

Slappin' The Salmon

**An Ice Climbers Guide to
Salmon River Falls**

Revision 18



Jim Lawyer



Above: Will Mayo finds a unique rest on the first ascent of **King Salmon** (WI6 M7+) in the Amphitheater.

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Front Cover: Mike Cross on the first ascent of **Slappin' The Salmon** (WI4+) on the main waterfall. This was the second route led in the Gorge, and stood as the most difficult route for many years.

Back Cover: Will Mayo on the second ascent of **A Pitch Called Wanda** (WI6 M7) in the Amphitheater. (Photo Copyright © 2005 David Le Pagne)

INTRODUCTION

Salmon River Falls Unique Area is section of river that flows over a waterfall and through a deep gorge below the Salmon River Reservoir. Once the main stem of the Salmon River, this section of the river is controlled by a dam and is used as a bypass reach in times of high water. As part of the FERC license, Reliant Energy maintains a constant water flow of approximately 15cfs in the summer and 7cfs in the winter. The Main Waterfall is the main attraction here; being about 300' wide and 120' high, it freezes up into a gigantic mass of yellow ice.

Unfortunately for ice climbers, the main waterfall and walls immediately surrounding the main waterfall are off-limits. The good news is that there are numerous stream and ground-water fed flows that breach the steep gorge walls downstream of the main waterfall.

There are 38 established ice routes and variations at Salmon River Falls with the majority of the quality lines at the higher end of the difficulty scale:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Number of Routes</u>
WI3	11
WI4	9
WI5	16
WI6	2

Below: Jim Lawyer climbs **The Jeffersons** (WI3) on the main waterfall.

Be warned that in thin ice years, several of the WI4s turn into R-rated WI5 horror shows. In good ice years, though, the ice is thick, reliable, and safe.

The Gorge provides a scenic, safe, quiet environment for climbing. The rim of the Gorge is flat and has very large trees for anchors and for topropes. The river runs along the base and, when frozen, provides easy access to the base of the routes.



ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Efforts have been made to keep this guide accurate and up-to-date. In doing so, I've relied upon information provided by other climbers and, as such, the ratings and consistency of the information may vary.

Regarding first ascent information, only routes that have been led from the ground, placing gear as you go with no falls or "hangs" are included. Top rope ascents don't count, at least not for this guide.

If you have corrections, information on new routes, or routes that have been climbed earlier than those that appear here, please send me an email at jim@summssoft.com.



Above: Chris Yenkey belays in the Amphitheater among the remains of several routes.

Opposite: Tom Yandon demonstrates old-school boldness and commitment on **Play It Again, Salmon** (WI5+ M6) in the Amphitheater.



ACCESS

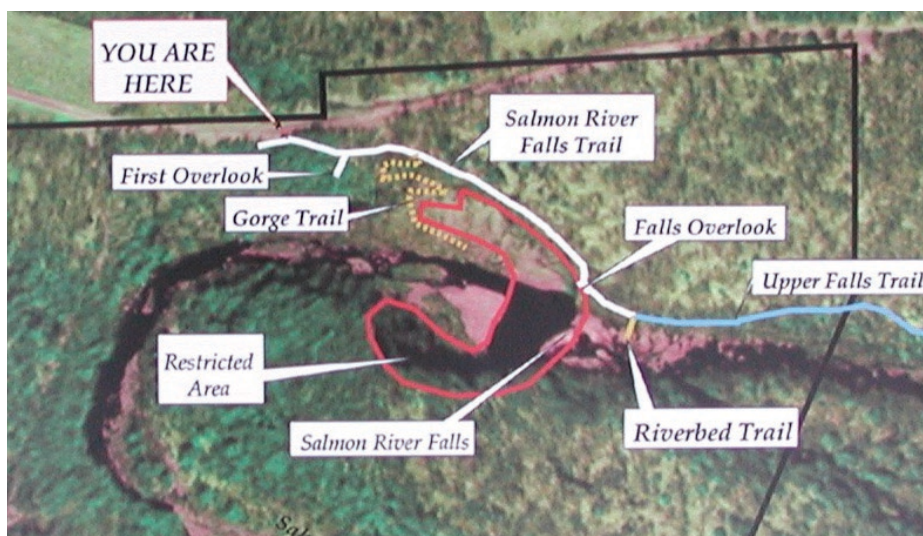
The Salmon River Falls Unique Area is managed by the DEC. The area has grown in popularity in the summer and, due to the rugged landscape, the DEC has been forced to restrict usage of the property for safety reasons. Ice climbing is allowed on the property with these restrictions:

1. Climbing is not allowed on the main waterfall or anywhere within the “restricted area” posted in the information kiosk. This may be reconsidered at a future time, but for now, no climbing on the main waterfall.
2. There are several rare and threatened plant species along the steep banks of the gorge. Do not disturb these by rappelling or climbing on them. Instead, restrict climbing to areas of the slopes containing ice. I’ve personally seen climbers scrambling up the steep slopes next to the ice to set up topropes; **don’t do that!**
3. The DEC has placed a sign-in sheet at the information kiosk; please fill it out upon arrival at the Gorge and drop it into the provided drop box. (Please note that each member of a climbing party must complete the form.) These sign-in sheets are important for management of the area and for possible future consideration of opening more of the Gorge to ice climbing.

Please follow these rules; continued access depends on our good behavior.



Fill out the ice climbing registration form at the information kiosk.



Above: The overview as sign-posted at the Gorge. The area in red is restricted—no ice climbing in this area.

Opposite: Tad Welch follows **Salmon Steak** in fat WI4 conditions.



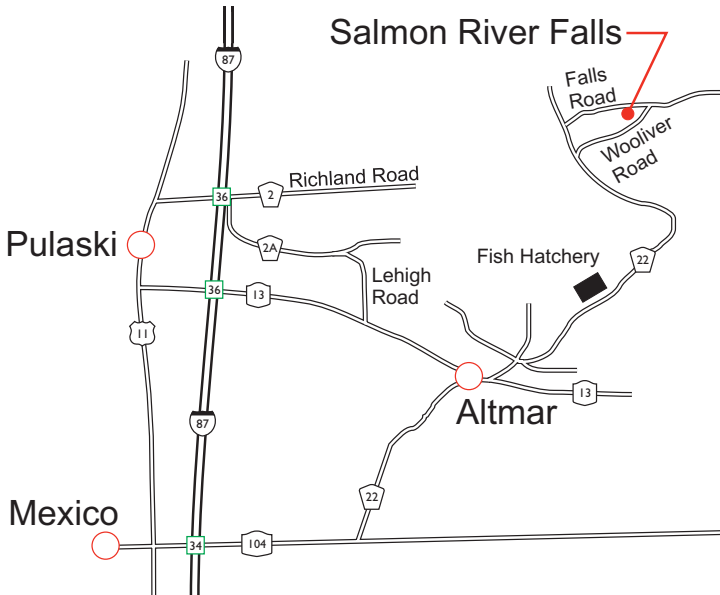
DIRECTIONS

From Syracuse and points south: go north on Interstate 81 and get off at Exit 34 (the exit for Mexico). Turn right onto NY 104. Follow 104 east for several miles and turn left (north) onto CR 22 (follow signs to the Salmon River Fish Hatchery), and follow into Altmar. Turn right onto NY 13, go about 100 yards and turn left (just after the Citgo station) onto CR 22 (also marked “Cemetery Street”), again following signs to the Salmon River Fish Hatchery. At the stop sign, continue straight on CR 22 and go past the Salmon River Fish Hatchery. After several miles, Falls Road intersects on the right (just after the intersection with Wooliver Road). Turn right onto Falls Road and go a couple miles to the DEC parking area on the right.

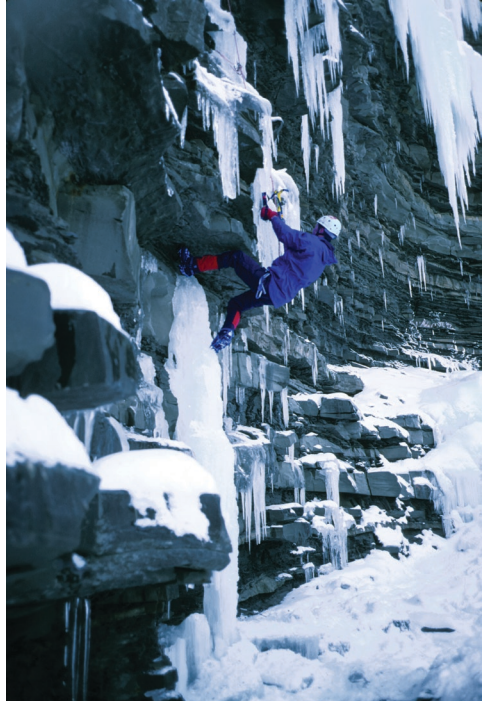
From Watertown and points north: Follow Interstate 81 south to Exit 36, the exit for Pulaski. (Note that the northbound and southbound exit ramps for Pulaski are several miles apart.) Turn left at the exit ramp onto Richland Road, then right onto CR 2A. After several miles, this road splits into Centerville Road (going left) and Lehigh Road (going right); take Lehigh Road to the intersection with NY 13. Turn left onto NY 13 and follow to Altmar. In Altmar, turn left onto CR 22 just after the Citgo station (also marked “Cemetery Street”), following signs to the Salmon River Fish Hatchery. At the stop sign, continue straight on CR 22 and go past the Salmon River Fish Hatchery. After several miles, Falls Road intersects on the right (just after Wooliver Road). Turn right onto Falls Road and go a couple miles to the DEC parking area on the right

The parking area isn't plowed, so park on the side of the road. Do NOT pull too far off the road, as there are deep ditches on either side (multiple climbers have been stuck here). Falls Road is seasonal and, just beyond the DEC parking area, isn't plowed, so it's safe to park on the side of the road.

ORIENTATION



Right: Tad Welch on the opening moves of **Shale We Climb** (WI5 M6).

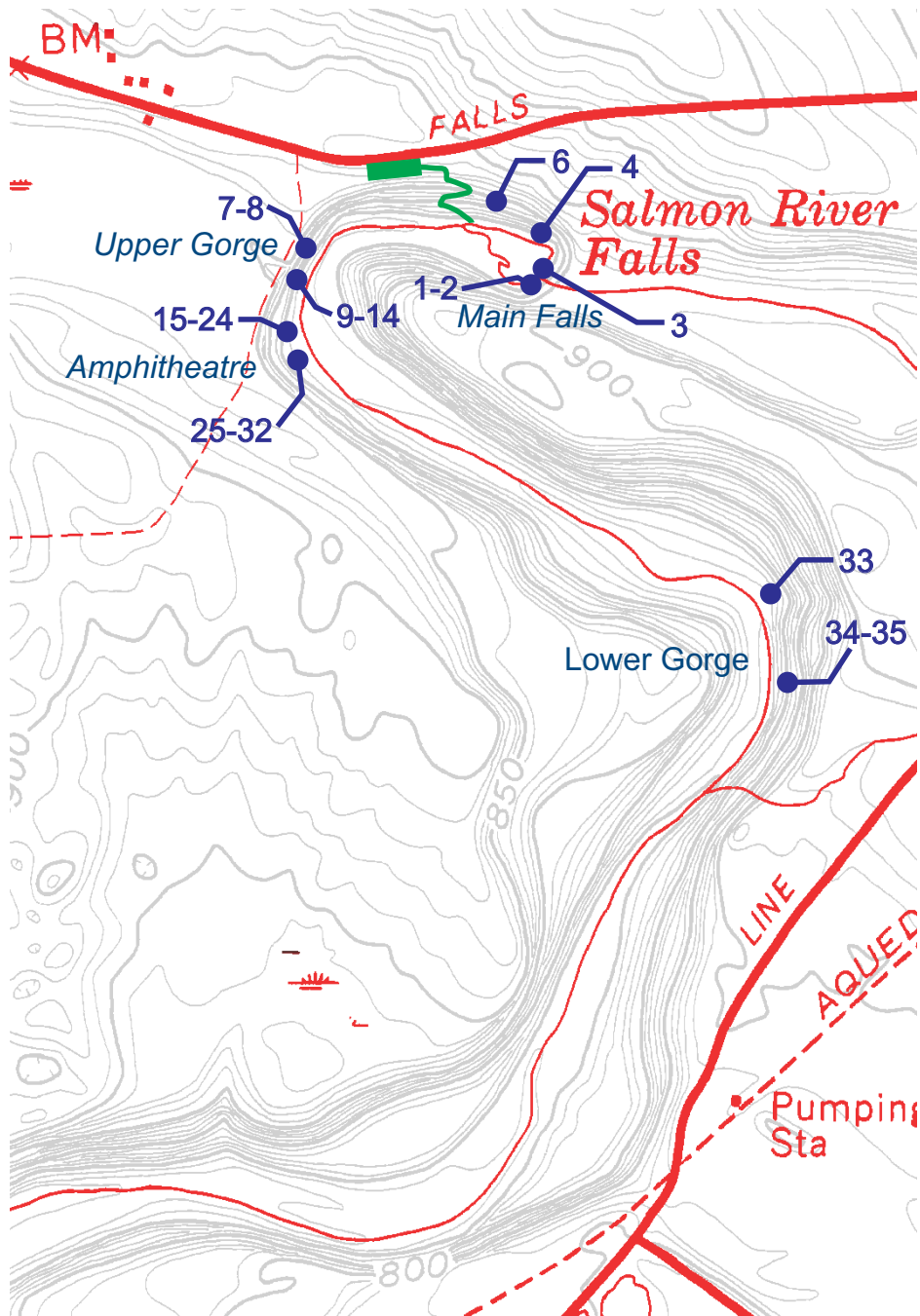


Below: Jim Lawyer on the first ascent of **Emergency Release** (WI5).



With respect to ice climbing, the gorge can be divided into these areas—the Main Falls, the Upper Gorge, the Amphitheater, and the Lower Gorge.

MAIN FALLS



Above: Overview of the Salmon River Gorge.



Above: Jim Lawyer on the route **Shale We Climb** (WI5 M6) in lean conditions on the second ascent, belayed by Tad Welch. This roof move was protected by a single stubby screw in the top of the column; gear above that was entirely slung icicles.

The Main Falls is where the Salmon River drops over the 110' shelf and into the Gorge proper. The water source for the ice is the river itself. When formed, the Main Falls is approximately 200' wide and 110' high. Climbing on the Main Falls is rare, as a long cold spell is required for the ice to form into climbable condition. Even so, several climbs have been done at the Main Falls, including the first recorded ice climb in the Gorge, **Swimming Upstream**.

To the left of the Main Falls are several full-length ice flows that reach the level of the river. These climbs are fed by ground water and are spectacular. The route **Shale We Climb** is here, and represented an advancement in difficulty for this area when climbed by Jeremy Haas and B. J. Sbarra in 1999; it remains a testpiece for aspiring ice climbers.

Further left are a number of smaller climbs near the rim as one descends the Gorge Trail.

1 Swimming Upstream 120' WI3+

The first route climbed at Salmon River Falls. This route climbs the far right side of the main waterfall.

Note: This route is currently closed.

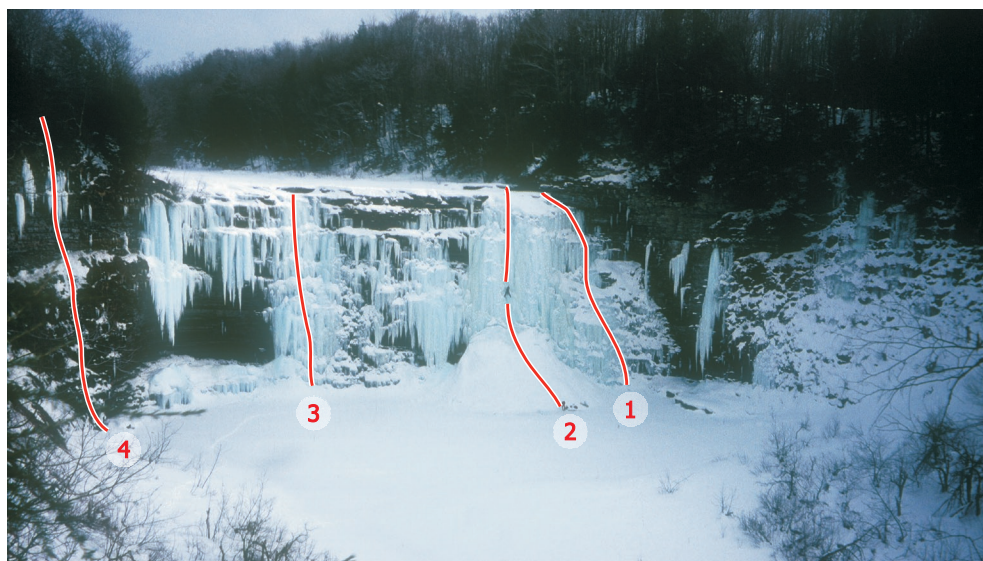
FA: Jim Seeley, Stuart Williams, and Jim Lawyer 1993

2 Slappin' The Salmon 120' WI4+

The second route led at the Gorge, and an ambitious line up the steepest part of the main waterfall. This route may never form again in the conditions of the first ascent, as the water has been diverted with a coffer dam at the top of the Falls.

Note: This route is currently closed.

FA: Mike Cross, Jim Lawyer, and Dave Gross 1995





Above: Mike Cross on the first ascent of **Slappin' The Salmon** (WI4+) on the main waterfall.

3 The Jeffersons 120' WI3 R

The DEC installed a coffer dam at the top of the main waterfall to create a more “attractive veil for viewing”, thereby creating this route. This route climbs the leftmost line on the main waterfall.

Note: This route is currently closed.

FA: Dan Cornell, Ian Bornath Mar 9, 1997

4 Shale We Climb 160' WI5 M6

Just left of the main waterfall is an overhanging area of shale. This route drips from the left side of this overhanging area. In the thin conditions of the first ascent, this route is mixed and challenging, but ends at the obvious break at two-thirds height. When the ice is fatter, an upper column forms that allows the route to be climbed to the top of the Gorge.

Note: This route is currently closed.

FA (up to midpoint): Jeremy Haas, B. J. Sbarra 1999

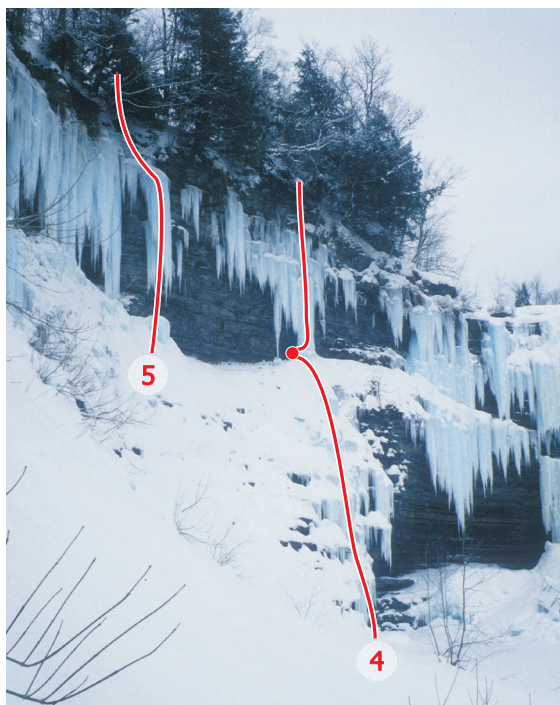
FA (upper column): Jim Lawyer, Simon Catterall (UK) Jan 2000

5 Emergency Release 100' WI5

About 100' left of the previous route is an ice pillar that drips from the rim of the gorge and ends at mid height. This route starts at the ledge mid-height (by traversing in from the left) and climbs the column to the top. The name references the practice, by Reliant Energy, of releasing water into the spillway during times of excessively high water. Although this has never happened during ice climbing season, this is one of several reasons that the main waterfall is closed to ice climbing.

Note: This route is currently closed.

FA: Jim Lawyer, Simon Catterall (UK) 1999



6 Fingerlings 30'-40' WI3

This route is located on the left as one descends the Gorge Trail to the river. There is a short wall with several short options located here.

Note: This area is currently closed.

FA: Peter Clark and others 1995



Above: Simon Catterall on **Fingerlings** (WI3) with the main waterfall in the background.

Below: Jim Lawyer climbs the upper column of **Shale We Climb** (WI5 M6) in fat conditions.



UPPER GORGE

This is the main ice climbing area downstream from the Main Falls. The central feature of the area is a massive ice flow formed by a small stream that spills over the rim in two locations. When formed, there are at least 4 separate climbable lines on this formation that span from the river level to the rim of the Gorge.

To the right of this large flow are several lines high on the rim, the best of which is **The Ice Hatchery**, a reliable WI4 climb.

7 The Ice Hatchery 60' WI4

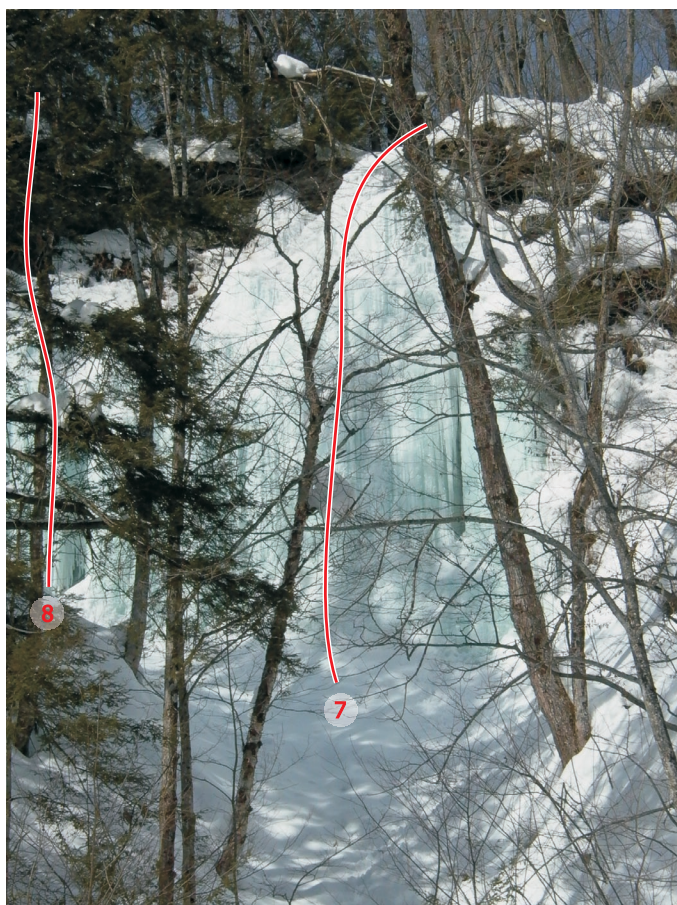
This reliable route is located up the first well-defined drainage on the right as one walks downstream from the Gorge Trail. Scramble easily up the drainage to the small amphitheater and set up a belay below the column. Climb the column to the top.

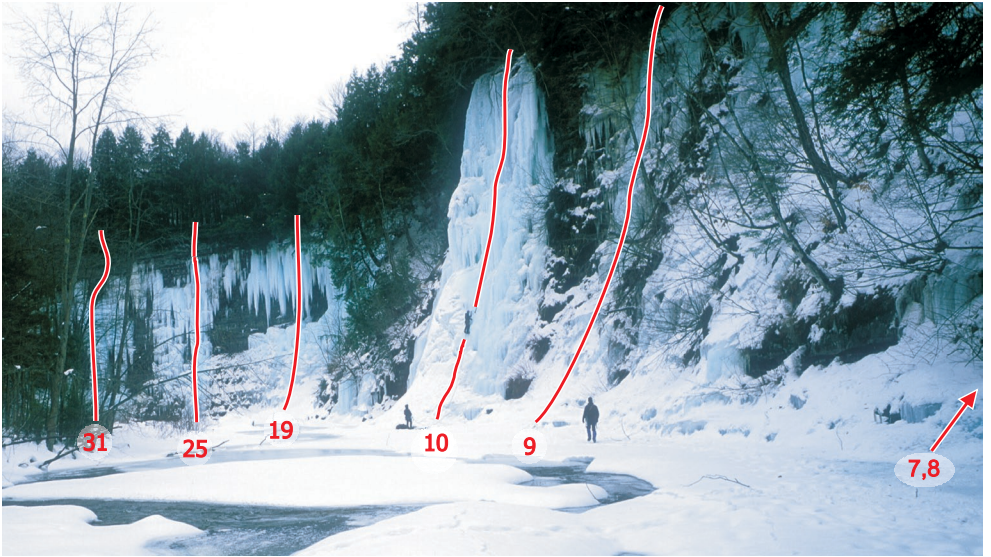
FA: Mike Cross, Jim Lawyer 1995

8 MLK 60' WI4

A line of ice sometimes forms to the left of **The Ice Hatchery**.

FA: Dan Cornell, Rick Bush, Jan 17, 2000



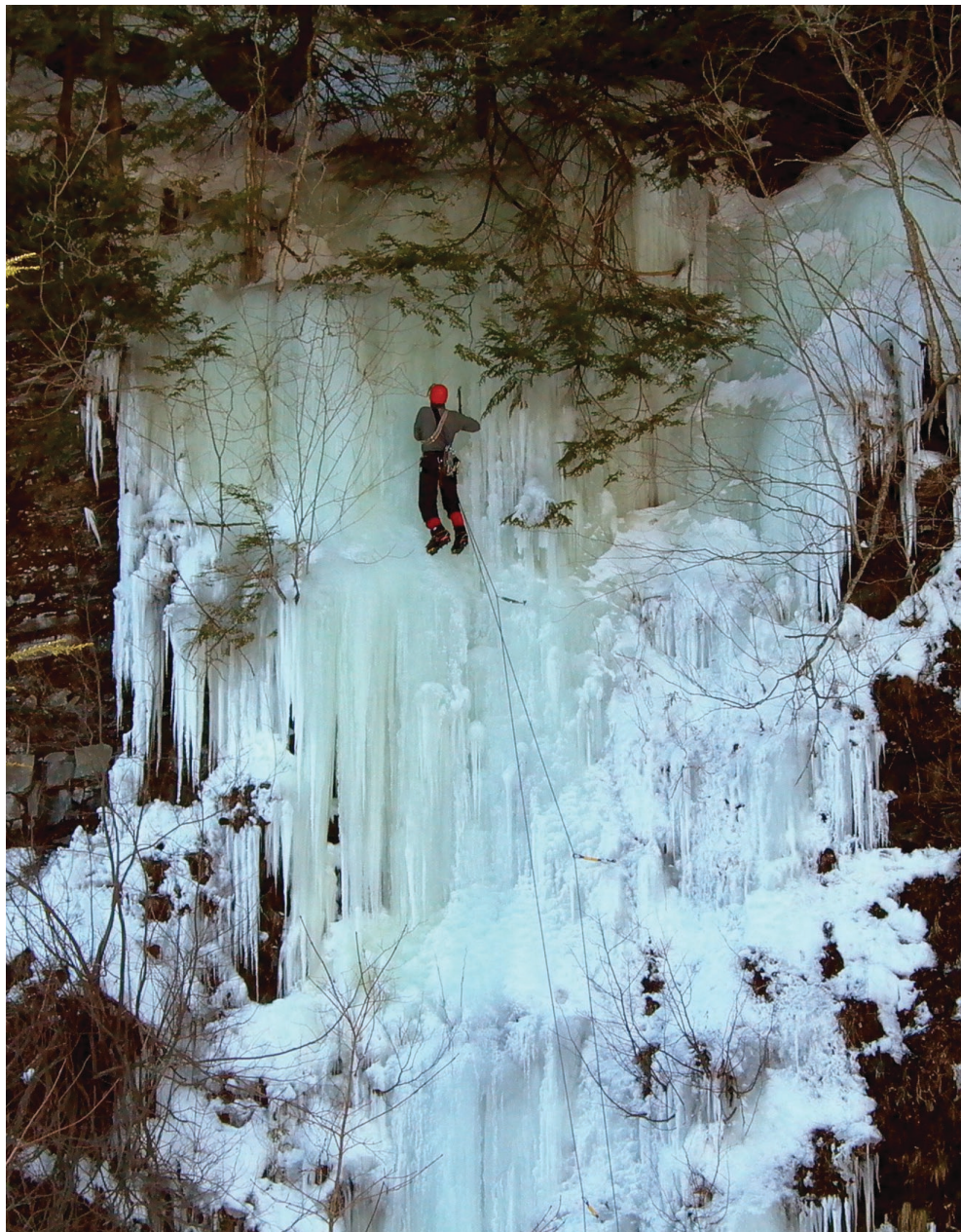


Above: Simon Catterall climbs **The Ice Hatchery (WI4)**, one of the most reliable ice climbs in the Gorge.

9 Sashimi 80' WI3+

30' right of **Salmon Steak** is a less-reliable and slightly shorter line with vegetated finish.

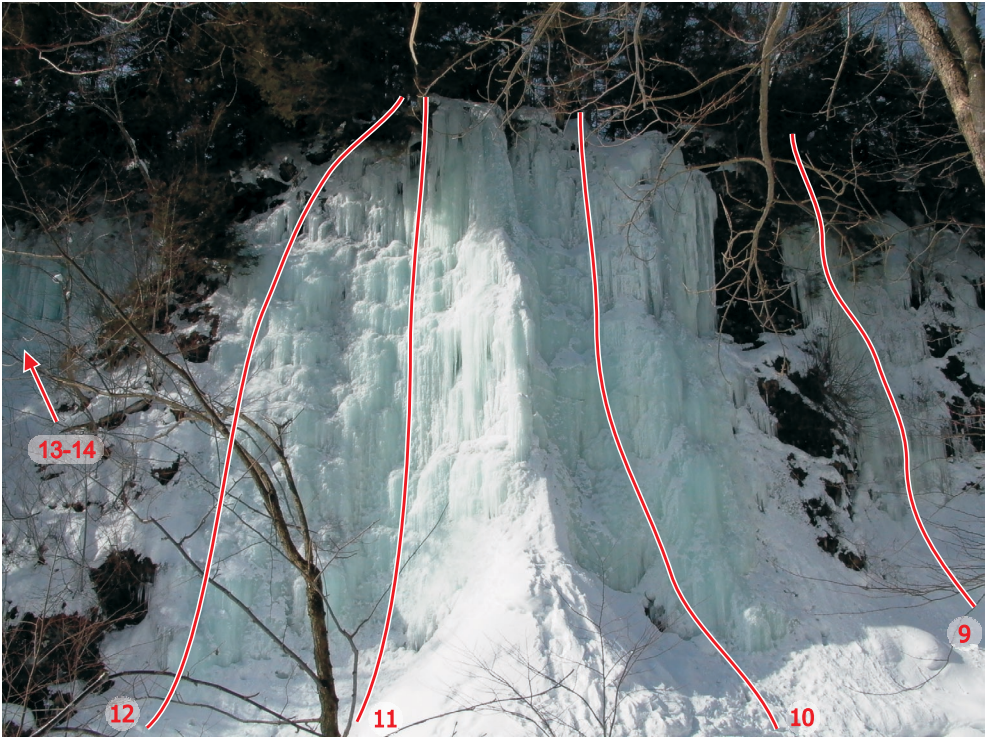
FA: Simeon Warner (UK),
Herdis H Schopka (IS) Feb 28, 2004



Above: Simeon Warner on the first ascent of **Sashimi** (WI3+).



Above: The main attraction in the Upper Gorge is the waterfall which pours from two streams. Here, Jim Lawyer leads **Salmon Steak** in WI4 conditions, belayed by Jim Seeley.



10 Salmon Steak 100' WI4

This route climbs the right side of the waterfall in the Upper Gorge. When frozen, the waterfall forms a fin in the center with climbs on either side; this route ascends the right side. Depending on how the route forms and the line chosen, difficulty ranges from WI4 to WI5. The route was long top-roped before it was led by unknown climbers.

FA: Unknown

11 Don't Cry Over Spilled Milt 100' WI4

This route climbs the left side of the fin on the waterfall in the Upper Gorge. Like **Salmon Steak**, difficulty ranges depending on how the ice forms and the line chosen.

FA: Unknown

12 Salmon Ladder 120' WI3

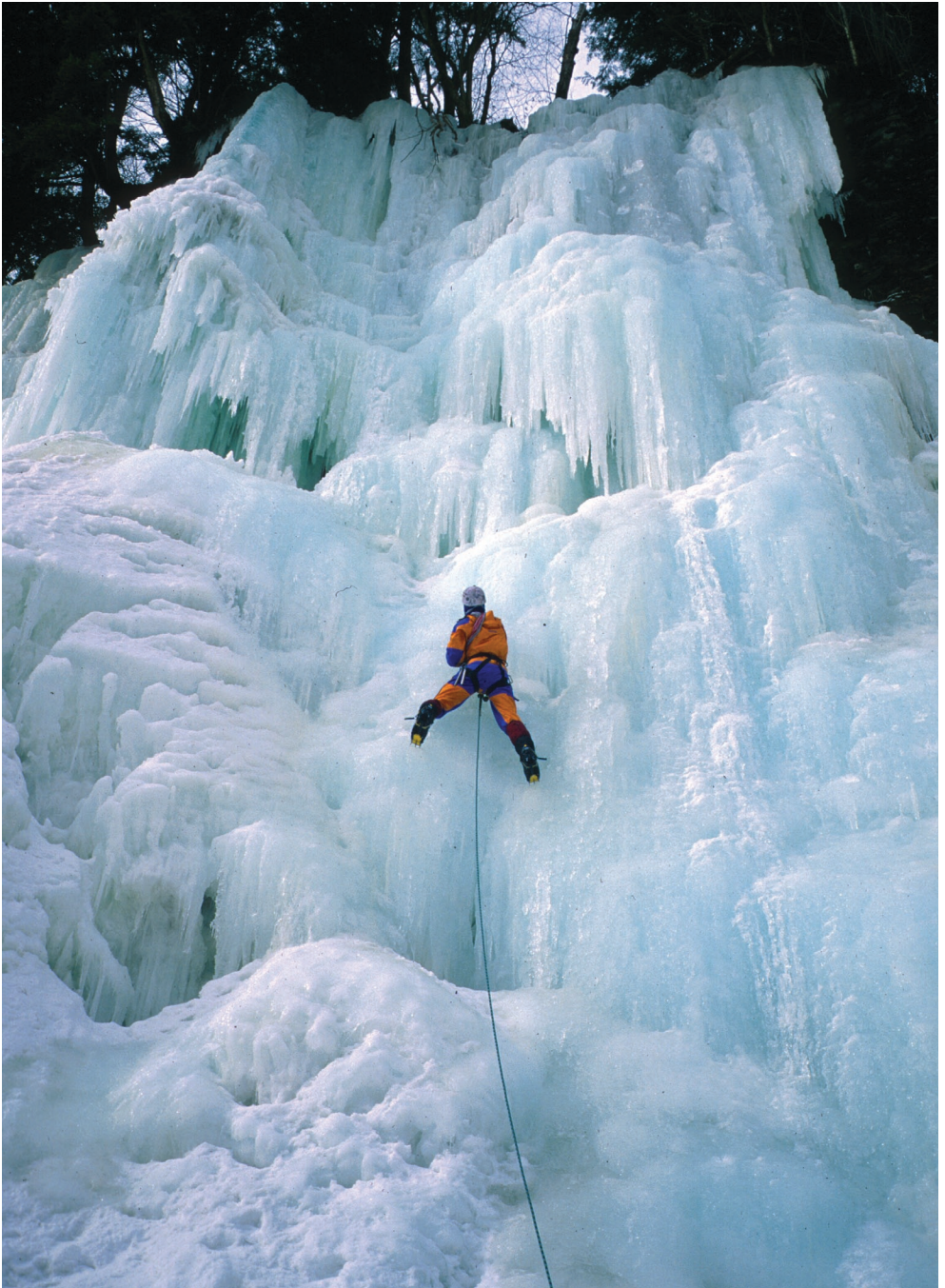
At the left edge of the waterfall in the Upper Gorge is a lower angled terraced climb. This route ascends the ice following the easiest line, then traverses right on loose rock to the rim.

FA: Dave Gross, Mike Cross, Jim Lawyer 1995

13 Shoots and Ladders 50' WI3

Up above the level of the river between the Amphitheater and the **Salmon Ladder** area is a small snow bowl that steepens near the top. This is the right-most route in the bowl, finding an easy finish to the right.

FA: Rick Bush and Fred Vanhouten, Jan 17, 2000



Above: Jim Lawyer leading **Salmon Steak** in super fat WI4 conditions.

14 Slinky 50' WI4

Start as for **Shoots and Ladders** and climb directly to the rim.

FA: Dan Cornell, Rick Bush, Jan 17, 2000

AMPHITHEATER

Downstream from the Upper Gorge is a leftward bend in the river with a steep, overhanging wall on the right. Springs and ground water drip from the shattered shale below the rim of the gorge forming impressive free-standing columns that don't reach the top of the cliff, similar to Pont-Rouge in Quebec. On the left side of the Amphitheater are many challenging climbs, including the testpiece, **Mate, Spawn, and Die**, one of the most aesthetic routes anywhere. The bulk of the reliable ice for climbing is found in the Upper Gorge and the Amphitheater.

Climbing in the Amphitheater is challenging—the ice pillars are steep and usually overhang at the top, and reaching the top of the cliff usually involves dry tooling on broken, loose, overhanging shale; care should be exercised on the chossy rock. The broken rock does freeze in place, as does the shale detritus on the horizontal ledges, and makes for safe, fun climbing. Due to the fact that most climbs are overhung by hanging icicles and loose rock, climbers should use judgement in assessing the conditions prior to starting up a line (i.e., make sure it's frozen). If a line hasn't been climbed in a while, one can rappel beforehand to break off free-hanging icicles that threaten the climber and belayer.



Above: The Amphitheater. Centered is the route **Mate, Spawn, and Die** (WI5 M4); to the left is **Play it Again, Salmon** (WI5+ M6).

Opposite: Jeremy Haas climbs the route **Mate, Spawn, and Die** (WI5 M4) in especially good conditions, belayed by Leslie Ackerman. This is the one of the most obvious and spectacular lines in the Gorge.



15 Salmon Runs 80' WI4

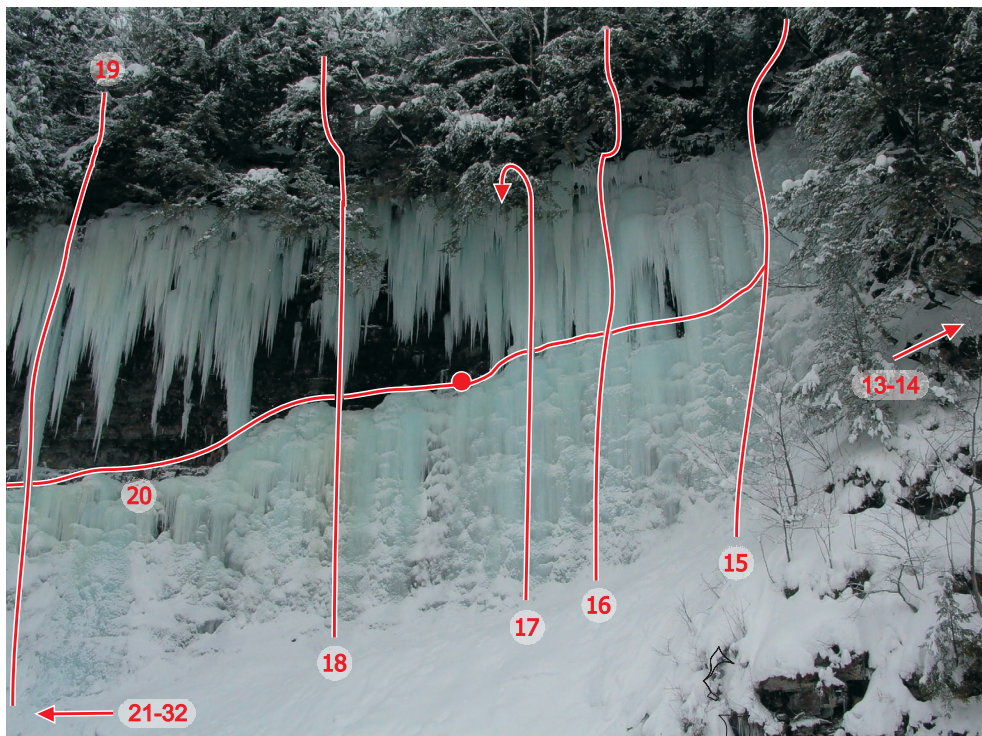
This was the first route led outside of the Main Waterfall, and was pivotal in that it demonstrated that it is possible (and fun) to actually reach the rim of the gorge through the loose shale rock band. At the far right end of the Amphitheater is a wall of ice that forms early and is lower angled. Climb the wall and into the overhanging rock below the rim, then pick your way carefully rightward to the top.

FA: Mike Cross, Jim Lawyer 1996

16 Salmon Nation 90' WI5

Left of **Salmon Runs** is a huge wall of icicles. This line climbs a solid-looking pillar to the top of the ice, then breaks through the rock at a right-facing corner choked with loose, frozen blocks (cam to 1" helpful).

FA: Jim Lawyer, Michelle Burlitch Jan 23, 2004



Left: Michelle Burlitch and Jim Lawyer preparing to climb in the Amphitheater.



Above: Jim Lawyer on **Salmon Runs** (W14) on the far right side of the Amphitheater. This is the most reliable and popular climb in the Amphitheater.

17 The Elbow 90' WI5

About 20' left of **Salmon Nation** is another solid pillar. At the top there is a tree that grows out from the cliff in a "U" shape; from the top of the ice, toss a weighted runner up and over this "elbow" to form an anchor.

FA: Jim Lawyer, Tad Welch, Jim Seeley 1999

18 Go Fly a Kype 90' WI5

When the ice is thick, there's another solid column about 20' left of **The Elbow**. Climb steep ice to the base of the column, then tighten your wrist loops and gun for the overhanging ice at the top of the column. Above is an overhanging mass of tree debris consisting of roots, encased rocks, and large U-shaped branches; climb into and through this overhanging root ball (yes, that's right, inside the tree debris), then slightly left to a rock bowl and on to the rim.

A "kype" is a hooked snout that males develop to show their dominant characteristics.

FA: Jim Lawyer, Simon Catterall (UK), Jim Seeley Feb 7, 2004

19 Salmonella 100' WI5+

One of the steeper pure ice lines, this route ascends a relentless free-standing column more than 10' from the rock. Climb the column to it's end. At the top, pull through a rock roof using turf placements and small-diameter trees for protection.

FA: Jim Lawyer, Michelle Burlitch Feb 26, 2004

Below: Simeon Warner climbs the steep center section **Salmonella** (WI5+) in fat conditions. The flow in the upper right corner is **Salmon Steak** et al.





Jim Lawyer climbs **The Elbow** (WI5). The route ascends easier ice to a free-standing column, at the top of which is an elbow-shaped tree that grows from overhanging rock.
(Photo Copyright © 2005 David Le Pagne)

20 Sockeye 100' II WI5+ R

A very impressive and scary lead. Climb up to the ledge and cave left of the **Salmonella** column, then ascend the back of a free-hanging column (stemming to the wall at the start to avoid breaking off the pillar), then corkscrewing around to the front of the pillar through a notch and on to the top.

The grade is a joke, suggested by the route naming consultant, Todd Mazzola. It's WI5+ R.

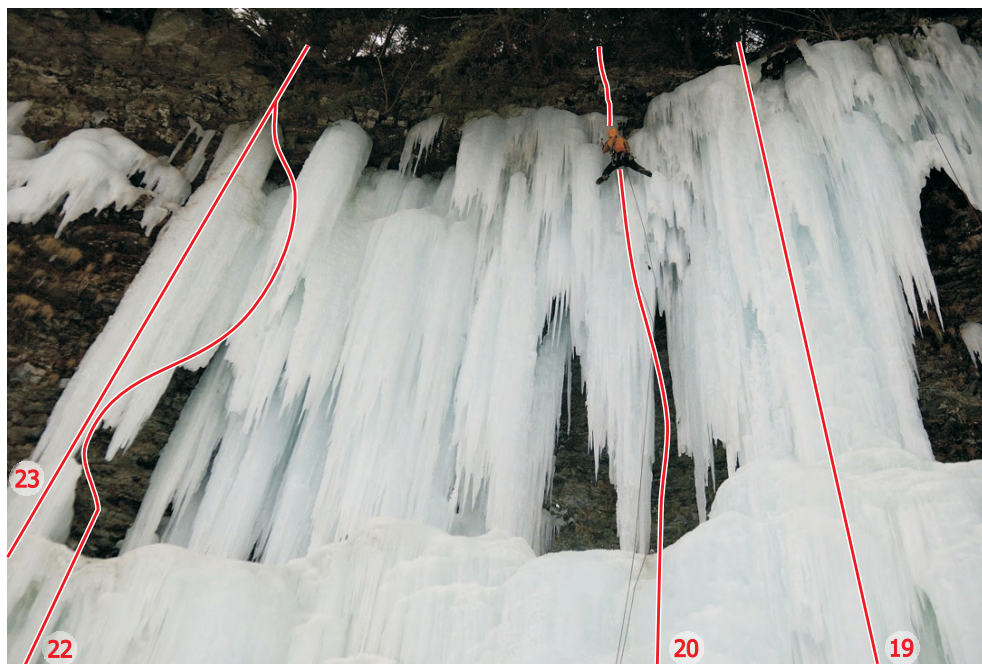
FA Robert "Griz" Ginieccki, Jim Lawyer Mar 20, 2005

21 Curtain Call for the Salmonid WI4

Arguably the most creative route in the Gorge. Starting 20' right of **Mate, Spawn, and Die**, climb easy ice (WI3) to the ledge beneath overhanging ice, then traverse right, weaving behind, through, and in front of ice columns to an obvious rock/ice cave left of the **The Elbow** and belay. Continue traversing behind the ice (very tight in places) to an enclosed ice "room", then punch through the ice, squeeze through onto the face, and continue the traverse past overhanging columns (strenuous WI4 traversing) to meet the route **Salmon Runs**, which is climbed to the top.

The climbing is very unusual and interesting, traversing inside incredible ice formations. Good judgement should be exercised in determining the conditions of the ice before attempting this route—this section of cliff is well-known for dropping large ice pillars, and you'll be traversing and belaying beneath some huge monsters. For this route to be in "condition", the ice can't be too plentiful; otherwise, the tight passages are closed up.

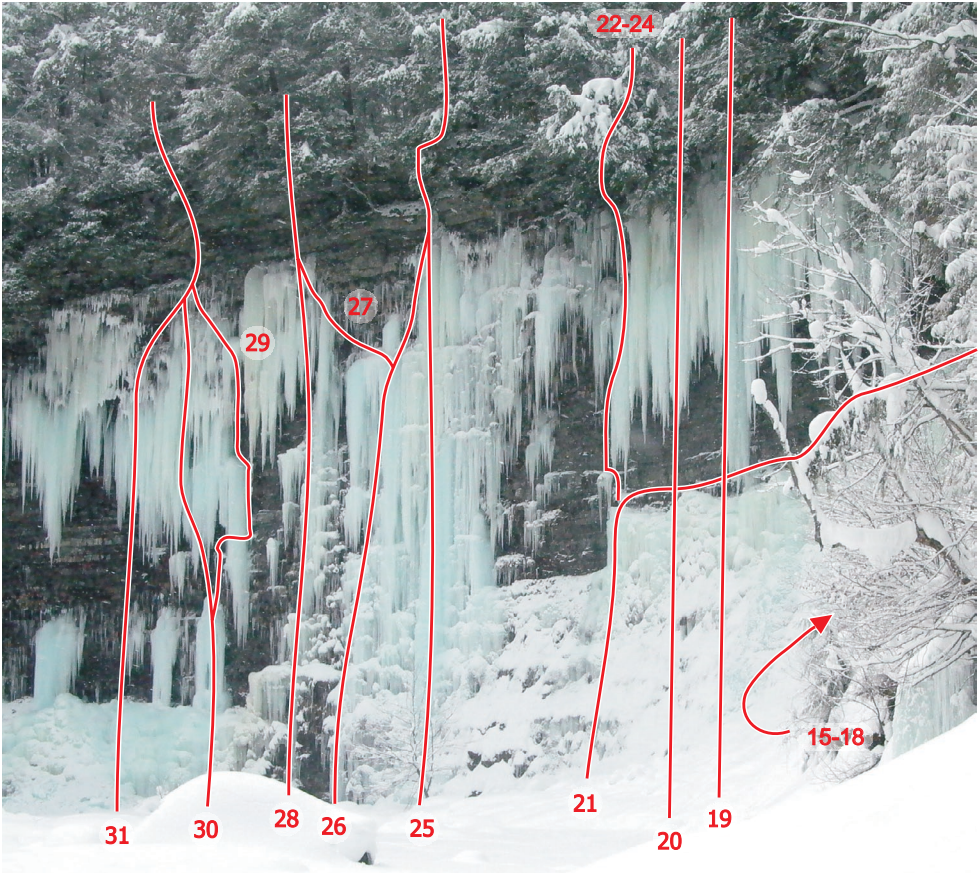
FA: Jim Lawyer, Michelle Burlitch Feb 28, 2004



Above: Robert "Griz" Ginieccki on the first ascent of **Sockeye** (WI5+ R).

Opposite: Robert "Griz" Ginieccki on the first ascent of **Sockeye** (WI5+ R). The route climbs out this cave using the free-standing column, then out a V-notch to the front of the pillar.





22 Chum 130' WI5+ M6

Another Gorge testpiece, especially impressive in that it was put up from the ground. Start as for **Curtain Call for the Salmonid** and climb to the ledge/pedestal. From the ledge, dry tool up and slightly left to a flat stance and straight up to the free-hanging curtain. Climb the curtain to the top, then dry tool past a final rock roof (fixed protection).

"Chum" is a type of Salmon, not usually the best type for eating. The name also means "the bait usually consisting of oily fish ground up and scattered on the water", which is fitting, as the rock on this route is especially chossy, but safe with fun moves.

FA Will Mayo, Jim Lawyer, Chris Yenkey

23 Chum Stick 130' WI5 M4 R

In a good year, a free-standing pillar forms from the top of **Chum**, touching down at the "flat stance" at the start of **Chum's** dry tooling. Climb the front of the column to the top, finishing on **Chum's** final two bolts.

FA: Robert "Griz" Ginieczki, Todd Mazzola, Jim Lawyer Mar 20, 2005

24 Chum Lick 130' WI5 M4

Yet another variation to **Chum** that climbs that route to the fourth bolt, then corkscrews around to the front of **Chum Stick**, finishing on **Chum's** final two bolts.

FA: Robert "Griz" Ginieczki, Todd Mazzola, Jim Lawyer Mar 19, 2005



Above: Will Mayo on the first ascent of **Chum** (WI5+ M6). The route dry tools from the ice pedestal across the rock and onto the hanging curtain. When the ice is fat, a column touches down onto the pedestal significantly changing the character of the route.

Below: Robert "Griz" Ginieccki on the first ascent of **Chum Stick** (WI5 M4 R).





25 *Mate, Spawn, and Die* 130' WI5 M4

Arguably one of the most spectacular routes in Central New York. This route follows steep pillars in the center of the Amphitheater to an overhanging left-facing corner, which is followed to the top. The route stood as a long-standing problem that was tried by many climbers. It was finally climbed using natural gear to protect the upper section. Fixed protection was later added by the first ascent party to make the upper section safe for future parties.

The route is reliable and makes a good warm up for the harder routes in the Amphitheater.

FA: Jim Lawyer, Ade Miller (UK) Feb 2001

Opposite: Todd Mazzola climbs **Mate, Spawn, and Die** (WI5 M4). **Chum Stick** is the yellow column that barely touches down in the center of the photo.

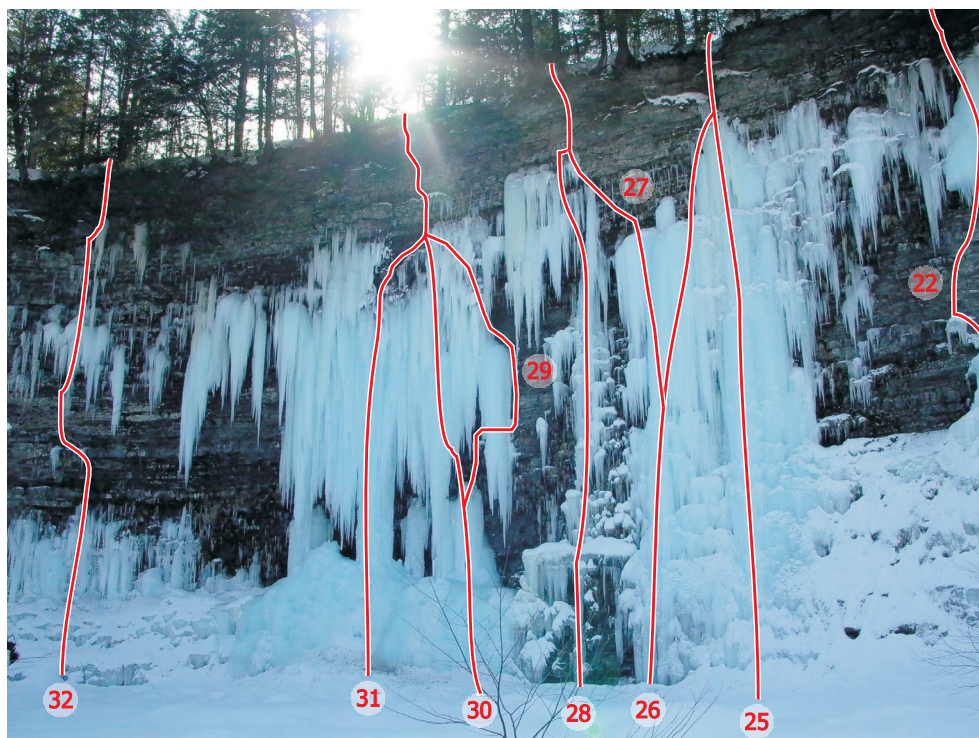
Below: Robert "Griz" Ginieczki on the first ascent of **Chum Stick** (WI5 M4 R), belayed by Todd Mazzola. Note the shale bits peppering the snow and ice.



26 Scale, Flail, or Bail 130' WI5 M4

A variation to **Mate, Spawn, and Die** begins left of the normal start by 20'. Climb a blue column to the top, then traverse rightward through steep columns to the normal finish.

FA: Joe Szot, Jim Lawyer Mar 11, 2005



Left: Robert "Griz" Ginieczki and Todd Mazzola gearing up.

Opposite: Jim Lawyer on Super Fly (WI5+ M7).



27 Super Fly 130' W15+ M7

This linkup that climbs the blue column of **Scale, Flail, or Bail** to its top, then traverses left on a ledge to tiered free-hanging icicles that are followed to their top. From there, climb the final three bolts of **A Pitch Called Wanda (M7)** to the top.

FA Jim Lawyer, Robert "Griz" Ginieczki Mar 3, 2007

28 *A Pitch Called Wanda* 130' WI6 M7

What a route! Originally "prepared" by Jim Lawyer and Chris Yenkey, they were too scared to lead it and, in fact, hung repeatedly while top roping it. A week later, ice conditions improved slightly for the first ascent. Start 25' left of **Mate, Spawn, and Die** at a thin pencil of ice that reaches river level. Climb the pencil (#1 Camalot), then climb increasingly difficult ice through free-hanging daggers to a stance at the top of the ice. From here, the route dry-tools slightly right to a final enormous roof (fixed protection). The exit moves through the roof are pumpy and wild, involving heel hooking and completely horizontal foot/thigh jamming.

FA: Jim Lawyer Jan 25, 2005

Will Mayo climbs the opening pencil on **A Pitch Called Wanda** (WI6 M7) on the second ascent.





**Will Mayo on A Pitch
Called Wanda
(WI6 M7) on the
second ascent.**

29 Egg Sucking Zonkers

130' WI5+ M6

A variation to **Play it Again, Salmon** begins right of the normal start by 20'. Climb several steep columns into a cave, then up the rock behind the ice, exiting right behind the curtain (via the "rabbit hole") to the right margin of the ice. Continue up fragile columns, exiting left onto overhanging ice which is climbed straight up to a break. Traverse left to the "launch pad", then follow the **Play it Again, Salmon** bolts to the top.

FA: Jim Lawyer, Chris Yenkey Feb 25, 2007



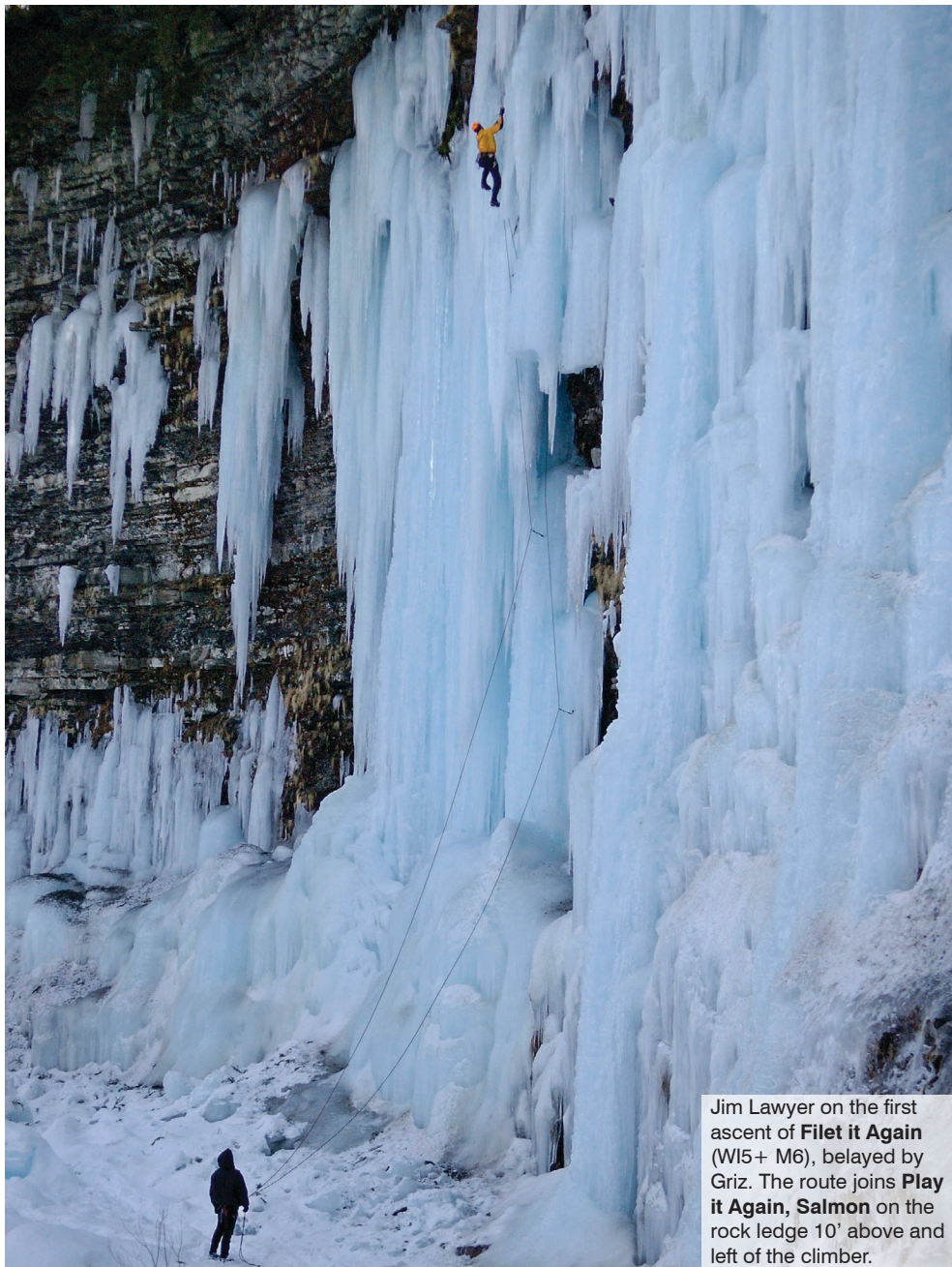
Robert "Griz" Ginieczki emerges from the "rabbit hole" on **Egg Sucking Zonkers** (WI5+ M6).

30 Filet it Again 130' WI5+ M6

Begin as for Egg Sucking Zonkers. Climb several steep columns into a cave, then out the roof to the left, following steep ice and free-hanging pillars to the "launch pad" on **Play it Again, Salmon**, then follow that route's final three bolts to the top.

Steep, demanding, and very three-dimensional.

FA: Jim Lawyer, Todd Mazzola, Robert "Griz" Ginieccki Mar 19, 2005



Jim Lawyer on the first ascent of **Filet it Again** (WI5+ M6), belayed by Griz. The route joins **Play it Again, Salmon** on the rock ledge 10' above and left of the climber.

31 *Play it Again, Salmon* 130' WI5+ M6

A difficult line up an intimidating section of cliff; it required two days to prepare due to its overhanging nature and loose rock. Left of **Mate, Spawn, and Die** is a cluster of free-hanging icicles. The most solid of these touches down on a ledge about 10' above river level and seems to end in the middle of the face. Climb the overhanging free-standing ice column to its top and fixed protection—the "top" is a low point of rock with ice that continues higher on either side. Step right onto a large ledge (aka the "launch pad"), then climb through three large roofs to the top (fixed protection).

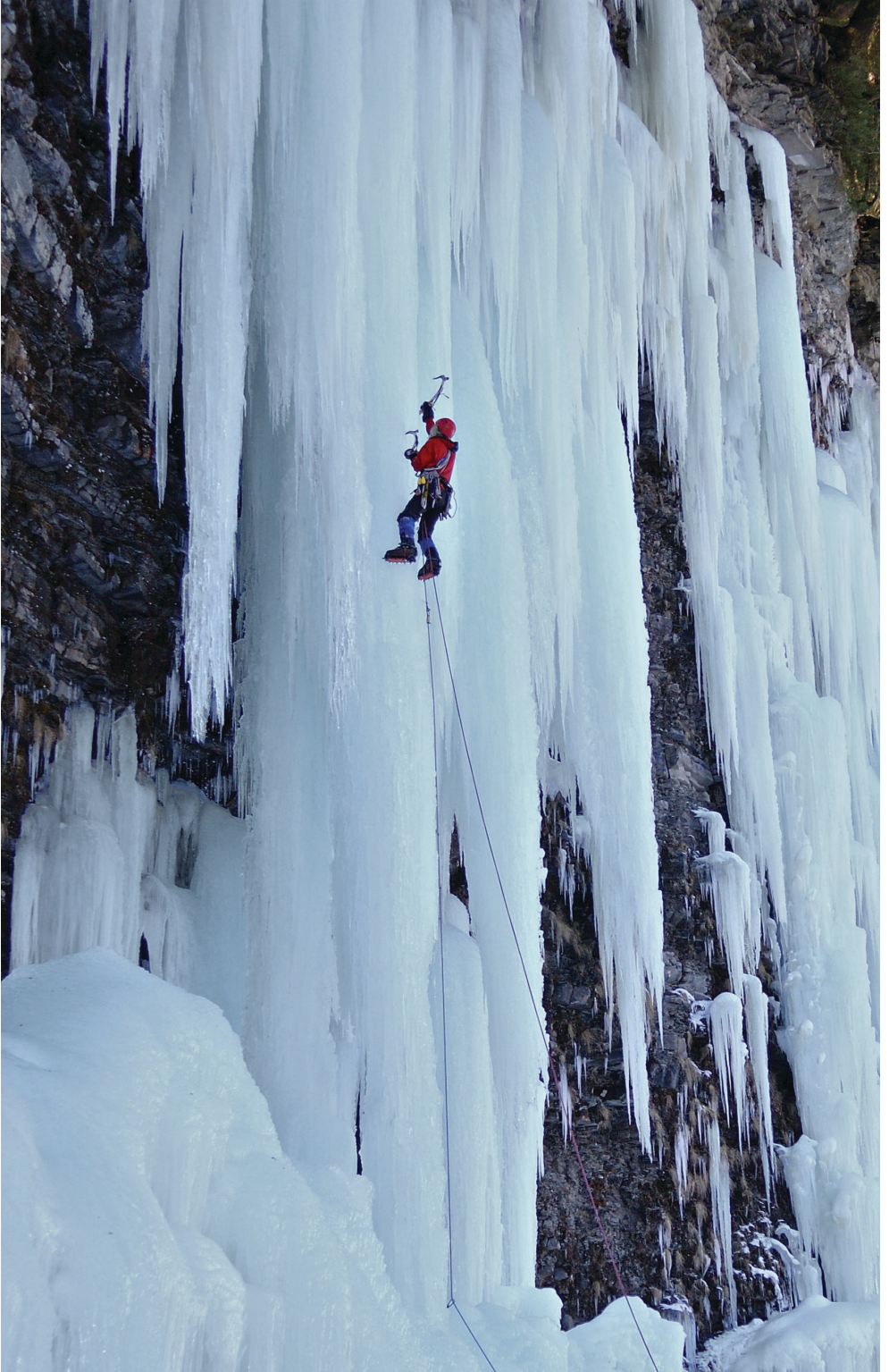
FA: Jim Lawyer, Michelle Burlitch Feb 26, 2004

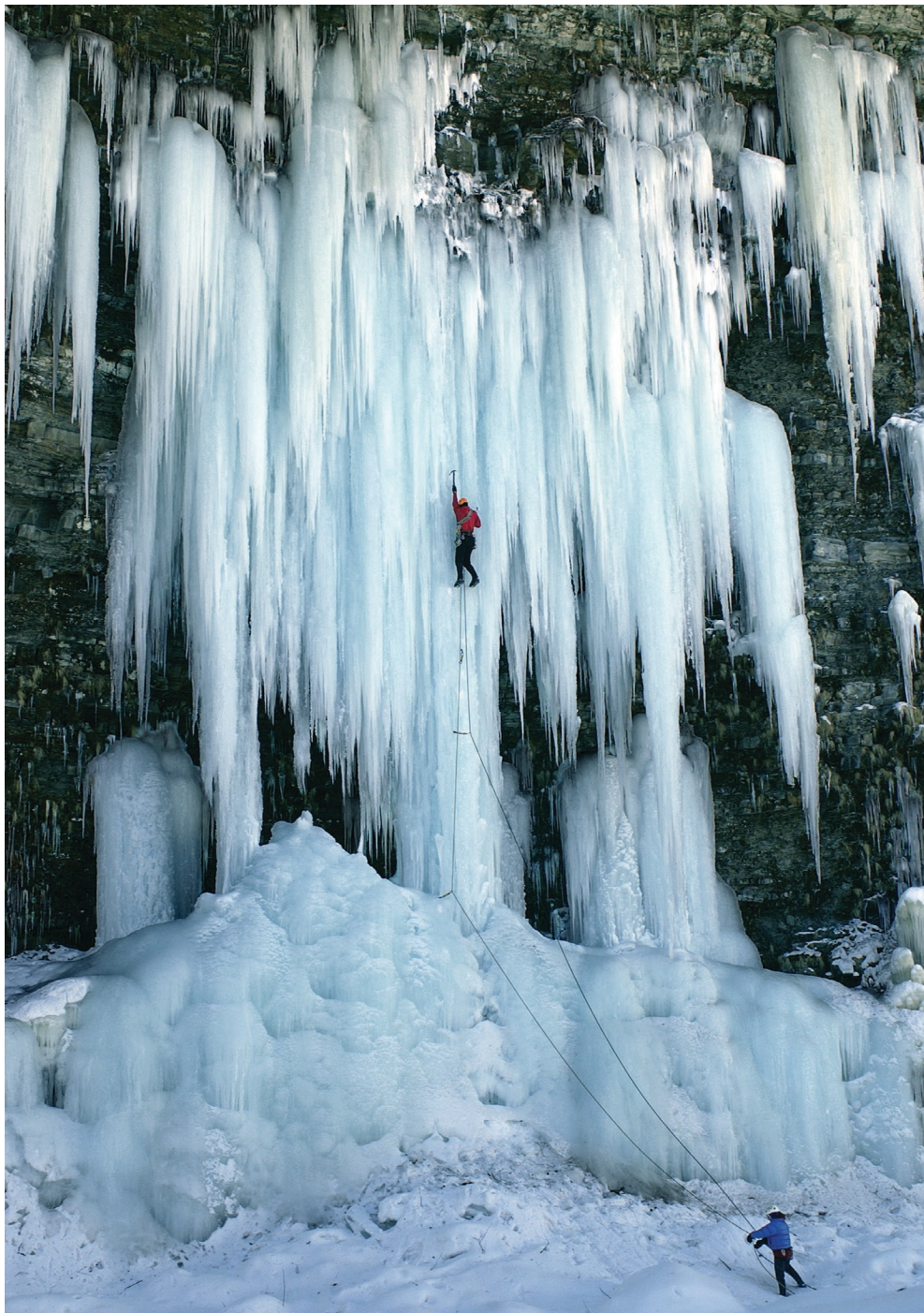


Above: Chris Yenkey thankfully reaches the fixed protection at the top of the ice on the second ascent of **Play it Again, Salmon** (WI5+ M6). From here, the route steps right onto the launch pad (the ledge with the dripping icicles), then climbs through three roofs above.

Left: Tom Yandon gears up in the Amphitheater.

Opposite: Tom Yandon climbs **Play It Again, Salmon** (WI5+ M6) in the Amphitheater. The route as seen in this photo is far thinner than on the first ascent and is probably a grade more difficult. The route weaves its way up the most dramatically overhanging section of the Amphitheater.





Above: Jim Lawyer climbs the initial steep section on **Play it Again, Salmon** (WI5+ M6) on the first ascent, belayed by Michelle Burlitch. The **Filet it Again** variation begins on the right side of the next set of columns. (Photo Copyright © 2004 Keith Robison)

Opposite: Tom Yandon climbs **Play it Again, Salmon** (WI5+ M6), belayed by Chris Yenkey.



32 King Salmon 130' WI6 M7+

This demanding line delicately links together hanging daggers and curtains of ice on the steepest section of wall in the Gorge; simply spectacular. Begin 50' left of **Play it Again, Salmon** at low-angled ice. Climb to the top of the ice, then dry-tool up to the right side of a small ledge. Climb onto the ledge and, from the left side, continue straight up ice and rock. The rock steepens near the top (crux), but hanging daggers allow one to climb behind and rest. The route finishes up a right-facing corner to the top (fixed protection).

FA: Will Mayo, Jim Lawyer, Tom Yandon Feb 5, 2004



Opposite: Will Mayo on the first ascent of **King Salmon** (WI6 M7+).
(Photo Copyright © 2005 David Le Pagne)



LOWER GORGE

About 1/2 mile downstream from the Amphitheater are several ice climbs. These can be approached from the Amphitheater on snowshoes by walking downstream, crossing the river as necessary. Obviously, caution must be exercised for the stream crossings, especially early in the season or when the snowpack is low. When the snow is deep, this approach can take up to an hour. **Lax** is the first ice flow on the left as one travels downstream; about 500' further on the left is **Green Eggs and Salmon**, a large 120' high flow.

The Lower Gorge can also be approached from Pipeline Road. From Altmar on route 22, turn right onto route 30, then left onto Pipeline Road and drive until you can see the Gorge on the left. Park off the side of the road and drop into the Gorge at a convenient spot. Depending on where you drop in, travel either upstream or downstream to the climbs.

Note: This property is not part of the Salmon River Unique Area and thus is not subject to the ice climbing restrictions described in the Introduction.

33 *Lax* 80' WI 3+

About 500' upstream from **Green Eggs and Salmon** is a small flow that starts from river level. A short ramp and 20' steep section lead to easier ground. Finish by moving right to avoid a small overhang using small columns and rock steps. An easier exit left is possible.

The name is the Icelandic word for "salmon".

FA: Simeon Warner (UK),
Herdis H Schopka (IS) Feb 28, 2004

Two short (25') columns form just upstream from **Lax**. **Kaka Lax** (WI3) is about 100' upstream and full of mud and rocks (best avoided). **Baby Lax** (WI3+) is another 50' upstream, a small column similar to the first portion of **Lax**.

FA: Simeon Warner, Brett Kelly Mar 5th, 2005



34 *Green Eggs and Salmon* 120' WI3+

This giant flow is about 120' high and sports several options. **Green Eggs and Salmon** climbs the left side up to the tree at the center of the flow at the top.

FA: Jim Lawyer, Leslie Ackerman Feb 4, 2004

35 *Salmon I Am* 120' WI4

Climb directly up the steepest part of the flow, surmounting a roof near the bottom.

36 *Are You My Salmon* 100' WI3

Yet another Dr. Seuss reference. About 100' downstream of **Green Eggs and Salmon**, at the far right end of the short cliff (the same cliff as the previous two routes), a line of good ice can be found cutting between the bushes. The route comprises a sequence of ramps with short steeper steps.

FA: Leslie Ackerman, Simeon Warner (UK) Mar 5, 2005

Right: Simeon Warner on the first ascent of **Lax** (WI3+).

