



Gold Butte is a climbing area owned and managed by Pitkin County Open Space and Trails. Here are a few guidelines to help make your experience at the Butte safer and more enjoyable-

Please stay on established trails to prevent unnecessary erosion to steep terrain and reduce the risk of dislodging rock on people below. Please leave dogs at home.

Gold Butte is Entrada Sandstone, a fairly soft rock. Keep in mind that holds can break unexpectedly. Protect climbs on the lead with this in mind. Don't climb when the rock is wet or damp as it is weaker and more likely to break in those conditions. There are some great boulder problems that are under overhangs that can be climbed during or soon after wet weather. Climb gently- the routes will get harder and lose some fun factor if we break off holds. Experienced leaders might avoid taking beginners on the harder routes where they are more likely to thrash and damage holds. Belayers should position themselves out of the line of fire nonetheless!

Climbing at the Butte was originally developed in the sixties by Harvey Carter. Many of his original pitons remain. They have been left in for historical purposes- they should not be relied upon for protection. Generally, you will find a bolt or cam placement close by. The original names of his climbs have been used for his routes. They reflect the era that Harvey lived and climbed in. Harvey only rated a few climbs the hardest grade he knew at the time- 5.9. Many climbs he rated in the 5.5 and 5.6 range... see what you think!

Wearing helmets while climbing or belaying or while in proximity of the cliff makes a lot of sense. There remains a great deal of loose rock on and at the top of the Butte. And there are some large blocks on the climbs themselves that could come loose with climbing use or natural weathering. Please warn people below you if you knock a rock off!

Because of rock fall danger to the main access path, the east face of the Butte (facing Aspen) will remain a lead only area. No top roping there please.

For the main amphitheater area (facing the Rio Grande), bolt anchors are set back from the top of the cliff to protect those who want to access most of the cliff-edge anchors for top roping. Please warn those below of potential rockfall if you are approaching the top of the cliff for this purpose.

For the lower cliffs facing the Rio Grande Trail, we recommend lead only climbing as access to the top anchors is difficult to protect.

WARNING!! Climbing Is Dangerous!

Because this guide is a compilation of information from many sources, its total accuracy in such matters as route descriptions or route ratings cannot be assured. Be forewarned that you must exercise your own good judgment as to where a climb goes, a climb's difficulty and most importantly, your ability to protect yourself from the inherent risk of rock climbing and bouldering. These risks may include the following: falling due to technical difficulty, failure of fixed protection, failure of your own equipment, or natural hazards such as holds breaking, falling rock, bad landings, and bad weather. Your safety depends on sound judgment based on your experience and a realistic assessment of your climbing ability and not this guide. If you have any doubt about your competence to climb a route safely, do not attempt it!

Getting to the Butte

If you are coming from Aspen, go out past the Hickory House and through the S-curves by the Forest Service building. Continue across the Castle Creek Bridge and turn right (North) down Cemetery Lane. At the bottom of the Cemetery Lane hill (about a mile from the turn from Hwy 82) you can park at Stein Park on the left side of the road. Walk along the Rio Grande Trail for a couple hundred yards to the right turn up the Sunnyside trail that takes you to the upper parking, just off the left side of the McClain Flats Road, for the Sunnyside trail (and the crag). This parking is accessed by car about a quarter of a mile uphill past the turnoff for Stein Park.

Since this parking is for hikers on the Sunnyside trail it may well be full. If so, there are a couple of adequate parking pullouts back down the hill towards Stein Park. Sight lines are very short for this parking so be careful pulling in and out! Consider riding a bike or taking the Snowbunny bus to Stein Park. From the upper parking lot walk west along the side of the road for about 25 yards and turn left onto the signed trail (see the overview map). With the addition of a lower trail up from the Rio Grande Trail that accesses the Guides Triangle, 1st pitch of Dusty Ridge, the Lower Buttresses and the Upper Southwest Face, approaching from Stein Park is now a viable option. Quick and close access to the crag is one of the true beauties of its location close to town. It is a year

round climbing area unlike the pass, and it has truly world class views up and down the valley. Even in mid winter, climbing is fine and comfortable when a high pressure system comes and sits in for a few days.

The closest restrooms (porta-potties) are located in Stein Park- so do your business before you hit the crag! Because of its size and intimacy, it is hard to find privacy once there and the sanitation issues are obvious.

Gold Butte's redevelopment and this guide are works in progress so let us know at: mountainexpert@utemountaineer.com if there are any issues that you think need addressing at the butte, whether they be on the trails or on the routes. Or, contact the county directly at web_open_space@co.pitkin.co.us

Remember, if you want to put up a new route or place any bolts contact Pitco OS&T for permission.

Only some (about a dozen or more) of the old routes have been bolted to make them safer. Work continues so this website will be updated as more routes are bolted. Some routes will be left as trad routes, but most will be, yes I'll say it, retro-bolted (at least in part) because of the large anticipated use of this soft rock climbing area.

Leading the old trad routes is a great challenge and requires a lot of skill and judgment- especially knowing what gear might hold an unexpected fall.

Oh yeah, and please, no dogs.

How to use this guide

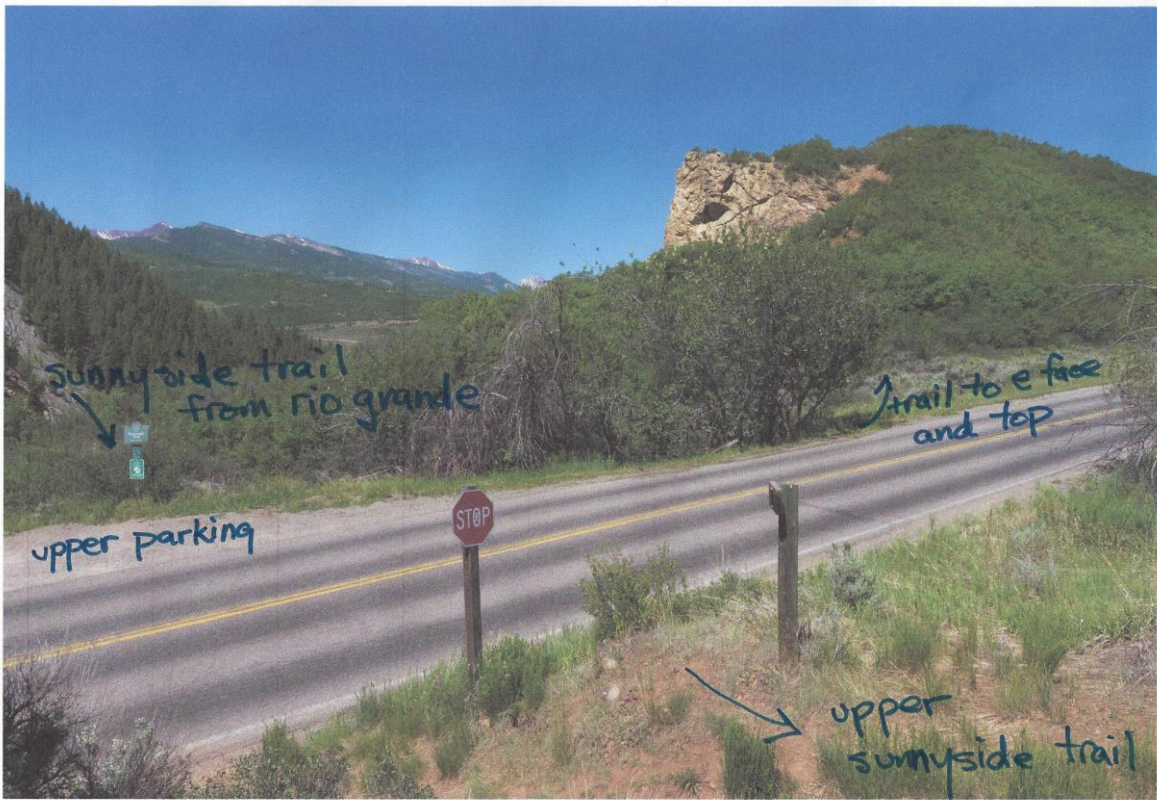
We've put up pictures of the Butte's different climbing aspects, with lettering that will correspond to route names, grades and, in some cases, descriptions on the page below. Anchors are fixed, glue-in bolts with chains and steel 'biners for lowering convenience (you don't need to untie!). Please leave the 'biners in place. As mentioned earlier, the upper southwest face has a number of anchor points that access the top anchors on the routes. Their locations and the climbs that they access are included on the overview map. These are provided so that climbers don't fall off the top trying to set up top ropes! Again, please warn others below if you are rattling around near the edge.

Many Thanks

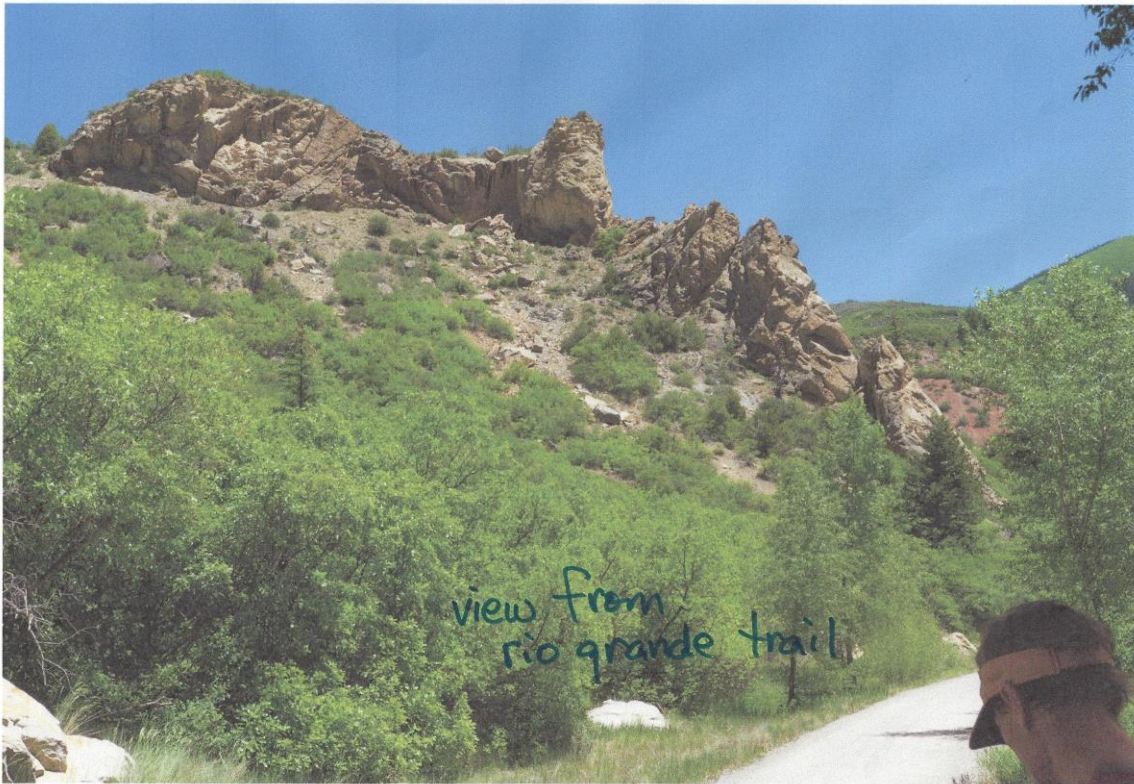
This little crag has literally taken years to get into the public's hands and ready to become the little gem that it is. Many generous people and organizations have come together in the project and made it happen. So- many thanks to Pitkin County, its commissioners and the Open Space and Trails board for listening to, and taking on

the vision of, the climbing community. Special thanks to Gary Tennenbaum and Dale Will from OST. Thanks to the Hurst family for working with the county to get this beautiful piece of property in the public's hands. The Access Fund has been helping on many aspects of acquiring and preparing the crag's use for several years. Huge thanks to them. The American Safe Climbing association provided bolts and bolting equipment for anchors. Jaywalkers Lodge turned out in force several times for trail building and their Outdoor Coordinator, Lynn Sanson was a great mentor for trail and route establishment. David Clark and Auden Schendler from Aspen Skiing Company headed a group of enthusiastic trail builders. Thanks Boots Ferguson for wading through some of the legal issues and tossing rocks around and to Jeremy Graham from the Red Brick for route establishment and looking into future route building. Local guide services, Aspen Expeditions and Aspen Alpine Guides helped with crag work days. And many, many more- Gold Butte was and is, truly a community effort. We all hope that the Butte can help beginning climbers can transition from the gym to the aestheticism of outdoor climbing...

“Enjoy Gold Butte!”



View from top Parking area

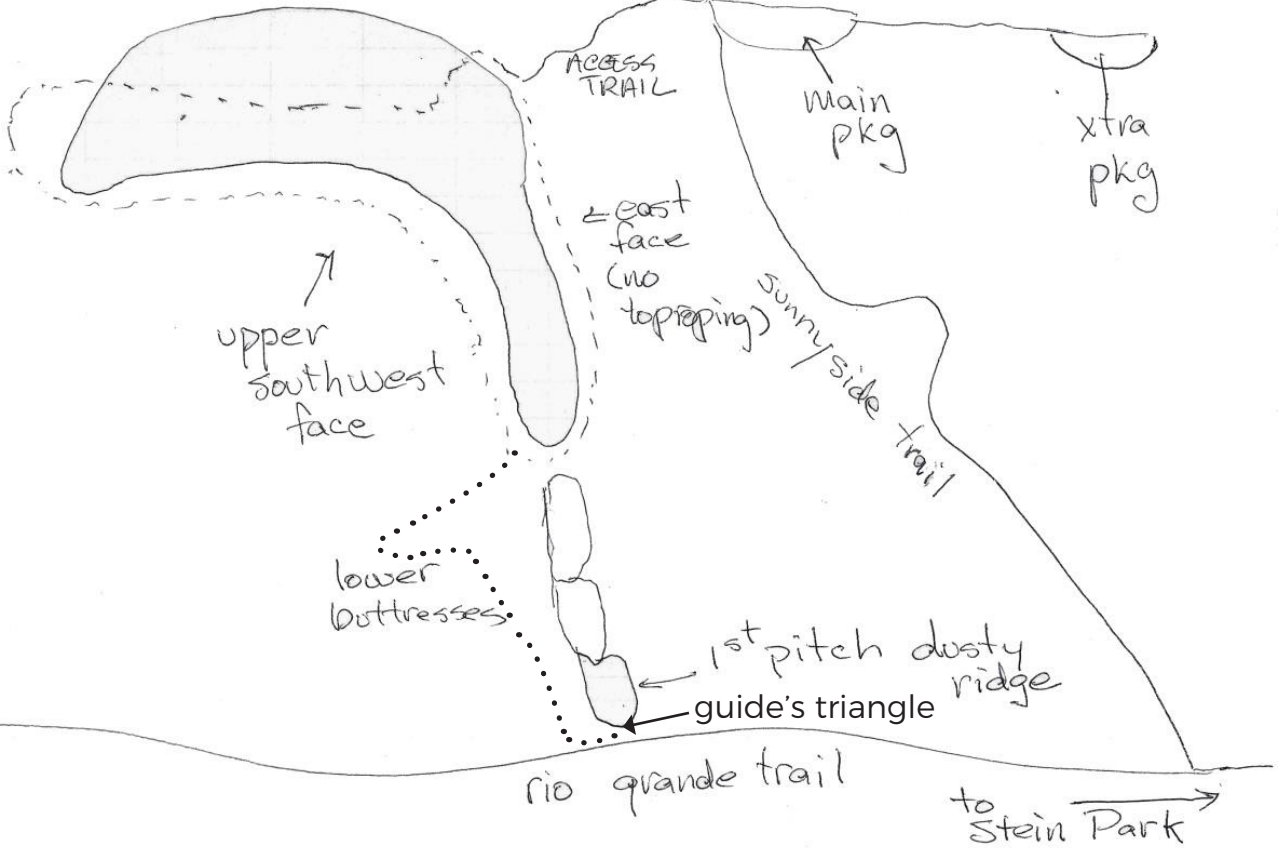


View from Rio Grande Trail

McClain Flats Rd.



xtra pkg



upper southwest face

Access TRAIL

Main pkg

xtra pkg

east face (no top roping)

Sunnyside trail

lower buttresses

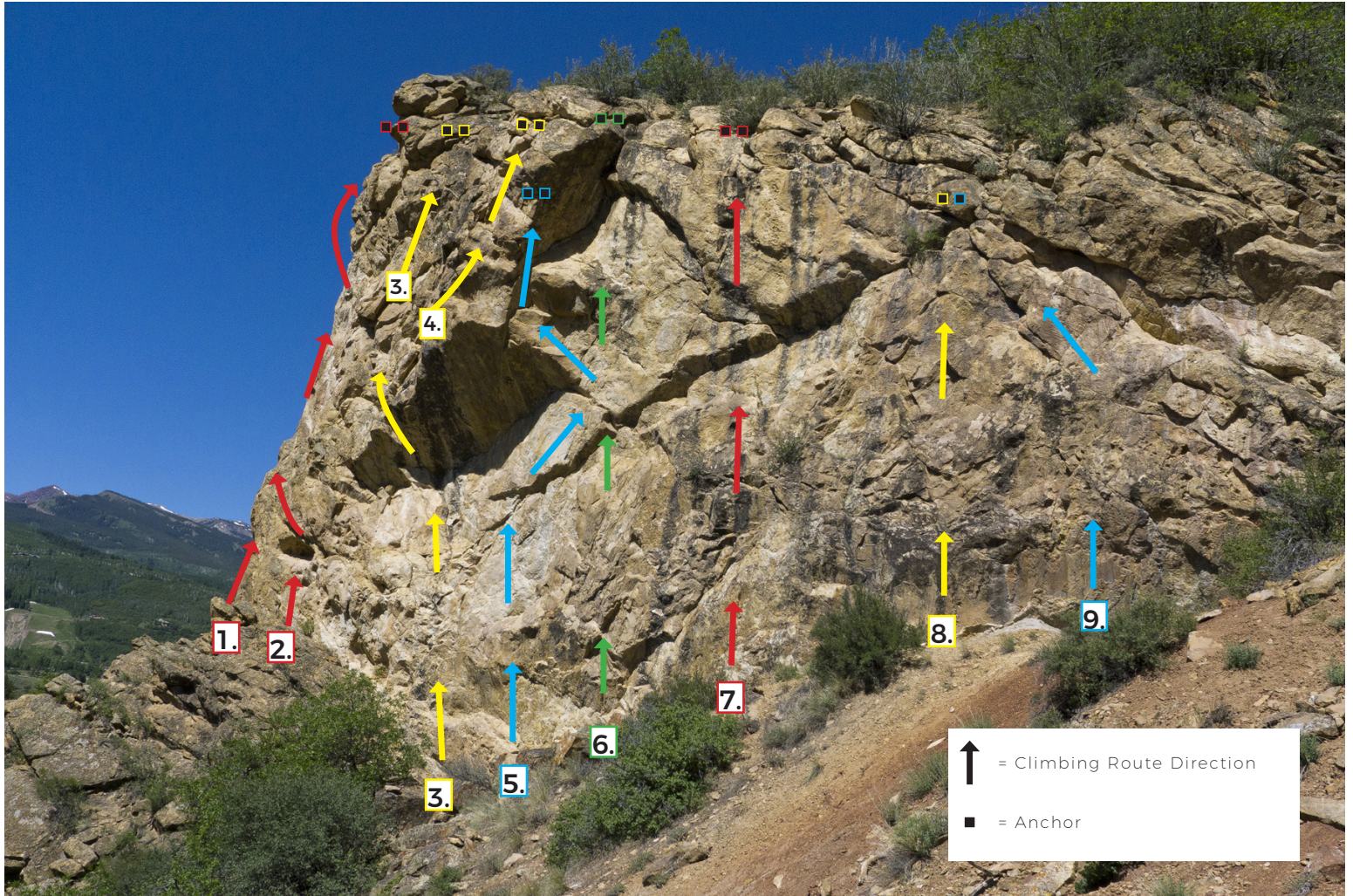
1st pitch dusty ridge

guide's triangle

rio grande trail

to Stein Park

East Face Climbs



Updated 5-27-2020

1. *Dusty Ridge Direct* - Bolted. Harvey graded this 5.6. Probably more like 5.8+!
2. *Dusty Ridge* - Bolted. Easier start but still at least in the 5.7 range
3. *Zodiac* - 7 bolts. 5.10a. Large hold below first bolt shows cracks- be careful.
4. *Quasar* - Shares start with Zodiac. Needs two bolts or boldness to get to chains.
5. *i'm over it* - 5.11d. Bolted.
6. *Spacewalk* - 5.11b. Bolted.
7. *Kloos Call* - 5.11d. Bolted.
8. *Flake Armour* - 5.7. Bolted.
9. *Hail Hole*. 5.8 - Bolted. Stick clip helpful.

Upper Southwest Face



Updated 05-28-14

9. Amigo. 5.10c. Bolted. Can traverse into it from left to top rope. Can be a rope shedder on top rope.
10. Eenie. 5.8+ Bolted. Stick clip helpful.
11. Meenie. 5.9+. Bolted. Shares anchor with Eenie. #1 Cam or stick clip helpful.
12. Hermaphrodite. 5.10. Bolts and .75, #2 cams. Stick clip useful. Awesome!
13. Bird's Nest. 5.10. Mixed route. 6 bolts and #2, 3, and 4 camalots. Stick clip useful, avoid loose block down low. Longer draw on 5th bolt helpful for rope drag.
14. Far out. 5.9. Bolted. Take along .75 and #1 cam optional.
15. Hairpin corner. 5.9 over the overhang. Some bolts. Take .4 thru 2 cams to augment.
16. Hero Loop. 5.9/10. Bolted. Climb gently. Probably the softest rock at the Butte. Great Route 'tho.
17. Hero Loop trad finish. Go right from last bolt. Small cams. Two bolts but only one chain and steel biner at this point.
18. Strip Tease. 5.10. Shares start of Hero Loop and follows the diagonal corner. Hollow

sounding block about 25' up. BEWARE!!! Can use shoulder sling to girth hitch bush. Bolt to protect finishing moves. Small rack from C3 thru #2 camalot.

19. Complete Crack 5.8. Bolted.

20. Shaft Crack. 5.8+. Bolted. Come in from slightly right.

The Blue lines at the top represent anchors away from the top of the cliff that allow access to anchors at the top of routes. This allows a safer way to set up top ropes.

Please respect the private property to the west (downvalley side) of the climbing area.

Upper Southwest Face - Right



Updated Photo, Updated Text 5-27-2020

14-20. Repeats of Upper Southwest page.

21. *Juniper* - 5.10b. 7 bolts.

22. *Can Do* - 5.11b. 7 bolts.

23. *Diablo Dihedral* - 5.11+. Not bolted.

24. *Graham Crackers* - 5.11d. Bolted. Can be traversed into from climb 25. at 5.10

25. *Mo's Crack* - 5.8/9. Trad. Well protected. Small thru 3 cam. Super!

26. *Still Hung Over* - 5.11 mixed - take a light rack with a #4 for the crack.

Also shown 1. Dusty Ridge direct.

The Blue lines at the top represent anchors away from the top of the cliff that allow access to anchors at the top of routes. This allows a safer way to set up top ropes.

See next page for additional views.

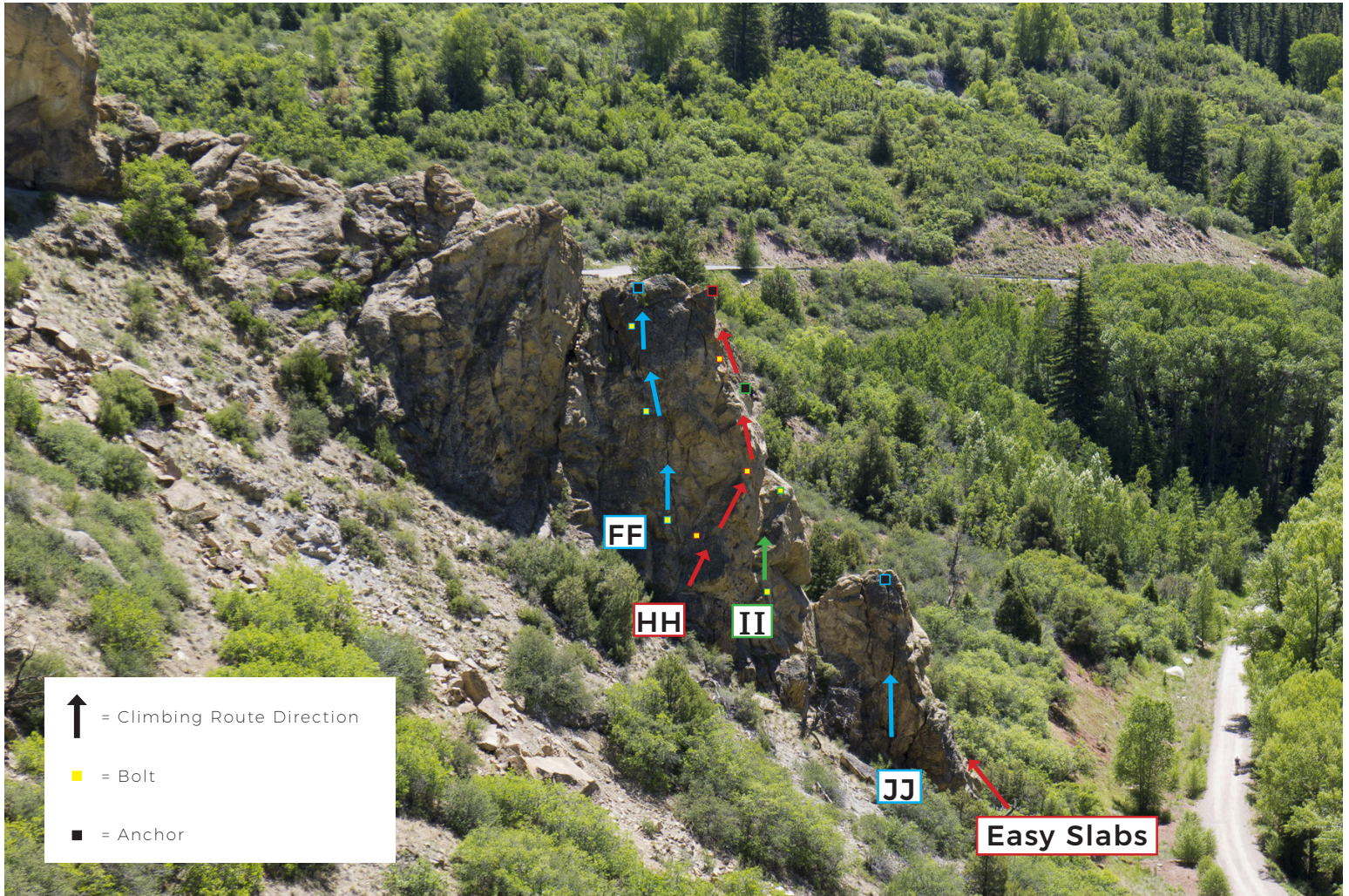
Please respect the private property to the west (downvalley side) of the climbing area.

Graham Crackers - Closeup View



24. *Graham Crackers* - 5.11d. Bolted.

Lower Buttresses



Updated 5-27-2020

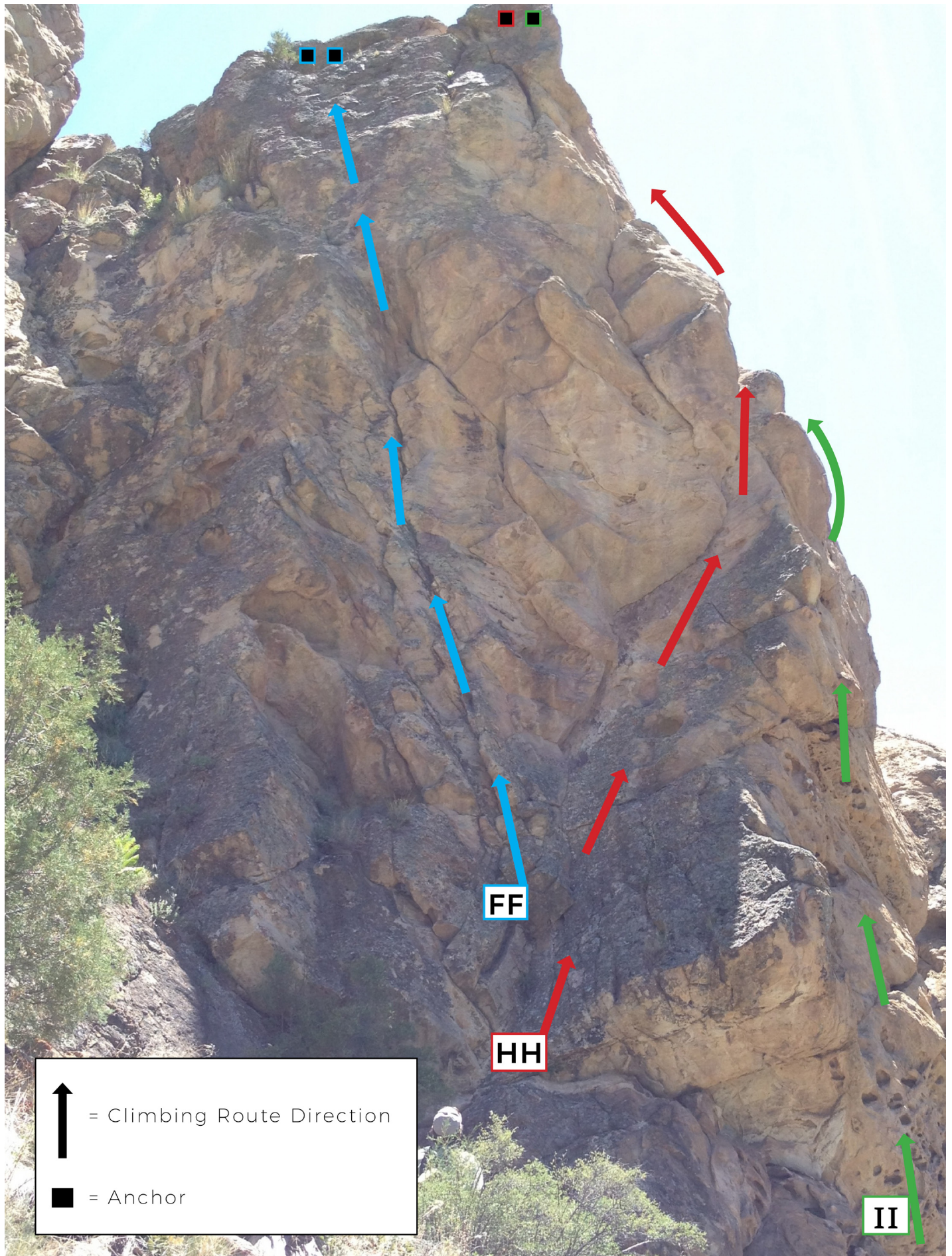
FF. *Scales* - 5.10

HH. *Mindbender* - 5.9, Bring a #1 Cam for the top section.

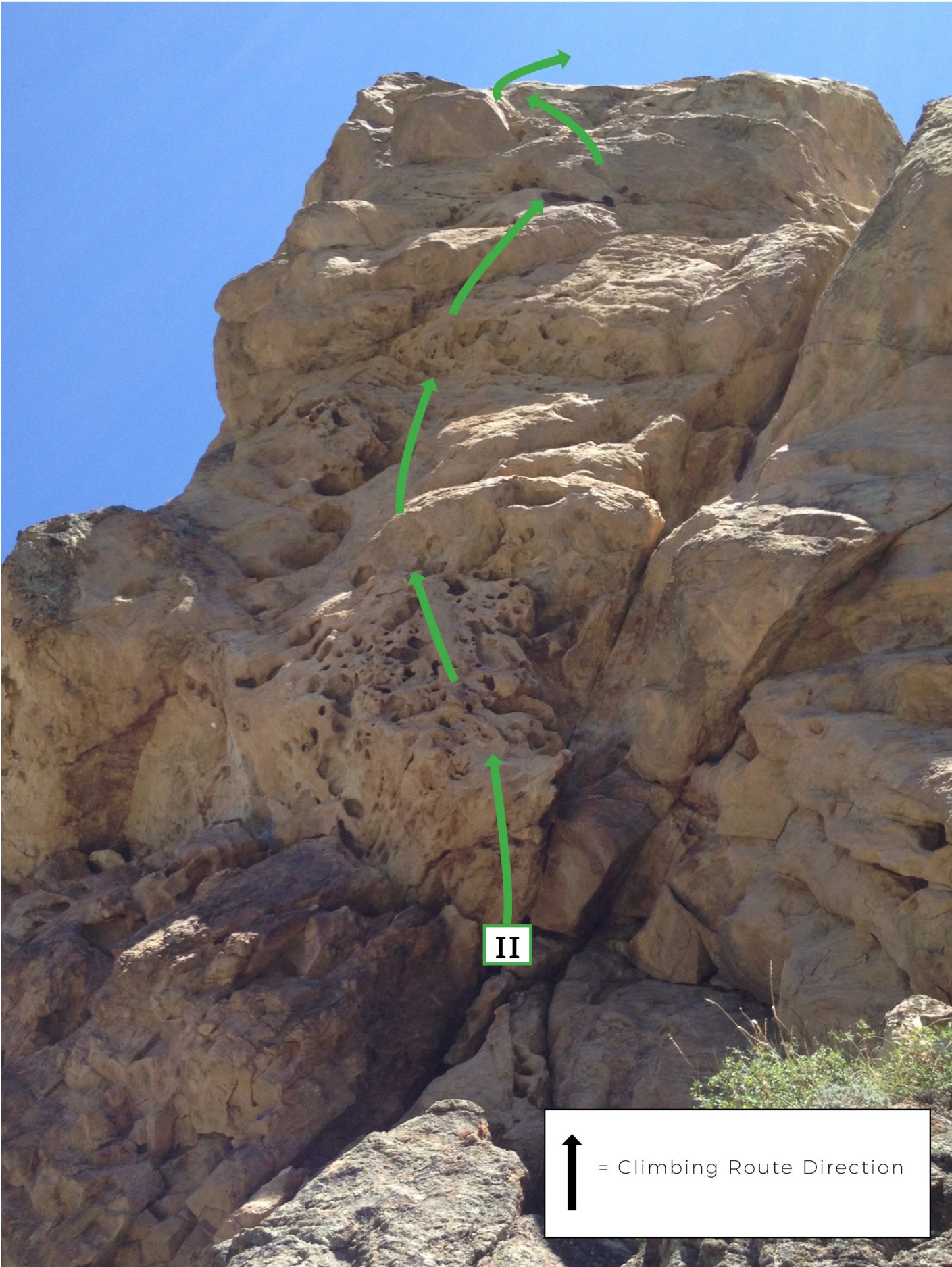
II. *Prophet* - 5.9, Bring a #1 Cam for the top section and three long slings.

See next page for additional views

Lower Buttresses - Closeup View



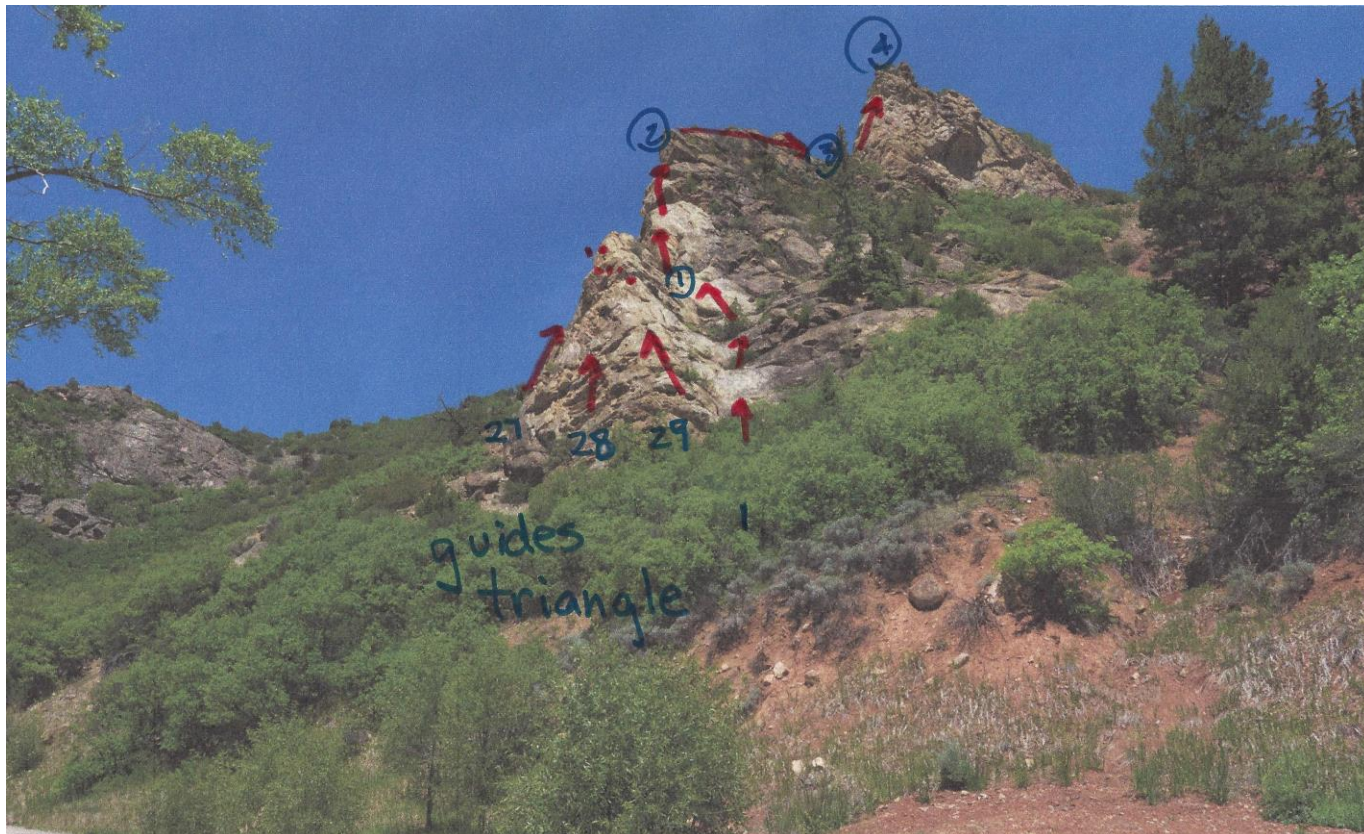
Lower Buttresses - Closeup View



II

↑ = Climbing Route Direction

Guide's Triangle/ Dusty Ridge



Updated text 06-23-2014

1-2. Dusty Ridge 5.8+. Fun Route. Two pitches up the ridge, one across the ridge and a final pitch up the east face/arete. Take along a few cams for the second pitch. A #1 camalot works nicely just off the belay and a #2 works near the top. Also, a few long runners for slinging junipers.

27. Rat-A-Tat-Tat. 5.6. 7 bolts & 1 pin. Chain anchors.

28. Dust Buckets. 5.6. 7 bolts. Chain anchors.

29. Squealing in the Dust. 5.7. 7 bolts. Chain anchors.