



AAC Publications

Green Gendarme, Northeast Face Direct

United States, California, Eastern Sierra

Less than an hour and a half from the Big Pine Creek South Fork trailhead in the John Muir Wilderness, the Green Gendarme is a prominent 800' buttress of dark green rock, sitting like a sentinel guarding the entrance to the Middle Palisade Group. Though it's easy to reach and there are several options for ascending the Green Gendarme with low technical difficulty, when Clayton Helzer, Adrian Leisure, Aaron Zanto, and I hiked in on September 22, we had been unable to find records of any technical routes on the main (northeast) face.

The northeast face is well featured, but there are very few crack systems. Our route, the Northeast Face Direct (9 pitches, 5.10), linked clean and enjoyable face climbing with steep corners and even a couple of stepped roofs.

On top of the Green Gendarme, we found a barely legible summit register with several entries. The first we could make out was from Mike Hurley and Scott McClintock, though an illegible line lists either a third member of this party or an earlier register entry; the date is also illegible, and a note next to the names says "via northeast." The only other entry we could read was from SP Parker and Urmah Franosch, a couple of Sierra backcountry legends, who had come up the back side in 2013. We're confident the line we established had not been climbed before, but the other history remains unclear.

Our route can be descended via rappel with a single 70m rope or a walk-off down a steep and loose gully to the east. The Northeast Face Direct begins literally 100' from a switchback in the trail, making it a very reasonable one-day outing from the parking lot.

— Dave Nettle

Images



The pyramidal Green Gendarme seen from the Big Pine Creek South Fork Trail. The Northeast Face Direct (9 pitches, 5.10) follows discontinuous features on the shaded left side of the face.



The Northeast Face Direct (9 pitches, 5.10) on the Green Gendarme, Eastern Sierra, California.



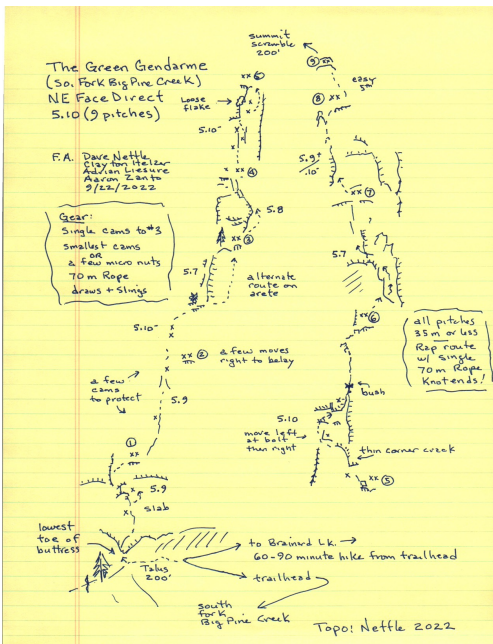
Aaron Zanto leading the 5.10 second pitch, a green slab of compact granite, on the Northeast Face Direct of the Green Gendarme, Eastern Sierra, California.



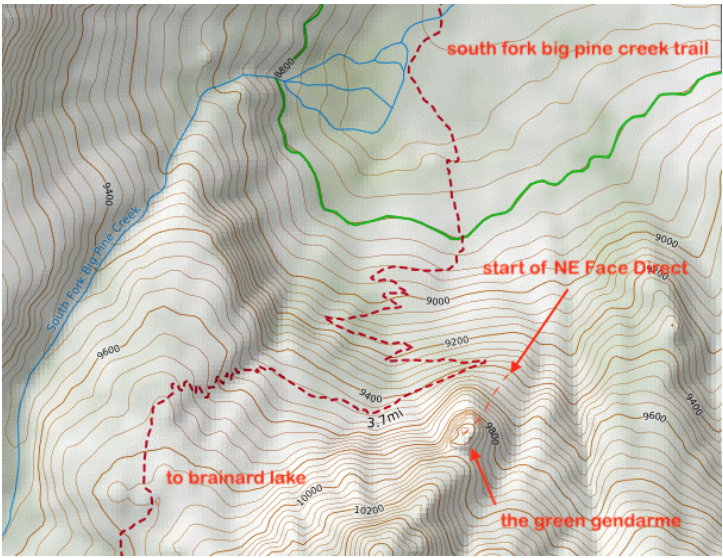
(Left to right) Adrian Leisure, Aaron Zanto, and Dave Nettle on the summit pinnacle of the Green Gendarme.



The summit register, as of September 2022, on the Green Gendarme.



Topo for the Northeast Face Direct on the Green Gendarme, Eastern Sierra, California.



Map showing the approach to the northeast face of the Green Gendarme, Eastern Sierra, California.

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