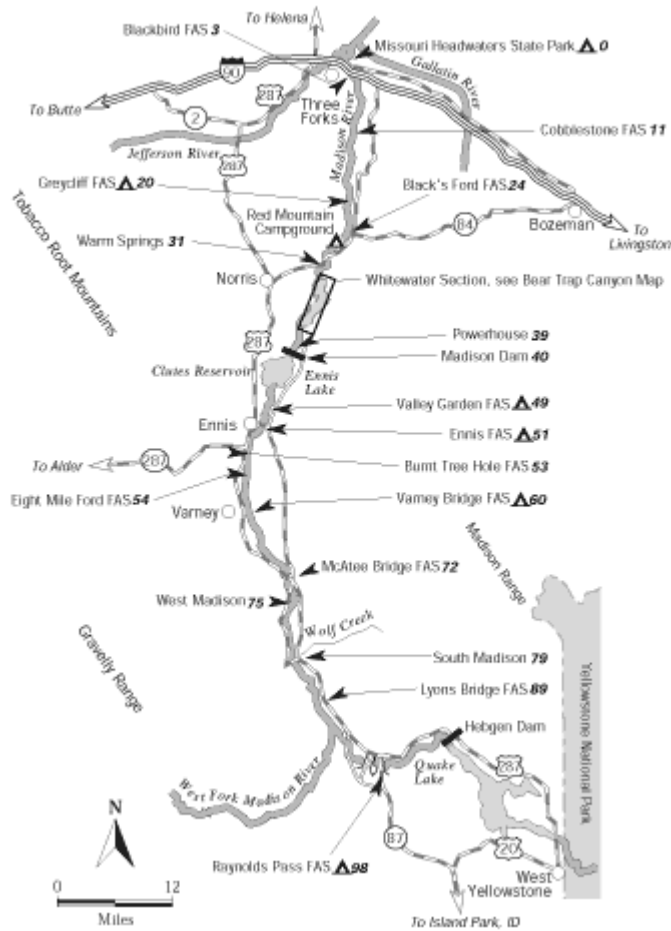


MADISON RIVER BOULDERING GUIDE Montana



By Loren Rausch 2008

PADDLING MONTANA
 MAP 18A: MADISON RIVER
 44589.CT.18A MADISON RIVER



Getting There:

From Bozeman drive west on US 191 to four corners. Continue straight through the intersection on MT 84 for 22 miles to Beartrap road (on left). The two main areas will be described in detail from this point.

Access/Camping

: The neat rock boulders are on B.L.M. land and have primitive camping. The Beartrap boulders are located on the Lower Madison Recreation area. There is plentiful fee camping available and world class fly fishing just feet away (Red Mountain Campground, see map).

Climbing Season: The Madison river boulders are in a “rain shadow” of sorts and stays dry and hot. Avoid the Neat rock boulders in the heat of the summer, this is a spring/fall/winter destination. I have bouldered here in all months of the year (sometimes in a t-shirt in winter).

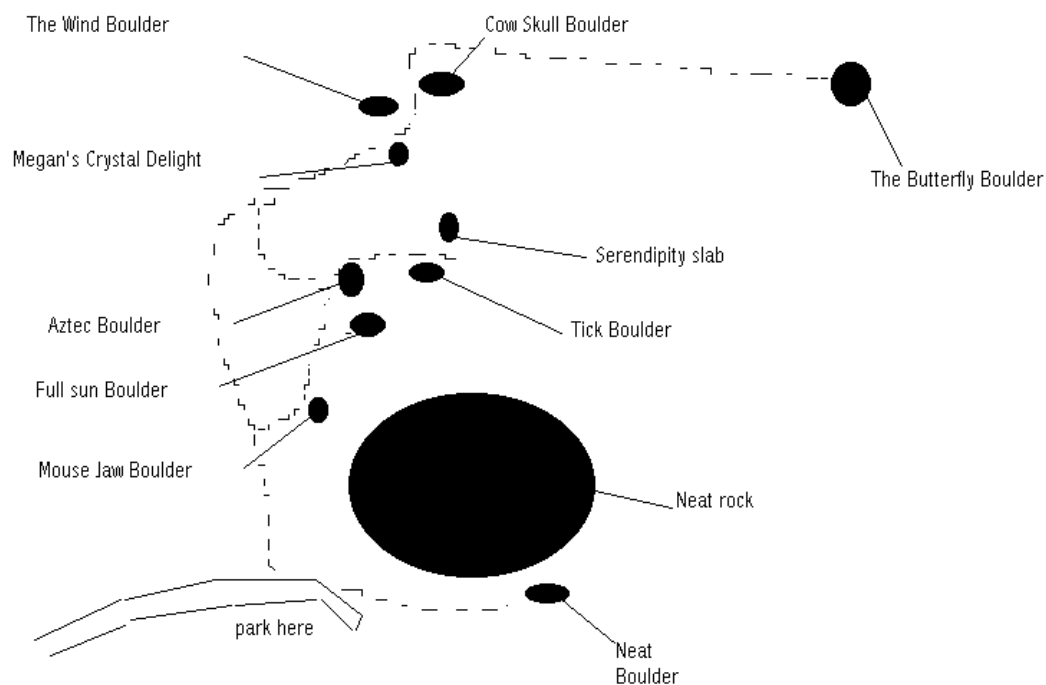
The Beartrap boulders can be climbed in the heat of the summer as they remain a bit more shaded and the Madison river is near by for a refreshing splash.

Geology/Climbing history: Present day Beartrap canyon was the lowest area available for the young Madison River to flow through around 2 million years ago. The Madison range has been slowly rising as the Madison river has been slowly eroding through the basement rock. This has produced the beautiful Beartrap canyon. The rock is mostly Precambrian basement rock (a complex of gneisses and schists) that formed around 2.7 billion years ago through metamorphism of older rocks.

Climbers have been visiting the area for decades although bouldering was not the main focus. Bushy boulder was developed as well as few of the closer roadside boulders in the Beartrap road area sometime in the 70's. Many of the harder boulder problems were developed in the early 2000's. If anyone has more information/ corrections on problems and/or history E-mail Loren at wannabemountainman@hotmail.com I'd love to hear it!

WARNING!!! Climbing is dangerous. Serious Injury or death can occur. This guide book is a collection of unverified information and is always changing and extremely subjective. The area will never be a destination area due to; loose, grainy rock, rattle snakes, cactus, rednecks, and a myriad of other dangerous variables. The area is in its infancy in relation to bouldering and many problems still require cleaning, scrubbing, and landscaping. Never-the-less the area contains a few quality boulders, stunning scenery, and a bit of adventure bouldering. The user should assume all risks associated with this guide. Never chip holds or modify the rock, leave it natural!!!

Neat Rock Boulders: The neat rock boulders are mainly just south of the Neat rock formation (a local climbing crag) in a shallow draw. To get there, Drive past Beartrap road for a few hundred yards, cross the Beartrap bridge and take a right onto a gravel road. Drive until an obvious grey cliff looms on your left; take a left onto a short 2 track road (2 wheel drive) and park at the base of Neat Rock.



Neat Boulders Overview

1.) “Neat Boulder” The neat boulder lies on the eastern side of Neat rock and is a great warm up. From the parking area just below Neat rock walk around the right side of the formation for a few minutes until an obvious white vertical boulder is found.



1.) unnamed V0-
start on the left side of the boulder, lip traverse to the top. Great problem.

2.) unnamed V1
Start on the left hand sidepull and right hand on whatever it can find. Go up to the good right hand crimp and top out.

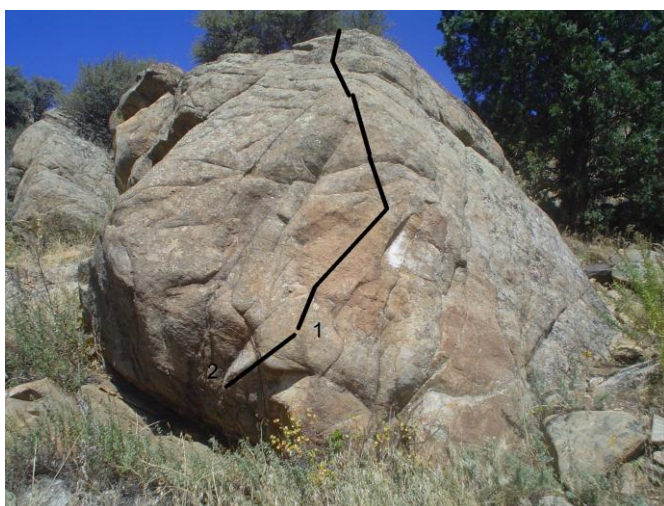
3.) unnamed V3
Start with right hand on right arête and left on undercling/sidepull.

Slap up using left crimps, and right arête edge.

4.) unnamed V4

Sit start to #3. Start low down on left sidepull and right arête. Contrived but fun.

2.) “Mouse Jaw Boulder” To find this boulder walk in the gully to the left side of the formation. There is a faint trail that leads to the base of the boulder with the obvious white scar.



1.) “Mouse Jaw” V3 or 4

Start this weird problem on a sloppy left hand up high and a right hand down on a sidepull crimp. Set the feet, slap way out right to an edge and work up lichen slab. (high ballish)

2.) Project

Sitstart to Mouse Jaw

3.) “The Aztec Boulder” The Aztec boulder is the nice looking geometric boulder balanced and over hanging in a small field of sorts. A tall slabby boulder just east is named the “full Sun Boulder”.



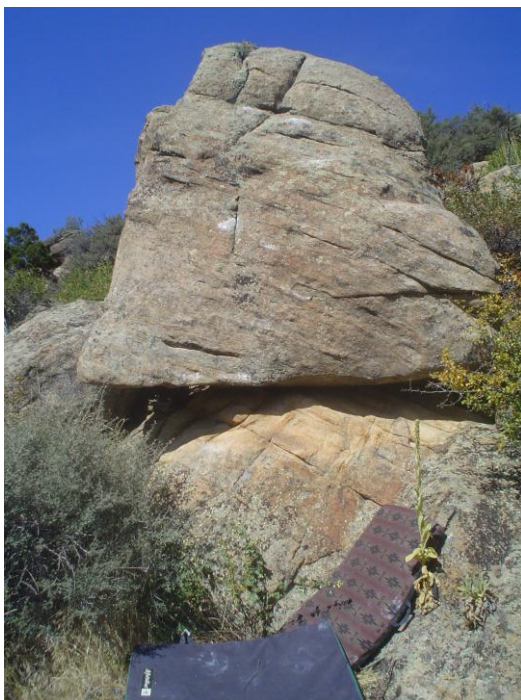
1.) “Jaguar Warrior” V2

A cool problem up the cracks to the left of the left arête.

2.) “Human Sacrifice” V1

Named after the similar looking Sacrificial boulder at Whiskey gulch, this problem may pack a punch as the thin flakes flex on the right arete. If they break you may be the next human sacrifice.

4.) “Full Sun Boulder” Just to the right of The Aztec boulder is tall boulder with a slabby south-east face.



1.) “Full Sun” V4 or 5

A strange yet gratifying problem. Start on the underclings, go left hand up to a gaston/jam. Slap right hand up to a sloper, left hand into a sidepull mono, right hand again to a sloper. Wrestle up to a high ball top out on lichen.

5.) “Tick Boulder” To find this boulder head up the gully immediately north of the Aztec Boulder. Bush wack up until you see a finger crack on a west facing rock (see cover). Climb this crack named “Tick Season” at V0. (beware of ticks)

6.) “Serendipity Slab” V0 A really good easy slab problem. Rummage around in the vegetation to the west of tick season until a clean face is found (it’s close to Tick season perhaps 30 feet away).



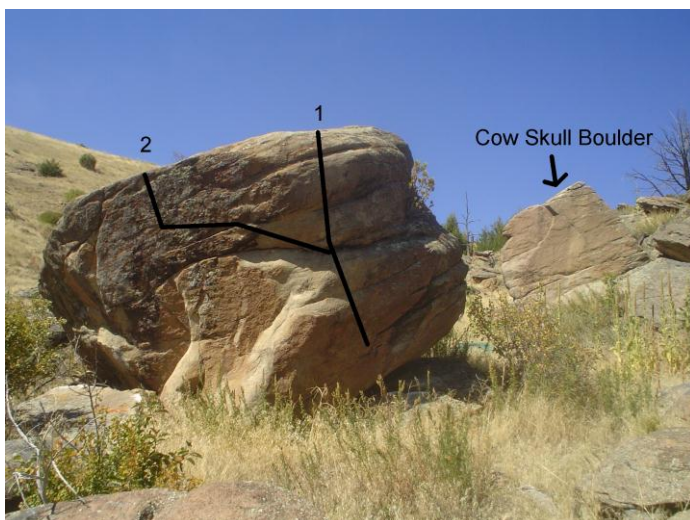
“Serendipity Slab”

7.) “Megan’s Crystal Delight” To find this boulder/face drop down into the gully south of the Aztec Boulder, and onto the south side of the shallow draw, hike up the faint trail until the slab appears on your right (see overview map).



1.) “Megan’s Crystal Delight” V0-
Climb the featured slab on big crystals.

8.) “The Wind Boulder” Keep walking up the trail for about 30 feet past Megan’s Crystal Delight. The big aesthetic boulder on the left is the wind boulder, a good boulder!



1.) “Follow The Wind” V5

A hard problem on bad slopers. Start on the horizontals down low, slap up to sloper, match and go straight up the prow to a mantle. If you climb right of the prow the grade is easier.

2.) “Wind Weaver”

V3 Start on # 1, traverse left to a dyno to the top. Mantle on up.

3.) On the north and west side of the wind boulder are a bunch of fun V0 problems. Needs more cleaning.



4.) “Wanna be Rockstar” V7

First climbed by Jeff Ho. On the south face of the wind boulder start on the thin crimp rail and heel hook out right like you mean it. Huck for the lip, and do a tough mantle.

Jeff popping off “Wanna be Rockstar”.

9.) “Cow Skull Boulder” The next boulder up the hill from the wind boulder. A sweet boulder with hard, good problems!



1.) “Bridge over troubled waters” V0

A unique problem on the east face. Start low and work onto the sloping shelf with good feet.

2.) “Yesterday” Project

Go up the slopers on the prow, eliminate the arête, just use the slopers., hard!!

3.) “Yesterweek” V7

Start on the left hand sidepull and right hand crimp. Bump right hand up to better crimp. Throw left to bad sloper, then right hand to worse sloper. Go straight up to bad sloper top out



4.) “Yesteryear” V6/7

same start at #3 but go left into good sidepull rather than straight up. Awesome!

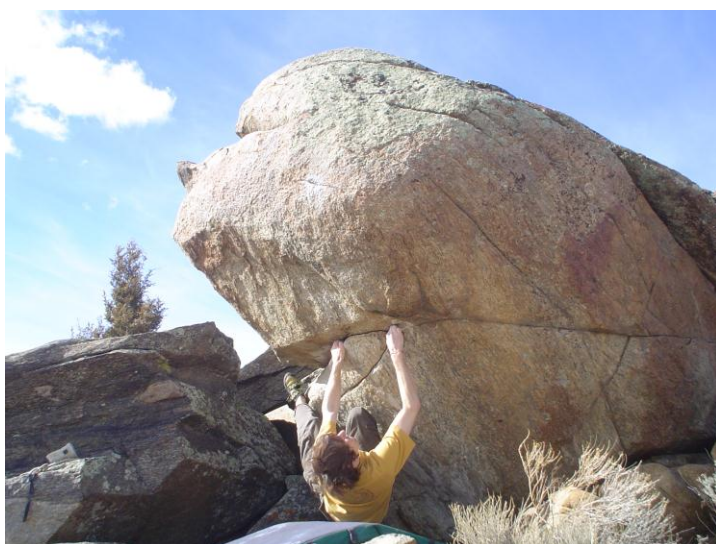
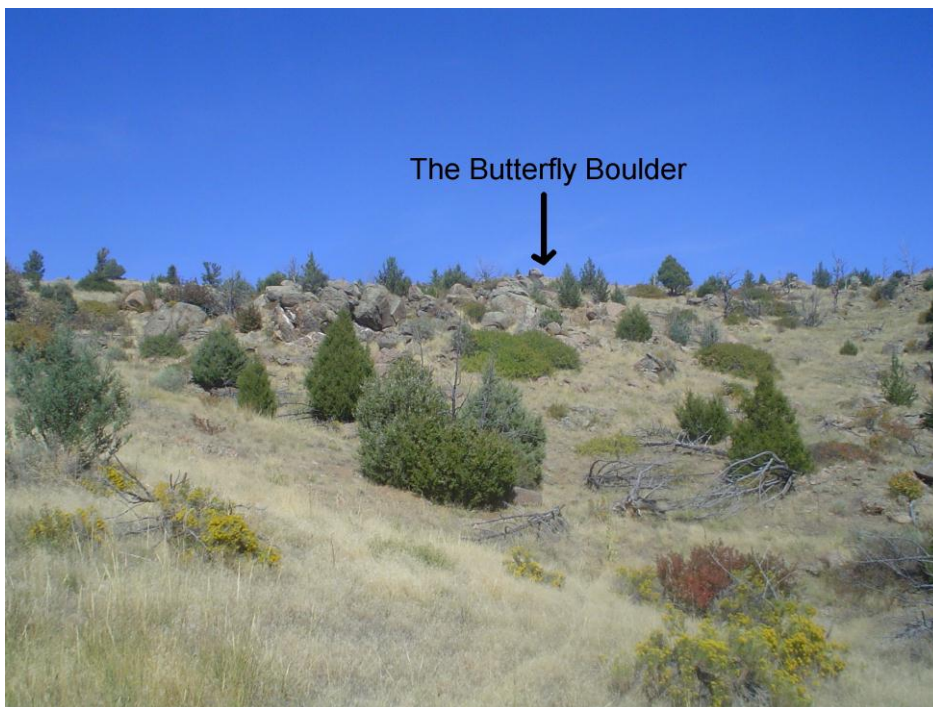
5.) “Bovine intervention” V4

Start on edges, go to good holds on left arête to top.



Yesteryear

10.) “The Butterfly Boulder” A 4 star problem anywhere! To find this boulder walk up hill and north from the cow skull boulder for about 30 feet. You can just see the boulder on the horizon 100 yards away. (see picture).



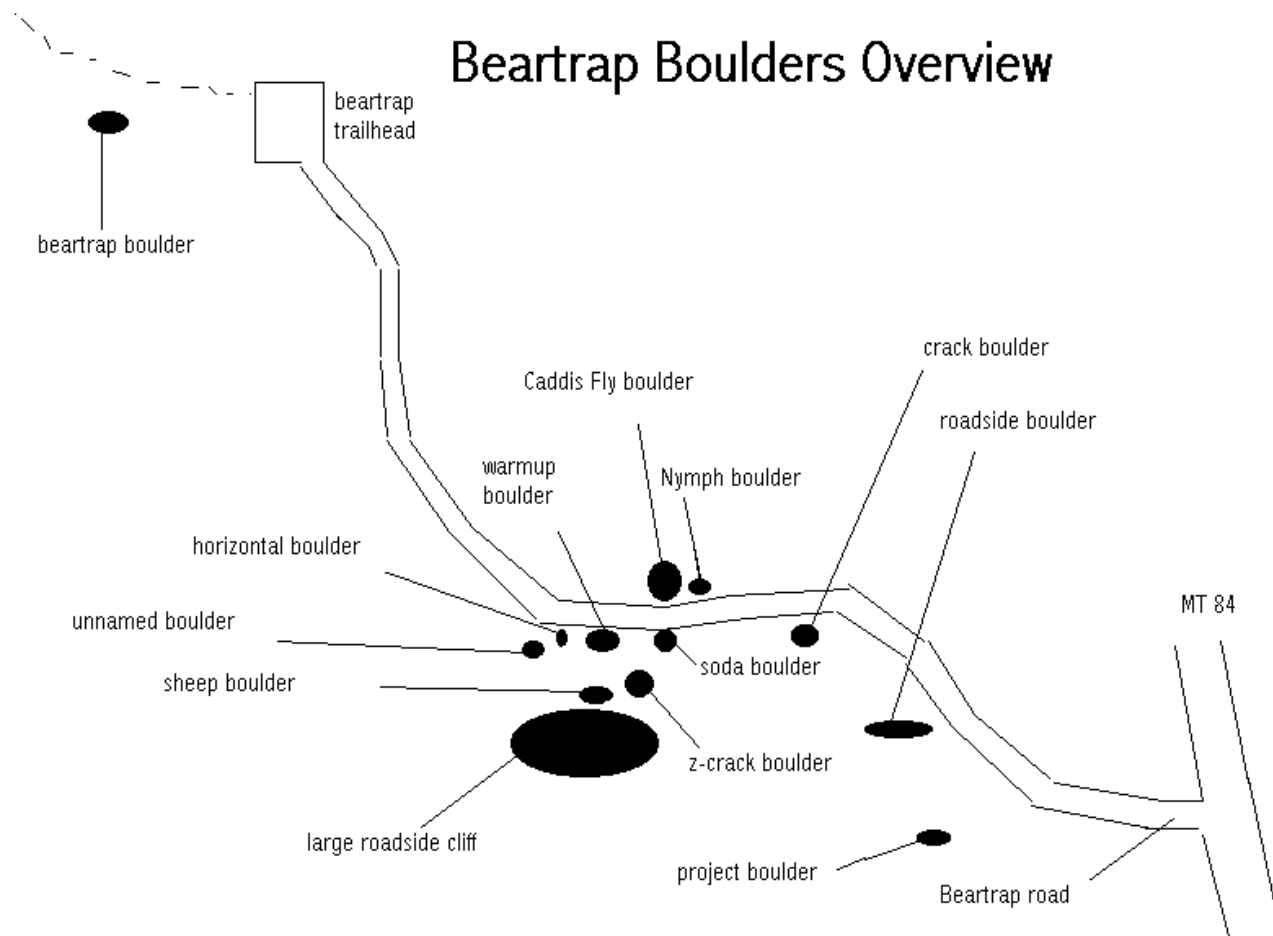
1.) “The Butterfly Effect” V7

Start right hand on crimp, left hand on sloper. Heel hook out left. Toss right hand up to good crimp, set feet, and throw for the top jugs. Seriously good problem!

“The Butterfly Effect”

There are many more problems that have been done, are still projects, or have been overlooked, keep your eyes open.

Beartrap Boulders: To find this bouldering area, turn on Beartrap road. Take a left before the beartrap bridge and follow the dirt road. Set your odometer, the first boulder is 1.1 miles up the road on your left.



It's obvious these boulders have been climbed on for decades, so the names are arbitrary and used purely for organization. If you know any history, names, etc. shoot me an E-mail.

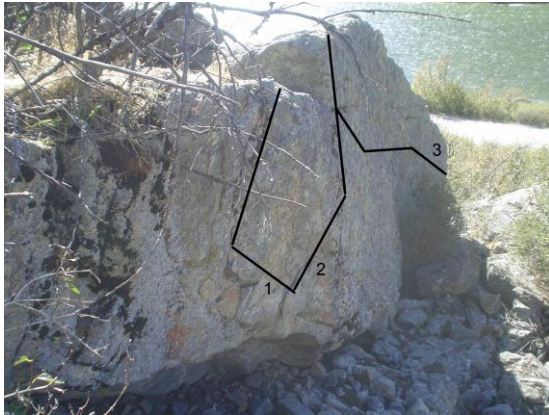
The large roadside cliff was the scene of severe rock fall some years back (the source of the boulders). Caution is advised, although there are a few bolts sprinkled on the cliff now.

1.) “Project Boulder” Drive up Beartrap road for 1.1 miles. You will see the diamond shaped project boulder half way up the hill side.



This may have one of the Bozeman areas hardest problems if completed (double digit problem?). Start on the obvious edges and work up to the apex of the boulder. This is a tall, beautiful problem with a good landing; but bring multiple pads and spotters. There are some fun easier problems to do on this rock also.

2.) “RoadSide Boulder” Drive 1.2 miles from the turn off on MT 84. A long, grey boulder, close to the road, will be spotted in a stand of bushes. Drive just past the boulder to a good pull out on the left (park here for the Project boulder also).



1.) “Mon” V2

I derived this name from rockclimbing.com.

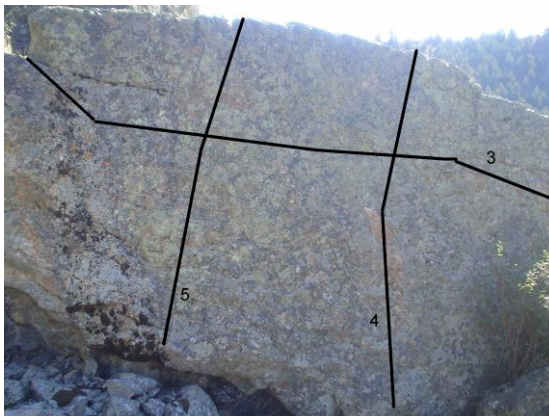
Start in the steep cave on pockets and go left up good edges.

2.) “Tana” V2

Same start as #1 but go right to small edges to top.

3.) “Montucky” V1

Start low on the right side, traverse below lip into “tana”. Good problem.



4.) “Orange Crystal” V1

A nice problem. Go up to the orange crystal, from here crux on small edges to top.

5.) “Choke Cherry” V1

Start 5 feet left of orange crystal. Go up on small, balancy edges to top.

3.) “Crack boulder” Drive 1.7 miles from MT 84 turn off until a small boulder is found on your left right next to the road. An obvious overhanging finger crack splits the boulder facing the road.



1.) “unnamed” V1

Climb the finger crack out the overhang.

The remaining boulders are found clustered together close to each other. Drive 1.8 miles from the MT 84 turn off. You will drive under a large cliff on your left, pull into the small turn off on the right, directly next to the river. The boulders between the road and the river will be described fist (Caddis fly boulder and Nymph boulder).

4.) “Caddis Fly Boulder” A 3 star boulder right next to rising Rainbow and brown trout!

This is the largest boulder north-west of the parking area, it juts out into the river.



1.) “Parachute Adams” V1

brush the spiders off from under the undercling, then reach up high to a good crimp, continue to the top.

2.) “Mayfly” V2

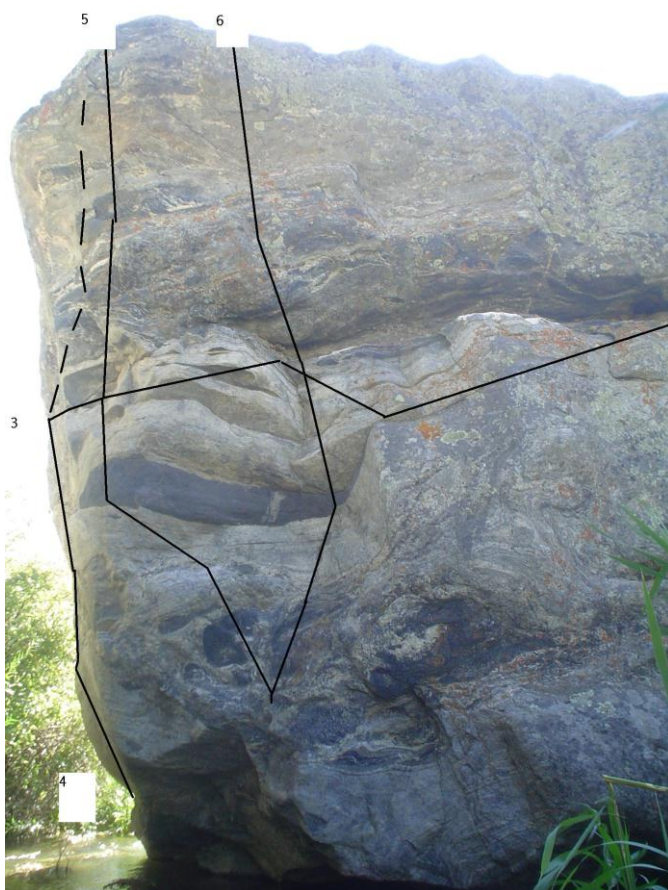
Start on the small crimps low down. Reach way up to some hidden crimps to the top. Good problem.

3.) “Salmonfly Traverse” V3/4

Start on #1, traverse low around boulder on good

crimps. At #4 go up to good jug, then keep traversing into #5, follow easiest weakness around boulder, staying low to log pile over river. I don’t think a full traverse around the entire boulder has been done. Awesome!

(The water is usually not this high)



4.) “The Midge” V3

A nice problem up the south-east arête. Start low down on side pulls and crimps. Make a few desperate moves and big moves on small holds to a good jug. Top out easily.

5.) “Wind Tunnel” V4/5

Another nice problem. Sit start in the cave on a matched sloper. Move up and left onto the arête on crimps and slopers. Hit the big jugs and top out. (stand up start on right hand pinch and left hand sloper goes at V3).

6.) “Madison Ave.” V2

This problem is a high ball, at least one ankle has been wrecked from falling. Starting on # 5 makes it a V3, otherwise stand start and move into good holds. Once up

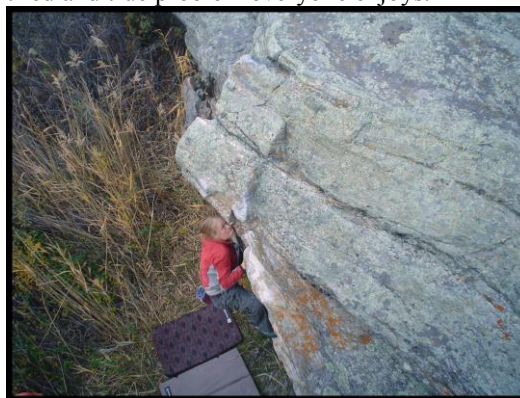
high the face blanks out. Make a huge reach to a right hand crimp, then hit the top and celebrate. A Madison classic.

5.) “Nymph Boulder” This is the boulder nearly touching the Caddis Fly boulder. It has a few problems on it. Only one is described here.



1.) “Crawfish” V0 to V3

There are a few ways to climb this problem. Using only the slopers makes it a balancy V3. Using the left edge makes it roughly V0. A tried and true problem everyone enjoys.



6.) Soda Boulder: This boulder is found right off the road (in fact you may wish to have your spotter on pad removal duty in case cars drive by). From the Caddis Fly boulder walk back to the pullout, the boulder is on the left about 50 feet from the car. An ancient orange soda can resides here.



1.) “Barley Pop” V2/ 3

Start on the good edges mid way up the boulder on the right arete. Right hand shoots to the hold on the arête, slap on up to the top.

2.) “Road Soda” V5

Sitstart to #1. Start on gaston and crimp, in a squished sit with poor feet. Throw out to the good crimps and traverse out into Barley pop. Fun!

7.) Warm Up Boulder: This is the vertical boulder located just east of the pullout, right next to the car. A great boulder with easy, fun warm ups.



1.) “unnamed”

V0-
climb the arête

2.) “unnamed”

V0-
Climb the face to the left of the arête.

3.)”unnamed” V0

Climb up to the good holds out left.

4.) “unnamed”

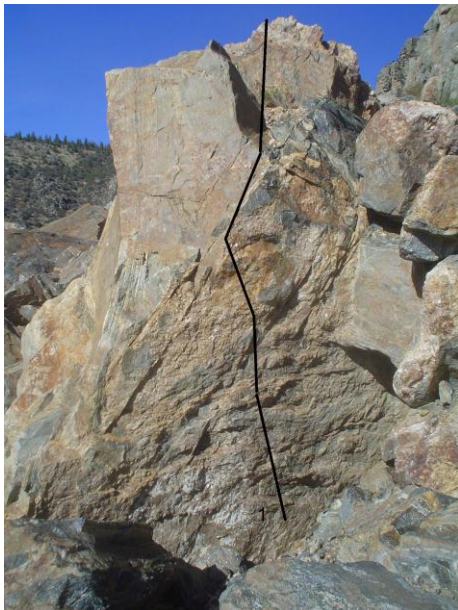
V0+
Climb out left on slightly harder terrain.

8.) Horizontal Boulder: The horizontal boulder is the boulder just south (right) of the warm up boulder. It is right next to the road and is distinguished by large horizontals on its north face.



1.) “Horizon has been Defeated” V0-
Start low and climb up the large slopy edges. Bring pads.

9.) Unnamed Boulder: This boulder is located south (right) of the Horizontal boulder about 20 feet. It has a bright orange south face with a textured appearance.



1.) “Unnamed” V1 or 2
Climb up the features to the top. Bring pads.

10.) Sheep Boulder and Z-crack Boulder: These boulders are located in the boulder field below the cliff. They are worth doing.



1.) “Z-crack Boulder” V0

Climb the obvious crack on the orange boulder. Fun!

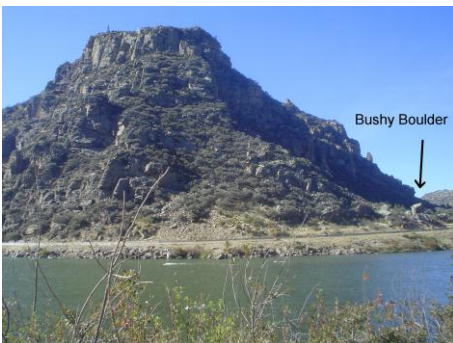
2.) “Sheep Herder” V2 or 3

Climb up the steep face, short, powerful, and fun.

Look around, there is still so much bouldering to be done here, really good looking stuff. Bring pads!

11.) Beartrap Boulder: This Boulder is located at the trailhead to beartrap trail. Drive to the end of the road (another mile) then walk a few hundred feet up the trail. The boulder will be obvious on the left. There are a few fun problems, V0- to V4 or so.

12.) Bushy Boulder: Bushy boulder is found on MT 84 about 1 mile past the beartrap bridge on the right. Park where you can off the highway. There are some boulder problems and some toprope problems.



bushy boulder from beartrap road.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

MAD LIBS

Madison River. At the end of the day my _____ hurt but I was happy and _____!
(body part) (type of emotion)

Problems by Rating

(Stars indicate quality, three stars better than two etc...)

V0-

“Unnamed” Neat Boulder ***
“Megans Crystal Delight” Unnamed *
“Unnamed problems” The Wind Boulder
“Unnamed” Warm up Boulder *
“Unnamed” Warm up Boulder *
“Horizon has been Defeated” Horizontal Boulder **

V0

“Tick Season” Tick Boulder *
“Serendipity Slab” Unnamed ***
“Bridge Over Troubled Waters” Cow Skull Boulder **
“Crawfish” Nymph Boulder***
“Unnamed” Warm up Boulder *
“Unnamed” Z-Crack Boulder **

V0+

“Unnamed” Warm up Boulder *

V1

“Unnamed” Neat Boulder*
“Human Sacrifice” Aztec Boulder
“Montucky” Roadside Boulder**
“Orange Crystal” Roadside Boulder*
“Choke Cherry” Roadside Boulder
“Unnamed” Crack Boulder*
“Parachute Adams” Caddis Fly Boulder**
“Unnamed” Unnamed Boulder

V2

“Jaguar Warrior” Aztec Boulder***
“Mon” Roadside Boulder*
“Tana” Roadside Boulder
“Mayfly” Caddis Fly Boulder*
“Madison Ave.” Caddis Fly Boulder****
“Barley Pop” Soda Boulder**
“Sheep Herder” Sheep Boulder*

V3

“Unnamed” Neat Boulder *
“Mouse Jaw” Mouse Jaw Boulder
“Wind Weaver” Wind Boulder*
“Salmonfly Traverse” Caddis Fly Boulder***
“The Midge” Caddis Fly Boulder*
“Crawfish” Nymph Boulder***

V4

“Unnamed” Neat Boulder*
“Full Sun” Full Sun Boulder**
“Bovine Intervention” Cow Skull Boulder**
“Wind Tunnel” Caddis Fly Boulder***

V5

“Follow The Wind” Wind Boulder**
“Road Soda” Soda Boulder**

V6

“Yesteryear” Cow Skull Boulder****

V7

“Yesterweek” Cow Skull Boulder***
“The Butterfly Effect” Butterfly Boulder****
“Wanna Be Rockstar” *

Projects

- Sit Start to “Mouse Jaw” Mouse Jaw Boulder
- “Yesterday” Cow Skull Boulder
- Project Boulder