



AAC Publications

Glacier Lake Area, Parking Lot Buttress, Eedica

Montana, Beartooth Mountains

On December 11, I left my home in Red Lodge at noon and took my snow machine to just before the Glacier Lake Trailhead in the Main Fork of Rock Creek. I was intent on scoping an ice line previously climbed by Aaron Mulkey (Splitsville (1,000', M6)), in a prominent weakness in the center of a northeast-facing buttress directly above the road [44.9981945, -109.5171827]. As I looked at the face through binoculars, I noticed what appeared to be a small drip in a left-facing corner, 300' to the right of the existing route. Having looked at this wall for years and never seen much in the way of ice, I decided to explore it. Two hours later I found myself on top, being blasted by beautiful sunlight and watching the clouds move in and out of the valley below me.

The first half of the route was steeper than it looked from below and featured a mix of dry-tooling and swinging/kicking into frozen moss, up to 90° in some sections. I then traversed left around a corner and found a 60' ribbon of ice in a chimney. This led to some very exposed mixed climbing and eventually a large ledge. Here I climbed up and right to what I hoped would be a simple exit. It proved to be very loose rock with down-sloping ledges, so I traversed again to the left and found a steep chimney that led to a small bush on top of the wall. I was not roped for any portion of the climb and I regret that. I named the route Eedica (650', AI5 M5), which is the Crow word for "far away".

I returned the following week intending to climb Mulkey's route but found the ice on both routes to be completely sublimated away, and I deemed any other weaknesses too dangerous to climb with the existing conditions.

— Justin Willis

Images

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