



# **Bears Paw Bluffs SANDSTONE**

**by Sam Carr and E.M.  
Updated June 2020**



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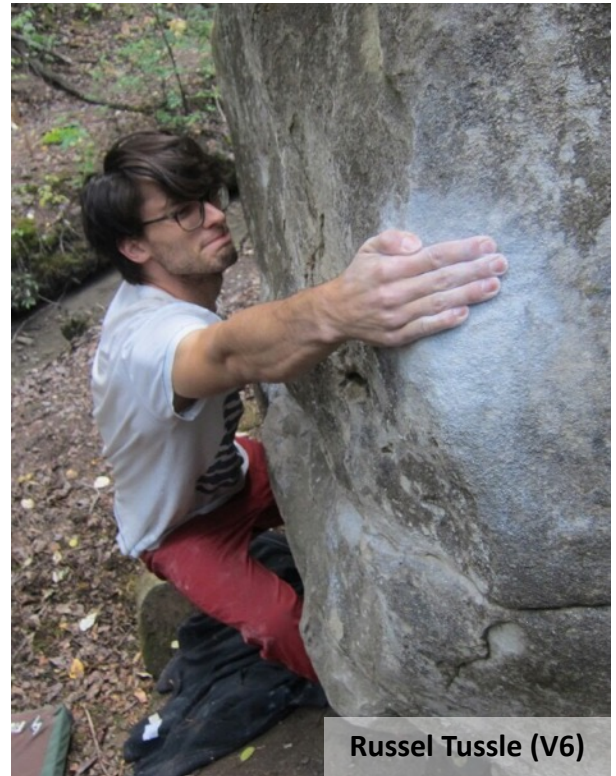
# Introduction

Hidden amongst the rolling hills and quiet forests between Valley Ridge and the Bearspaw Reservoir are clusters of outcrops and boulders, some of which provide pleasant climbing. Many of these outcrops, such as Bearspaw Bluffs, have been explored by climbers for many years. Others, such as the Ravine, are most likely new and have not seen much traffic. The soft sandstone offers many interesting features from slopers to pockets and, on rare occasions, crimps. Bearspaw Bluffs contains the largest concentration of climbs. The bluffs reach up to 10m in height and provide tall highballs/routes and several quality boulder problems. The Ravine offers shorter problems with many butt-dragging starts, but some interesting movement is to be found. The Lookout is a heap of rubble (more so than the other areas) which somehow yields one standout highball with a possibly ankle-smashing landing. Lakeside continues to be explored and may appeal to particularly adventurous climbers.

All in all, you will definitely encounter terrible rock/kitty-litter sand, but once you ignore the perpetual brushing and the question of why you even came here, you may enjoy some climbing on the outskirts of Calgary.

## Preservation of the rock

In order to preserve the climbs as much as possible, it is best NOT to climb when the rock is wet, such as after rain fall or periods of snow melt. When the fragile sandstone becomes saturated with water, holds are much more likely to break. Do NOT use metal brushes!! These will carve out the rock like it's butter!



Russel Tussle (V6)

## Conditions

Summer and fall (late June to October) provide the best conditions. Unfortunately, snow melt keeps the sheltered and vegetated rock wet until late spring or early summer. However, in dry periods, early season climbing (starting in March) may be possible at the sunny, south-facing Bearspaw Bluffs. The midsummer heat can make for lots of mosquitos and high humidity at shaded outcrops.

As discussed above, periods of rain cause the slow-drying sandstone to be extra fragile and slippery. Only head out in dry conditions.



## Access

The majority of climbing described in this guide is located on TransAlta property (who own much of the land surrounding the Bearspaw Reservoir). On warm summer days, you will likely encounter plenty of hikers, mountain bikers, dog walkers, fishers, and swimmers along the approach trails described in this guide. The landowners seem to tolerate access to all these groups at the time of writing. Although the author has never encountered barricades or signs that restrict access, we ask that climbers comply to any rules or restrictions imposed by landowners in the future. PLEASE be respectful and minimize your impact when climbing at Bearspaw Bluffs to preserve access for future climbers. Refrain from lighting fires, camping, littering, stashing gear, playing loud music, or climbing late at night during your visit.

## Equipment

Most climbing described in this guide requires little more than shoes, chalk, several brushes, and 1-2 bouldering pads. If you wish to top-rope at Bearspaw Bluffs or clean/inspect highball problems, a short length (30-40m) of climbing rope and several slings for anchor-building will be required. Most bolt anchors on the main cliff at Bearspaw Bluffs should also be reinforced with rebar pounded into the grassy slopes above the cliffs.



## First Ascents

If you believe you've climbed a new route/problem in the areas described in this guide, please feel free to contact the author so your addition can be added to future versions of this guide. The author may be reached at [scckarr@gmail.com](mailto:scckarr@gmail.com) Please include approach notes, a description, the grade, and a photo if possible.

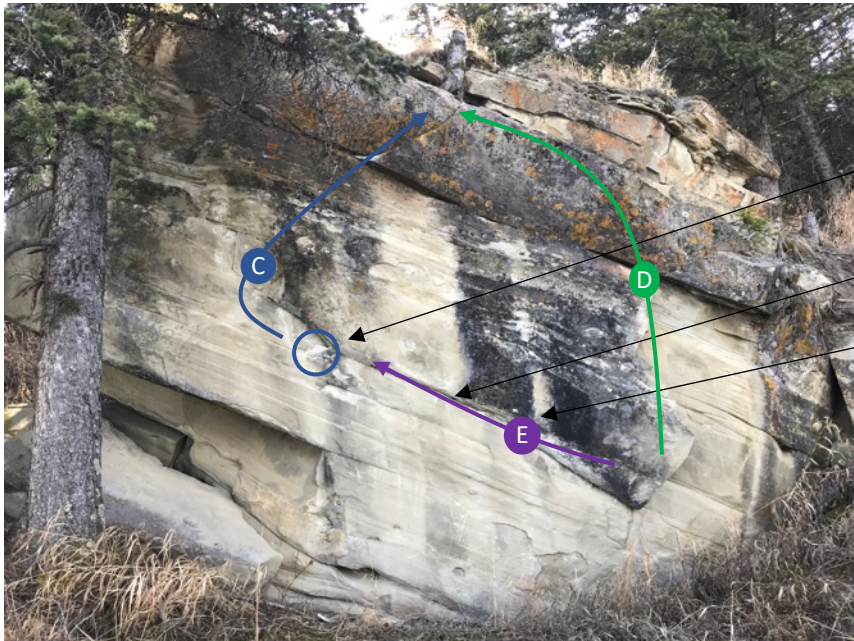
## Disclaimer

Rock climbing is dangerous and can result in injury or death. Climbers using this guide do so entirely at their own risk and the author takes no responsibility for any personal harm. There may be misinformation in this guide. Climb at your own risk! Land owners may decide to restrict access and it is your responsibility to comply to closures. It is not your legal right to access.



# Introduction

## Legend



Starting Hold(s)

Direction of Problem

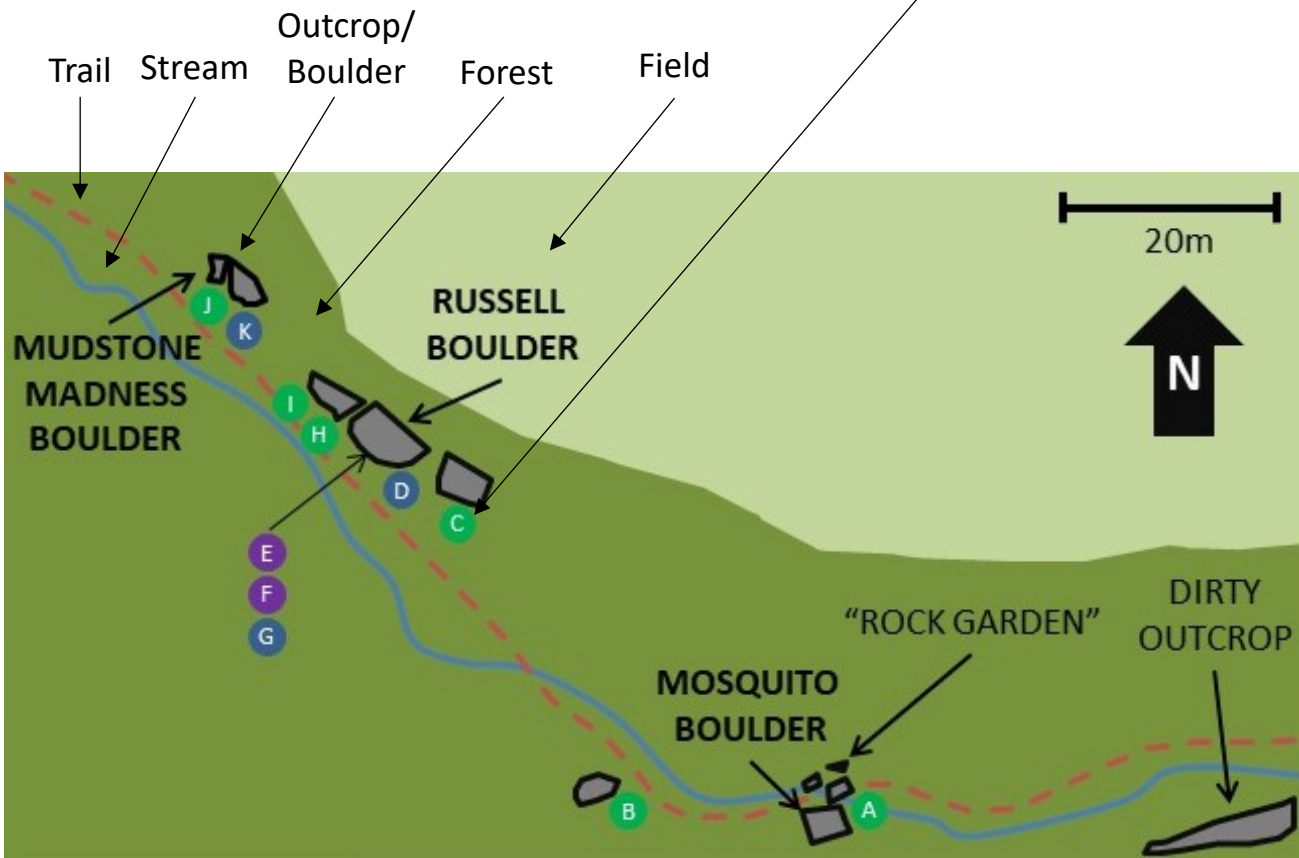
Route Identifier  
Colours:

Green (V0-V3)

Blue (V4-V6)

Black (V7-V10)

Purple (project)

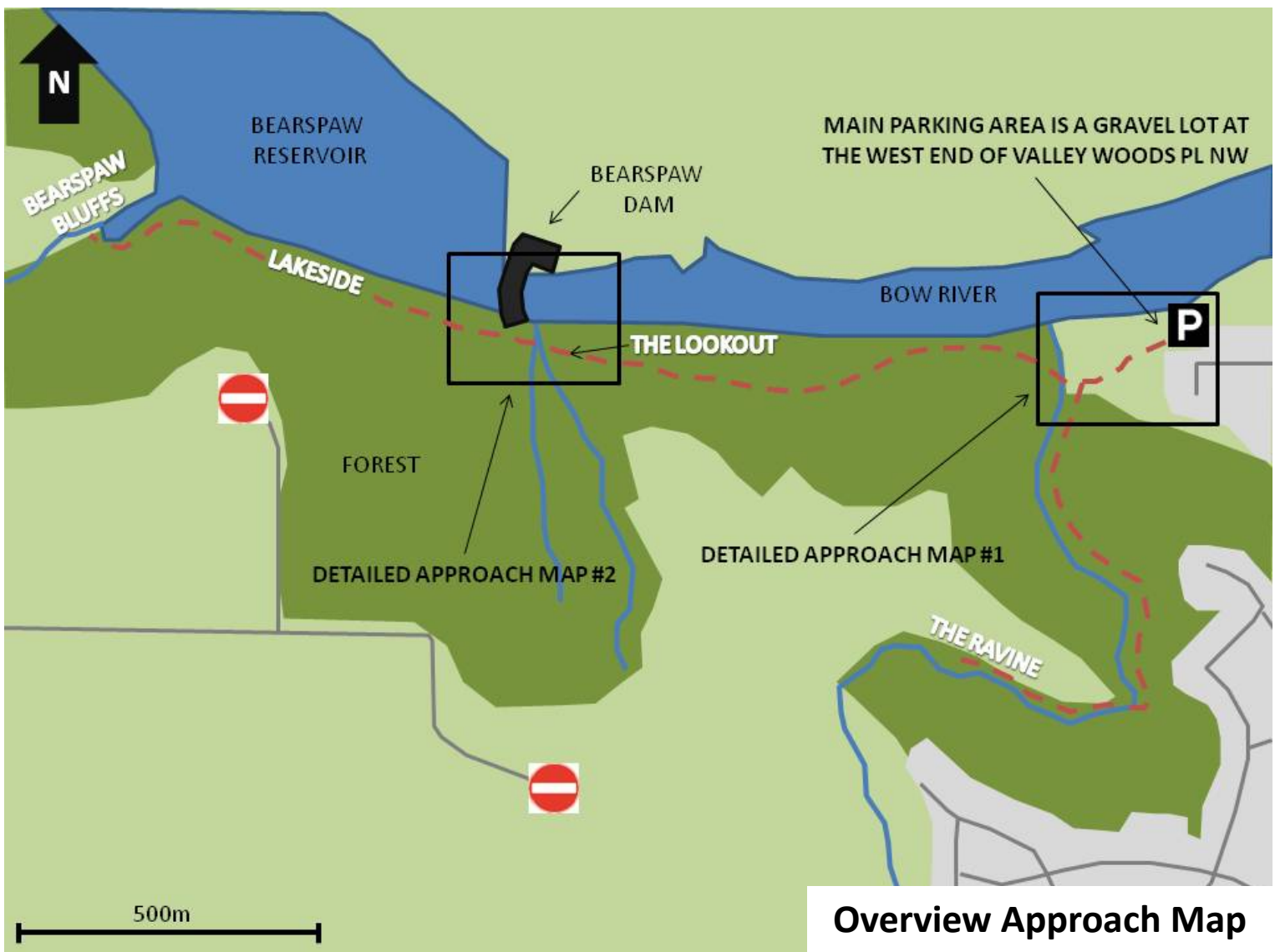


# Introduction

## Approach

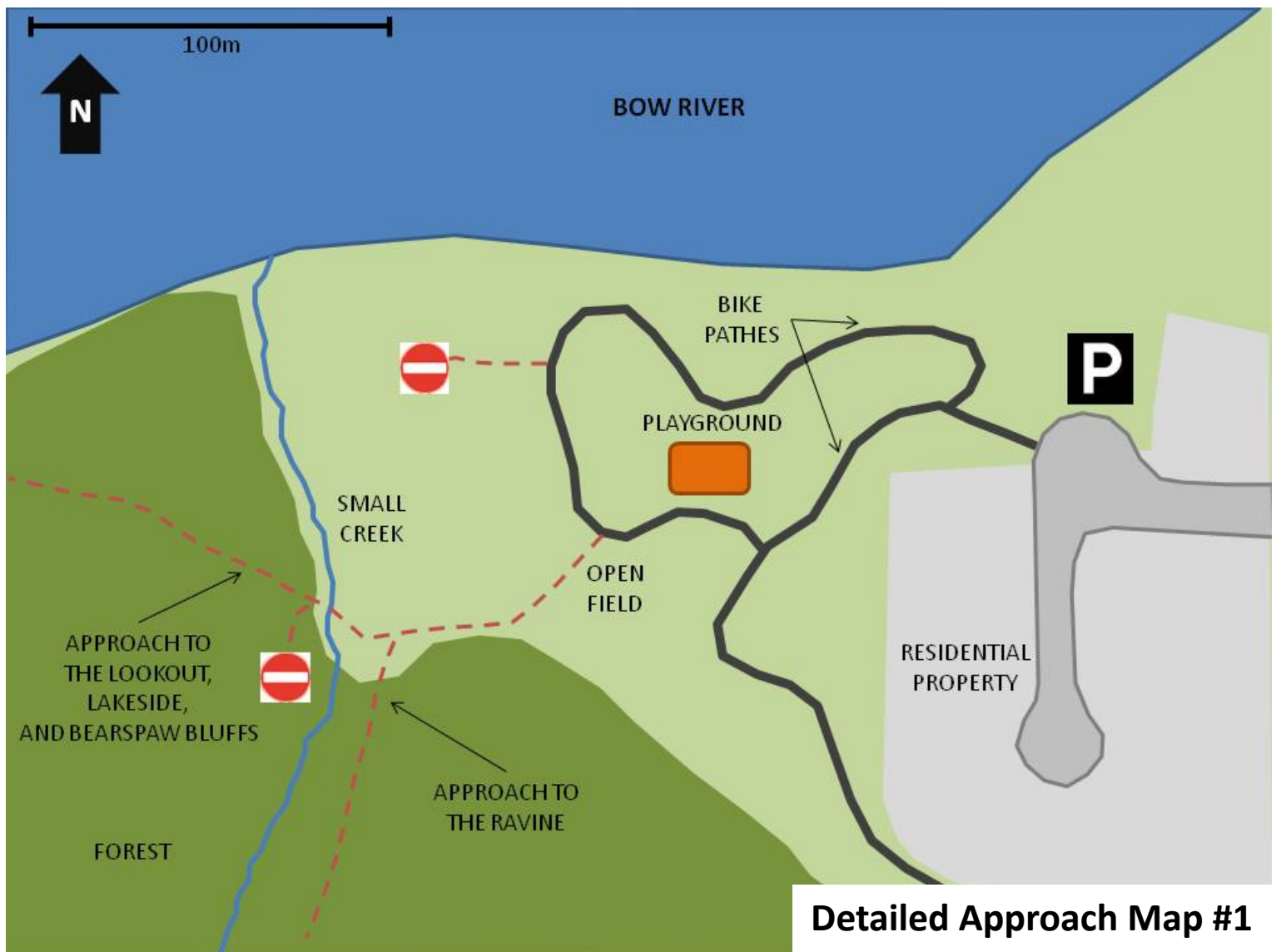
The main parking area is located in the community of Valley Ridge in NW Calgary. From the Trans-Canada Highway, drive down Valley Ridge Boulevard towards the Bow River. When you reach a T-intersection, take a left onto Valley Woods Landing. Continue 350m to the west end of Valley Woods Pl. Park in the small gravel parking lot. Although it may be possible to shorten approach times to certain areas by parking elsewhere in Valley Ridge and on gravel range roads to the west, PLEASE only park at the described parking area. Trespassing across private property or parking on residential streets may lead to access issues in the future.

The four main climbing areas (The Ravine, The Lookout, Lakeside, and Bearspaw Bluffs) detailed in this guide are approached from this main parking area. Approach notes are described at the start of each chapter. The following pages contain several maps that first-time visitors may find useful.

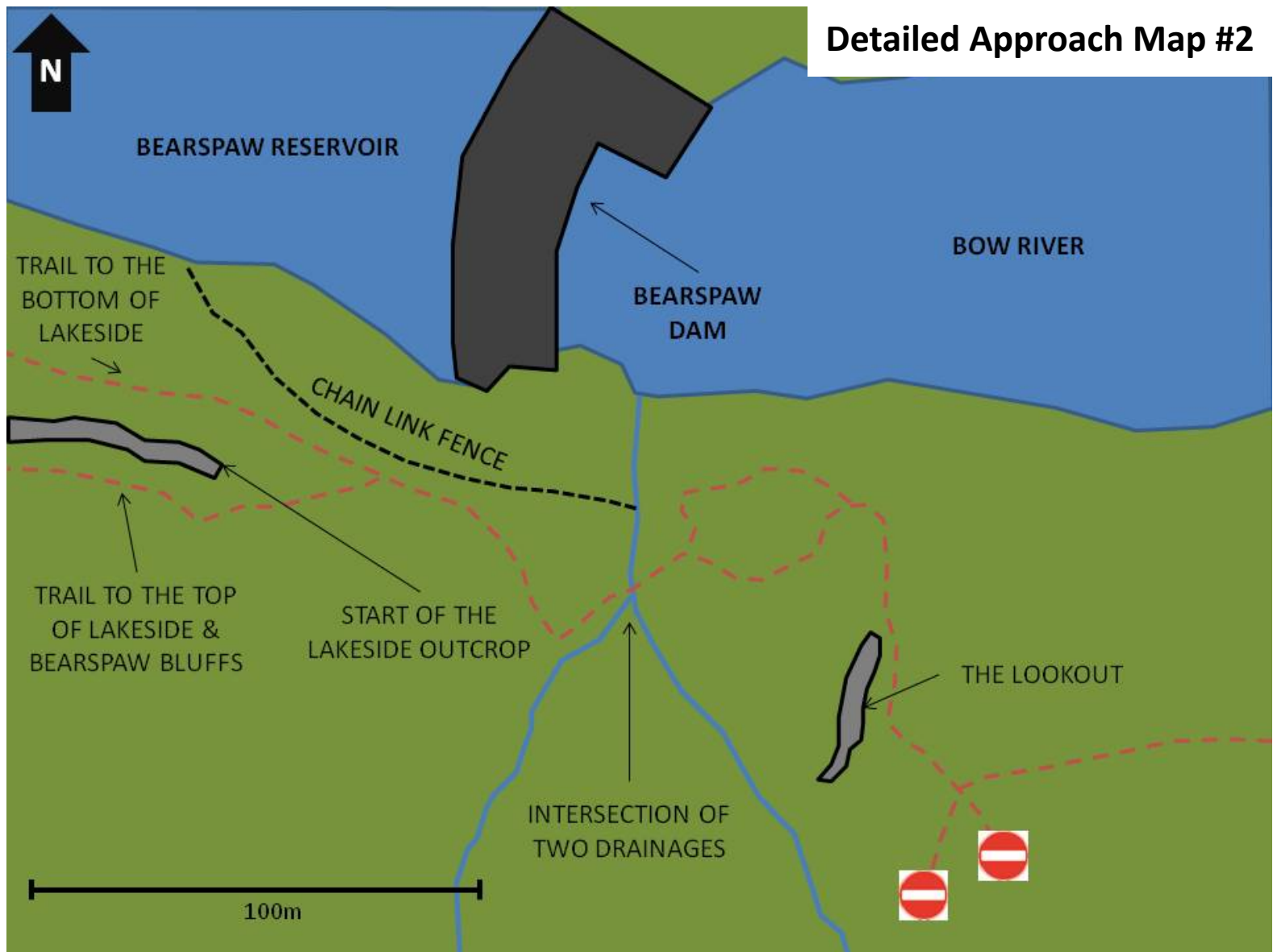


**Overview Approach Map**





**Detailed Approach Map #2**





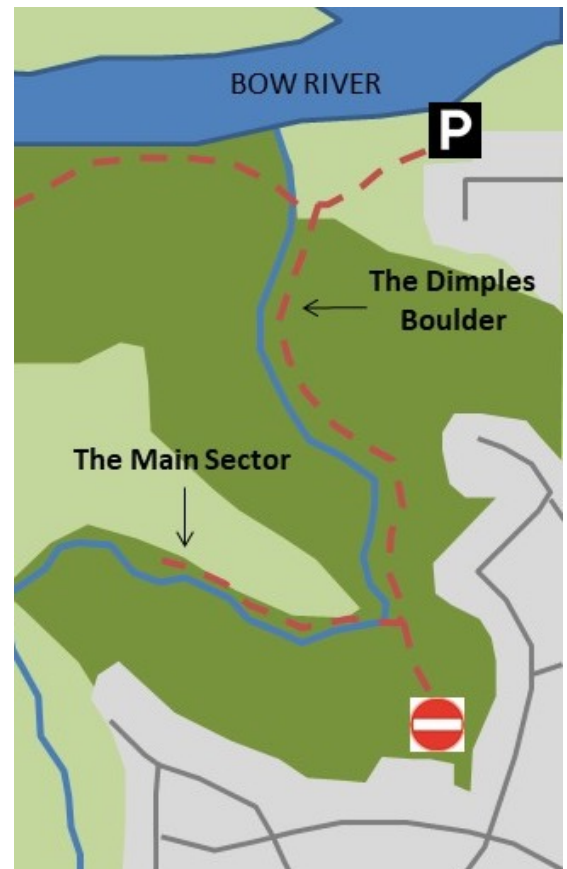
## Introduction

The following boulders are located upstream along the small creek/ravine just west of the main parking area. These boulders have the shortest approach of all the climbing areas detailed in this guidebook. Most problems are short sit-starts on mossy, secluded boulders in a vegetated ravine. The Mudstone Madness and Russel boulders provide the best climbing.

**Approach** (5min to Dimples from the Main Parking Area, 15min to the Main Sector of The Ravine from the Main Parking Area)

From the main parking area on Valley Woods Pl, follow the bike path west, past a playground, to a trail crossing a short, open field. At the far side of the field there will be a small creek. Take the path following the east bank of the creek upstream (see Detailed Approach Map #1). The trail will initially climb until a burnt tree stump and clearing are met. The Dimples Boulder is located below the trail by the creek at this point.

To access the Main Sector of the Ravine, continue up the ravine until the trail veers uphill, away from the creek. Leave the main trail and stick to the creek on a faint trail until the outcrops are reached. Several overgrown and highly fractured outcrops will be passed before reaching the main boulders.



Mudstone Madness (V3)

**Conditions** (Mid May though early October)

Hidden at the bottom of the ravine, these boulders don't see much sun and take longer to dry than other areas. Chinooks and spring melt water keeps these boulders wet long into spring. Spring melt causes the creek to run heavy and the accumulation of ice can make access tricky. Unfortunately, hot summer days can make this area feel quite muggy and humid.

## The Dimples Boulder

There is only one problem on this boulder, but it is a good butt-dragging-heel-hooking-mantling time. The boulder is found directly below the trail when a prominent burnt tree stump is reached. To access, bushwhack straight downhill about 10 meters when you encounter the burnt tree stump (which is uphill of the trail).



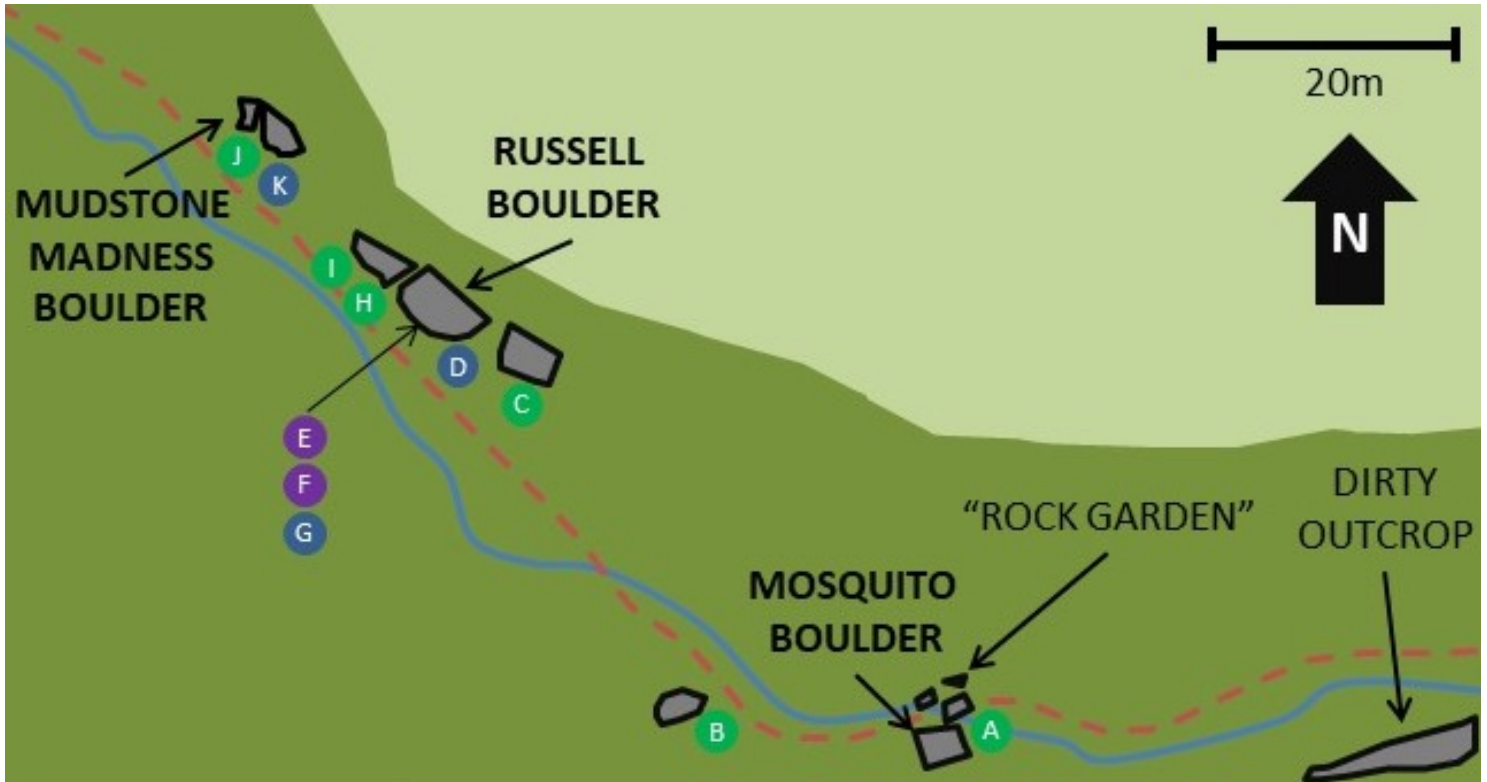
### A) Dimples (V5) \*

Start on two edges on the left side of the boulder. Traverse to the right until you can hit the large edge on the top of the boulder. An awkward mantle will get you on top. There are some interesting pebbles and divots to grab on this one. (FA Sam Carr 2017)



## The Main Sector

The Main Sector of the Ravine is a set of boulders by the creek about 10 minutes upstream of the Dimples Boulder. There are several good problems, most of which are sit starts. The outcrops/boulders are smaller than other areas but still offer a variety of fun lines. There are several harder problems, such as Russell Tussle (V6), as well as a couple of open projects.



The Mosquito Boulder is the first boulder encountered when approaching the Main Sector and is located right next to the creek. In spring, this boulder may be almost completely covered in ice.

### A) Mosquito Burrito (V1)

Start left hand on the arête and right hand on a low edge (below the lip of the boulder). A couple moves up and to the right to finish the problem. Very short.

### B) Unnamed Hill Slab (V0)

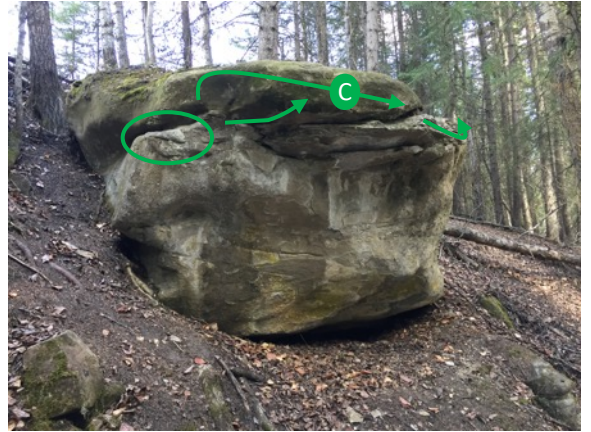
A slab set in the hill about 20m past the Mosquito Boulder. This problem seems to combine a lowball eliminate with a poor, sloped landing. Very little to recommend.



The Warm-Up Boulder is located on the north bank of the stream beside the Russell Boulder.

## C) Warm-Up Traverse (V2)

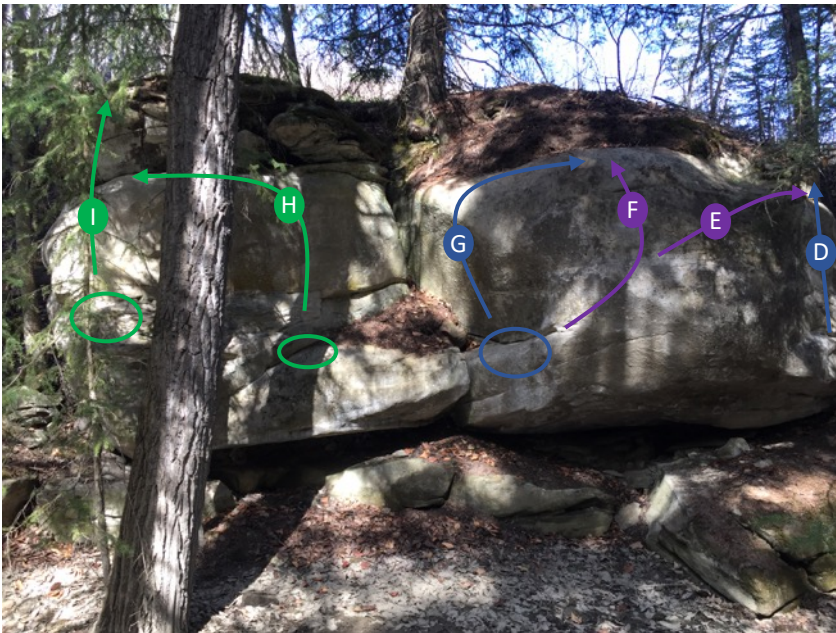
There are a couple variations. Start on the obvious edge on the left side. Either move directly up to the lip and traverse to the right or stay low until you are forced up to the lip (harder). Continue to traverse right until a small tree is reached. Mantle directly right of the tree (don't use it!).



The Russell Boulder is the tallest boulder at the Main Sector with the greatest number of problems.

## D) Russell Tussle (V6) \*\*

Sit-start with two pockets/edges directly above the small ledge (this sit-start feels very awkward). Interesting moves on slopers and edges will bring you to the rounded lip. This is the highest quality problem in the area. (FA Sam Carr 2017)



## E) Open Project (Russellsprouts)

Start on the large obvious edge on the left side of the boulder to the right of a crack. Crank up to two crimps on the bulge and continue traversing right on slopers to the Russell Tussle top-out.

## F) Open Project

Start as per Russellsprouts. Once on the two crimps, tackle the blank face directly above.

## G) Lump (V4)

Start on the large edge as for E and F and move left into underclings. Figure out a way to climb the bulge. Everything left of the crack is out. (FA Sam Carr 2017)

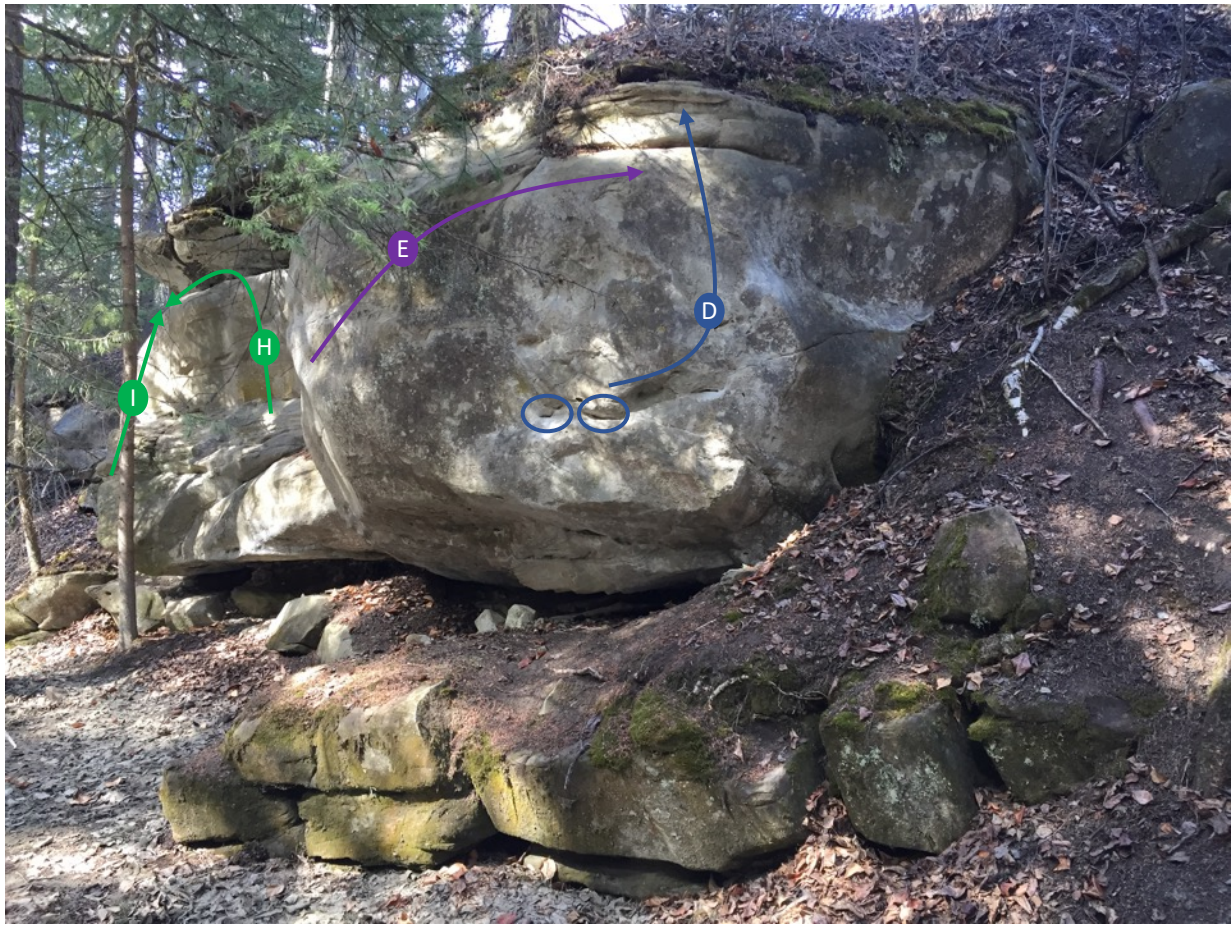
## H) One move Blunder (V1)

Start on an undercling, hike up the feet, and reach. Finish as for "Flakes don't Break".

## I) Flakes don't Break (V2)\*

Start on the large edge. Climb straight up to the large rounded flakes of dubious strength...





The Mudstone Madness Boulder is the last boulder in the Main Sector and is located 10m upstream of the Russell Boulder.

## J) Mudstone Madness (V3) \*

Start two hands on the sloping edge furthest on the right side of the boulder. Traverse to the left until it is possible to mantle in the awkward chimney. Note that some of the foot ledges are out, check the image. (FA Sam Carr 2017)



## K) Mudstone Mantle (V4) \*\*

Start as per Mudstone Madness but once on the crimpy rail head straight up and into an intriguing mantle. The detached blocks/boulders to the left are OUT. Only use the main block on which the problem starts. (FA Sam Carr 2018)



# The Lookout

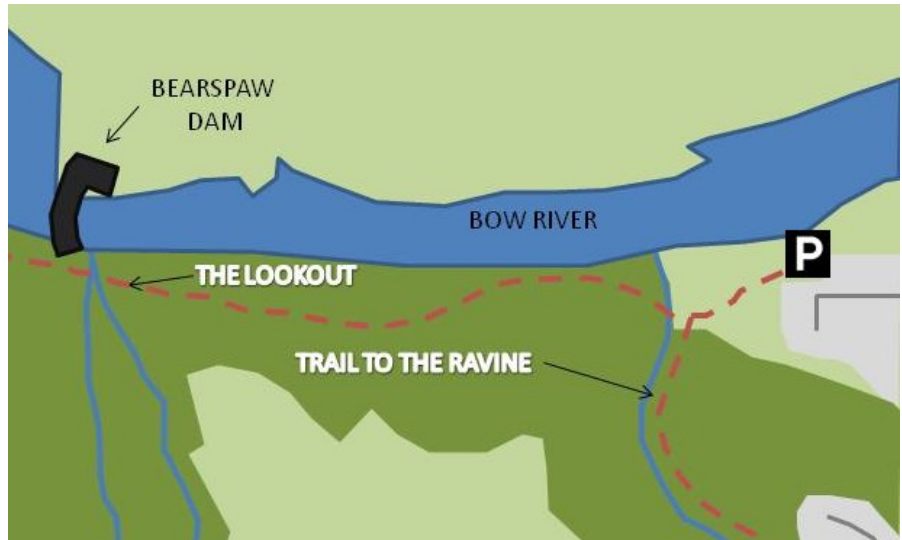
## Introduction

The Lookout is located on steep forested banks above the Bow River. The Main Sector holds several lines worthy of climbing. Outcrops are easily accessed from the trail leading to Bearspaw Bluffs and Lakeside areas.

## Conditions *(April to October)*

The Main Sector gets some sun and can be dry year-round, but is usually wet during spring and chinook melts. The Riverside Sector is more shaded and takes longer to dry.

## Approach *(15-20min from the Main Parking Area)*



From the main parking area on Valley Woods Pl, follow the bike path west, past a playground, to a trail crossing a short, open field. At the far side of the field will be a small creek. Follow the trail across the creek and into the woods on the other side (see Detailed Approach Map #1). A hundred metres past the creek, the path will climb a short hill before levelling out while running parallel to the Bow River.

Shortly after passing a barbed wire fence and overhead powerlines, you will encounter an obvious clearing with the hydro dam visible below. At this clearing, take the trail leading downhill 15m towards an obvious cliff (The Main Sector of the Lookout) in the direction of the hydro dam.

To access Riverside, backtrack 100m towards the parking lot past one set of powerlines and follow a faint trail down 10m towards the Bow River.



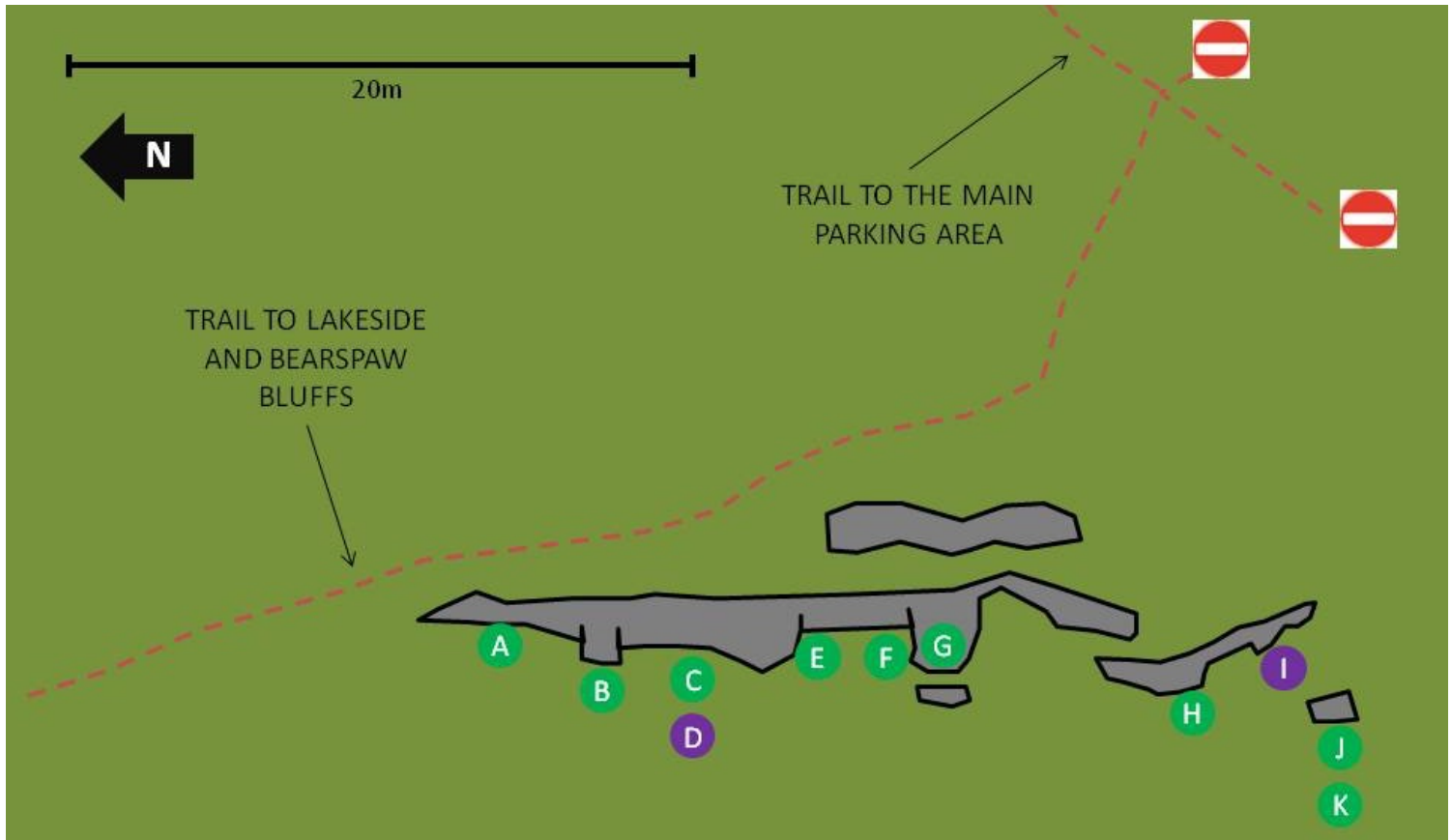
Orange Crush (V2)



# The Lookout

## The Main Sector

The Main Sector at the Lookout offers several pleasant lines. Shark Fin and Righter's Block have fun moves and safe landings. However, the most aesthetic problem and area classic is Orange Crush, which also boasts the worst landing. Fancy that. A rope may be handy for cleaning and rehearsing the moves on some of the taller problems.



# The Lookout

## A) Righter's Block (V0)\*

Sit start on the lower left side of the wall. Trend up and right through cracks and jugs. The crack/corner on the right side of the wall are out. A high variation is possible along the upper lip of the wall. This is a good wall for creating eliminates.

## B) Shark Fin (V3) \*

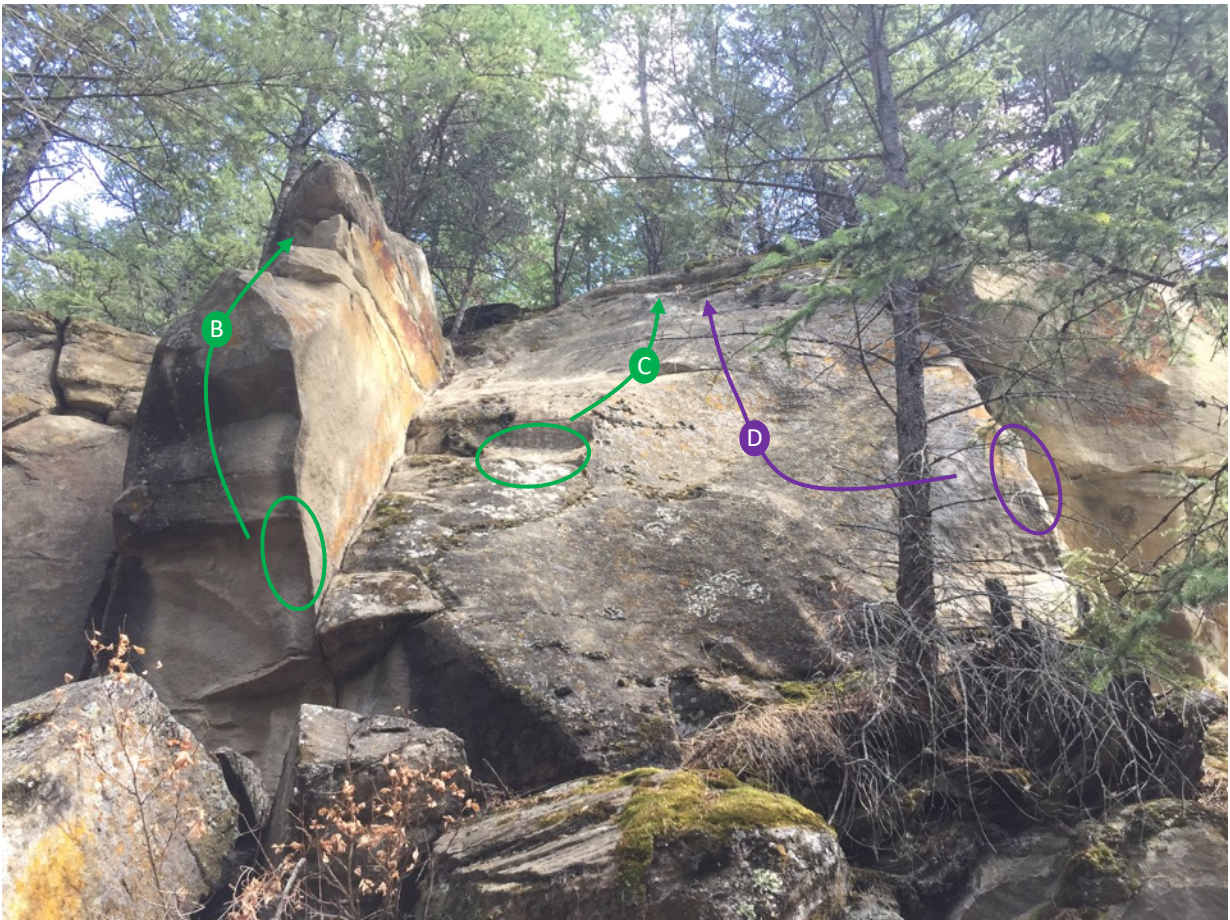
Start in a low side pull on the right arête. Move up the box and top out on big edges. The big edge on the slab and anything above are out!

## C) Pepsi Zero (V0+)\*

Start on the large edge and perform a mantle. Stretch up to good edges near the top of the slab and pull yourself up. The crack to the left and the wall further to the left are out. A sit start adds a move but doesn't change the grade. Bad landing.

## D) Open Project (Diet Pepsi)

Start with two hands on the right arête (by the hole) and smear left and up. Move directly up the centre of the slab without using the massive edge to the left (start hold for Pepsi Zero). Float to the good edge directly above. Being tall may be a useful asset. Bad landing.





## E) Easy Crack (V0)

Start low and climb up the finger sized crack in the corner. Bad landing.

## F) Very Easy Crack (V0-)

Climb the corner/crack. Easy access up/down Orange Crush. Bad landing.

## G) Orange Crush (V2) \*\*

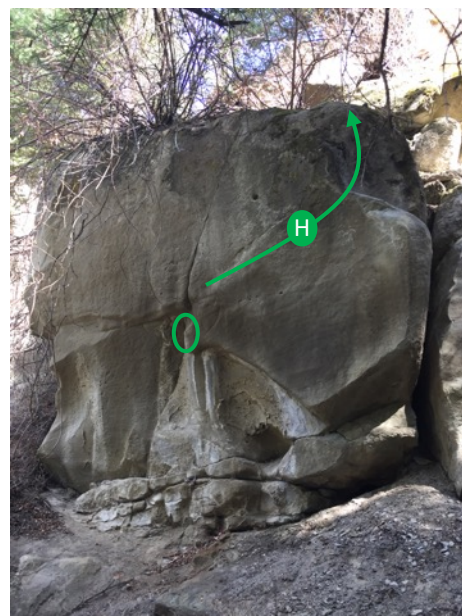
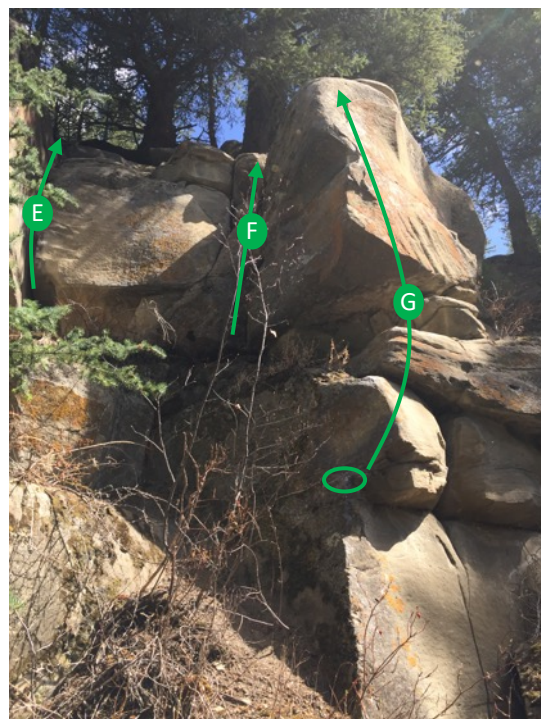
This is the problem to do here. Start on a low edge at the bottom of the block (left) and climb easily up on big edges over the roof. Once over the roof, climb the orange face and pull an awkward mantle to top out. The landing isn't ideal, and the hardest moves are at the top. Give the holds a good brush before giving it a shot. Tope roping the problem to sort things out may be advisable.

## H) Hole in the Wall (V1)

Start on small edge, move out right to a two-finger pocket, and out to the lip. Finish above. Sloped landing.

## I) Open Project

Traverse along a seam before transitioning into an overhanging crack avoiding the boulder down left. Needs cleaning.





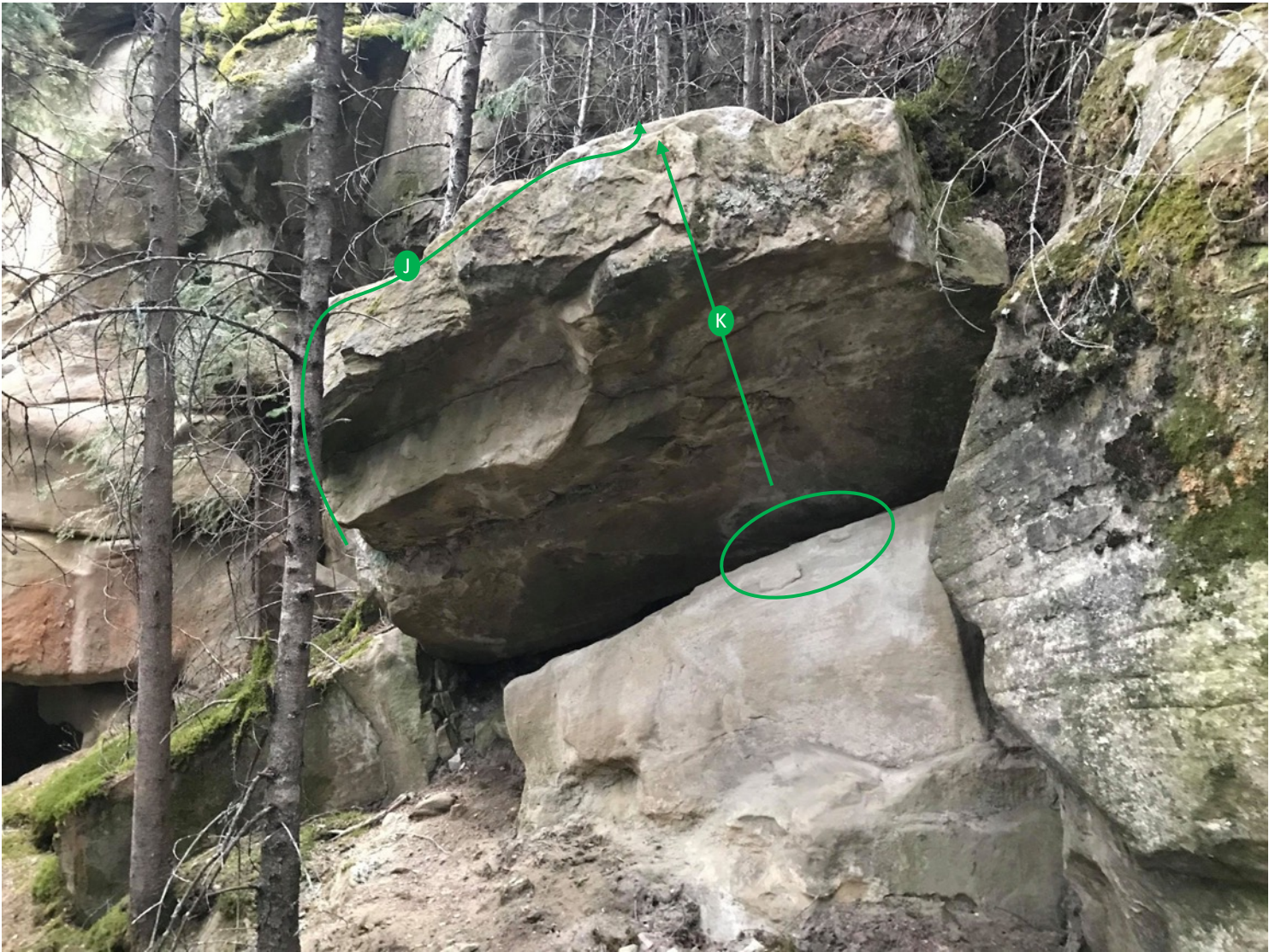
## The Lookout

### J) The Tree is Lava (V0-)

Start on the far-left side of a small flat-topped boulder and traverse right while avoiding a nearby tree. Finish by mantling on the far-right side.

### K) Don't Mind the Tree (V0)

Start low on a large flat edge directly below the topout of "The Tree is Lava". Make a big reach/hop to the lip and mantle.





## Riverside Sector

A small outcrop just downhill from the main trail 100m before the Main Sector. The outcrop features a traversing V1 and a bouldery V3. Both problems have less than optimal landings when topping out. There is also a difficult looking project with a mediocre landing.



A) Flopping Fish (V1): Start on a large edge to the far-left side of the outcrop. Traverse right using large feet. When possible do an awkward mantle to gain the large ledge. Exit the ledge further to the right. If you fall, try not to launch down the steep hill.

B) Flying Fish (V3): Start left hand on a in cut crimp above the roof and right hand on a sloping crimp below the roof. One hard move to the “Flopping Fish” jugs. Finish as per “Flopping Fish”.

C) Project  
The face on the right side of the outcrop.

## Introduction

These outcrops stretch along the shore of the reservoir between the hydro-dam and Bearspaw Bluffs. The outcrops are extremely fractured and can be fairly tall. The climbs here feel more adventurous compared to the other areas detailed in this guide. The more solid sections of the outcrops offer some highballs, however loose blocks are a concern on most climbs. It is best to access climbs via rappel. Despite the tricky access, several quality lines can be found. Of particular note is “Hanging Garden”, which tackles an impressive hanging slab.

## Conditions *(April to October)*

These outcrops dry reasonably quickly and are comparable to the Lookout. They are, however, significantly more vegetated which may cause seeping in certain sections.



Hanging Garden(V4)

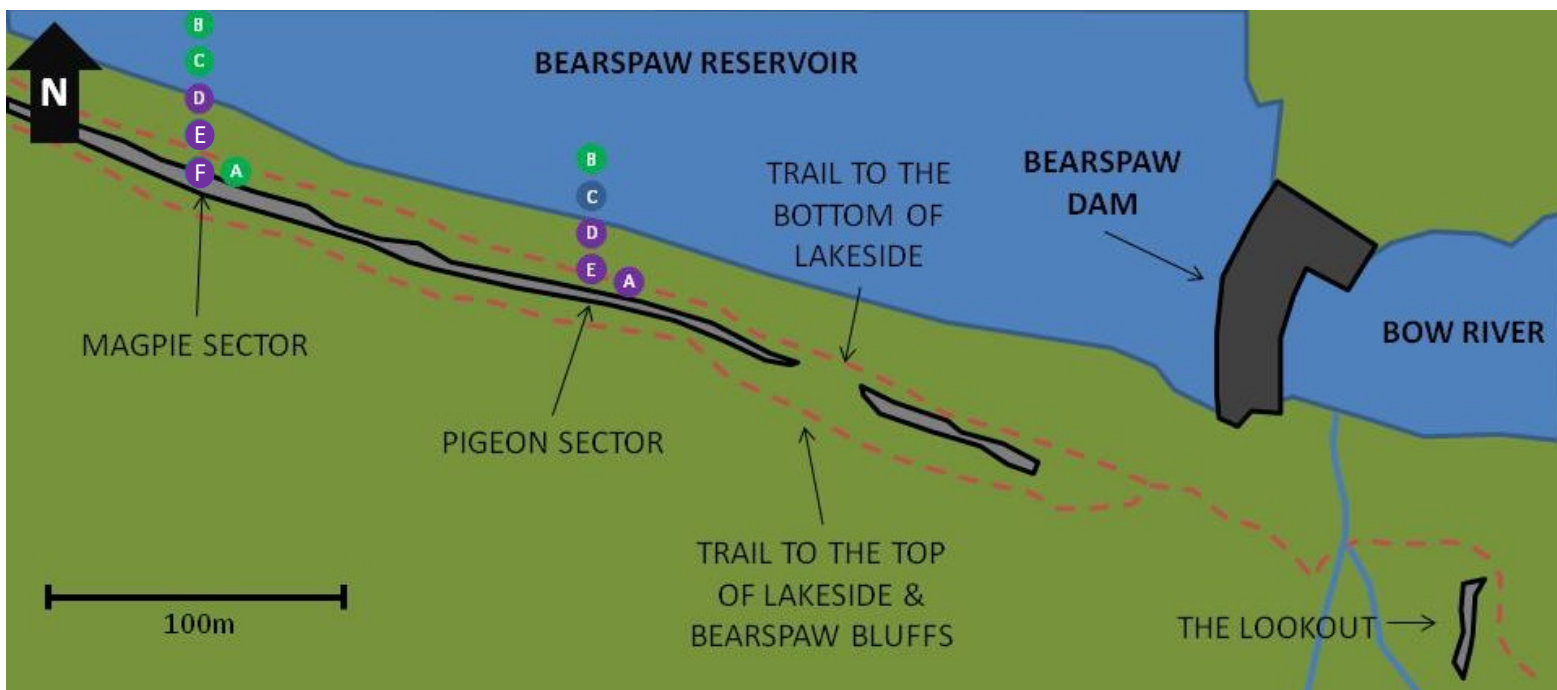


## Approach (35-45min from the Main Parking Area)

From top of The Lookout, walk down the obvious trail along the skier's right side of the outcrop. Continue down one of several trails to the bottom of the valley below The Lookout. You will find yourself in an open forest near the intersection of two drainages that empty into the Bow River 50m away. At the intersection of the two drainages, follow a faint trail heading up the hillside opposite of The Lookout. The trail first leads climbers' left for 15m before switch backing right and curving up to parallel a chain link fence with a "No Trespassing" signs. This fence guards the Bearspaw Dam, so do NOT hop the fence or approach any closer to the dam. When you are directly above the dam, a mossy cliff will be visible above you. This cliff is the start to the Lakeside outcrop (see Detailed Approach Map #2). From here you have two options:

- 1) Continue following the lower trail as it contours above the shores of the reservoir to access the bottom of the Lakeside climbs.
- 2) Head uphill 20m to the top of the cliffs and follow the faint upper trail along the cliff's edge. This trail provides access to the top of the Lakeside climbs (as well as Bearspaw Bluffs).

On your first visit, finding your chosen problems at Lakeside from the lower trail will be difficult, but finding them from the upper trail may prove to be impossible (if you've decided to rappel down). Either use the GPS coordinates at the end of this guide or carefully consult the maps and photos. A key landmark may be the built-up landing zone below Hanging Garden.



## Pigeon Sector

The Pigeon Sector is the first solid section of outcrop found along the approach (200m past the dam). It features several beautiful aretes. The lines are tall, landings usually bad, and all lines contain loose rock... It is best to access this sector via rappel to avoid very long walk-offs. If this still sounds fun, the cool hanging slab feature of “Hanging Garden” is the most recommended climb. Very tricky to locate from above...

### A) Open Project (Scary Arete)

A striking prow 10m left of Hanging Garden. After completing the obvious arete and gaining a seemingly juggy edge, the first ascensionist will be faced with the choice of jumping down to their pads or questing upwards into increasingly loose terrain. Be sure to check out the titillating Fe-oxide concretions on the left wall.

### B) Yamineering (V1/5.8)

Climb the crack left of Hanging Garden. When loose blocks make vertical progress seem foolhardy, strike out right via awkward moves to share the top-out with Hanging Garden. The problem/route can be somewhat protected by dubious hand to finger sized gear. If only there was a rusty piton to clip, one could close their eyes and really imagine they were on a Yam classic. Has only been TRed at this point.

### C) Hanging Garden (V4) \*\*

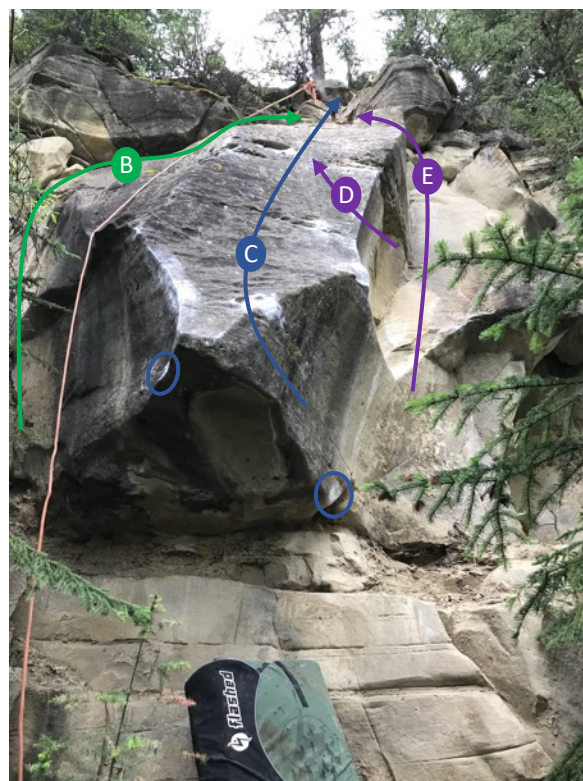
Start below the prow and make a few tricky moves to gain the slab (crux). Continue upwards on a cool hanging slab using pockets. A few more moves on suspect rock above the slab will gain the mossy slopes above. Rappel to descend. The landing has been built-up slightly making falls off the crux manageable. (FA Sam Carr 2020)

### D) Open Project (Open Book Left)

Climb up into an awkward corner and make a few insecure moves to gain better holds on the slab.

### E) Open Project (Open Book Right)

Climb the same awkward corner as “Open Book Left”, but, instead of finishing up the slab, continue up the corner.





## Magpie Sector

The Magpie Sector is found 150m further along the outcrops from the Pigeon Sector. All of the problems here host bad landings. The Magpie face hosts some beautiful and somewhat bold lines. Like the Pigeon Sector, these climbs are best accessed via rappel. Be weary of the steep mossy slopes above. It may be best to rappel from a tree higher on the mossy slope and redirect above the desired climb lower down. Very tricky to locate from above...



### A) Big Bird (V1)

Start on the lower large edge and make a tricky move out right. The rest is a V0. The topout has some suspect blocks to pull on.

### B) Traverse (V0)

Traverse the crimpy rail into “Jenga” and continue into Complete “Wide Way Around”

### C) Jenga (V0)\*

Climb the obvious break in the face using blocks and the cracks in-between. Some of the blocks wiggle.. But there are nice finger-locks in-between! Finish on “Complete Wide Way Around”.

### D) Complete Wide Way Around (V0)\*

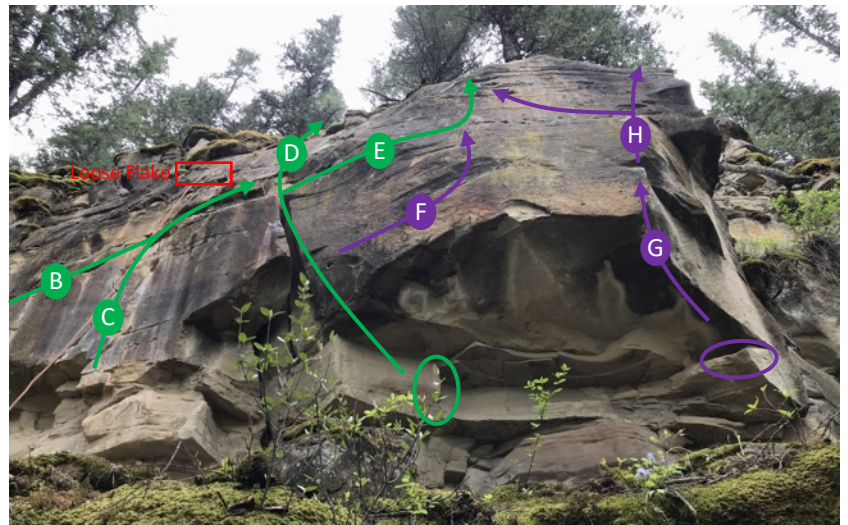
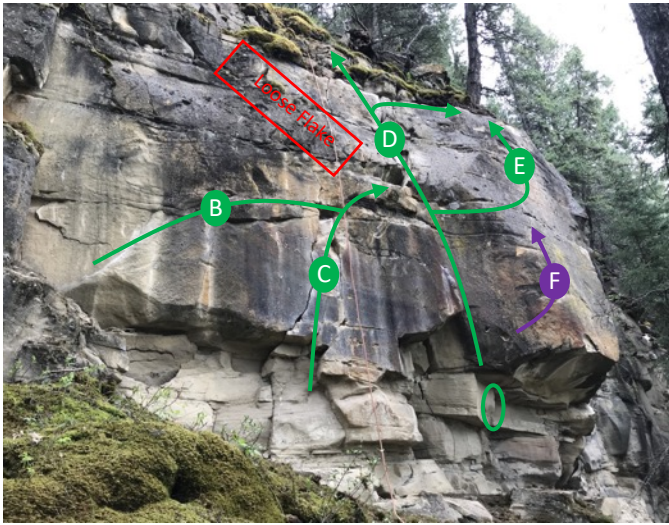
Start below the roof on a flat side-pull. Climb through pockets to gain the wide crack, and follow it to several large edges. Continue up the crack directly above. Don’t follow the large loose flake to the left.. Once at the lip either climb up steep mossy blocks until your satisfied, or traverse the top of the lip to the top of “Wide Way Around”. Descend via rappel.

### E) Wide Way Around (V0)\*\*

From the top of the wide crack of “Complete Wide Way Around”, traverse right using pockets and a seam until you can reach the very large edge below the lip. Mantle onto the steep mossy slopes above. Best to descend on rappel rather than tackle the steep mossy slope... A quality line. (FA Sam Carr 2020)

### F) Open Project (No Wide Way Around)

Start as per Wide Way Around, but when possible fire right up the blank face to connect with Complete Wide Way Around.



## G) Open Project (Magpie Arete Low)

Starting on a large, somewhat hollow sounding block, gain the jug above the lip using small pockets before jumping off. The author injured a finger on the heinous pockets.

## H) Open Project (Magpie Arete)

Climb Magpie Arete Low to the jug and find a way to reach the next jug on the arete without being sent tumbling down into the reservoir. Easier climbing on intriguing pockets gains the lip. Mantle onto the steep mossy slopes above. A variation is to traverse and finish as Complete Wide Way Around. A worth while stand start from the jug above the roof should ease the grade. Descend via rappel. This will be a beautiful line when finished.



## First Washout Sector

Located near the end of the Lake Side outcrops, past Magpie Sector close to Bearspaw Bluffs. Following the upper Lake Side trail a steep clearing 100m or so after Magpie Sector. Only one problem is located here, but it makes a nice pitstop on the way to Bearspaw Bluffs.



### A) Sandy Staircase (V0)\*

Start on the lowest and largest of hold on the arete and follow it the the top of the boulder. A fun problem with a good landing.

This problem is located 5m below the trail in the middle of the steep hill clearing (aka The Washout). The top of the boulder can be slightly seen from the trail.



Sandy Staircase (V0)



## Introduction

This is the largest area containing the highest density of rock, the best quality sandstone, and the longest climbing history. Bearspaw Bluffs have seen traffic by climbers since the 80s. You may notice relics of the past including old rusted hangers and rebar anchors. These bluffs used to host a 30 foot wide hands roof crack named “Stark Reality” until it collapsed during heavy rainfall. There is plenty of bouldering to be sampled on the many outcrops. The Mass Movement Sector provides lowballs on quality stone, while high quality highballs can be found on The Slab Boulder. The Point Boulder is well worth a visit with one particularly beautiful face. The Big Cave Sector, Middle Sector, and Harris Roof Sector feature safe traverses near the ground as well as top rope routes and highballs up to 10m in length. The softness of the rock makes this a top roping crag as lead falls on bolts or gear would likely result in ground falls. The best option for anchors is to pound in rebar above the outcrops to reinforce bolts in the soft sandstone. Please inspect all fixed gear as its origin is unknown and quality is usually suspect. Everything here was likely climbed long ago, but the author has assigned names to different problems, boulders, and cliffs to make this guide more understandable.

## Conditions *(April to October)*

Most of the climbing is dry year-round and winter climbing may be possible on warm days. The Slab Boulder, Cocaine Edges Sector, and The Point Boulder will stay wet longer. These areas are more likely to be buggy in the summer as well. Snow along the north-facing approach trail and mud along the shore of the reservoir can make spring and winter approaches tricky.



Covidicus Maximus (V9)



The Slab Left (V0)



## **Approach** (50-60 min from the Main Parking Area)

From the top of The Lookout, walk down the obvious trail along the skier's right side of the outcrop. Continue down one of several trails to the bottom of the valley below The Lookout. You will find yourself in an open forest near the intersection of two drainages that empty into the Bow River 50m away. At the intersection of the two drainages, follow a faint trail heading up the hillside opposite of The Lookout. The trail first leads climbers' left for 15m before switch backing right and curving up to parallel a chain link fence with "No Trespassing" signs. This fence guards the Bearspaw Dam, so do NOT hop the fence or approach any closer to the dam. When you are directly above the dam, a mossy cliff will be visible above you. This cliff is the start to the Lakeside outcrop (see Detailed Approach Map #2).

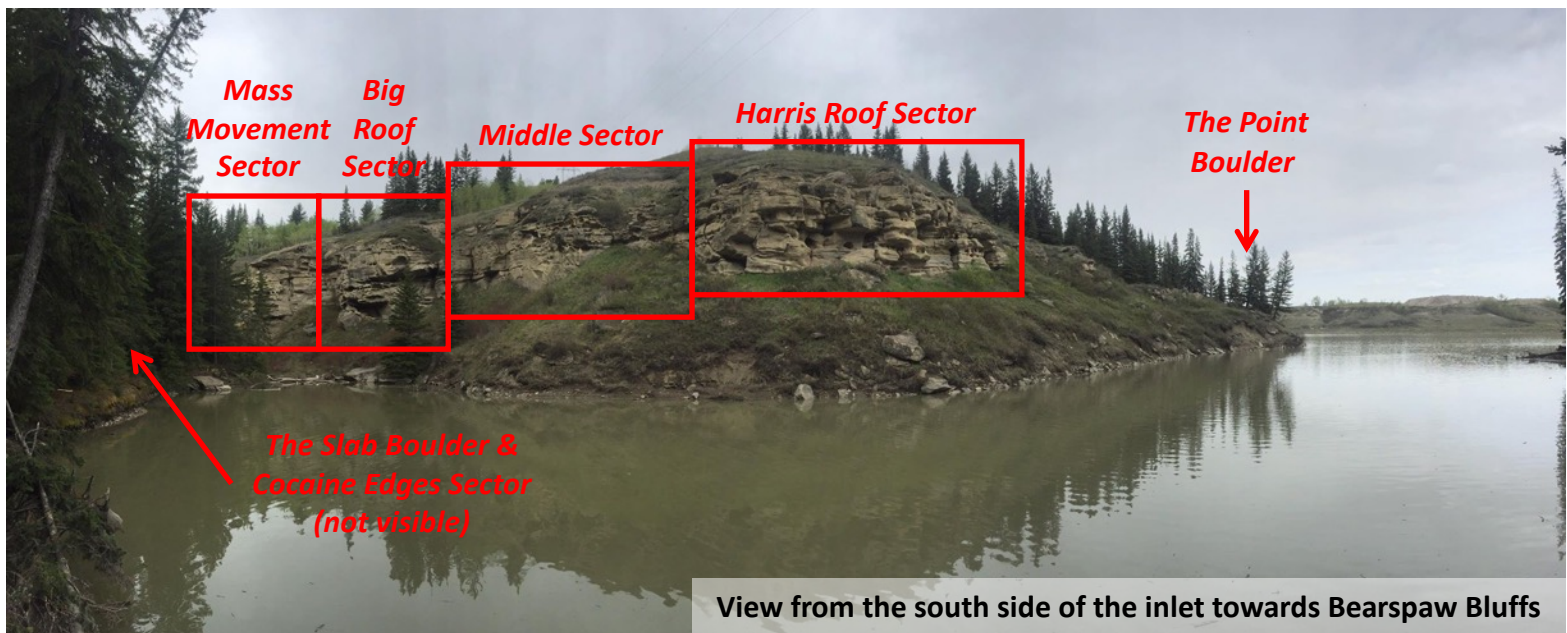
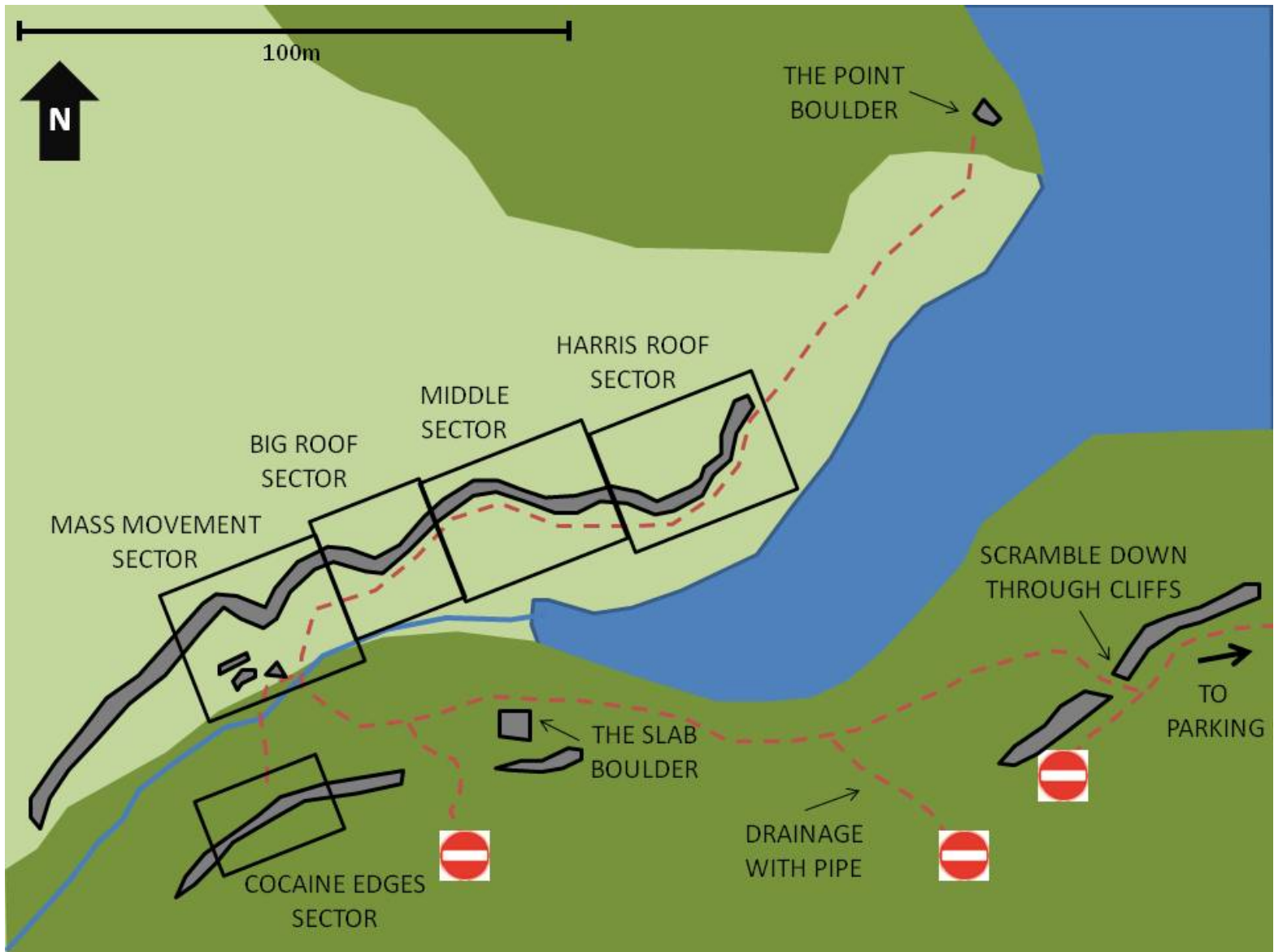
Head uphill 20m to the top of the cliffs and follow the faint upper trail along the cliff's edge. This trail runs parallel to the reservoir and crosses several mudslide scars. Some people may find the trail slightly exposed and crashpads may prove to be unwieldy in several tight, forested spots.

After 15 minutes (from the Bearspaw Dam), the trail will start contouring left into the inlet containing Bearspaw Bluffs. You should be able to spot Bearspaw Bluffs across the inlet through the tree cover. Scramble easily down through the cliffs below on a faint trail and walk to the shore of the inlet (note where this trail descends as it is difficult to spot on return). A typically muddy trail leads along the shore of the inlet towards the climbing. This trail passes by a rope swing and a steep drainage (with a trail and a pipe).

Note: It used to be possible to follow a trail from The Lookout to Bearspaw Bluffs more directly along a powerline, however this trail passed through private property and the landowner has recently erected a fence and a "No Trespassing" sign (May 2020). Please respect this closure and follow the described approach which avoids this landowner's property. DO NOT TRESPASS!



# Bearspaw Bluffs





## The Slab Boulder

The Slab Boulder is the first climbing you will encounter at Bearspaw Bluffs when approaching. It is tucked in the forest at the end of the inlet. Great highballs on beautiful rock make this boulder a good warm-up after the long hike in.

### A) Slab Left (V0)\*\*

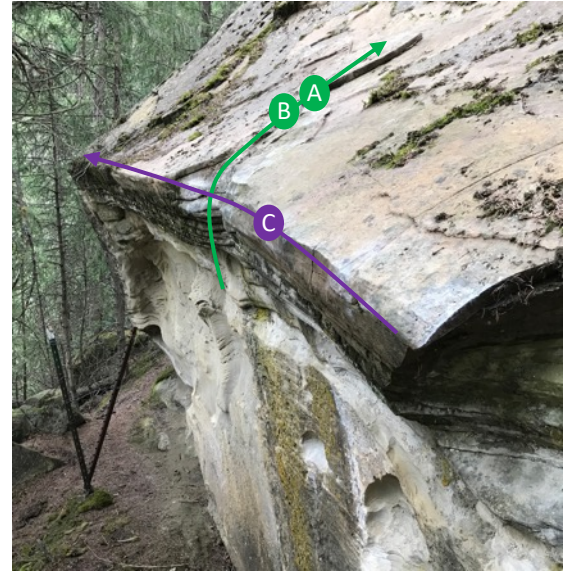
Gain the hanging slab by pulling a burly mantle for the grade. Gently pad up the exciting slab while avoiding the left arete.

### B) Slab Centre (V0)\*

Start as per slab left. once on the slab climb the less featured and steeper right side without using the right arete. Gain the lip and traverse to the top of the boulder. Slightly more difficult than Slab Left.

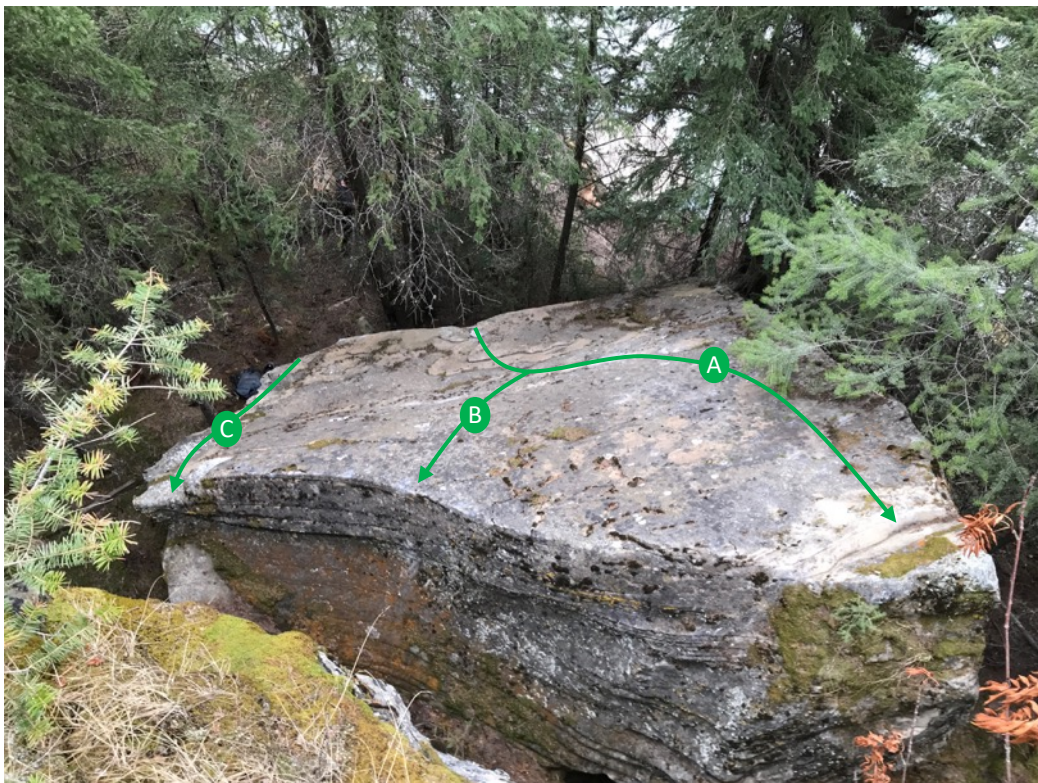
### C) Slab Right (V0-)

Climb the right arete and traverse the lip to the top of Slab Left and Right.



### D) Open Project

Follow the sloping lip at the bottom of the slab boulder. Needs to be cleaned and an old barbed wire fence removed.





## Cocaine Edges Sector

Several top rope routes of dubious quality exist in the forest on a shaded cliff south of the Mass Movement Sector.

### A) Poisson D'Avril (V0-/5.8)

The yellow, crumbly crack 5m to the left of Cocaine Edges. Not recommended

### B) Cocaine Edges (V0-/5.7)

Follow a hand size crack up a near vertical face. The rock quality deteriorates higher up. Can be done as a highball with poor landing or on TR. Has also been climbed on questionable gear.

### C) Psyched Out by Socks (V0-)

20m to the right of Cocaine Edges. Follow a series of cracks that end higher up on the face.



View of the Cocaine Edges Sector from the top of the bluffs

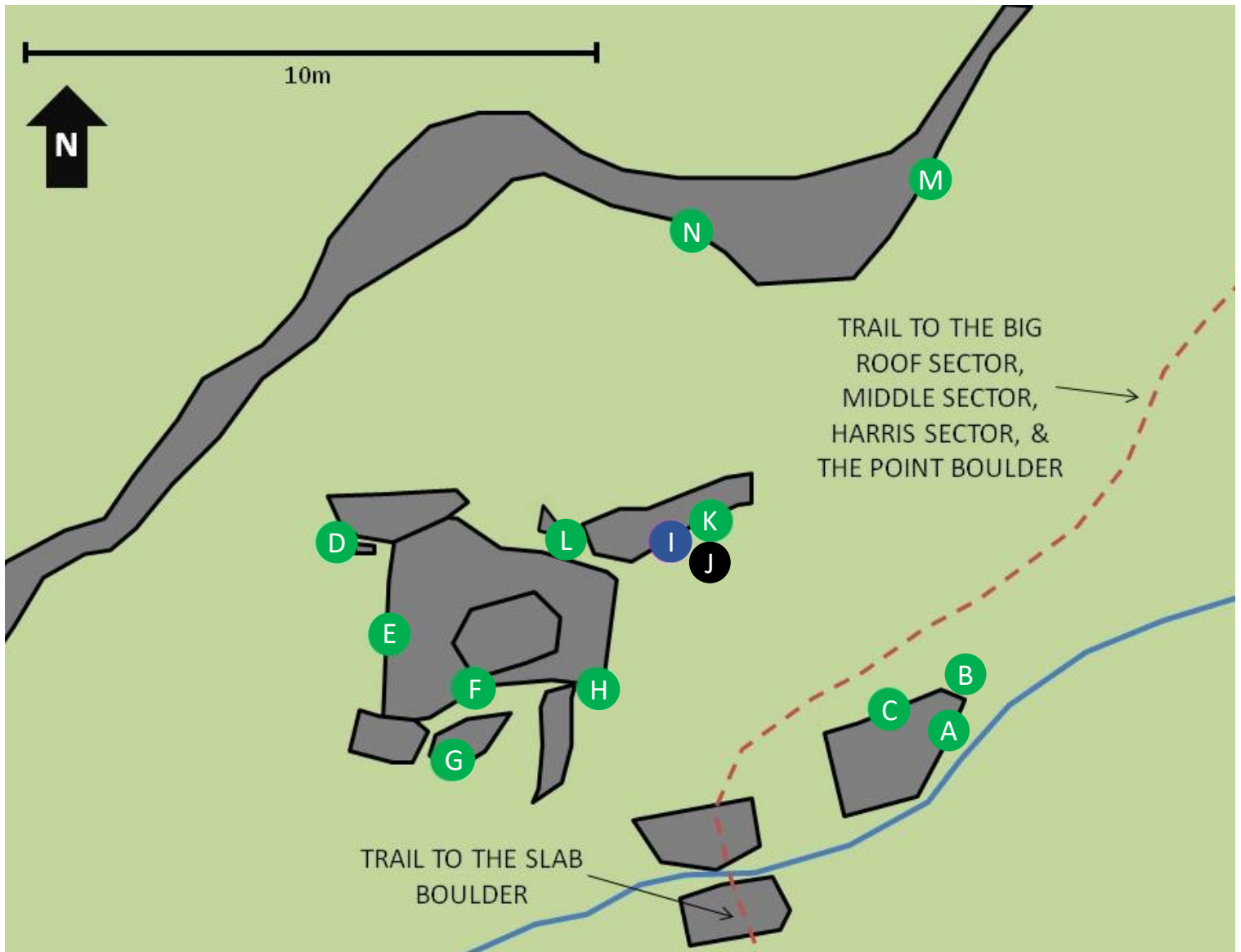


## Mass Movement Sector

Mass Movement is a geological term used to describe an event where material moves down slope. The Mass Movement boulders were the consequence of a large collapse of a section of the bluffs and resting place of the notable 30-foot roof crack "Stark Reality". The newly formed boulders have had less time to be overcome by lichen and moss than other boulders in the area, and provide high quality sandstone.



Mass Action (V3)





## A-C) Gems (V0-V1)\*\*

This aesthetic pyramid shaped boulder hosts many V0-V1 on the best sandstone in the area and potentially the entire guide. Here are a few suggestions to get you started. Go nuts!

### A) Gem1 (V0)

Start on a large jug about shoulder height on the creek side of the boulder. Mantel and finish trending left on nice edges to the top.

### B) Gem2 (V1)

Grab both aretes and slap/heel-hook up the double arete until it is possible to mantel. Start lower down the aretes to make it harder. Nice climbing here!

### C) Gem3 (V0)

Climb the crescent crimp rail in the middle of the front face. Sit start goes at V3.

## D) Mass Action (V3)\*\*

Start sitting on the jagged boulder underneath the roof. Grab the lip of the roof, place your foot out left, and crank up on beautifully shaped holds.

## E) Coffee Table Traverse (V0-)\*

Traverse the nice lip from left to right and mantle at the peak.

## F) Countertop Traverse (V1)\*

From the far-left side of the upper flat block. Start right of a small boulder on the shelf and traverse from left to right only using the upper block. Follow the lip all the way around to the far-right side. Moving past the topout of Nosedive feels airy.





## G) Out from the depths (V2)\*

Start on two edges right of a pocket. Make a few moves left to the peak and mantle.

## H) Nosedive (V0)\*

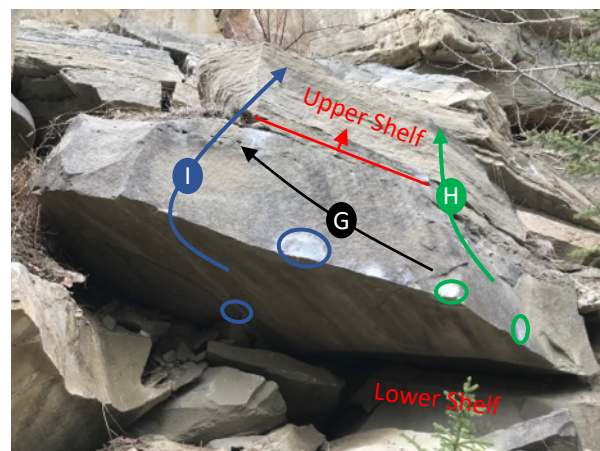
Grab the sloped lip right of the “ramp” block. Traverse right to the peak and make two mantles to reach the top of the second flat boulder.

## I) Mass Movement (V5)\*\*

Start using a crimp above the roof and an edge in the back of the roof. Make a few tricky moves to gain the upper shelf. (FA Sam Carr 2020)

## J) Covidicus Maximus (V9)\*\*

Start with a right-hand side pull and left-hand block. Traverse left avoiding the upper shelf using small crimps and pockets until you can fire to a good edge. The lower shelf is out. A variation using the lower shelf may be interesting as well. (FA Hunter Lee 2020)



### K) Wack (V3)\*\*

Start as per “Covidicus Maximus” and move upwards using pockets and edges. This one feels odd. The lower and upper shelves are in. *(FA Sam Carr 2020)*

### L) The Fin (V2)\*

Tucked between and behind “Covidicus Maximus” and “Countertop Traverse” this nice problem climb a small boulder. Avoiding the nearby boulders climb the thin fin starting on a large flat edge down low.





## N) MM Toprope Route #1 (5.?)

"N" tackles the chossy swiss cheese looking face. A reinforced picket and one bolt are available at the top for an anchor.

## M) MM Toprope Route #2 (5.?)

"M" ascends a crack right of the prow. 2 bolts are available on a ledge below the top of the cliff, but reaching them may be dangerous. One bolt has been placed halfway up this route perhaps in an effort to create a sport climb. Leading seems foolhardy.

## Big Roof Sector

This sector hosts one of the taller walls in the bluffs. The large roof provides several boulder problems. A toprope route also climbs the least steep section of the wall.



### A) BR Toprope Route #1 (5.8)

Toprope route. Pull over the roof and climb the the face using large pockets to a sandy ledge. 2 bolt anchor at the top.

### B) Open Project

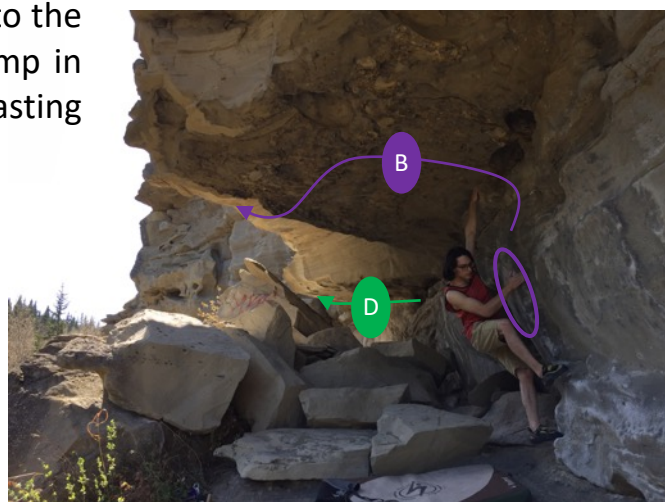
Starting on a sidepull below the roof, tackle the dirty roof using huecos.

### C) Open Project

Climb the obvious finger crack.

### D) Little Roof (V3)

Tackle a small roof starting on a large rail right of carvings in the wall. Mantel over the lip and either continue to the top or jump down. An eliminate taking out the crimp in the roof (Not the jug) could make a shoulder blasting problem.





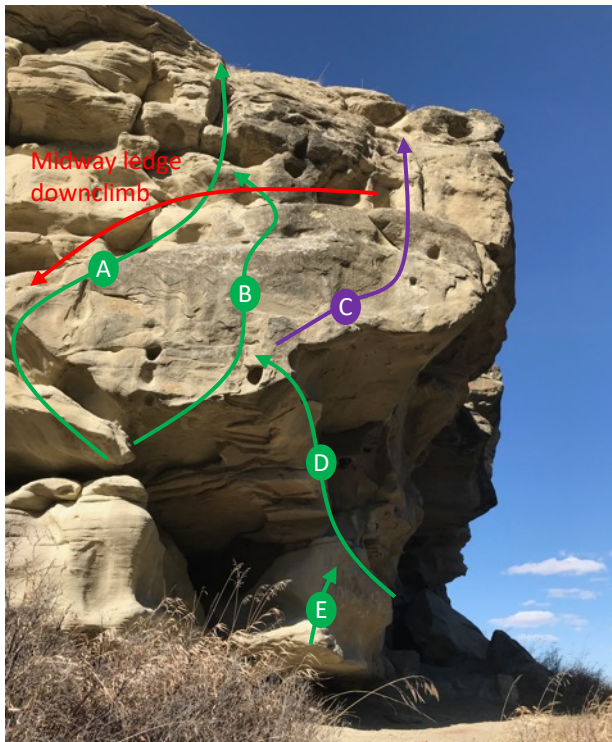
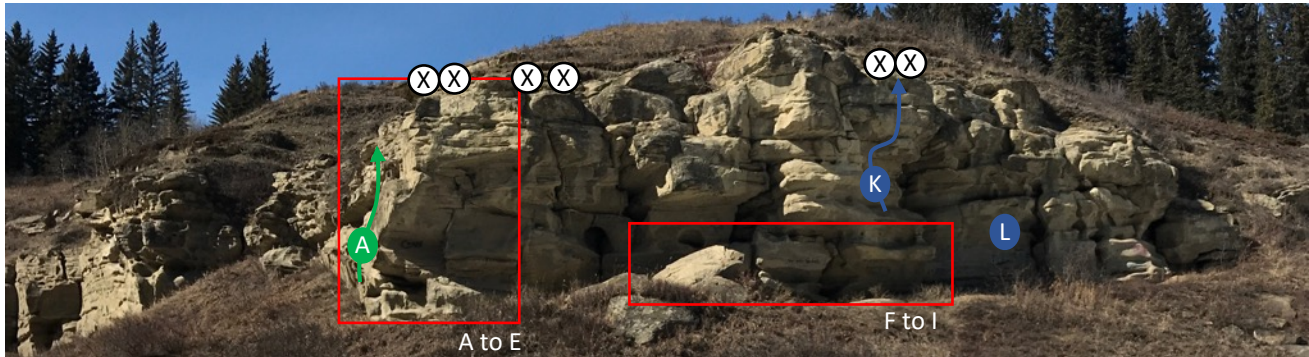
## Middle Sector

The Middle Sector is composed of a fairly sandy cliff that the author has not thoroughly explored. Perhaps, some worthwhile traverses and top rope climbs could be found here. There is one rusty bolt on a boulder above the highest section of the cliff.



## Harris Roof Sector

The Harris Roof Sector features both top rope routes/highballs as well as mellower problems at its base. In addition to 3 sets of relatively intact bolted anchors, there are numerous chopped bolts all over the cliff. If top roping, take the time to inspect the bolts you are using and consider backing them up with pounded in rebar.



### A) Harris Left/HR TR#1 (V0/5.8)

Follow the nice left trending bulge until it is possible to traverse right onto the midway ledge. Take the first break in the upper section to gain the top. This can be done on top rope or as a highball.

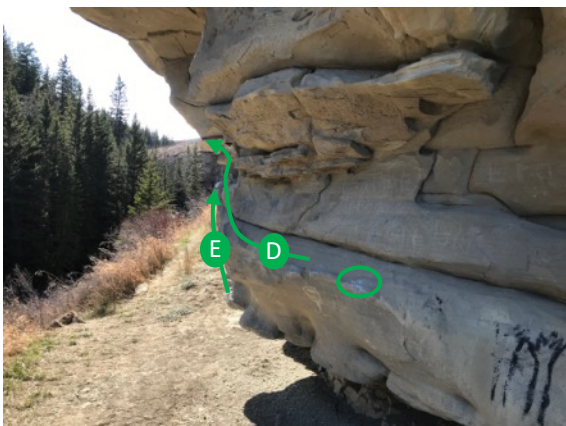
### B) Harris Centre/HR TR#2 (V2/5.10a)

Climb up from the left side or through the roof to a large flat edge. Move up on crimps followed by slopers to gain the midway ledge. Either downclimb Harris Left or finish the climb to the top of the wall. This can be done on top rope or as a highball.

### C) Open Project (Harris Left)

From the large flat edge above the roof, climb out right using crimps and pockets until making an airy mantle onto the midway ledge.

**Note:** Harris Left can be down climbed from the midway ledge to avoid the loose and exposed upper section of the wall.





## D) Through the Roof (V0)\*

Starting on slopers around the corner to the right of the roof and traverse left until you gain jugs below the roof. Make several large fun moves through the roof to reach a large pocket above. Finish on Harris Centre or jump down.

## E) Through the Roof var. (V2)\*

Start seated using a slick sloped hold down low. Make a large move to a flat edge and finish up on Through the Roof.

Many linkups and variation of the problems described here can be done and have almost certainly already been completed by someone at sometime. An enjoyable variation of the above descriptions is to linkup Through the Roof into the Left, Centre, and maybe Right Harris Roof lines.



## F) Chill Bear (V5)

Start with a right hand on the arete and left hand on a crimp deep in the cave. Move around the the arete and fire for the lip. A true lowball!

## G) Lower Shelf (V2)

Traverse the sloping shelf.

## H) Boulder Problem (V1)

Start on an in-cut edge and make your way to the lip of the upper shelf.



## I) Upper Shelf (V0)

Traverse the juggy upper shelf and from left to right. Mantle the shelf at the end for full value.

## J) T.A.B. (V3)

A link-up of Lower Shelf, the Boulder Problem and Upper Shelf. Don't forget to mantle!

## K) HR TR#3

Toprope route that tackles the steep blocky roof with a very sandy finish. 2 bolt anchor.



Harris Centre (V2)

## L) Dino (V4)

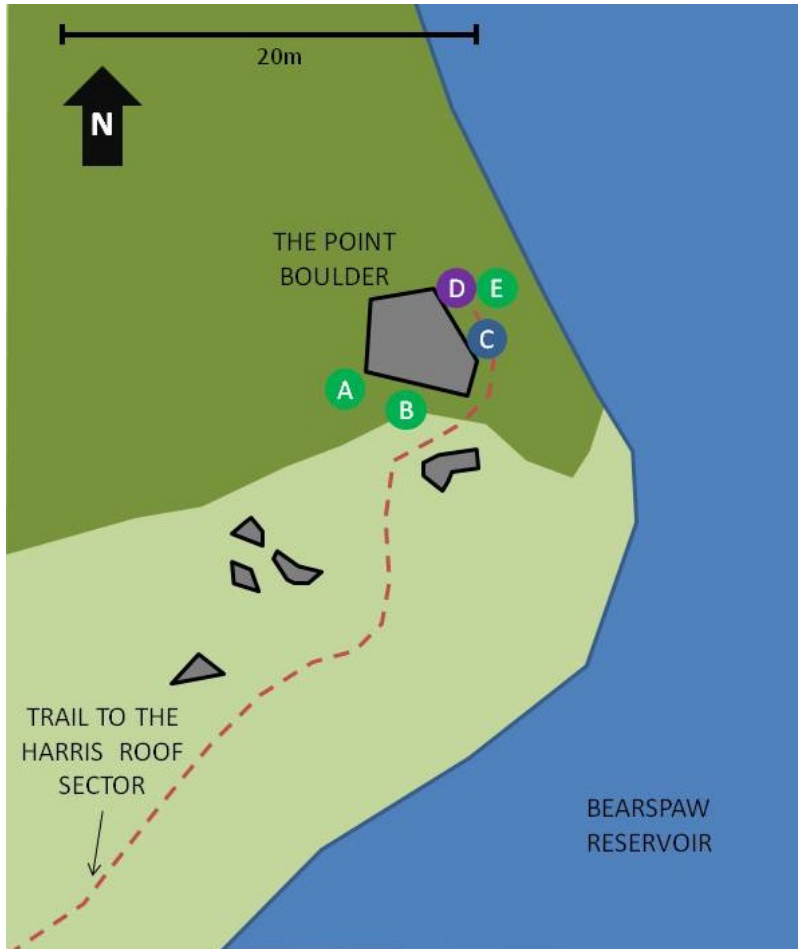
From an edge on a sandy face, leap towards a pod. Either jump down from the pod or quest up into the sandy upper section to topout.





## The Point Boulder

Located in the trees on the north-west point of the inlet. Little Army is the best problem and makes the lengthy approach worthwhile. This boulder receives less sun and stays wet longer than most areas at Bearspaw Bluffs.



### A) Under Dog (V1)

Climb the slightly overhanging face using edges and the arete.

### B) Slab (V1)

Make a single odd move on the lichen covered slab.

### C) Little Army (V4)\*\*

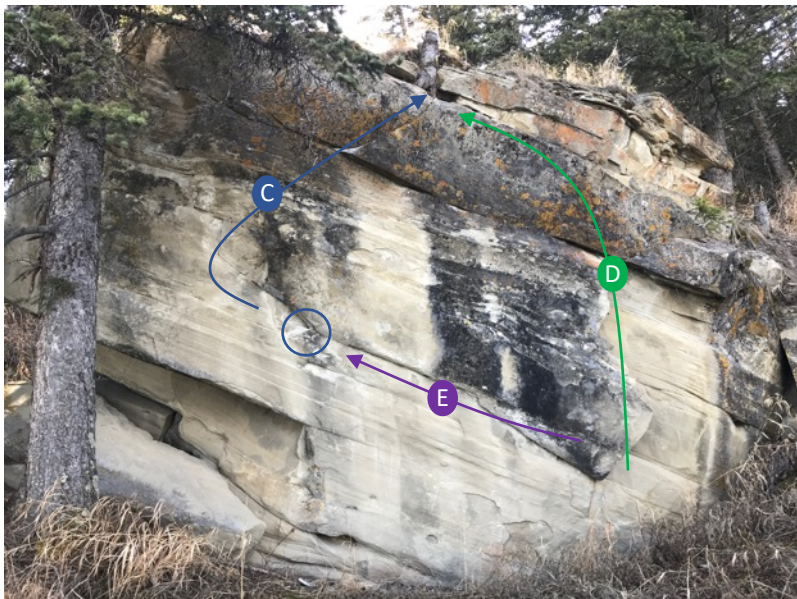
The best problem on the boulder. Start in a chest level slot/edge and make interesting dynamic moves to an insecure mantle. Sit start for a slightly longer problem at the same grade. Or avoid the sidepull and launch directly for the edge to bump the grade to V5. (FA Matt Lucas 2012).

### D) Do You Like Lichen? (V1)

Starting on the large flake, climb to the lip and traverse into the Little Army mantle.

### E) Open Project

Traverse into the start of Little Army via a heinous undercling.







Little Army (V4)



## V0

- Unnamed Hill Slab (The Ravine)
- Righter's Block (The Lookout)
- Pepsi Zero (The Lookout)
- Easy Crack (The Lookout)
- Very Easy Crack (The Lookout)
- The Tree is Lava (The Lookout)
- Don't Mind the Tree (The Lookout)
- Wide Way Around (Lake Side)
- Complete Wide Way Around (Lake Side)
- Jenga (Lake Side)
- Traverse (Lake Side)
- Sandy Starcase (Lake Side)
- Slab Left (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Slab Centre (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Slab Right (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Poisson d'Avril (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Cocaine Edges (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Psyched Out by Socks (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Gem1 (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Gem3 (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Coffee Table Traverse (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Nosedive (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Through the Roof (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Harris Left/HR TR#1 (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Upper Shelf (Bears paw Bluffs)

## V1

- Mosquito Burrito (The Ravine)
- One Move Blunder (The Ravine)
- Flopping Fish (The Lookout)
- Hole in the Wall (The Lookout)
- Yamineering (Riverside)
- Big Bird (Riverside)
- Gem2 (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Countertop Traverse (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Boulder Problem (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Slab (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Underdog (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Slab (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Do You Like Lichen (Bears paw Bluffs)

## V2

- Warm-Up Traverse (The Ravine)
- Flakes Don't Break (The Ravine)
- Orange Crush (The Lookout)
- Out from the Depths (Bears paw Bluffs)

- The Fin (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Harris Centre/HR TR#2 (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Lower Shelf (Bears paw Bluffs)

## V3

- Mudstone Madness (The Ravine)
- Flying Fish (The Lookout)
- Shark Fin (The Lookout)
- Mass Action (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Little Roof (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Wack (Bears paw Bluffs)
- T.A.B. (Bears paw Bluffs)

## V4

- Lump (The Ravine)
- Mudstone Mantle (The Ravine)
- Hanging Garden (Lakeside)
- Dino (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Little Army (Bears paw Bluffs)

## V5

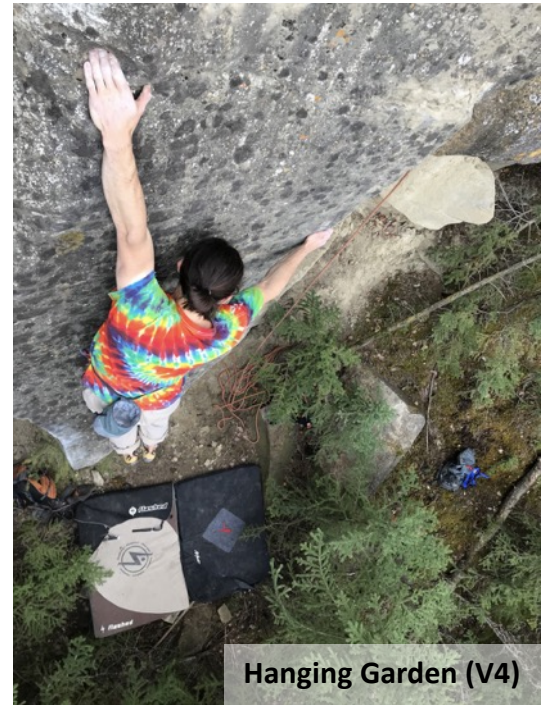
- Dimples (The Ravine)
- Mass Movement (Bears paw Bluffs)
- Chill Bear (Bears paw Bluffs)

## V6

- Russel Tussle (The Ravine)

## V9

- Covidicus Maximus (Bears paw Bluffs)



**Hanging Garden (V4)**

## Top Highballs

- Slab Left (V0), Bears paw Bluffs
- Complete Wide Way Around (V0), Lake Side
- Harris Centre (V2), Bears paw Bluffs
- Orange Crush (V2), Lookout
- Hanging Garden (V4), Lakeside
- Magpie Arete (Open Project), Lakeside

**Only have one day to boulder and want to sample the best sandstone (with the least amount of bugs, wet rock, and bushwacking) ???**

Hike to Bears paw Bluffs and start your day off at the Mass Movement Sector. Enjoy a variety of safe, solid, and fun problems. Next, move to the The Slab Boulder and sample the beautiful highball slab problems which come in fairly accessible grades. Finish the day off by hiking out to The Point Boulder (perhaps making some worthy pit stops at the Big Roof Sector and the Harris Roof Sector). Hopefully, the classic problems in an atmospheric setting by the water will leave you with a smile on your face!

## Coordinates of Boulders/Sectors

Use the coordinates listed below to help you find your desired sector or boulder. The coordinates are in the decimal degrees format. If you are using Google Maps, simply enter the latitude, a comma, and the longitude (e.g. 51.098808, -114.270153).

Area	Boulder/Sector	Latitude	Longitude
The Ravine	Dimples Boulder	51.098808	-114.270153
The Ravine	Mosquito Boulder	51.095414	-114.272544
The Ravine	Russell Boulder	51.095695	-114.272987
The Lookout	Main Sector	51.099934	-114.281421
The Lookout	Riverside Sector	51.099837	-114.279823
Lakeside	Pigeon Sector	51.101057	-114.285922
Lakeside	Magpie Sector	51.101342	-114.287926
Bearspaw Bluffs	The Slab Boulder	51.101714	-114.292081
Bearspaw Bluffs	Cocaine Edges Sector	51.101541	-114.292782
Bearspaw Bluffs	Mass Movement Sector	51.101769	-114.292871
Bearspaw Bluffs	Big Roof Sector	51.102003	-114.292413
Bearspaw Bluffs	Harris Roof Sector	51.102101	-114.291590
Bearspaw Bluffs	The Point Boulder	51.102810	-114.290804