

MORO ROCK

Introduction

Moro Rock is a large exfoliating dome hanging over the north side of the Kaweah River drainage below the Giant Forest. Its massive west face captures climbers' attention on the drive up from the southern entrance of the park. While first climbed in 1861, steps were later built on the north ridge and provide a beautiful summit view for visitors and an easy walk off at the end of the day for climbers.

The climbing on Moro is excellent and varied with routes from low 5th class up to 5.12 and anywhere from 40 feet to ten pitches. The west face is 1,000 feet tall and broken by many ledge systems so climbs can be mixed and matched in countless ways. The east face is a bit shorter and the south face is not as steep as the other two but holds several long classic moderates. Portions of the east and south faces have seasonal climbing closures for Peregrine Falcon nesting, please abide by the closures so the whole area doesn't get closed for nesting like Chimney Rocks. Closures are usually from April 1st through August 15th, visit <http://www.nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/rockclimb.htm> for more info.

Though the climbing is superb, Moro Rock is not the place to push your limits. Some climbs are very safe and will take all the gear you have, but others rely on 30 year old button heads or knobs that are no longer there. It is up to you to figure out which is which. Even the more user friendly routes can still have serious sections so please take care while exploring the featured and solid granite on Moro Rock. Another objective hazard is the summit viewing platform. I have nearly been hit by several objects, including a full water bottle that started 500 feet above. Wear a helmet!

Directions

Coming from the north or south simply make your way to the Giant Forest and take the road near the museum to Moro Rock/Crescent Meadow. In the summer or on busy weekends the road may be closed to private vehicles during daytime hours, in which case you can park by the museum and take the shuttle out to Moro Rock. If you arrive before or after the shuttle hours you can usually drive out in your vehicle. If you take the shuttle in and miss the last one out you will have to walk almost two miles back to your car.

Special Note on Moro Topos

Moro Rock is a large and complex formation. The topos show major features but not a lot of detail. For example, you can park a school bus on some of the ledges shown but many smaller features are not drawn in. Also, I am constantly updating and researching but I have not climbed every pitch so do not be surprised if some details (bolt counts, etc..) are off but please let me know if you notice this.

MORO ROCK - EAST FACE (Updated 7/13/2018)

Introduction

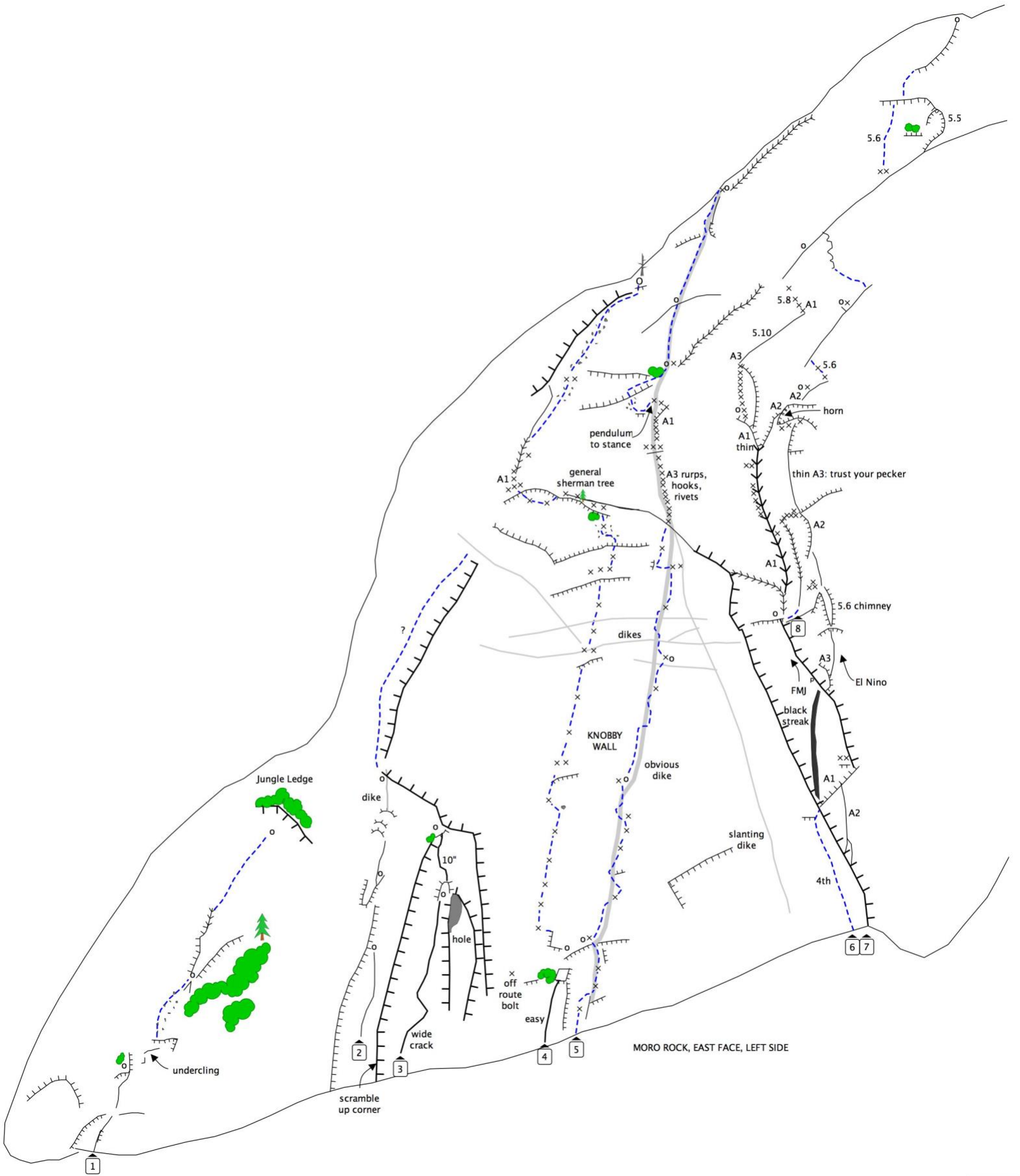
The East Face of Moro Rock has a lot of variety with the lower side of the face holding longer aid climbs ranging all the way to the single pitch top-ropes and bolted climbs next to the parking lot. In between there are a host of climbs that can be combined in many ways. Aside from the climbs next to the parking lot, the east face sees less people than any other aspect of Moro even though it has the easiest approach. I'm not sure why this is, perhaps it's because it can be subject to the annual Peregrine Falcon closures or the fact that many of the climbs are aid climbs or maybe because it has some of the oldest bolts on the formation. Whatever it is, don't let it discourage you because there are many outstanding climbs with spectacular views.

Directions

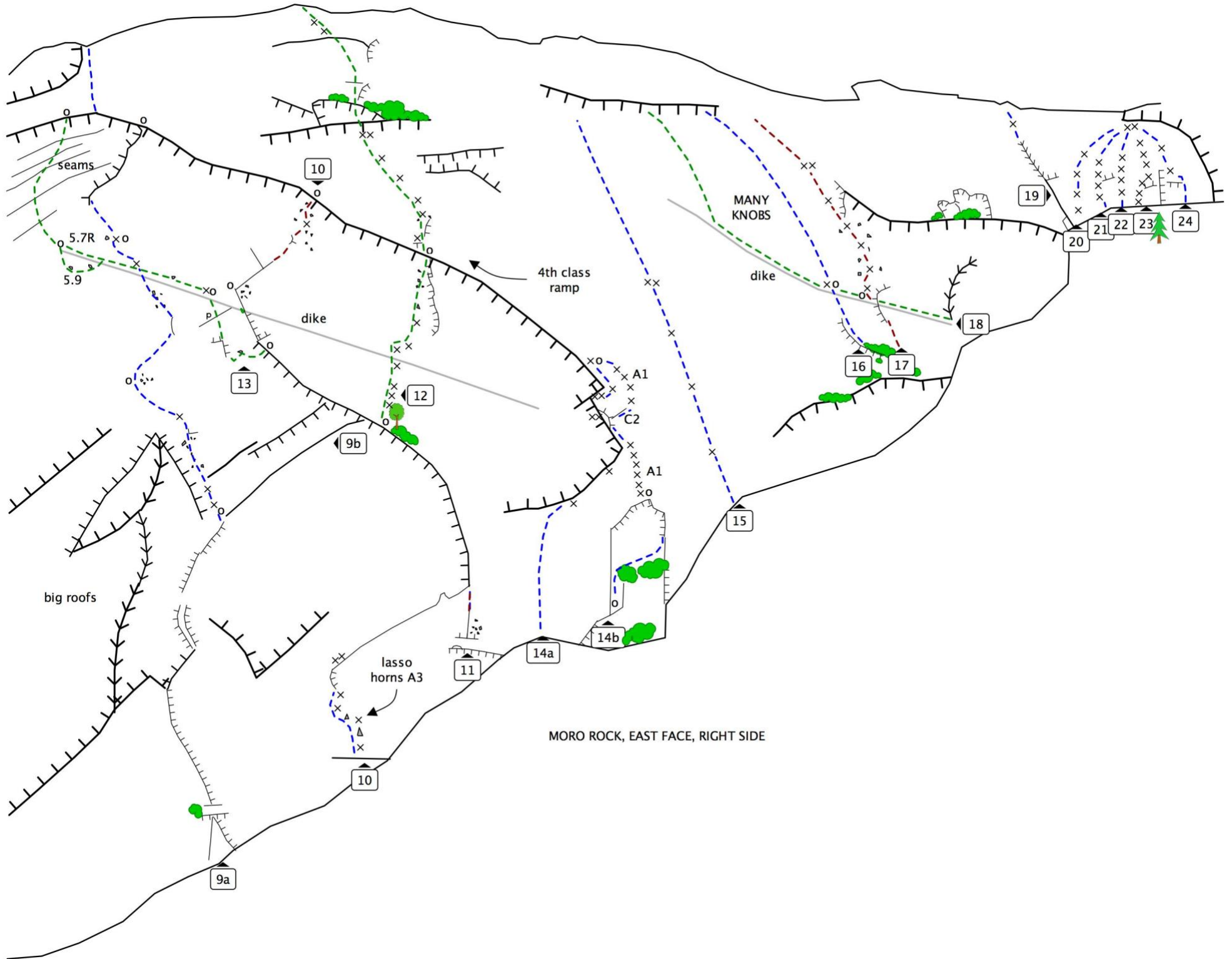
From the parking lot, descend via a faint climber's trail along the base of the East Face and occasionally down in the gully.

1. The Couch Trip 5.9+
2. Incomplete ?
3. Unknown 5.9
4. Piece de Renaissance 5.10b A1
5. Moro Oro 5.9 A3
6. Full Metal Jacket 5.10 A3
7. El Nino 5.10 A3+
8. El Principe Pequeno A4+
9. Glow With the Flow 5.9 or 5.11+
10. Out of Reach 5.10 A3
11. Ladies on Top 5.8
12. Biscuits-N-Gravy 5.10

13. One Lane Highway 5.9
14. East Face 5.7 A2 or 5.11c
15. Mike Lechlinski 5.10+ R
16. Ticket Ride 5.9R
17. Arc of Biner 5.9
18. Diagonal 5.7X
19. Unknown 5.5
20. Bear Damage 5.10a
21. Flight of Stares 5.10a
22. Guitar Man 5.10a
23. There's always room for Jello 5.8+
24. Stair Trek 5.5



MORO ROCK, EAST FACE, LEFT SIDE



MORO ROCK, EAST FACE, RIGHT SIDE

MORO ROCK - EAST FACE

1. **5.9+** 3 pitches **The Couch Trip** *Small to 3"*

P1 Below and to the right of an arch near the bottom of the East Face are a few crack and ramps below some bushes. Climb a right sloping 5.8 ramp to a small ledge and follow the 2-3" crack to another small ledge and belay.

P2 Go up and right, through an undercling and up some knobs to a V-shaped stance at the base of a right facing corner.

P3 Follow the right facing corner and the low angle slabs to Jungle Ledge. See the South Face for info on the Jungle Ledge

FA: Mike Daly, James Cook, 8/89
2. **5.?** 4-5 pitches **Incomplete** *Appears to need some wide gear.*

*There is no reliable info for this climb and the following is my best estimation from research and binoculars.

P1 Continue down the East Face past the giant golden corners to another series of left leaning corners that form some big holes and chimneys. Scramble up the leftmost corner and traverse left to a splitter crack. Follow it until it deteriorates.

P2 Step left into a left facing corner and follow it up to a narrow roof on the left. Ascend the right side of the roof to a V formed by two cracks.

P3 Through the right side of some overlaps onto a dike where the route connects with "Unknown" at a steep headwall.

FA: Unknown
3. **5.9** 5 pitches **Unknown** *Small to wide.*

*These details are based on third hand information and studying the cliff with binoculars

P1 About 2/3 of the way down the east face is a chimney system that leads into a dark hole. Just left of this is a zig-zag wide splitter. Climb it into an alcove.

P2 Very wide goes up and left to a bushy ledge below the steep headwall.

P3 Traverse left along the top of the slab and belay near a tree.

P4-5 It appears to climb the face to the left of the giant right facing corner above.

FA: Unknown
4. **5.10b (5.9R) A1** 8 pitches **Piece de Renaissance** *Set of nuts and single set of cams, slings for knobs, 3 rivet hangers.*

P1 After the giant roofs and golden corners on the east face there is an open, knobby slab. A vertical dike goes up the slab (Moro Oro), start at an easy wide crack to the left of the dike. Climb to a small ledge. Unprotected 5.9 face climbing can be had to the left of the crack.

P2 Up a small right facing corner and left though features to the first bolt, up past 4 more bolts to a knob, traverse left, one more bolt then a two bolt belay with small knobs as a stance.

P3 Two more bolts to another two bolt belay.

P4 Two bolts to a three bolt belay.

P5 Pass one bolt and go over a small roof, traverse left on knobs to another bolt and belay at two bolts on the ledge above.

P6 Go left past two bolts and then at the bolt next to the bush traverse down and then across to two more bolts, then up to a three bolt anchor at a stance. This anchor is below the bottom of the large corner above.

P7 Three aid moves up a short rivet ladder into a dihedral, past a bolt, then up and right onto the face to a two bolt anchor.

P8 Follow knobs up to the top of the right facing corner and a dead tree.

FA: E.C Joe, Jon Gatti, John Vargas 4/89
5. **5.9 A3** 8 pitches **Moro Oro** *Small to 4", slings for knobs, hooks, 2 rurps, rivet hangers.*

P1 Left of the big roofs and high golden corners there is an open slab with a vertical dike. This route follows the dike the whole time. Pass three bolts and belay at a knob and bolt on a ledge.

P2 4 bolts to a bolt/knob belay.

P3 Knobs around the dike with a single bolt at the end. The next bolt/knob on a stance is the anchor.

P4 One bolt to a two bolt anchor.

P5 Traverse left past a bolt at the top of the slab. A3 rurps, hooks and rivets lead up the steep wall to a three bolt anchor (hole count in topo is not accurate, I think there's around 20 but could not fit them).

P6 Bolt ladder to an A1 small roof going up and right to more bolts. Pendulum left from the highest bolt to a stance, climb up on knobs and go right on the ledge, back to the dike and a single bolt backed up by small gear.

P7 Knobs up to a horizontal 2-3" crack.

P8 Follow the dike and belay at a single bolt backed up with 2-4" gear. 4th off.

FA: E.C. Joe, Dave Hickey, James Cook 9/88
6. **5.10a A3** 7 pitches **Full Metal Jacket** *Double set of nuts, double set offsets, double cams from small to 4", 13 rivet hangers, 4 thin KBs, 2 #1 LAs.*

P1 Scramble up the 4th class ramp below the big curving, golden corner marking the upper pitches of FMJ. Traverse right under a small roof (A1) out to a two bolt anchor.

P2 Climb the ramp going up and left to a small ledge.

P3 Follow the overhanging, curving corner above (A1 nuts) past some bolts to a to bolt anchor.

P4 Up on the left side of a roof (thin A1) and eventually step right to an anchor at the base of a rivet ladder.

P5 Rivet ladder to the top of an arch and an awkward A3 move into a 5.10 crack going right. Follow the crack to A1 bolts going up to 5.8 face and another crack going right. Belay in this second horizontal crack.

P6 Follow the crack to a two bolt anchor.

P7 Straight up unprotected 5.6 or right around some 5.5 corners. Belay on ledge.

P8 5.8 face into a left facing corner/ramp to the top.

7. **5.10 A3+** 9 pitches **El Nino** 10 beaks, 2 RURPS, 7 Kbs, 3 short and 3 long LAs, 2 small angles, 10 #2, 4#3 and 2#4 heads, 1/4" keyholes, hooks, 1 set offsets, 1 set nuts, 3 set TCUs, double cams from 1-3", 1 4" cam and a partridge in a pear tree.
P1 4th class up the ramp under the curving golden corners as for FMJ. take a vertical A2 crack up to a two bolt anchor.
P2 Follow the ramp up and left to a grey area near the top of a black. Ro right on slab into a thin A3+ system leading to a 5.6 chimney and belay past the top of it at a three bolt anchor "John de Aves".
P3 Follow a crack up, past a sharp loose block, into an A2+ right facing corner ending under a roof and belay on three bolts to the left. "the opiator"
P4 The ultra thin, A3 "Trust Your Pecker" pitch goes up a crack, into a right facing corner and ends at three bolts under a roof.
P5 A2 left from the belay, around the roof, over a horn and back right into an A2 crack that goes up and right to belay next to a single bolt.
P6 Continue right in the crack and then face climb up to another crack that connects with FMJ where you go right to a two bolt anchor.
P7 Straight up unprotected 5.6 or right around some 5.5 corners. Belay on ledge.
P8 5.8 face into a left facing corner/ramp to the rop.
FA: Grant Gardner, Brandon Thau, Jody Pennycook 11/97
8. **A4+** 1 pitch **El Principe Pequeno** 2 RURPS, 10 beaks, heads (two #1, ten #2, three #3, one #4), 1 each blade, 1 each LA, 1 each aliens, 1 keyhole hanger, set of offsets nuts.
Traverse from just before the second belay on FMJ towards the second pitch of El Nino along a 5.9 crack/flake. Before reaching El Nino, head up a seam into a thin groove. When it ends after a rivet, traverse right along 5 bolts to the third belay of El Nino.
FA: Grant Gardner, Brandon Thau 1/16/99
9. **5.9R or 5.11+** 4 pitches **Glow With the Flow** Small to 2.5" and slings for knobs
P1a 5.11+ This start is grungy, not often climbed, and may require some OW gear. Start under the roofs down past the obvious ramps on the east face. An OW into a left leaning corner curves up to the roofs. At the first roof, traverse right into a chimney and then head up and right out onto the main face.
P1b The usual approach. Start on Ladies On Top and follow a crack down and left directly after the bushes. Belay at its end.
P2 Go up past two bolts, some gear and knobs, another bolt and then go left and belay off of knobs.
P3 Trend right to get a little gear and then go back left to 5.9R knobs, cross the dike and a bolt. Belay off knobs and the second bolt above the dike.
P4 Face climb to the right facing corner and follow it to the 4th class ramp of the east face.
FA Mike Daly, Art DeGoede
10. **5.10a A3** 2 pitches **Out of Reach** Small to 2"
P1 There are two large, left leaning ramps up on the face before the big roofs as you descend the east face. This route starts in between the left ramp and the roofs. Start on a small ledge and pass four bolts by lassoing horns to a two bolt belay (A3).
P2 Follow the thin crack right and throw the rope over the horn at the end of pitch two, connect with the left facing corner of Ladies on Top and belay once the corner slants left.
FA: Hans Kegljar, Marc Scovill 7/91
11. **5.8** 4 pitches **Ladies On Top** Small to 3"
P1 As you descend the east face there are two sloping ramps up on the face. This route starts below and climbs up to the leftmost, smaller corner/ramp. Walk left out a small ledge to belay below the right facing corner. Climb knobs to the corner and belay when it slopes left.
P2 Follow the ramp until it thins out below a small roof.
P3 Continue up the corner/crack until it ends and a crack goes right.
P4 Follow the crack right, out onto the face and then up knobs past a bolt to the large 4th class ramp of the east face.
FA: Dave Hickey, James Cook, 1985
12. **5.10** 3 pitches **Biscuits-N-Gravy** Small to 4" and slings for knobs
P1 Climb the first pitch of Ladies On Top and set up the anchor after the bushes and small tree. Follow 5 bolts up, traverse right and up past two more bolts and knobs to the large 4th class ramp of the east face.
P2 Up past five bolts to a two bolt anchor between the mossy streaks.
P3 Onto the big ledge, through the blocks, up features and two more bolts to another ledge. 4th class up to rail.
FA: Shawn Hazelwood, Mark Rye 6/92
13. **5.9 (5.7R)** 4 pitches **One Lane Highway** Small to 2" Slings for knobs
P1 Climb the first two pitches of Ladies on Top to get to the start. Traverse straight left to a big knob, left more to a small corner, then up past a seam with a fixed pin and to a one bolt belay on the dike.
P2 Follow the dike past a bolt. Staying on the dike at the end is 5.7 but there's no pro but if you drop below the end of the dike for a few moves it's 5.9 with knobs for protection. Belay at the end of the dike.
P3 Trend up and left on runout 5.7 past seams and go as far as you can.
P4 Get to the big ledge where easy slabs take you to the summit ridge.
FA: Hans Kegljar, Peter Scovill 6/92
14. **5.7 A2 or 5.11c** 3 pitches **East Face** Small to 4". Also bring 2 1.5" angles and 2 KBs if doing the direct aid variation.
P1a (free) Start left of the broken buttress of the aid start. Climb up 4th class working towards roof above.

P2a Follow the roof up and right to a two bolt belay in the alcove or past it to an anchor under the next roof.

P3a 5.11c moves around the roof lead to the ramp that's 450 ft of 4th class.

P1b (aid) Go down the east gully until the first very large right facing corner. Scramble over to a broken buttress below it, climb up through some bushes and end by climbing the right side of the broken buttress and belaying on top (5.5).

P2b Ascend a very old bolt/rivet ladder to a crack up in the right facing corner (A1). The crack widens into a bolted belay in an alcove.

P3b Follow an A2 seam out right to another short bolt ladder that ends on the left sloping ramp that's 450 ft of 4th class.

FA: (direct) Jerry Dixon, George Session, George Whitmore, Merle Alley 9/58. (free) Mike Lechlinski 1983.

15. **5.10+ R** 2 pitches **Mike Lechlinski** *Three bolts and a bolted anchor.*

*The name and exact details of this route are unknown.

P1 60 ft to the right of the big right facing corner of the East Face route. Climb past three bolts to a two bolt belay.

P2 No pro, climb up until it gets easy.

FA: Mike Lechlinski

FA: Mike Daly, James Cook, 8/89

16. **5.10R** 2 pitches **Ticket Ride** *Slings for knobs*

P1 Descend down the east face and onto a ledge with small bushes below a horizontal dike. Scramble into a right facing corner and continue straight up to a bolt on the horizontal dike.

P2 Follow knobs up.

FA: Jackson, John Ribitch 6/87

17. **5.9** 2 pitches **Arc of a Biner** *Small gear and slings for knobs*

P1 Descend along the east face to a ledge with small bushes and start directly under a right facing crescent arch. Climb up to the arch and step left onto the dike.

P2 Follow knobs past five bolts, staying left of the next right facing corner and end at a two bolt anchor. Easy off.

FA: Dave Hickey, Mike Daly, James Cook, 6/91

18. **5.7X** 2 pitches **Diagonal** *Small gear and slings for knobs*

P1 Descend along the east face to where a horizontal dike cuts through the bottom of a right facing crescent arch. Follow the dike to a single bolt belay backed up with knobs.

P2 Continue to follow the dike until it thins out and it is possible to head up on knobs.

FA: Jackson, John Ribitch

19. **5.5** 1 pitch **Unknown** *Small to 3"*

At the start of the third rail leave the stairs and walk to near the end of the ledge. Climb the left leaning crack, past and old bolt, then up to the stairs.

FA: Someone a long time ago.

20. **5.10a PG-13** 1 pitch **Bear Damage** *Four bolts to a two bolt anchor*

At the start of the third rail leave the stairs and descend along a ledge to the last bolted route near the end. Climb past four bolts to a two bolt anchor.

FA: Unknown

21. **5.10a** 1 pitch **Flight of Stares** *Four bolts to a two bolt anchor*

At the start of the third rail leave the stairs and walk towards the far end of the ledge. There are three bolted routes, this is the middle one passing the left side of a very small roof.

FA: Peggy Buckey, Todd Swain 6/88

22. **5.10a** 1 pitch **Guitar Man** *Four bolts.*

At the start of the third rail leave the stairs and descend along the ledge. There are three bolted routes near the far end, this is the one on the right. It was originally put up as a free solo but later unknowingly retrobolted.

FA: Jackson 5/87

23. **5.8+** 1 pitch **There's Always Room for Jello** *Seven bolts.*

Start to the left of Stair trek, near the pin tree, under a large and very thin flake. Find your way onto the ledge (don't pull too hard on the flake!) and traverse right past a bolt and to a tricky mantle (crux). Follow the easiest way up to the two bolt anchor (5.7).

FA: Brian Lang 7/16/2016

24. **5.5** 1 pitch **Stair Trek** *1-2" gear optional. Two bolts.*

At the start of the third rail leave the stairs and descend along the ledge. Before you get to the large cedar tree climb up to the right of a left-facing corner past two bolts. Starting further right atop a flake you can traverse into the first bolt and protect the start with 1-2" gear.

FA: Todd Swain, Peggy Buckey 6/88

*It is also possible to top rope 5.5 slabs off of the railing of the stairs as has been done for many years (Stair Slabs).