



ALGOMA

Deep Water Solo GUIDE

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Know Before You Go!

Safety first. Never climb alone and always check the water for hazards before deep water solo climbing. Most inland lakes throughout Algoma have high tannin levels making for dark tea-like water that can have poor visibility past a few feet.

Disclaimer

1

Check the weather and wave forecast. For more weather information and the wave forecast check the NOAA Great Lakes Coastal Forecasting System.

2

Be known.
Make sure someone knows when and where you will be climbing.

3

Be prepared.
Bring a first aid kit, communication device, and adequate flotation devices.

Climbing is inherently dangerous, especially over water. Wear a helmet, be prepared for the day, and practice water rescue techniques. It is important to recognize on any body of water that planning for the weather is a must; especially on Lake Superior where conditions can change very quickly. Always plan ahead for a trip on the lake. Tell someone where you are going and take a form of communication with you. This guide is for informative purposes only and does not give the reader the right to trespass. ACC Sault Ste. Marie accepts no liability and this guide is not sanctioned by the Alpine Club of Canada.

How to Use This Guide



Fun Factor! One star is worth trying. Two stars are the best climbs at the the crag. Three stars is the best climb for that grade in Algoma, a must do!



An overhung climb with deep water



A vertical climb, with deep water, some falling technique required



A vertical or slabby climb that you do not want to fall on due to risks of an unsafe landing



Morning Sun



Sun all day



Afternoon sun



Total travel time (drive+paddle) to the crag from Sault Ste. Marie

Where to Climb?

The lake-side cliffs throughout Algoma have endless possibilities. It is no surprise that with so much available rock and water comes great deep water solo climbing.



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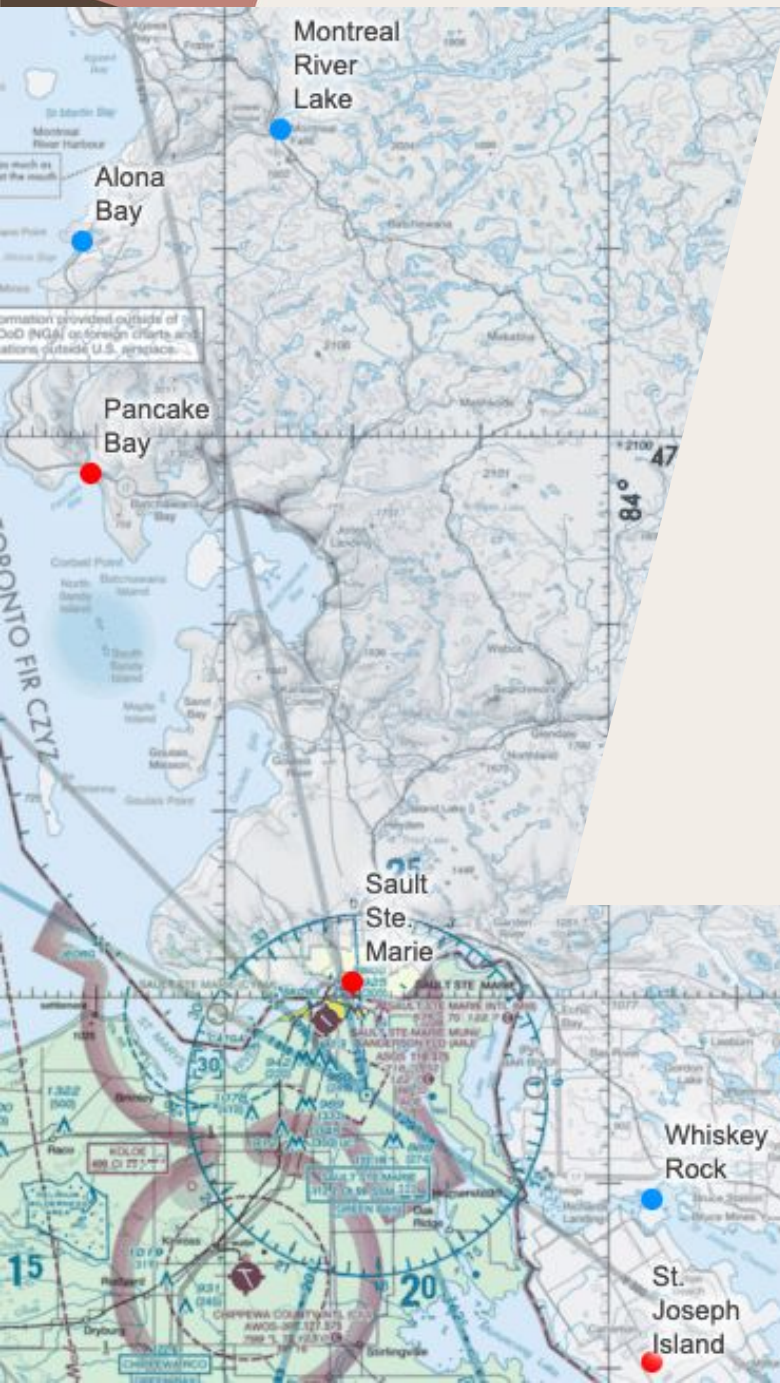
Getting There

Driving NORTH from
Sault Ste. Marie:

- Alona Bay is a 1 hour 15 minute drive + 20 minute paddle
- Montreal River Lake is a 1 hour 40 minute drive + 30 minute paddle

Driving EAST from
Sault Ste. Marie:

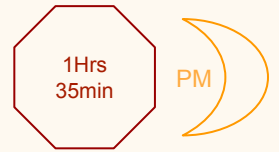
- Whiskey Rock is a 45 minute drive + 20 minute paddle
- Rock lake is a 50 minute drive + 30 minute paddle
- Granary Lake is a 1 hour 50 minute drive + 20 minute paddle



Climb North of Sault Ste. Marie



Alona Bay



Location: 47.179136, -84.711137

Access:

Drive north on Hwy. 17 past Sault Ste. Marie. Take the first left turn after the Alona Bay highway lookout for the beach access trail. Take your boat down the beach access trail (this is more of a step goat path) to the stone beach. Paddle along the large cliff north of the beach for approximately 2 km. You will pass a stone beach (with land routes to climb) and then shortly after see a large cave with the DWS routes. On a map this cave with the DWS routes is near the point of Alona Bay.

Rock Details:

Magical rock with geodes sprinkled throughout the cliff.

Overview:

This is a five star cliff, with features unlike anything you will see (like crystal pocket holds). These routes are approximately 30 feet tall and have extra deep clear water. The climbs here are all also very relaxed to give you confidence on your ascent. Wetsuit is recommended unless it is a very hot August.



Topping out on Blood Diamond

Alona Bay

Routes:

1. Healing Crystals 5.7 ☆☆☆😊

Using the steller hand and foot holds to start, about 1/3rd of the way in from the corner, make your way up zig-zagging to and from the corner edge following the obvious bomber holds. Approx. 30 feet high.

2. Geode 5.8 ☆☆☆😊

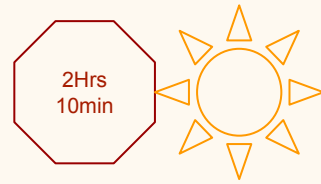
Start a few feet to the climbers left of Healing Crystals below some very visible pockets and cracks. Make your way mostly straight up to the top from this point. Make sure to check out the geodes in the holds on your way. Approx. 30 feet high.

3. Blood Diamond 5.9 ☆☆☆❤️

Start climbers left of the cave and make your way up to a little ledge. You could easily do a dry start for this route by skipping the first moves to the ledge. Once at the ledge begin the traverse over the cliff right for five feet to the obvious solid finishing reach. Be cautious of a few sharp crystals on this route. Approx. 20 feet high.



Montreal River Lake - Atlantis Wall



Location: 47.29434042691881, -84.40668548050371

Access:

Drive north on Hwy. 17 past Sault Ste. Marie. Take the first right before the Montreal River bridge. Drive up the gravel road past the Montreal River Lake dam where there is a public boat launch. From here take your boat up the lake (north-east) towards the giant granite cliffs. Across from the cliff you will see a beautiful sand beach that is perfect for taking breaks. There is undoubtedly more climbs here, however, the current routes are along the most obviously deep areas and topout when the cliff starts to change from vertical to slab.

Rock Details:

Giant gritty cliffs! The water depth can vary from the dam and make the climbs have different starting points or in some cases almost completely disappear.

Overview:

The size of this cliff makes deep water soloing the bottom 30 feet almost feel silly. In an ideal world, these deep water solos would be the cherry on top after an adventurous trad climb. In terms of rock climbing routes, there is lots of potential at this giant cliff.



↑
Atlantis
Wall

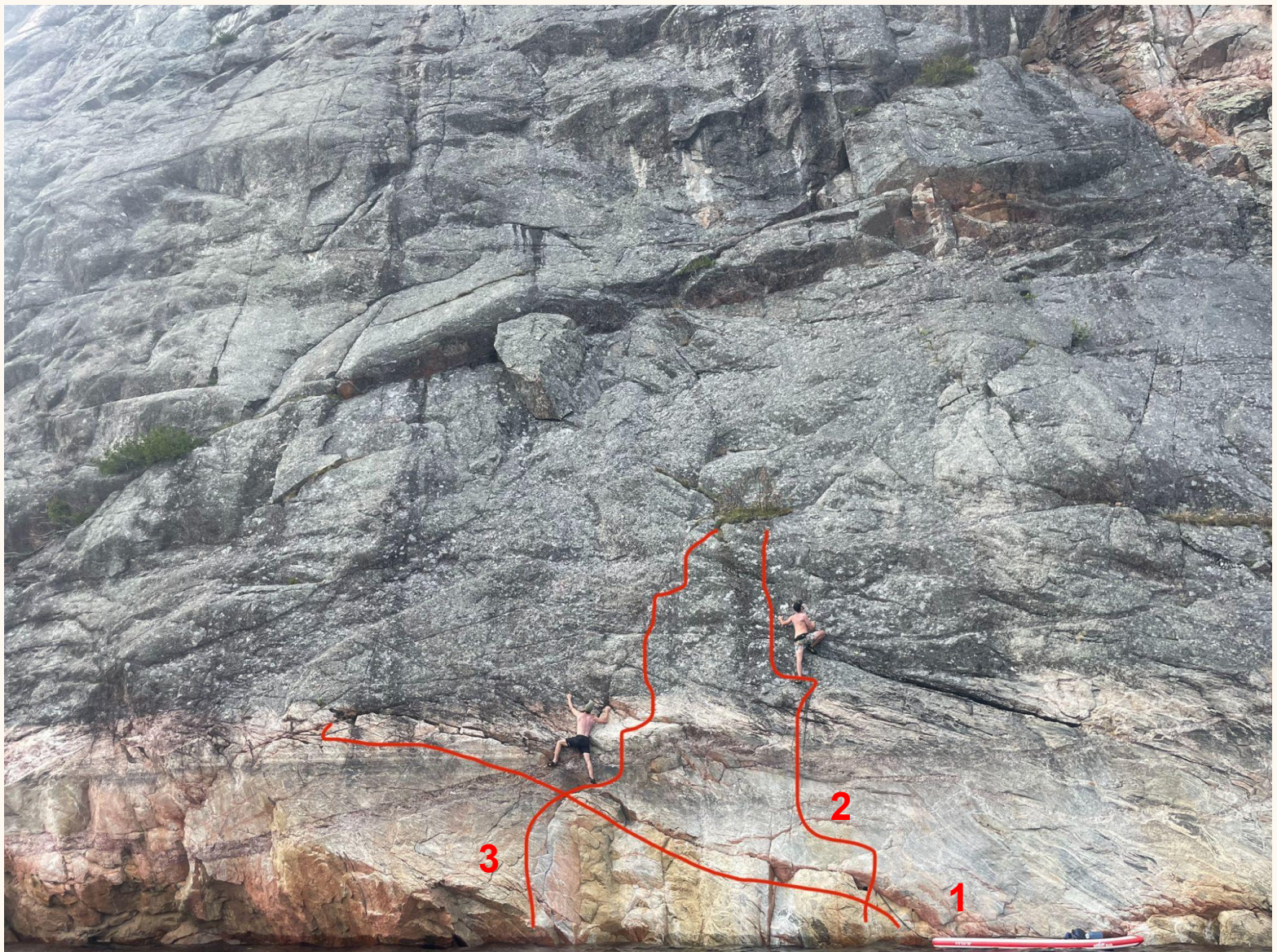
Montreal River Lake - Atlantis Wall (low water level)

Routes:

- 1.. Super Traverse 5.8 ☆☆☆😊
A very fun 40(ish) feet long traverse working your way left using a great big fun crack. A great climb for cooling down after a day of adventures.
2. Tea Time 5.9+ ☆☆☆😊
From the same starting point as "Super Traverse", work your way up 35 feet to a small ledge with a bush. If you were to climb this when the water level was higher then only the top 15 feet of grey rock may be visible.
3. Crack Ladder 5.9- ☆☆☆😊
Work your way up a fun flake and slowly meandering crack towards the small bushed ledge for a finishing jump platform!
4. Block Party 5.9- ☆☆☆😊
Located to the far climber's-left of the giant slabby flake is a large boulder in the water. Find your way past a few awkward moves to the top - approximately 15 feet.



Paddle across the lake from the beach to find the routes 30 feet to the right of a giant slabby flake.



Climb East of Sault Ste. Marie



Rock Lake



Location: 46.442886, -83.798554

Access:

Park at the Rock Lake beach located on Old Mill Beach Road (46.448794, -83.762005) and paddle west across the lake approximately 3km.

Rock Details:

We're not rockologists but believe this cliff is made mostly of quartzite rock.

Overview:

A tricky but very fun cliff. Easy access to the top via a rope as it is a known cliff jumping location. The lake has very high tannin levels which makes the water clear but very dark. This is also the warmest lake to DWS, no wetsuit needed after June.



Wet start for the climb "White Whale"

Rock Lake

Routes

1. The Warm-up. 5.7 ☺

Located to the climber's left of the cliff jumping rope. Start up a slightly rounded corner to a small ledge approximately 10 feet high.

2. Working the Corner 5.9 ☆ ☺

As the name suggests, work your way up the corner to the top out approximately 20 feet up.

3. The White Whale 5.9+ ☆☆☆ ☺

Start at the crack running up to a small shelf and move from left to right. 20 foot top out.

4. High Heels 5.9- ☆ ☺

Located further down the cliff below a pine tree, it is the most obviously doable line. Start with a high heel to pull yourself out of the water, veer slightly left to a left heel hook on the "ramp" and then continue upwards. Approximately 20 feet up

5. Stiletos 5.10 ☆ ☺

Rather than bearing left to follow the easier route of *High Heels*, go straight up from the same starting point to complete a tricky crux move.

6. Deez Nuts 5.11 ☆ ☺

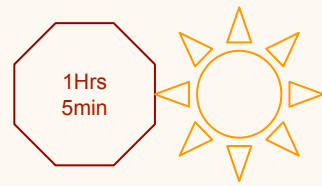
The most difficult and tallest route on the cliff. You will find the crux of this climb a third of the way up but will still need to maintain your cool to make the top out at approximately 30 feet.

7. Master of Pull-ups 5.9 ☆☆☆ ☺

After a small break in the cliff where there are some shallow boulders is a corner with two big pull-up jugs and minimal feet. Once you pull yourself up and out of the water, traverse right along the crack and then back left and up until you reach the bush overtop of where the route started (the traverse back left is fairly lichen covered). approximately 15 feet high.



Whiskey Rock



Location: 46.317187,-83.959200

Access:

At the end of Camp Dours Rd. on St. Joseph Island is a boat launch. From there paddle with the land to your left until you enter the channel between Picture Island and St. Joseph, at this point cross the small channel and continue until you see the small jumping rock located on the front face of Whiskey Rock. If you have a motor boat, leaving from Kensington Point Marina may be fastest.

Rock Details:

Dark black rock with sharp cracks and corners.

Overview:

This cliff is good for people new to DWS. It is a well known cliff jumping location, and seeing the locals jump adds confidence to the water depth for new climbers. Not to mention the beautiful scenery around this little island. It is a small cliff maxing out at a height of about 15 feet. Taping up your hands is recommended here as some cracks have very sharp edges. A wet suit is not typically needed here after June.



Nearing the top of "The Main Attraction"

Whiskey Rock

Routes

1. Baby Steps 5.7

This route is not recommended for a novice, it has a slight lean to it making for an unsafe fall. The route can be started under a small roof and then traversed over to the gentle slab or can be started directly below the slab. Holds are fairly obvious on this route but use caution; a good jump is needed before falling in the water to clear the cliff safely.

2. Current Project. - Grade Unknown

There is an obvious thin crack to work up this route with minimal feet, unfortunately at this time the face is very moss and lichen covered making it a slippery face. Once cleaned this route is undoubtedly doable.

3. The Main Attraction 5.8

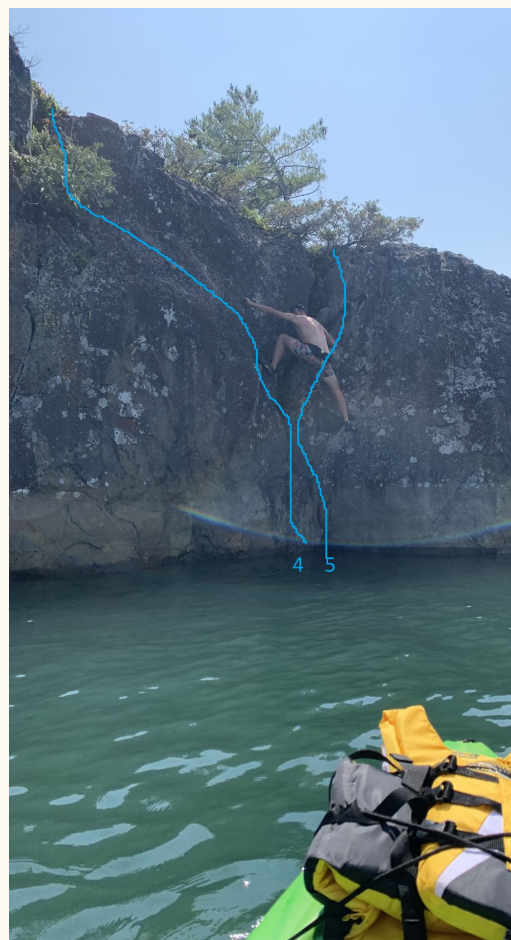
Located directly below the main cliff jumping attraction. This route starts up a slight corner and then traverses slightly left along a sharp crack. At this point the climb can continue up the crack, past a small shrub to the top or the alternative finish is to use some of the bigger holds further left of the crack to finish up the nose of the cliff.

4. Blueberry Nacho 5.8

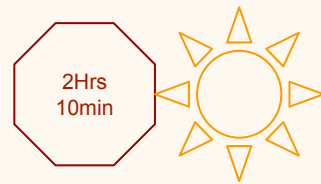
To the climber's right of the Main Attraction approximately 15 feet. Climb up a corner crack and make your way up and to the left by the blueberry bush.

5. Put your Purse Down 5.8

Continue straight up from the same start as Blueberry Nacho stemming your legs up the corners to the top. Use caution if your shoes are wet when trying this climb.



Granary Lake - DWS Wall



Location: 46.279341, -82.842314

Access:

Granary Lake has a few great cliffs, one in particular for deep water solo and another taller wall for traditional climbing. Both sit side by side on the north side of the lake about a 2km paddle from the boat launch. The trad cliff is visible from the boat launch with a Canadian flag painted on it, and the deep water solo wall is the smaller cliff you pass on the way there

Rock Details:

Extra gritty, clean, overhung and solid rock. This cliff makes for difficult but rewarding and safe climbs.

Overview:

This is not an ideal cliff for new climbers due to the difficulty of most routes, however, being a warm inland lake makes it a great place to spend the day projecting difficult routes. The climbs here go up about a third of the cliff (18-30 feet) to a large shelf that spans the length of the wall. These DWS climbs are also a very refreshing option after warming up on a trad climb at the flag rock wall.



Granary Lake - DWS Wall

Routes

1. Dyno-cologist 5.10 ☆☆☆😊

Make some big (and obvious) moves up this very dynamic route. This is one of the shorter routes at 18 feet.

2. Lover's Quarrel 5.11- ☆☆☆❤️

This 25 foot climb requires some additional technique and strength to overcome the cliffs slight overhang (and crux).

3. Cave climb ❤️

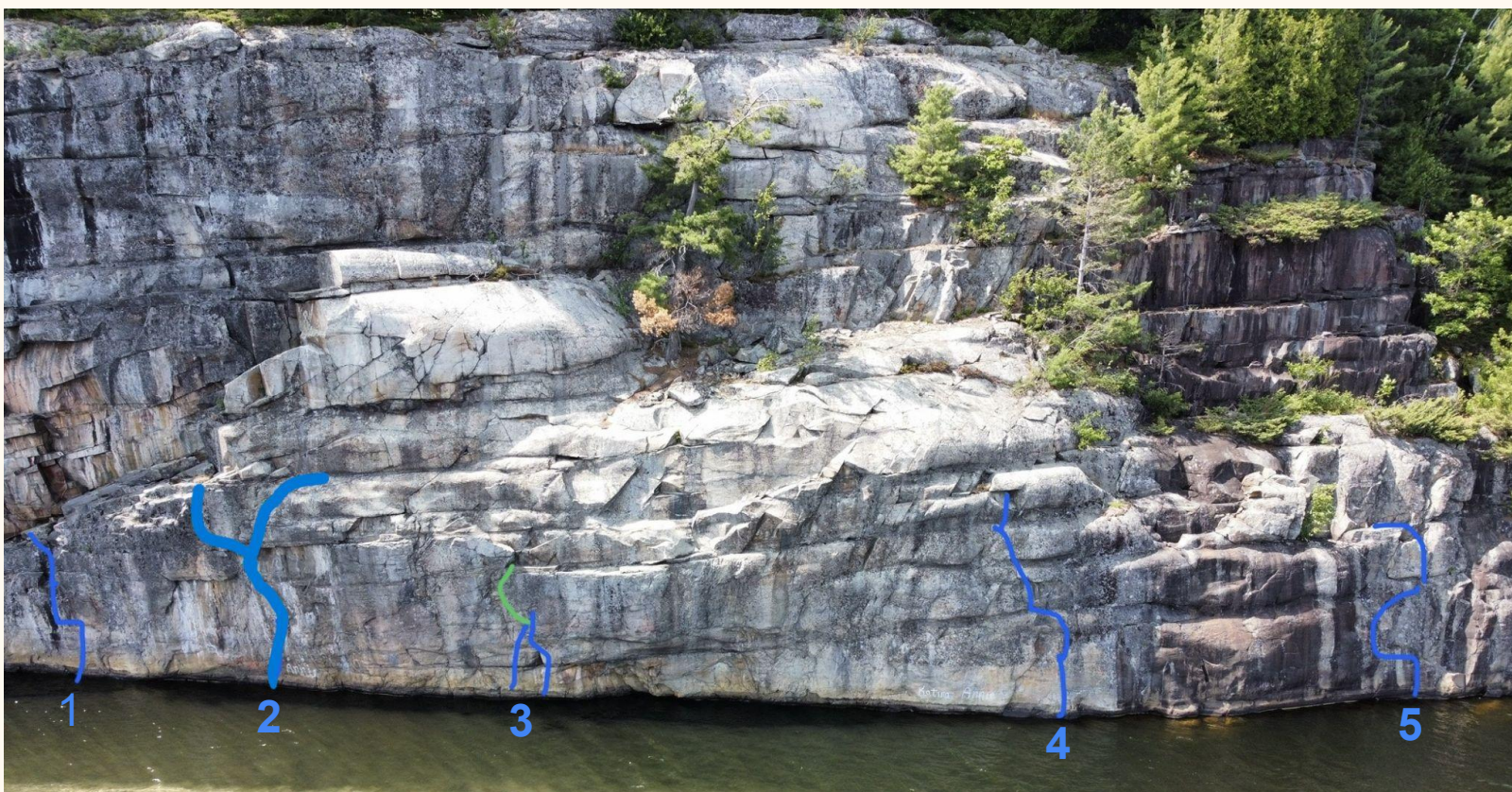
This is a pending project. Good luck

4. Pillow Talk 5.10 ☆☆☆❤️

This is the tallest route on the wall (30 feet) that works through some fun and tricky moves at the start and progressively gets easier.

5. Pillow Fight 5.8 ☆☆☆❤️

This is the warm-up climb for the wall. It has fun but manageable moves the whole way up



DWS Honorable Mentions

- Climbable, but not worth the paddle.

Picture Rock (S)

Location: 46.317092,-83.954042

Overview:

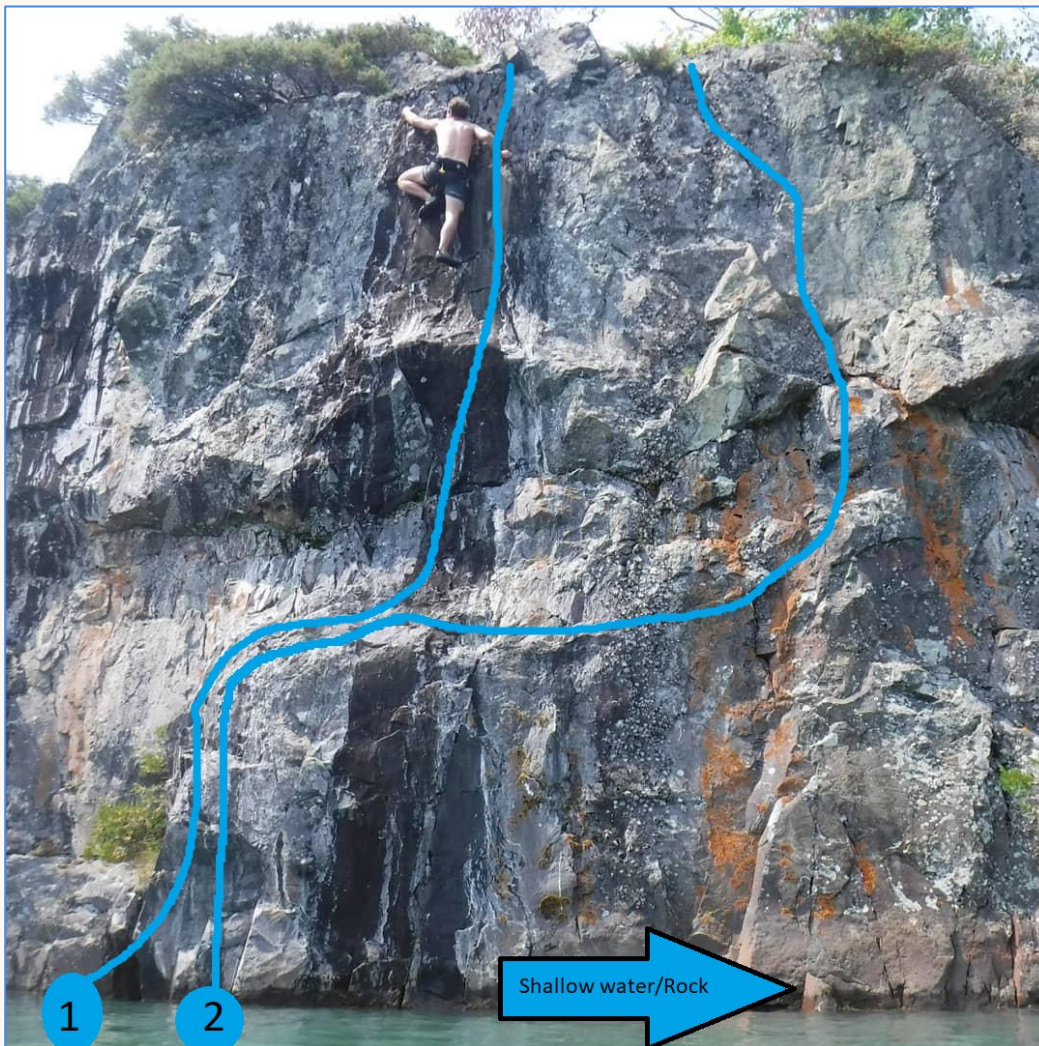
This cliff (see photo below) can be found on your way to Whiskey Rock, it is about 25 feet high, and is best left alone. Route 1 Called "A walk in the Park" is not a difficult climb per say (5.9+) but it is located uncomfortably close to some shallow water and has a small shelf to get over on the way up. This leaves little room for error if falling to land safely in the water and so it is not a recommended climb for novices. Route two is called the "Danger Zone" and rightly so. It can tempt a climber to travel over some of the shallow water for the good holds, making an easier climb, but an unsafe climb. The "Danger Zone" is not recommended.

Lake Lauzon 😊

Location: 46.206209, -82.857042

Overview:

This cliff is a long paddle or a quick motor boat ride. This lake has lots of cliffs but most of them have a slight lean to them, making them less than ideal for DWS or are on land/shallow water. There are rope rock climbing routes on this lake. The only DWS, "Raising the Roof" 5.8+ is located near the hydro lines running to the lake. It has a small roof to overcome which is fun, but there are some loose rocks. This cliff is approx. 15 feet high. With easier access and some cleaning this location could have potential but at this time it does not offer enough fun for the travel time required.



Basswood Lake (S)

Location: Along the crown land of the Southwest Shoreline.

Overview:

This is another known cliff jumping location on the lake. The rock here is very round on top and also very lyckin covered. This makes for a slippery climb and a little more risk than ideal at the top when finishing on a brief slab. There are multiple easy climbs up this cliff jumping area (all unnamed) but none are exceptional, all are dirty, and all are not the safest finish. This cliff is approx. 15-20 feet high. This cliff is not worth the travel for DWS.

COMING SOON...



Algoma Select ICE

Coming soon!
Explore the most popular places
to ice climb in Algoma



Algoma Select ROCK

Coming Soon!
Explore the most popular places
to rock climb in Algoma.



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