

# ROCK CLIMBING COLORADO

A Guide to More Than 1,800 Routes

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Second Edition

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**FALCON** GUIDES

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# NORTHERN FRONT RANGE

## GREYROCK

### ■ OVERVIEW

Greyrock, a granite 7,613-foot-high peak, rises above the low Front Range mountains northwest of Fort Collins. This remote slabby dome, reached only after a stiff hour's walk uphill on a popular hiking trail, yields a surprising number of excellent climbing routes from one to four pitches in length. Over 125 routes ascend Greyrock and its surrounding satellite crags, scaling crystals and edges up slabs and incipient cracks, and jamming excellent cracks that range from finger-size to off-width. The best parts of the Greyrock climbing experience are the numerous beginner and moderate routes that lace the crag and the spirit of adventure that still pervades this quiet, off-the-beaten-track area.

Greyrock is a traditional climbing area, with many crack routes that offer excellent protection. The bolted slab routes, put up on lead, tend to be sparsely protected with bolts at the crux sections and creative pro placements in incipient cracks and thin flakes. Beware of long runouts on the slabs, especially on easier climbing, which tends to be toward the tops of the pitches. Some of the routes have serious fall and injury potential, some with groundfall possibilities. Use your best judgment when climbing, and don't be afraid to back off a serious pitch if you feel at

all unsure of your abilities. Remember that climbing at any grade is serious business.

Beefy  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch bolts protect most of the sport routes. Some of the older routes, however, are still protected by  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch bolts that may or may not hold a serious fall. Bring a rack for most routes with lots of small pro like RPs, Stoppers, Tri-cams, Lowe Balls, TCUs, and small flexible Friends. A set of cams is needed for multi-pitch lines.

### Trip Planning Information

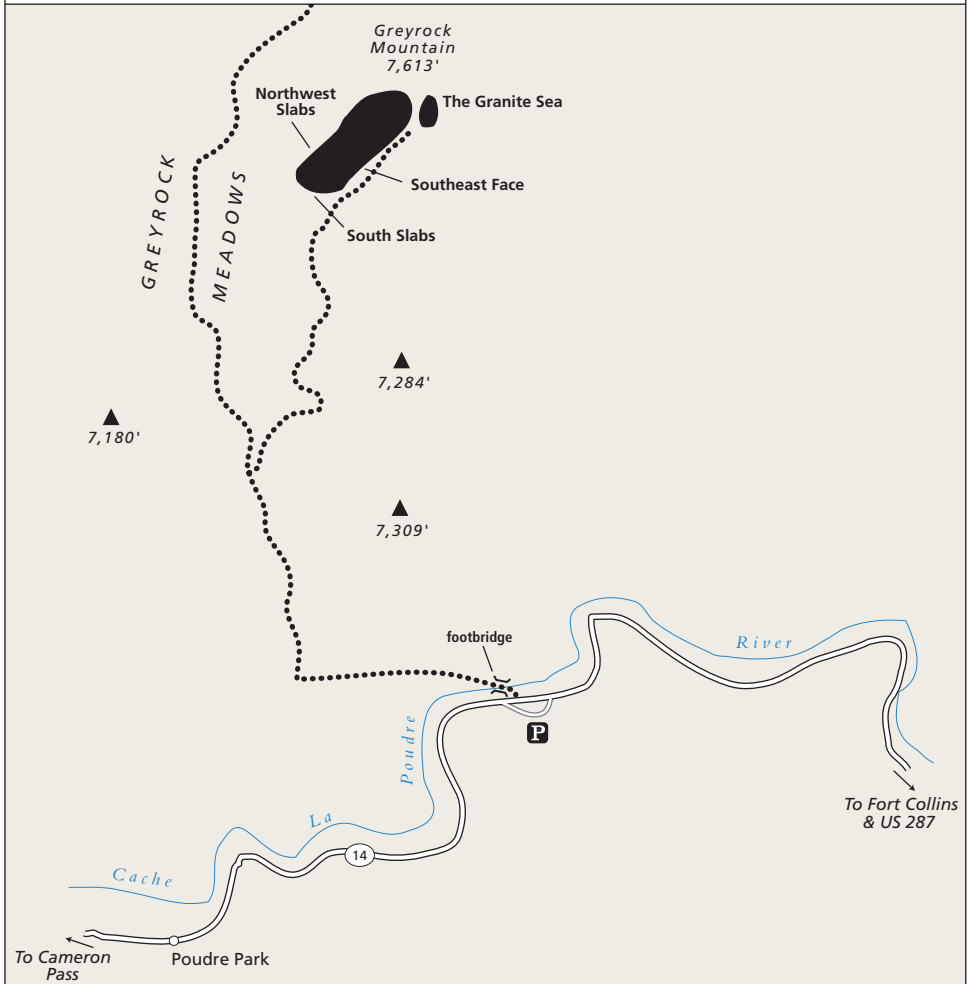
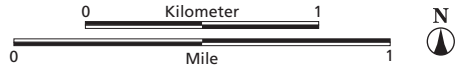
**Area description:** A slabby granite peak perched above Poudre Canyon with excellent climbs on slabs, steep faces, and cracks.

**Location:** North-central Colorado, about 20 miles northwest of Fort Collins.

**Camping:** Public camping is found along Highway 14 a few miles west of the trailhead in Roosevelt National Forest, including Ansel Watrous, Stove Prairie Landing, Narrows, Mountain Park, and Kelly Flats Campgrounds. All are fee areas located along the river and popular in summer. Camping is also found at Horsetooth Reservoir west of Fort Collins. Backpackers can camp in the forest around Greyrock.

**Climbing season:** Year-round. Summer days can be hot on the south-facing slab. Bring lots of water. Afternoons are often cloudy with severe thunderstorms. Avoid the top

# Greyrock



of the rock during lightning storms. Fall and spring offer good climbing weather. The crag's southern exposure also gives a surprising number of good climbing days in winter, although the access trail can be icy and snowbound.

**Restrictions and access issues:** Greyrock is in Roosevelt National Forest. There are no current climbing restrictions or access problems.

**Guidebooks:** *Greyrock* by Craig Luebben.

**Nearby mountain shops, guide services, and gyms:** Adventure Outfitters, The Mountain Shop, Inner Strength Rock Gym, Desert Ice Mountain Guides.

**Services:** All services in Fort Collins.

**Emergency services:** Call 911. See Appendix B: Poudre Valley Hospital.

**Finding the cliff:** From Interstate 25, take exit 269 and drive west into Fort Collins on Highway 14. Turn north on U.S. Highway 287 (North College Avenue) and drive northwest about 10 miles to a junction with Highway 14. Turn west (left) onto Highway 14 and drive 8.5 miles to the parking area for Greyrock National Recreation Trail (Trail 947) on the south side of the highway. Cross the river on a footbridge and follow the steep trail up a dry, rocky canyon, keeping right at a fork. Continue up the steep trail in a sharp canyon to a flat area south of the Greyrock cliffs. Allow an hour of hiking to the cliff.

The South Slabs lie directly ahead; the Southeast Face is to the right; and the Northwest Slabs sit on the opposite side of the rock. The South Slabs and Southeast Face are easily accessed from the Greyrock trail, which swings under the faces and works around the rock's northeast flank to its summit. The Northwest Slabs, not included in this guide, are reached by walking around the left (west) side of the rock from the trail. A few small crags and walls lie northeast of Greyrock, including Granite Breakers and The Granite Sea. Numerous fine cracks and most of Greyrock's harder routes ascend these cliffs.

## South Slabs

The South Slabs are a broad, south-facing wall broken by ledges and ramps into three cliff tiers. The easily accessible slabs offer many excellent routes up to three pitches long. Most are done as single pitches, although link-ups on the different tiers are possible. Many routes are bolt protected and some have rappel or lowering anchors.

**Finding the cliffs:** Approach the slabs by continuing north on Greyrock Trail from an

obvious trail junction until you're under the face. Look for a large trailside boulder with a small pine in it. A climber access path winds faintly up the hillside above the boulder. Routes are described from left to right on the lower and middle tiers.

**Descent:** From the upper tier, follow a system of third-class ramps and ledges that lead southwest between the middle and upper tiers. Fixed rappel anchors—a bolt and a slung chockstone—are atop *Comercopia*. Bring two ropes for a 150-foot rappel and an extra sling in case it's missing. A large ledge/ramp, dividing the lower and middle tiers, is easily accessed from the base of the slabs.

**1. Fun Flake** (5.6) Superb moderate line up the left side of the lower slab. Begin behind a tree. Work left and then layback and face climb straight up an excellent flake crack for 60 feet. Finish up an easy slab to a belay on the ramp above. **Descent:** Scramble west. **Rack:** Small gear to 1 inch.

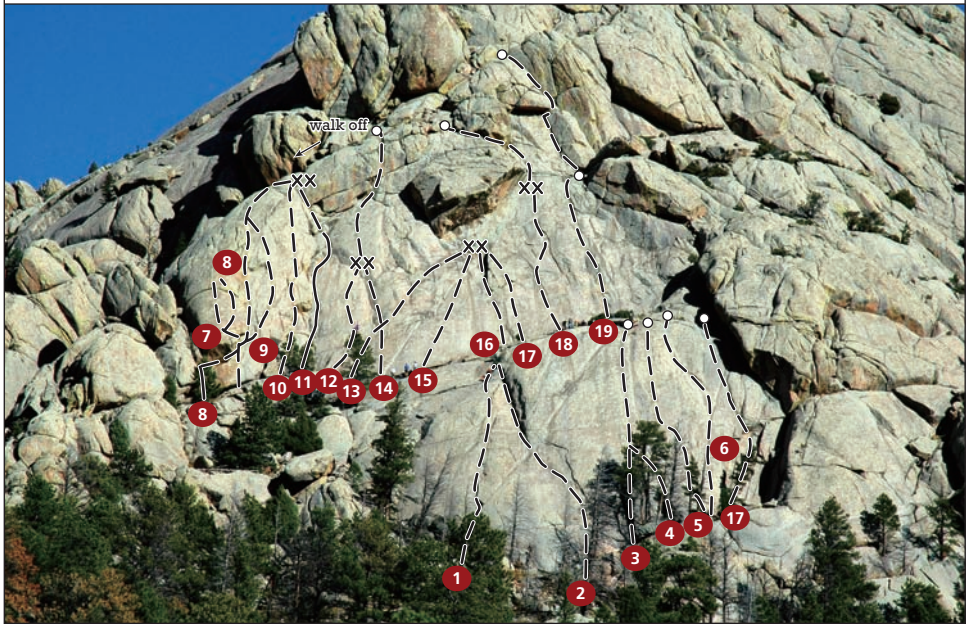
**2. 2 Minds Meet** (5.7) Follow an angling crack up left to a long, easy groove.

**3. Between Nothingness and Eternity** (5.12a) Begin just left of the large trees at the base of the lower wall. Climb up right on paper-thin edges and dicey smears past five bolts to a runout easy slab. Belay from boulders on the ramp above.

**4. Bad Boys Bolt** (5.11b/c) Start in the shade behind the trees. Climb up left past two bolts and join *Between Nothingness and Eternity* at its fourth bolt. Continue upward on easier climbing.

**4a. Black Market** (5.11b) is immediately right. No topo. Work up a thin slab past two bolts and angle up left (5.7 X) to the fifth bolt of *Between Nothingness and Eternity*.

## South Slabs



**5. Birdland** (5.9 R) A brilliant runout route up the slab's right side. Begin just right of the trees. Edge straight up to a bolt and work left into a crystal-studded water groove. Climb the groove and work left to a crack that takes large Stoppers and small Friends. Run it out to the belay ramp.

**6. Jazzman** (5.10a) More good face climbing reminiscent of the South Platte domes. Climb to the first bolt of *Birdland* and then up left of a blunt edge. **Rack:** Large Stoppers and small cams.

The following routes are on the upper tier of the South Slabs. Access these by scrambling up from the left (west) side of the slabs to a ramp beneath the face.

**7. Testicle Traverse** (5.11a or 5.9) Excellent climbing up the bulbous testicle on the left

side of the middle slab. Face climb up to the right side of the large roof and hand traverse/undercling left under some small roofs to a steep slab. Climb straight up past a bolt (5.11a) or swing right. Either way, work up left to a stance at a horizontal crack. Rap from here (fixed anchors) or continue up the slab (5.6) above. **Rack:** Small to medium Friends and long runners for the traverse.

**8. Dirty Love** (5.10d) Begin under the *Testicle Traverse* roof. Climb under the roof to a fixed piton and undercling right (5.10c) into an obvious right-facing corner. Jam, chimney, and stem up the corner. Continue right up an easy slab from the top of the corner to a sloping belay ledge.

**9. Flirty Dove** (5.9) Begin *Testicle Traverse*, only work up right from the roof onto a steep slab. Edge to a bolt and climb incipient

cracks (5.9) to the right side of a small overhang. Traverse up left above the roof to the *Dirty Love* dihedral and finish up it.

**10. Roofus Dickus** (5.11c) Begin just left of a large right-facing dihedral on the left side of the middle slab. Climb a shallow corner up right to an obvious finger crack over a roof. Strenuous jams lead over the roof (5.11c) to a headwall. Continue straight up (5.8) past a diagonal crack to an easier unprotected slab.

**11. Cornercopia** (5.7) A fun moderate route up the right-facing dihedral. Belay and rappel with two ropes from anchors atop the corner.

**12. Slab Happy** (5.7) Superb edge climbing on the leftmost bolted route on the slabs. Smear and edge up right on perfect granite to a final tricky traverse (medium Tri-cam useful) that arcs up and right. 70 feet. 5 bolts to 2-bolt anchor. **Descent:** Lower or rappel.

**13. Slip** (5.6 R) Follow a thin ramp and seam arching right to anchors on a ledge below the huge roof. Protection is scant.

**14. Climb on My Face** (5.10a) Great long pitch. Thin edging (5.10a) leads to bolt 1. Continue up left on fun face moves past two more bolts to *Slab Happy's* anchors. Rap here or continue straight up past two more bolts (5.10a) and angle right to a leaning headwall. Jam a crack (5.9) up the wall to a good belay ledge. **Descent:** Downclimb southwest along ramps.

**15. Wigs on Fire** (5.10b) Enjoyable but runout. Begin right of *Slab Happy* directly below the big roof. Boulder moves lead to the first bolt. Angle up right with hard climbing to a final 30-foot runout. 70 feet. 3 bolts to 2-bolt anchor. **Rack:** Thin gear.

**16. Wildstreak** (5.10d R) Thin face climbing (5.10d) to a bolt right of a pronounced

black streak. Head up runout rock (5.6) with groundfall potential. End at a 2-bolt anchor on a ledge. **Descent:** Rappel 70 feet.

**17. Beer for Breakfast** (5.8 R) Climb an unprotected groove to a narrow, pointed roof. Step over the roof and end at anchors. You can do a bottom pitch (5.9) starting at the bottom right side of the lower tier right of *Jazzman*. Follow a right-facing corner to the slab right of *Jazzman*.

**18. Grey Rat Rocksicle** (5.8 R) Begin on the upper right side of the ramp. Work up left (5.8) into a flared crack, exit right, and climb devious corners and discontinuous cracks to the right side of the huge roof. End on a ledge above the roof. **Descent:** Scramble southwest down ramps. **Rack:** Small pro.

**19. Sugar Mountain** (5.5 R) A great beginner route. Begin at the top of the lower ramp. **Pitch 1:** Climb grooves, cracks, and slabs right of a water streak (not a lot of pro). Belay on a ledge at a horizontal break. **Pitch 2:** Tackle a left-facing corner to a roof, traverse right around the roof, and follow cracks up left to a good ledge. **Descent:** Downclimb southwest.

## Southeast Face

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This 500-foot-high slabby wall offers excellent multi-pitch lines. A good problem for off-width masters is on a boulder between the South Slabs and the Southeast Face. Craig Luebben's *Go Spuds Go* (5.12a) is a 15-foot problem that jams an overhanging roof crack.

**Finding the cliff:** Approach the face by hiking up the Greyrock Trail past the South Slabs until you're directly below the Southeast Face. Scramble through the trees to the cliff base.



## Southeast Face



**Descent:** Downclimb north from the top of the routes to the summit trail, which leads back to the cliff base. Some routes have rappel anchors. Bring two ropes to rappel.

**20. Toolin' Woody** (5.10a) The route ascends a steep buttness that ends below some large ledges on the left side of the face. Climb thin cracks and slabs to anchors on a ledge by a small tree. 100 feet.

**21. The Woody Tool** (5.10a) Follow a left-angling seam up a steep slab to anchors.

**Descent:** Rappel 150 feet with double ropes. **Rack:** Thin pro for incipient cracks.

**22. Prints of Darkness** (5.8) Pull over the left side of a narrow roof and climb a black streak past two bolts to a good belay ledge.

**Descent:** Traverse down right to *The Woody Tool's* anchors and rappel with double ropes. **Rack:** Standard rack with extra small gear.

**23. Pretty Face** (5.8) A pretty face climb with three bolts. **Descent:** Rap 150 feet from anchors.

**24. Theodore** (5.6) A fun moderate climb that is ideal for learning to lead trad pitches. Look for lots of good gear placements and belay anchors. Start below a crack right of a short right-leaning, right-facing corner. The crack is the middle of three distinct cracks (*Alvin* [5.6] is the left crack and is a good alternate start). **Pitch 1:** Jam a good hand and fist crack (5.6) to a belay ledge. **Pitch 2:** Diagonal left up a lower-angle crack to a stance under a large jutting roof. **Pitch 3:** Jam easy cracks left of the roof to good ledges. **Pitch 4:** Fun, well-protected climbing up a slab. **Pitch 5:** Scramble up left to the summit via easy cracks and corners. The last two pitches can be combined with a long rope. **Rack:** Sets of Stoppers and cams to #3.5 Camalot.

**25. Simon** (5.8+) A companion route to *Theodore* and the hardest of the three “Chipmunk” routes. Start just right of *Theodore* below an arching crack. **Pitch 1:** Jam the hand crack (5.7) to a good belay ledge. 70 feet. **Pitch 2:** Scale an easy, grassy crack (5.4) to a stance at a horizontal dike under and right of a big roof. 125 feet. **Pitch 3:** Crux lead. Climb a steep, angling hand and fist crack right of the roof. Follow the crack until it ends or, at a shelf, traverse right a few feet and climb a good lightning-bolt crack and rejoin the angling crack. Do the steep crux (5.8+) and pull overhangs to a large ledge shared with *Theodore*. 100 feet. **Pitch 4:** Work up right along an easy crack to a ledge with bushes. 100 feet. **Pitch 5:** Angle up right on mostly fourth-class rock with an occasional technical move to the summit. **Rack:** Standard rack up to #3 Camelot. A #4 Camelot is sometimes used but not necessary.

**26. Mr. Gone** (5.10a R) Begin below the center of the wall beneath a prominent prow. **Pitch 1:** Follow thin face moves (5.10a) past three bolts to a superb finger crack up a steep slab. Belay from anchors at an angling break. 150 feet. **Pitch 2:** Short lead up a moderate, unprotected slab to a stance under the prow. **Pitch 3:** Edge straight up the prow (5.10a) to a bolt. Go right to easier cracks or continue straight up (5.10a R) to a bolted stance left of a stepped roof band. **Pitch 4:** Stem up an easy, large, left-facing dihedral to the summit. 200 feet. **Descent:** It’s possible to rappel from the top of pitch 3 and avoid the easier upper section. Make two double-rope rappels from bolt anchors. **Rappel 1:** 100 feet to the pitch 1 anchors. **Rappel 2:** 150 feet to the ground. **Rack:** Set of Stoppers and cams to 3 inches.

**27. The Greatest Route at Greyrock** (5.8) Excellent and recommended with good

pro and fun cracks up the right side of the Southeast Face. Use slings to avoid rope drag on the long upper pitches. Communication is also a problem. To find the start, hike the summit trail until you reach some aspens near the face. Go left along the cliff base to a crack that heads up right and is just right of a short left-facing corner topped by a small roof. **Pitch 1:** Do the route crux up a tricky crack (5.8) to a crack in a slab or climb the left-facing corner and pull the roof’s right side after 12 feet. Above, climb incipient cracks up clean rock (5.7ish) to a traverse left to a belay ledge. 85 feet. **Pitch 2:** Step back right and work up a long, narrow left-facing corner to an obvious roof overlap. Pull over on jugs (5.8) and belay above on a small ledge. **Pitch 3:** Climb a crack left of the belay (5.6) to an easy, prominent, left-facing dihedral. Belay on a ledge on the right. 165 feet. **Pitch 4:** Stem and jam up an easy dihedral (5.5) and finish up fourth-class rock to the summit. 160 feet. **Descent:** Walk off by hiking northeast past cairns to the summit trail, which leads back to the base. **Rack:** Standard rack with Stoppers and cams to #3 Camelot. Tri-cams work well in horizontal cracks.

**28. Barfy’s Favorite** (5.7) 4 pitches. Another good line. Begin right of *The Greatest Route at Greyrock* atop a boulder just right of a large left-facing dihedral. **Pitch 1:** Face climb a bulge to a good hand crack (5.7). Belay at a tree. **Pitch 2:** Step left and jam a crack to another tree. Climb a good corner above to a belay stance at a horizontal dike. **Pitch 3:** Follow cracks and corners to a stance left of a small roof. **Pitch 4:** Ascend to a short right-facing corner at the left end of a long roof. Pull left above the corner and roof and run up the slab above. **Descent:** Walk off. **Rack:** Selection of nuts and cams.





Climbing high on Spearhead in Rocky Mountain National Park. BOB D'ANTONIO

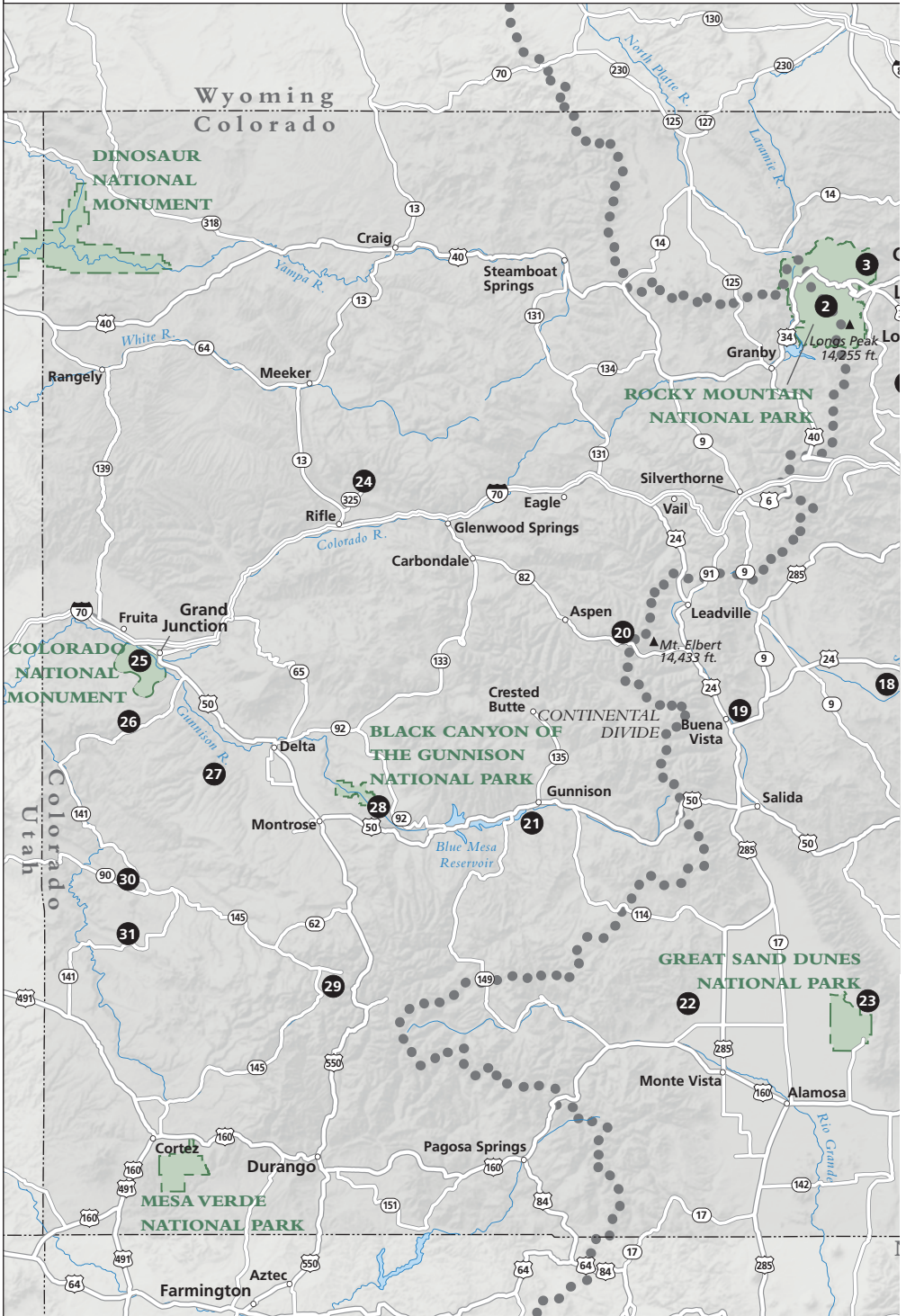
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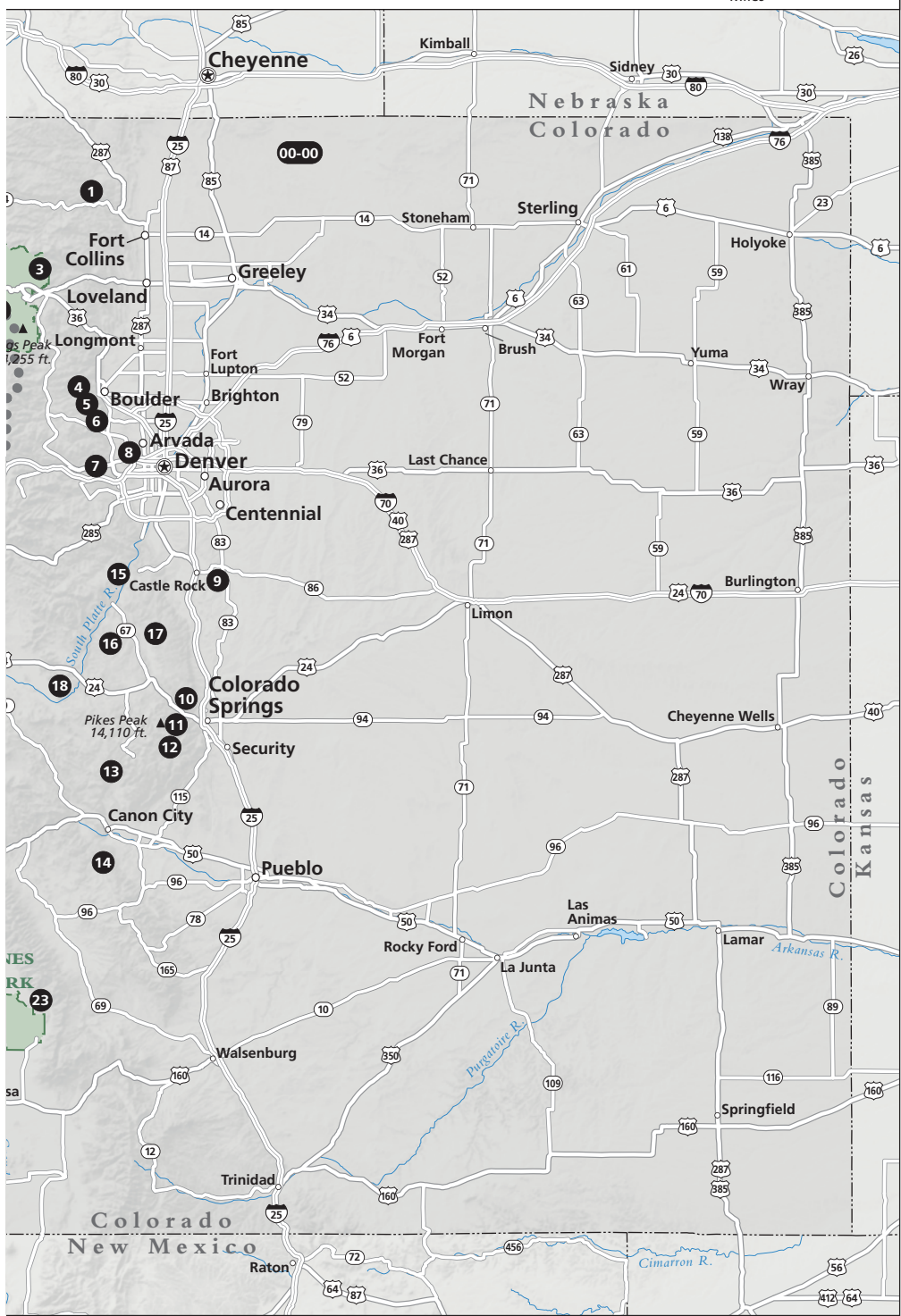
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# Colorado Overview







# Legend



Trail



Interstate



Paved Road



Paved Road



Gravel Road



Unimproved Road



State Line, Forest,  
Park, or Wilderness  
Boundary



Waterway



Lake/Reservoir



Building



Camping



Gate



Mile Marker



Town



City



Climbing Area



Crag/Boulder



Cliff Edge



Mountain Peak



Trailhead



Parking



Interstate



U.S. Highway



State Highway

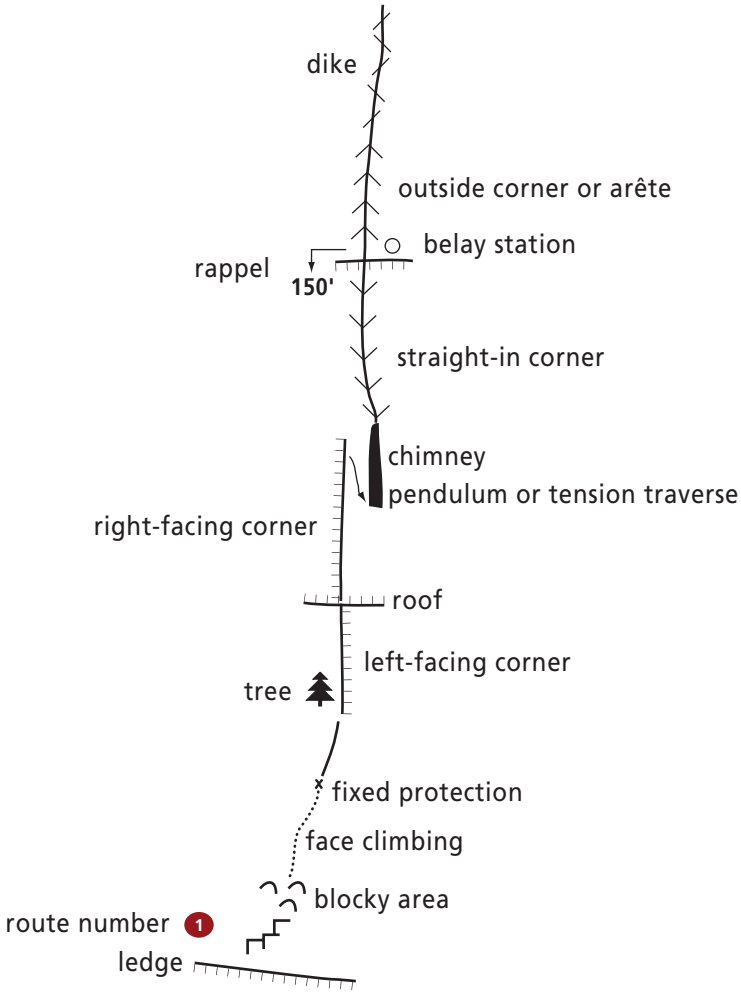


County Road



Forest Road

# Key to Topo Drawings



*Dedicated to the memories of Earl Wiggins, Billy Westbay, Charlie Fowler,  
Ryan Sayers, and Craig Luebben. All great Colorado climbers. All missed.  
It's a 5.11 mantle into heaven, brothers.*

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