

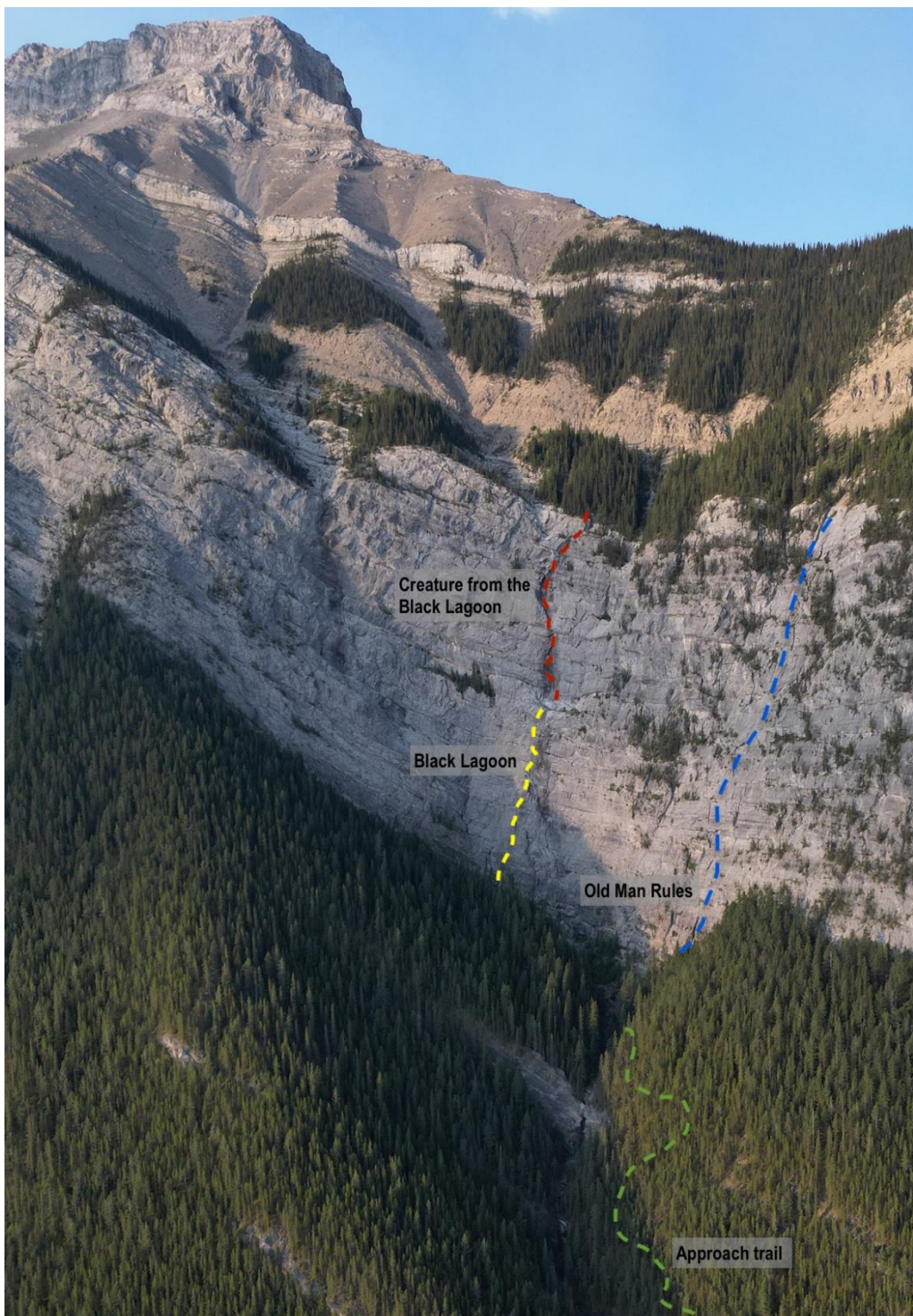
## “Black Lagoon” & “Creature from the Black Lagoon”

On the north bowl of Mt McGillvary, as seen from Hw1. This route is about 300m up the creek bed/ drainage in the McGillvary bowl past the existing route, "Old Man's Rules". The upper section of the route can be seen from the highway and is prone to seep after rainfall. On the contrary, the lower half of the lower route cannot be seen from the highway but stays dry. The lower and upper sections of the route have two drastically different characters and will be described as two independent routes. A large bowl/ balcony divides the route in half and provides amazing views of the pristine Lac Des Arcs and the Exshaw cement plant.

The lower half of the route, ‘Black Lagoon’, weaves up stacked pinnacles reaching the aforementioned balcony ledge. On its own, this would provide a good option for those looking for a multipitch breaking into the 5.10 range. Other than the initial pitch, the route has very short, but well protected cruxes, and most of the climbing is in the 5.08 range and broken up by intermittent ledges.

Some of the belay’s bolts are placed awkwardly high, this is to help reduce the amount of friction while pulling the rope over bulges while descending/ rappelling the route. Not using a PA anchor system and hitching the climbing rope to the belay via a locker is recommended.

If the intention is to climb ‘Creature from The Black Lagoon’ the lower pitches are likely looked at as more of a mode of transportation to get to the midway ledge and continue upward. These pitches are much more sustained at the given grades and offer more exposed, technical climbing.







## Approach

The easiest way to approach is to park in a small gravel pullout opposite the Lac Des Arc Lake, on the south side of the highway (51.047350, -115.177781). This is accessed from Hw1 heading eastbound from Canmore. Once parked here, walk into the gravel staging area and up a short embankment up to the obvious cut line (Heart Creek Bunker Trail).

Alternatively, park at the Heart Creek Trailhead parking lot. From here head west on a good trail (Heart Creek Bunker Trail) to pass the forementioned gravel staging area towards the highway.

Continue along this cutline past the gravel pit for 300m to find a faint trail on the left (south) that heads uphill towards McGillvary through the forest. The steep but mossy trail weaves uphill with a drainage appearing on the left. After about 25 minutes the trail will angle downhill depositing you into a large drainage

gully/ dry creek bed. Follow this creek bed for 300m until it comes to an end at a large gavel berm.

If walking from Heart Creek parking lot allow for about 45mins to 1hr. If walking from the gravel pullout, allow 30-45 mins.

## Gear

A 70m rope is essential – tie knots as some of the rappels are rope stretchers.

14 draws total with 2-4 alpine draws is recommended to cut down on rope drag for the longer pitches.

As some of the belay stations are positioned high up, bumping your anchor system down during the rappel will be handy.

**P1; 5:10a, 25m 8 bolts**

The most sustained pitch of the route. Leave the ground into a right trending groove with bad hands but good feet to stem. Pull up over a mid-pitch bulge via a good layback crack before taking on two smaller overlaps. Face climb up the final section using good side pulls and smeary feet to finish on a large, comfortable belay mound.

**P2; 5.09 35m 12 bolts**

Leave the belay stepping onto the face and down left on good in-cut holds to gain the initial wall. Reach a good ledge and overcome a bulge with a good, but not obvious pinch before continuing up easier terrain. Weave into a vertical groove with good stemming and then up the top of the obvious pinnacle as seen from the belay. Step down into a groove to belay.

**P3; 5.10a 35m 13 bolts**

Leave the trench-like belay feature up and left and aim up to a break in the wall above before reaching easier ground. Continue onwards past ledges to reach an in-your-face, but well protected crux move blocking the way up another pinnacle feature.

**P4; 5.10a 35m 7 + 7 bolts (optional midway station)**

Start out on texture-less water worn rock just right of the gully. Good face climbing on solid rock leads up to an obvious roof. Traverse left under the roof onto daunting, but solid blocks to pull up over a roof. If rope drag becomes an issue, stop at this mid pitch belay station, or continue up a short vertical wall then into a groove to pull up over another slab ledge to reach the belay.

**P5; 5.10a 25m 6 bolts**

Leave the belay on meandering easy terrain into solid and highly textured rock. A short stemming sequence through 2 bolts blocks the way onto more water worn slab. Climb up easier but slabby terrain through a shallow dihedral that leads way to the massive balcony in the upper bowl. Obvious belay on a rock slab at the back of the balcony.

**Creature from The Black Lagoon (extension)**

165m / 5.11a / Sport

The first 3 pitches of the extension are short and utilize good belay stances, the best being the ledge at the top of P6, and top of P8. Link any of these three pitches in any configuration if desired or climb as one mega pitch.

**P6; 5.10d 20m 7 bolts**

From the giant ledge, locate the bolts that start up a vertical groove. Step onto the rock and employ chimney like moves climbing to pull over an overlap to gain easier terrain. Unique polished rock with heuco like jug features leads into a short blank slab onto a horizontal ledge. Step out left on a foot ledge clipping a high bolt with a alpine draw.

**P7; 5.10d 20m 7 bolts**

Leave the belay stepping back out right, and again clipping the high bolt off the ledge with an alpine draw and continue up another overlap on solid black rock into the obvious corner. Face climb on good holds working towards the corner. Layback, stem, and jug haul up the belay ledge.

**P8; 5.10d 20m 7 bolts**

Leave the ledge continuing up the corner using a solid dagger feature. Clipping two close bolts protecting the belay on smeary feet- more awkward than difficult. Finish up the corner as it ends, following bolts left up and to

a roof. Clip the bolt at the roof and make an airy step out left gaining the ledge above. Belay on a small perch at a disheveled pine tree just over the roof.

**P9; 5.08 35m 8 bolts (mostly 5.6)**

A wandering pitch through a water worn groove heads up to the obvious belay on black rock. Most of the pitch rambles up easy terrain but the final wall under the belay provides a few moves real climbing.

**P10; 5.11a 25m 10 bolts**

More face climbing on amazing black, highly textured rock that leads up a short roof overcome on jugs. Follow the corner crack into a shallow flared open groove- harder than it looks. Step up through the top of the groove and pull into a nice belay ledge.

**P11; 5.10b 25m 9 bolts**

Leave the belay stepping into another large right facing corner that presents difficulties as slabby more than steep. Small crimps and tiny feet lead the way on solid rock as you traverse rightward to a belay above a tree.

**P12; 5.11a 20m 6 bolts**

Leave the belay climbing onto a short vertical wall and then stepping out left to the arete at the first bolt. Clip a second bolt immediately over the lip of the roof and continue up above the belay. A short difficult section on thin holds guards the way to easier ground leading into the forest. Once off the slab and in the forest continue across a mossy and dirty corner/ depression to belay on a high rock slab tucked away.

**Rappelling Sequence**

The route can be rappelled from any station, including the midway station on P4. If climbing the extension, 'Creature from the Black Lagoon' after pitch 11 two dedicated rappel stations must be used due to the traverse.

Rap 1: Rap from the forest to the previous belay at the base of the short wall (don't run rope through maillon & rap ring)

Rap 2: Aim right of a cluster of trees to a dedicated rap station. 35m rap – TIE KNOTS!

Rap 3: Rap directly straight down to a second dedicated rap station.

Rap 4: Rap to the station in the middle of the corner above the large ledge.

Rap 5: All the way down to the huge ledge and walk to the next rap.

Rap 6: Leave the large ledge descending to the anchor just below.

Rap 7: Long rap passing the optional midway anchor.

Rap 8: Setup rap on skiers right (east side) of the dihedral corner.

Rap 9: Step awkwardly up and then over the mound

Rap 10: Straight forward rap to the ground.

\*Because of the awkward height of the anchors, its beneficial to bump a 120cm anchor sling down to each station during the rappel sequence. This should help ensure the stances are not awkwardly hanging.