Ice Lake Trailhead is at the end of the road. There is a parking lot and restroom at the trailhead.

Deadman's Lake

From the North Gate entrance, follow North Gate Boulevard for 3.1 miles and turn right onto a dirt road. Follow the dirt road for 0.3 miles to reach the Deadman's Lake parking lot.

West Monument Creek

From the South Gate entrance, drive 2 miles on South Gate Boulevard and make a left turn onto Pine Drive. Follow Pine Drive for 2.4 miles and make a left turn onto West Monument Creek Road. Then follow West Monument Creek Road for 1.1 miles and park at the pull-off on the side of the road before the gated entrance to the water treatment plant. To access the West Monument Creek trailhead, hike on the Falcon trail for 0.15 miles and make a left at the junction with a connector trail. Follow the connector trail for 0.8 miles until it meets West Monument Creek Road. Then walk down the road for 0.3 miles and take a right turn to arrive at the West Monument Creek trailhead. Hiking on the Falcon trail and connector trail is necessary due to the gated entrance of the water treatment plant.



Fishing West Monument Creek - Landon Chandler



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