

NORTH SENTINEL

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Intro

North Sentinel is best known for its profile when viewed and photographed from the deck on the Zumwalt Meadow trail. Climbers historically looked past it at the more infamous Grand Sentinel. Only recently has the climbing potential been explored and the few routes weaving up the headwall are outstanding crack climbs. The approach is a continuous uphill hike with a fun 5.10b pitch thrown in, so while it's not quite roadside, the hike is worth it for the unique views of Kings Canyon. If you're fast it may take just over an hour but expect it to take longer.

Directions

North Sentinel is on the south side of the canyon almost straight across the river from the loop at the end of Highway 180. To get there, park on the south side of the loop at road's end and follow the hiking trail southwest over a footbridge across the Kings River. Walk left (east) once across the river for 50 feet or so and then turn right (south) and leave the trail.

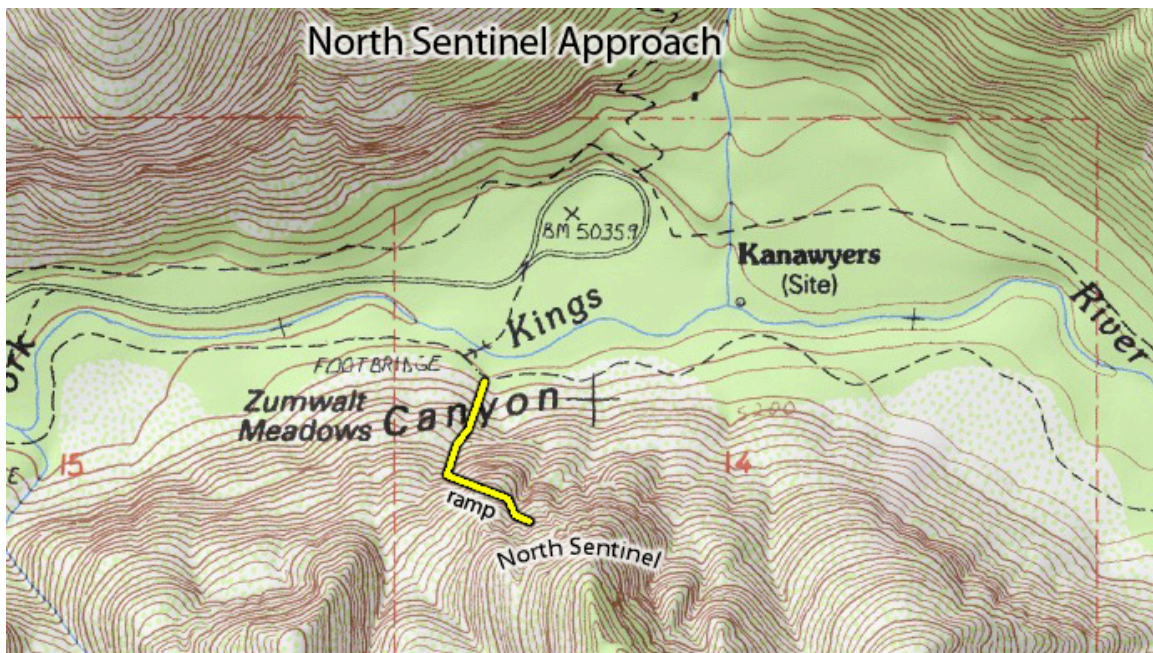
Continue up boulders and scree, keeping the base of the cliff to the left. After ascending about 600 vertical feet look for a ramp that cuts left out onto North Sentinel. This ramp can be seen from the road and in the picture on the next page.

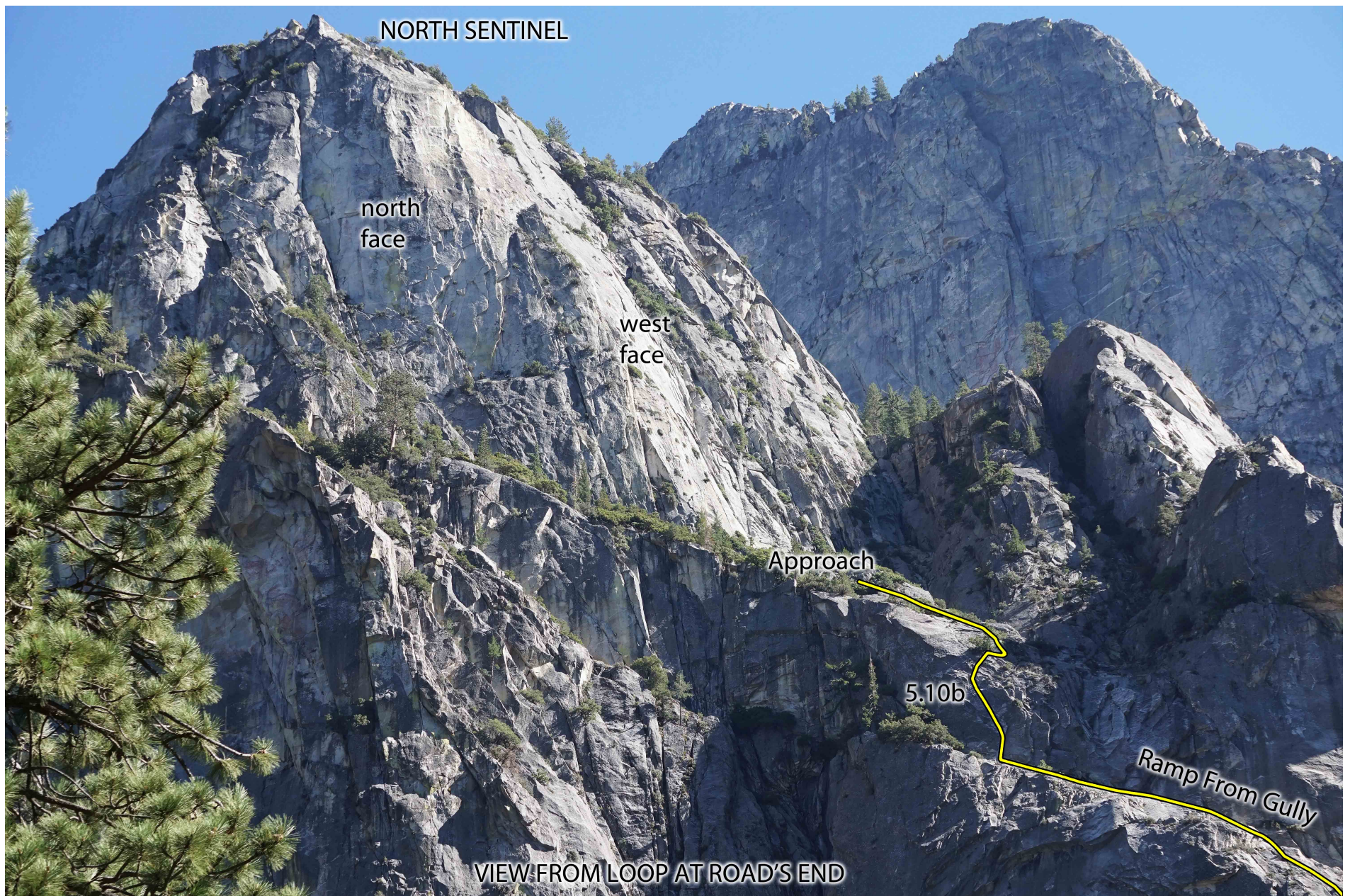
From near the end of the 2nd-3rd class ramp a short pitch up laybacks and cracks brings you to the forested slopes below the headwall. All currently recorded routes are approached this way and any of the racks for the routes will suffice for the approach pitch.

Descent

Option 1: From the summit, walk south towards Grand Sentinel and then make your way down into the gully below it. This can be followed all the way down to the trail by the river but does not access the start of the routes.

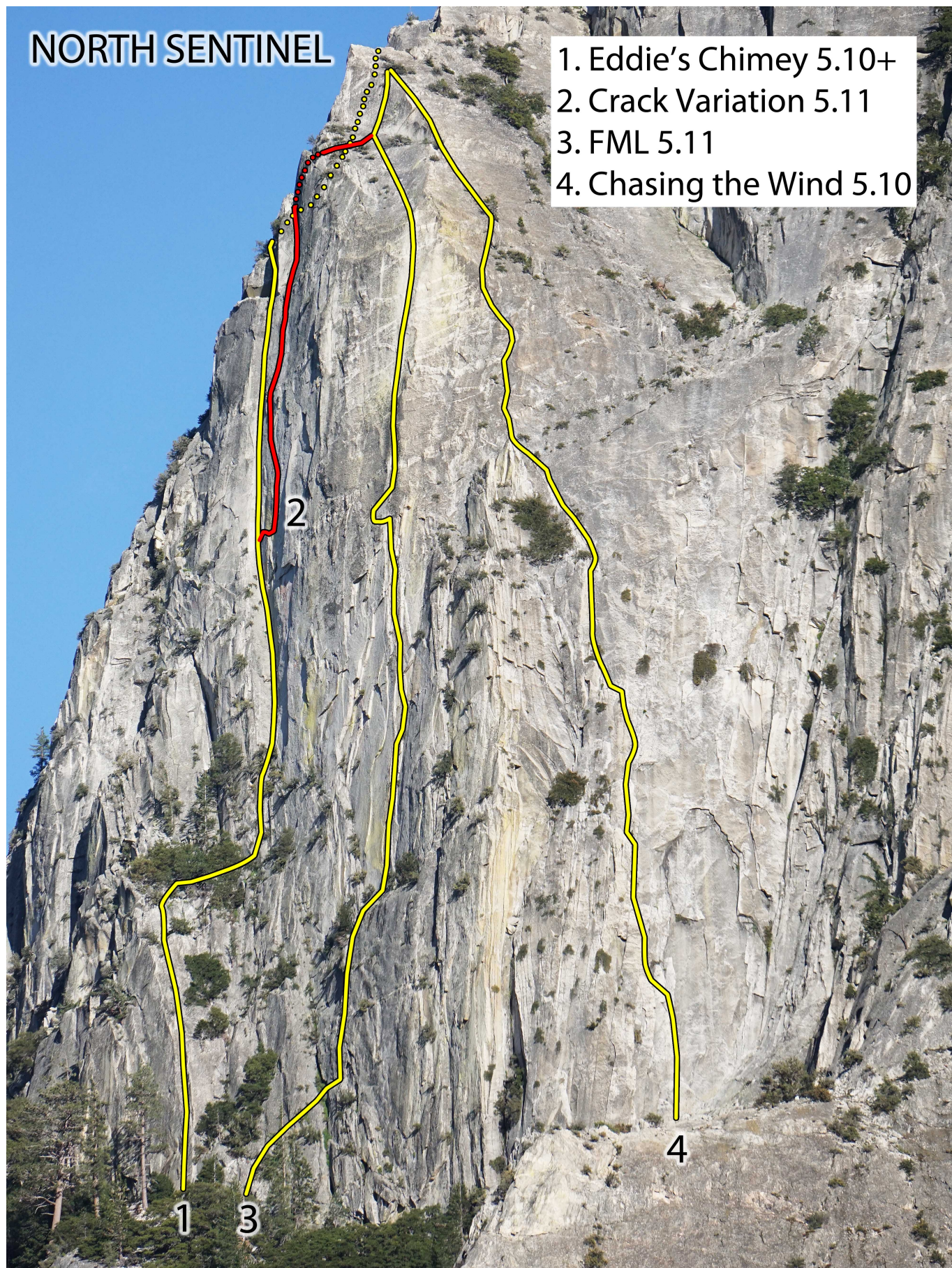
Option 2: Rappel down Chasing the Wind. This can be done from the top of any of the routes and requires two 60m ropes and probably some webbing. From the summit, rap down the trees to the northwest along the low angle slabs. Looks for the lone conifer in a crack near the edge and rap from it down to the bolted anchors on Chasing the Wind. See pictures and topo below.

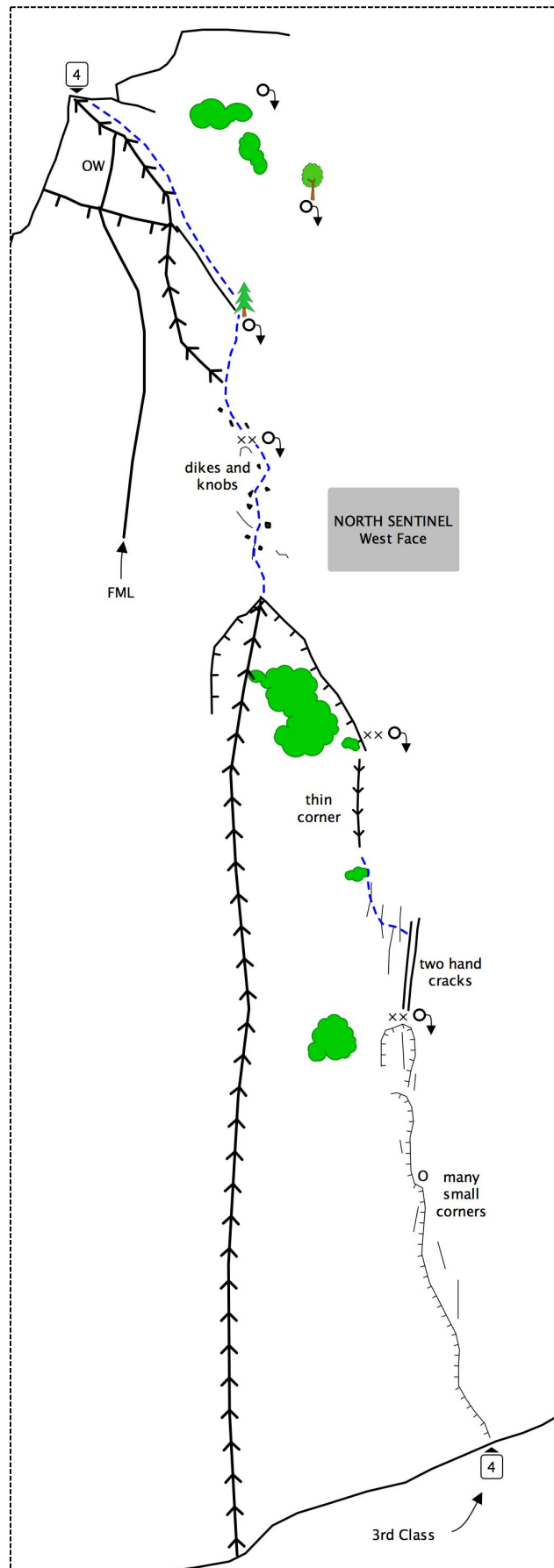
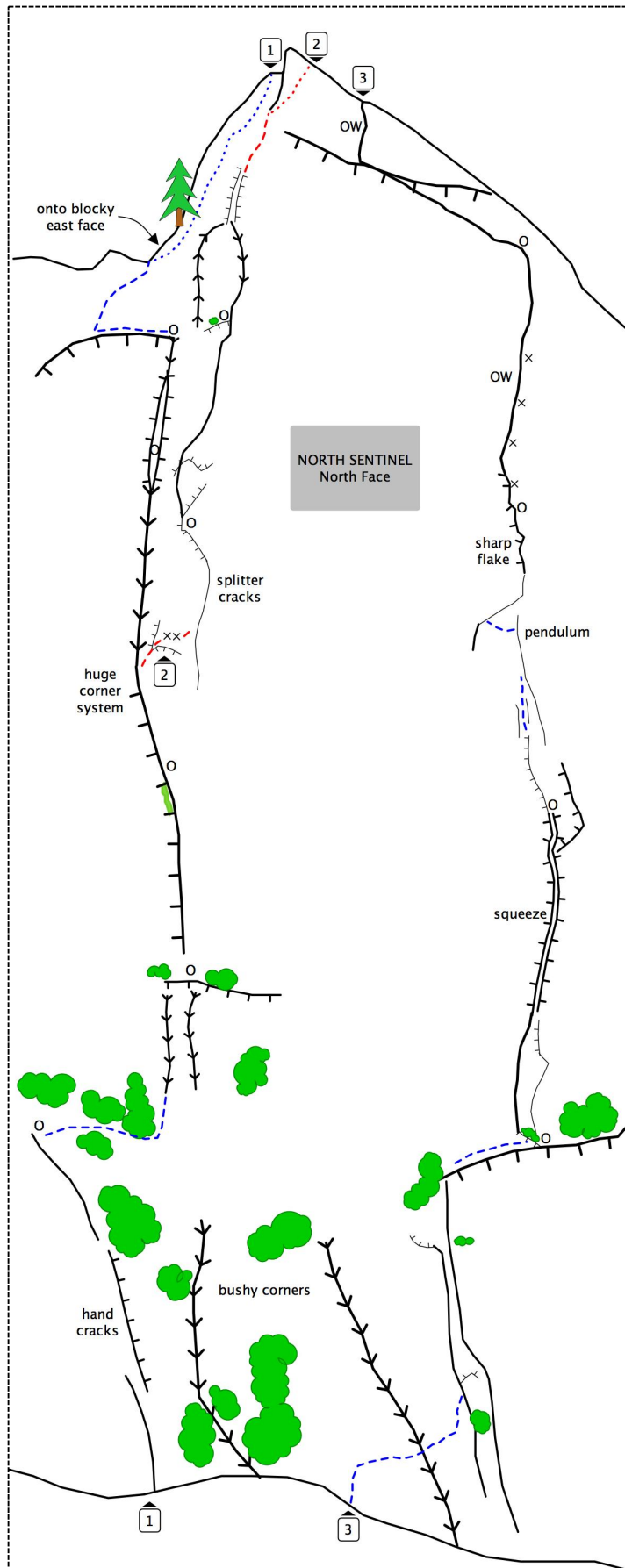




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1. Eddie's Chimney 5.10+
2. Crack Variation 5.11
3. FML 5.11
4. Chasing the Wind 5.10





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NOTE: All routes ended with the 5.9 OW at the top of FML on the first ascents. The descriptions below and pictures above are possible independent finishes.

1. **5.10+** 6 pitches **Eddie's Chimney** *Doubles to 3", nuts, single 4, 5 and 6 inch.*

P1 To the left of the big bushy corners, along the edge of a cliff band, climb nice hand cracks in corners to a big bushy area.

P2 Work right and then climb small corners up to a ledge at the base of the massive corner system.

P3 Follow the big corner/ramp and belay above the grassy spot.

P4 Stay in the beautiful corner and belay in the chimney above.

P5 Work up the chimney and onto a large ledge.

P6 Go left around the corner and follow low 5th blocks to the summit.

FA: Caitlin Taylor, Chaz Langelier, Vitaliy Musiyenko, Brian Prince 6/2016
2. **5.11** 3 pitches **Crack Variation (to Eddie's Chimney)** *Doubles, or more, from small to 3.5".*

P1 Partway up the 4th pitch of Eddie's Chimney, move right onto a small ledge with a bolted anchor, this is the start of the route. Follow the obvious splitter into a shallow sloping corner. Belay at stance (short pitch).

P2 A short way up the corner continue up and left in the splitter, through a small roof and up the widening crack to a ledge with a small bush.

P3 Go up the crack and into a chimney. Then you can either move right on the huge ledge to find the 5.9 OW finish or continue up mellow terrain to the summit.

FA: Chaz Langelier, Vitaliy Musiyenko, Brian Prince, Caitlin Taylor 6/2016
3. **5.11** 5 pitches **FML** *Doubles to 6".*

P1 Locate two steep and dirty cracks angling up and left, a bit right of the big brushy ramps and corners. Traverse into these cracks above a bush and follow them to a big ledge. Other variations are probably possible.

P2 From the right end of the big ledge you can see the squeeze chimney behind the flakes. To get off the ledge either climb the clean 4-5" crack or take the thin flake to the right. It didn't break off when I followed it so it might hold! Near the top of the squeeze belay in a small alcove, do not go right under the roof. Or do, that might go somewhere fun?

P3 From the tight alcove work up and out onto the exposed face via small corners and cracks. Once the main crack bottoms out and becomes difficult pendulum left to another crack. Hand traverse back up and right to a sharp flake and wide crack, follow that to a ledge below the main offwidth.

P4 The FML offwidth. Destroy yourself and walk your gear up the OW, passing occasional bolts placed on the FA when the leader ran out of gear. Belay once the angle eases off.

P5 Follow the low angle wide crack towards the final headwall. A short 5.9 OW ends just below the summit.

FA: Brandon Thau, Vitaliy Musiyenko, Brian Prince, Daniel Jeffcoach 5/2016
4. **5.10** 6 pitches **Chasing the Wind** *Doubles to 3", nuts, and some runners to sling knobs.*

P1 After the approach pitch to the forested ledge, head pretty much straight up to the west face of the headwall. Scramble up slabs to find a series of small right facing corners. Follow them for a short pitch (note, pitches can be broken up in many places on this climb).

P2 Continue up the cracks to a bolted anchor. Generally staying right without going out onto the blank face.

P3 Follow the two hand cracks until near the end, then traverse left and work up towards a clean corner with a bush at the base and top. Belay after the corner.

P4 Continue up the ramps to the top of the massive pillar, then venture onto the exposed face above through knobs, dikes, and some gear placements until you find a bolted anchor.

P5 Straight up through the crux, then the angle eases off. Many variations possible from here.

P6 Either stay on the low angle face to the summit or go left and finish on the 5.9 OW at the top of FML.

FA: First 4 pitches: Adam Sheppard, Daniel Jeffcoach 5/2016. Full route: Vitaliy Musiyenko, Caitlin Taylor 6/2016.