



## AAC Publications

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### **McGinnis Peak, northeast ridge, attempt; Peak 9,400', northwest face, Don't Wake the Snake**

Alaska, Hayes Range

In March, Chad Diesinger, Andy Ducomb, and I made our fourth trip to McGinnis Peak, the easternmost peak in the Hayes Range. A 14-mile approach brought the three of us to the east face and provided easy access to a col on the northeast ridge, our objective. Once gaining the col, we dug in for the night and continued up in the morning. After a few blocks of simul-climbing along the knife-edge ridge, Andy arrived at the belay and told me he was feeling pretty worked. I turned and looked at the long section of ridgeline remaining to the summit—almost a mile. I know we could have made it to the summit, but the descent back down the knife-edge ridge was worrisome. We headed down.

As we downclimbed under bluebird skies, I struggled with disappointment. During all of my previous trips here the weather had been horrendous. However, as we descended through the icefall, a likely unclimbed, S-shaped couloir on the northwest face of Peak 9,400' caught my eye. Chad and I decided to give it a go the next day while Andy rested in the tent. [Peak 9,400' is located approximately three miles east of McGinnis Peak, directly across the McGinnis Glacier.]

We started up the couloir around 9 a.m. The snow was a bit deep at the bottom, where the couloir pinched down, but conditions improved above. The angle was around 45°, steepening to 60° on the upper part of the face. Simul-soloing, we topped out 20m from the summit just before 1 p.m. The face had been in the shade the entire morning, and a strong wind had begun to blow about halfway up. But the summit was warm, sunny, and sheltered from the wind. It was glorious. I usually don't like to waste too much time on a summit, but we stayed for almost an hour, eating and taking in the incredible views. An hour and a half of downclimbing brought us back to our skis, and the next day we skied out to the car.

We named our route Don't Wake the Snake (3,400', 60°) due to the shape of the couloir and the problems that would arise if anything slid, and also in honor of Will Ferrell and his tight pants. Peak 9,400' had been climbed before by the north ridge, southeast ridge, and east face. But the northwest face had not been climbed.

Jason Stuckey

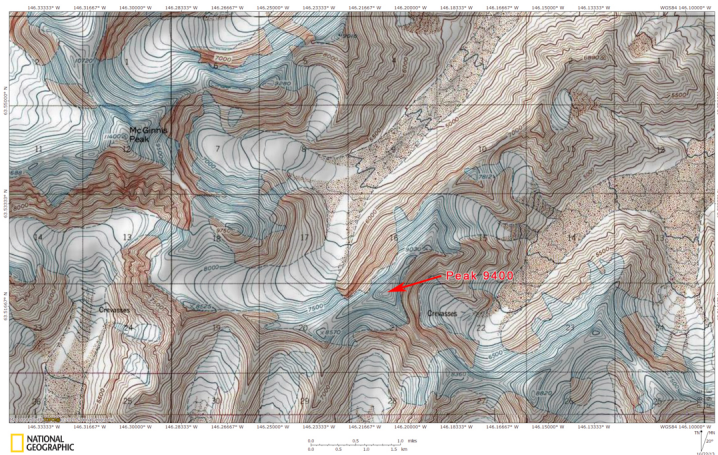
## Images



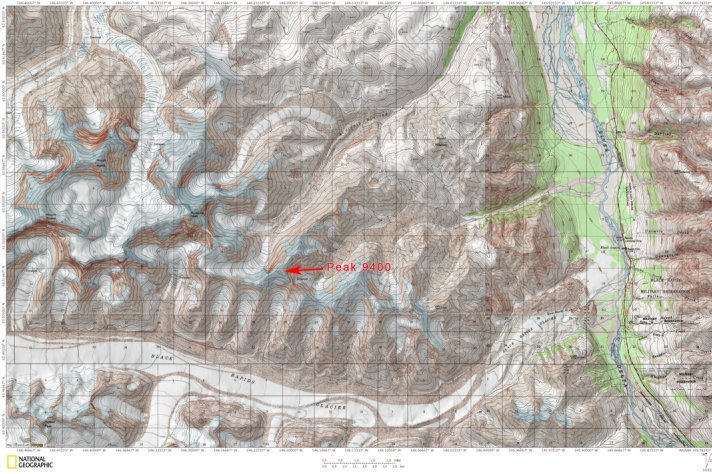
The northwest face of Peak 9,400'. Don't Wake The Snake climbs the marked couloir then angles right toward the top to gain the summit.



Descending Peak 9,400'.



A close up of the area with Peak 9,400' circled and McGinnis Peak to the west.



An overview of the area with Peak 9,400' circled and McGinnis Peak to the west.



Chad Diesinger on the summit of Peak 9,400'. McGinnis Peak is the prominent peak in the distance. The northeast ridge comprises the right skyline; the Cutthroat Couloir climbs the prominent couloir down and right of the summit before joining the northeast ridge at a notch.

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