

Rescuer & Aircrew Safety when Connected to the Helicopter and Ground

Charley Shimanski & Dave Weber

10 October 2025



OCTOBER 7-12, 2025



Helicopters Connected to Terrain

Charley Shimanski & Dave Weber

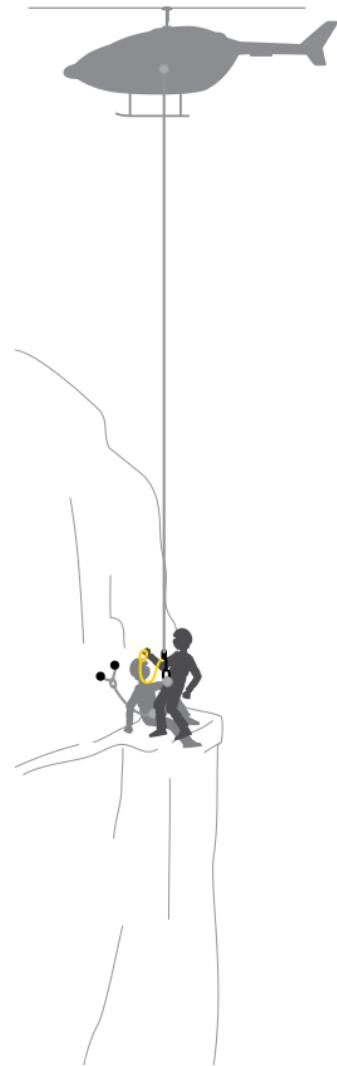
10 October 2025

Content

- Common Techniques
- Pros & Cons
- Helicopter Offset
- Discussion & Questions



The Problem



The Solutions

- **No Perfect Solution**
- **Not a Sales Pitch**
- **The Right Solution Depends:**
 - Different Teams
 - Different Terrain
 - Different Rescue Challenges
 - Different Resources



Common Techniques

1. Quick Clip
2. Releasable Hitch
3. Cutaway
4. Petzl Lizard

Operational Flow

- 1. Connected to Anchor**
- 2. Secure on Lanyard**
- 3. Unhook from Helicopter**

Quick Clip



 JACKSON HOLE
WYOMING 2025

Quick Clip

PROS

- Lower cost
- Relatively simple
- Familiar equipment

CONS

- No auto-release
- Training required
- Comms sequence changes

Releasable Hitch

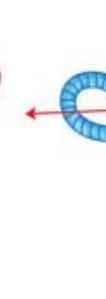
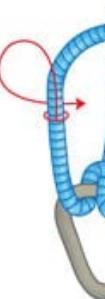
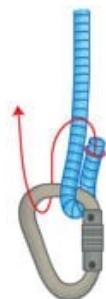


©KNOTS3D.com



Releasable Hitch

Munter Mule Instructions

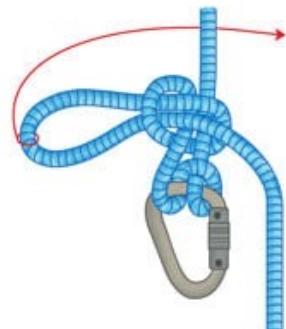


1 Wrap the rope end through the carabiner twice

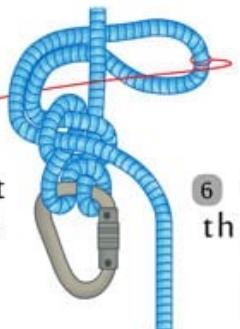
2 Take it up and pass it to the right side

3 Make 2 loops with the rope

4 Pass the right loop through the left one



5 Take it to the right side



6 Pass it through the loop so formed



101KNOTS



JACKSON HOLE
WYOMING 2025

Releasable Hitch



Releasable Hitch



Releasable Hitch

PROS

- Lower cost
- Familiar equipment

CONS

- No auto-release
- Training required
- Knot-tying required
- Rope binding

Cutaway

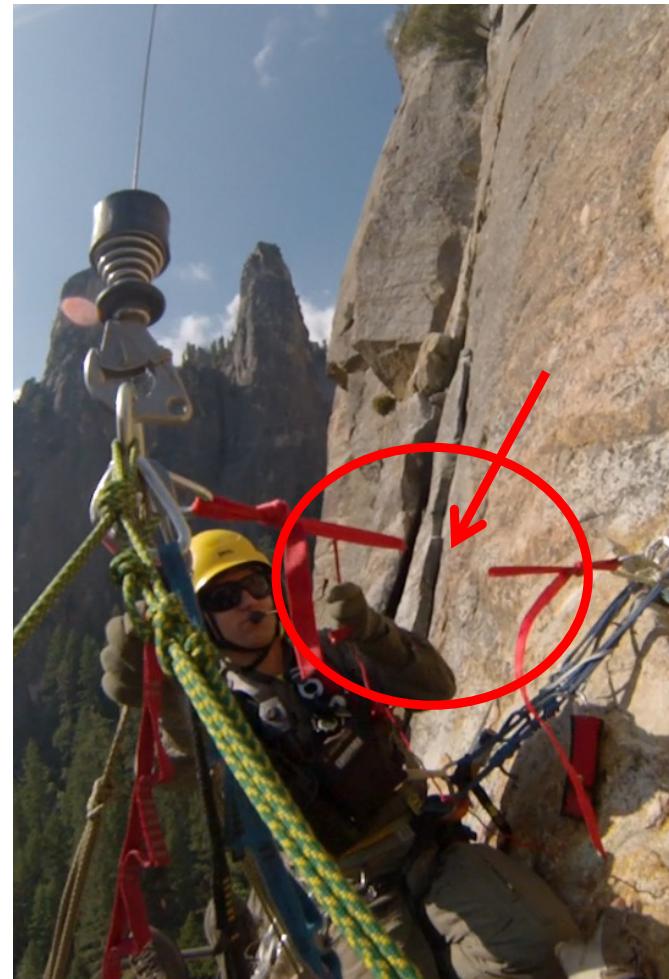
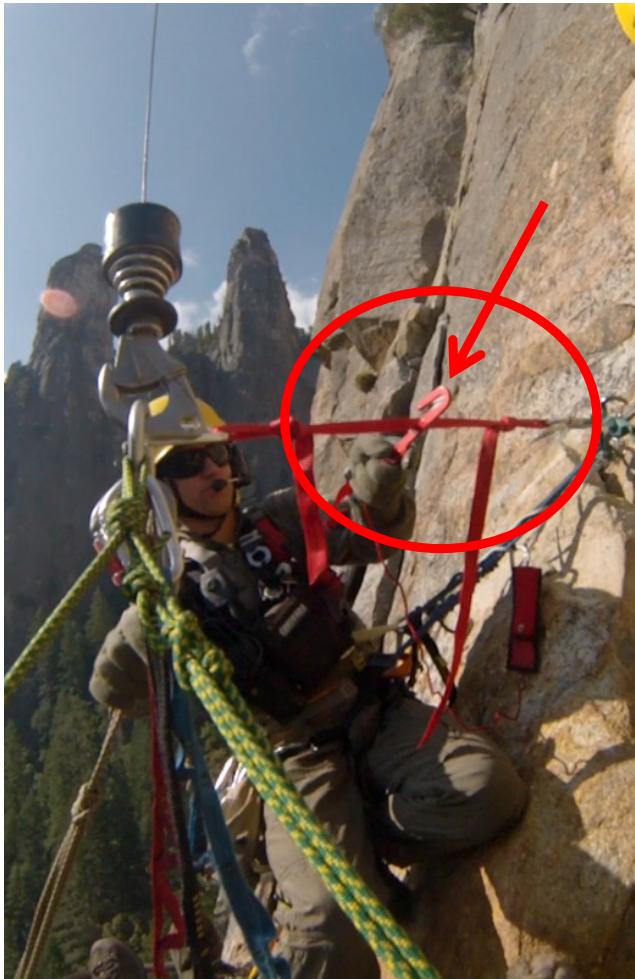


Cutaway

- Designated lanyard cut
- Litter/rescuer swings away from wall



Cutaway



Cutaway Comms



Cutaway (HIPPA release obtained)



Cutaway

PROS

- Lower cost
- Relatively simple
- Familiar equipment

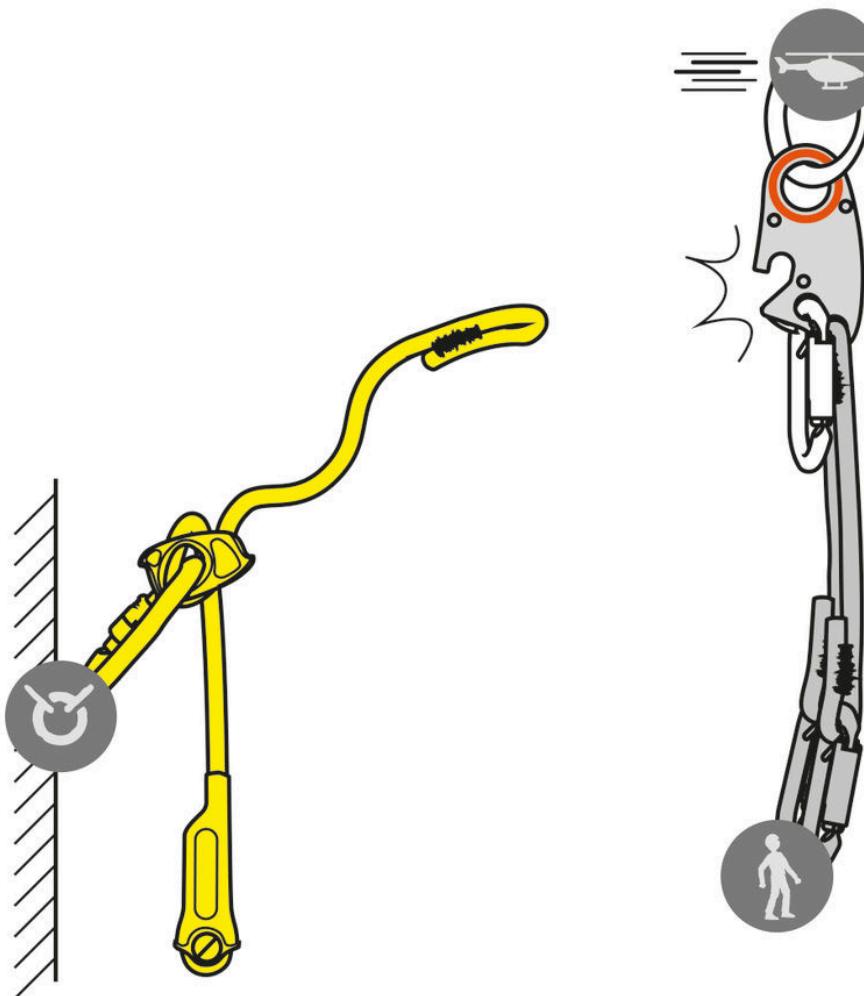
CONS

- No auto-release
- Training required
- Blade & life-safety ropes
- Partner required?

Petzl Lizard



Petzl Lizard



Petzl Lizard



Petzl Lizard Insertion



Petzl Lizard Extraction



Petzl Lezard

PROS

- Auto-release
- Petzl curriculum
- Standardized training reps
- Time stress reduced

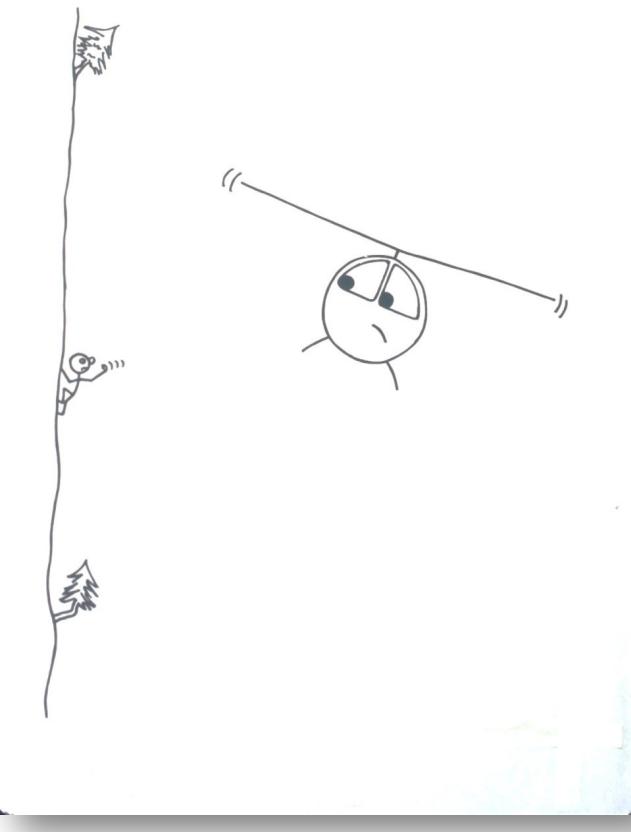
CONS

- Higher Cost
- Petzl curriculum
- Training required
- 10-year lifespan
- Specialized equipment
- Non-modifiable device



Helicopter Offset

The problem...



NOT the solution.



Helicopter Offset

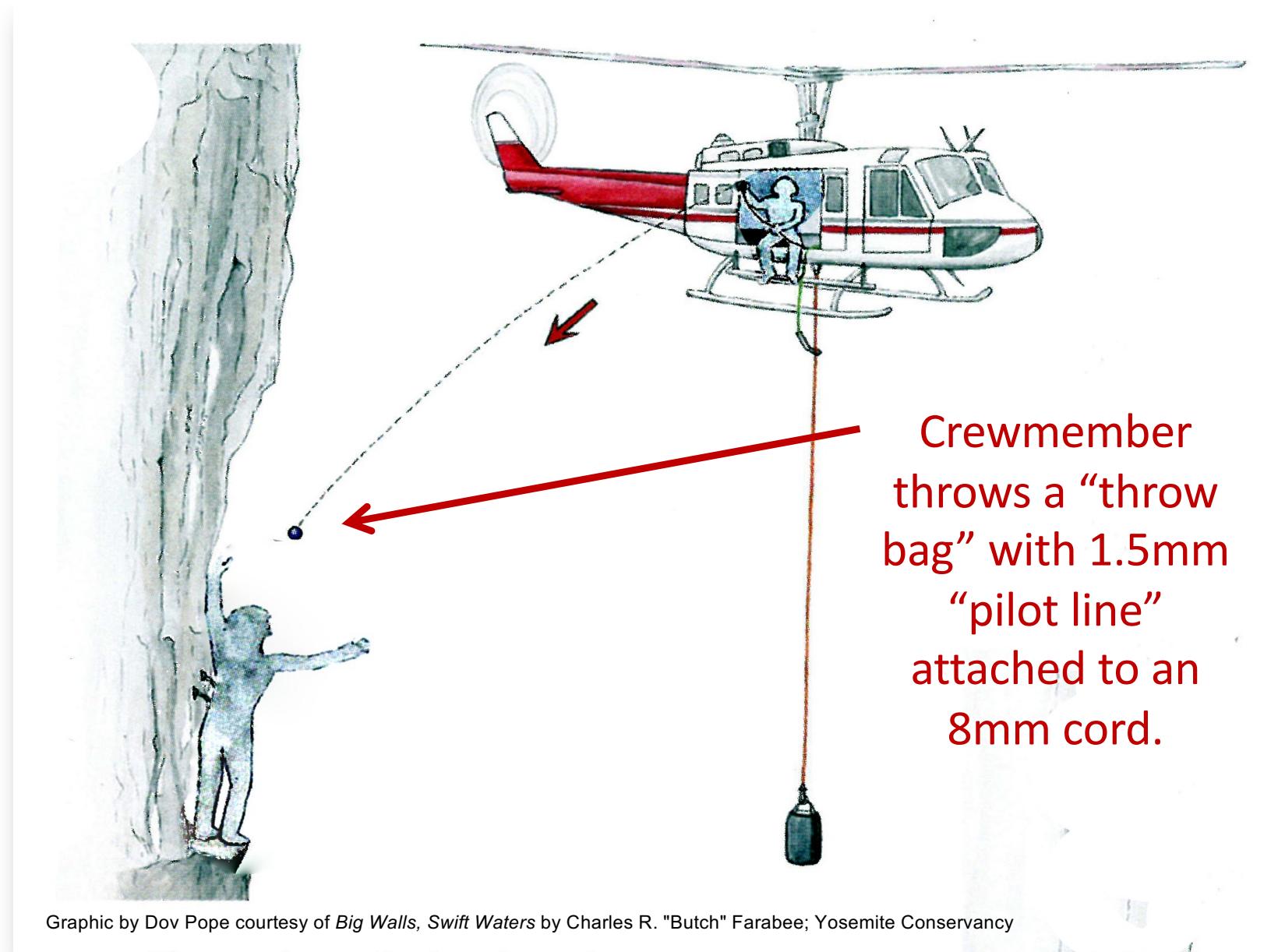
- Could be required with any connection
- Helicopter required to hover away from vertical terrain
- Load pulled horizontally to reach insertion site

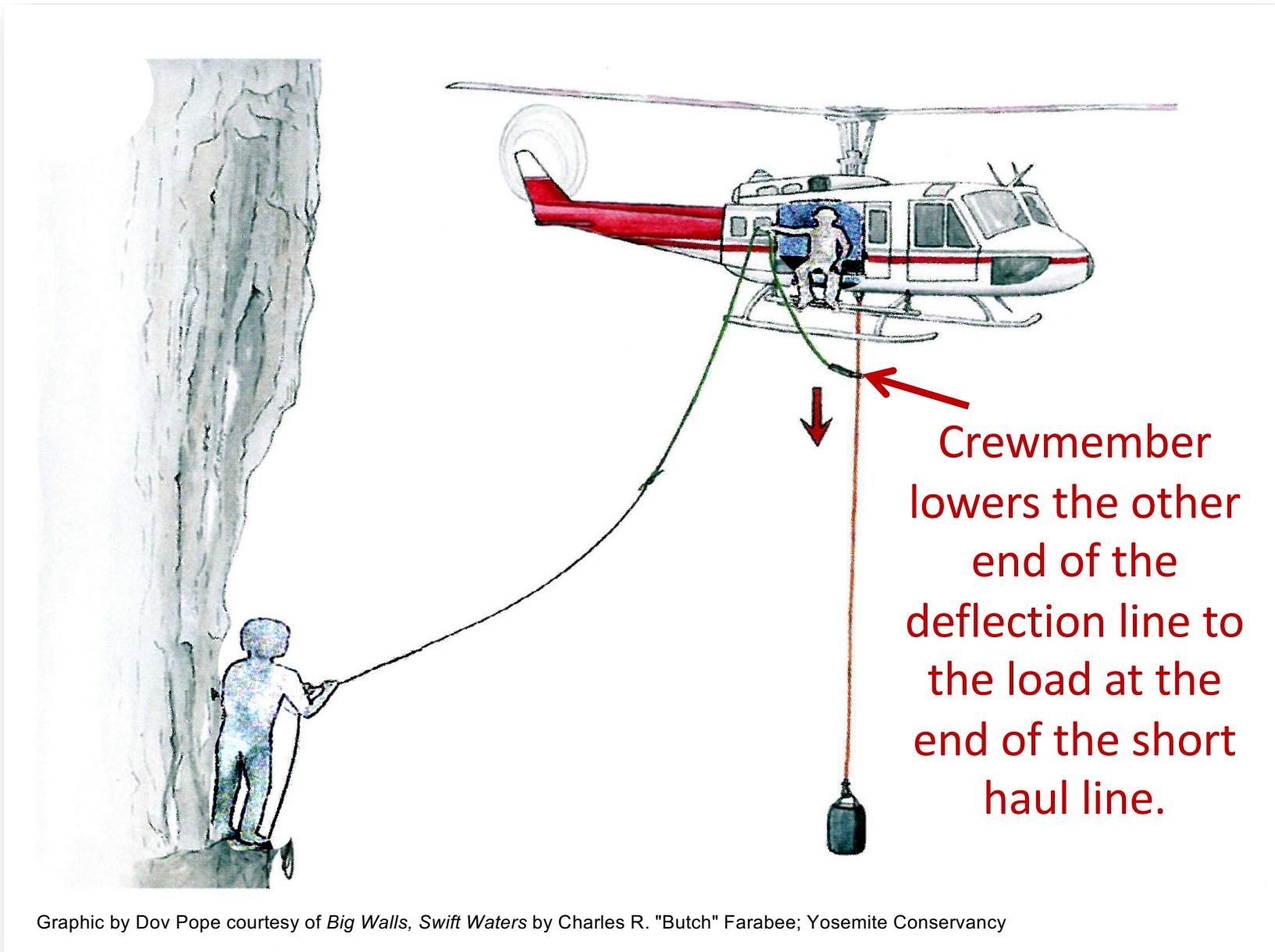


Helicopter Offset

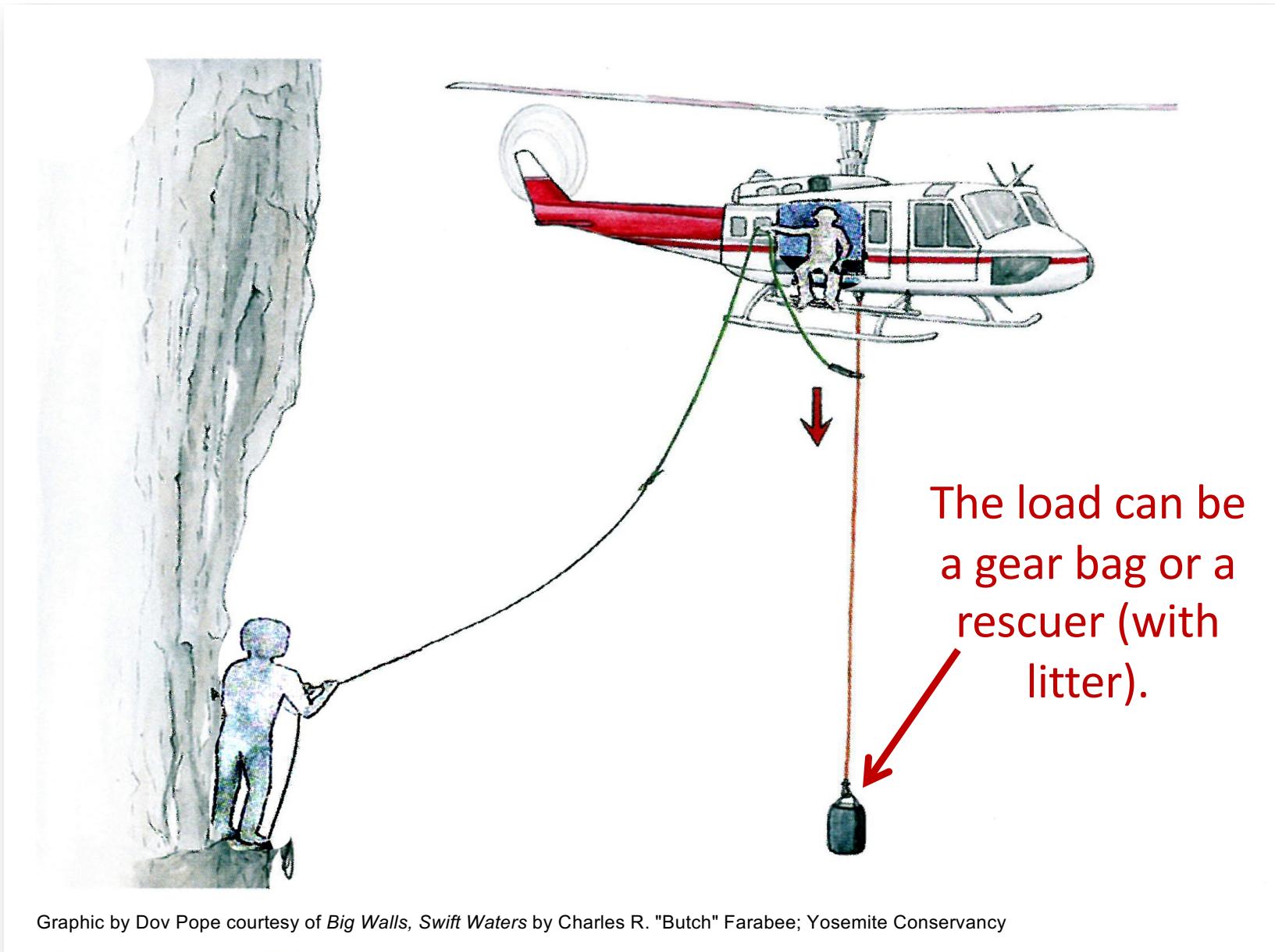
- Tagline pulled to wall at offset angle
- Telescoping rope hook can be used to pull empty hook to wall

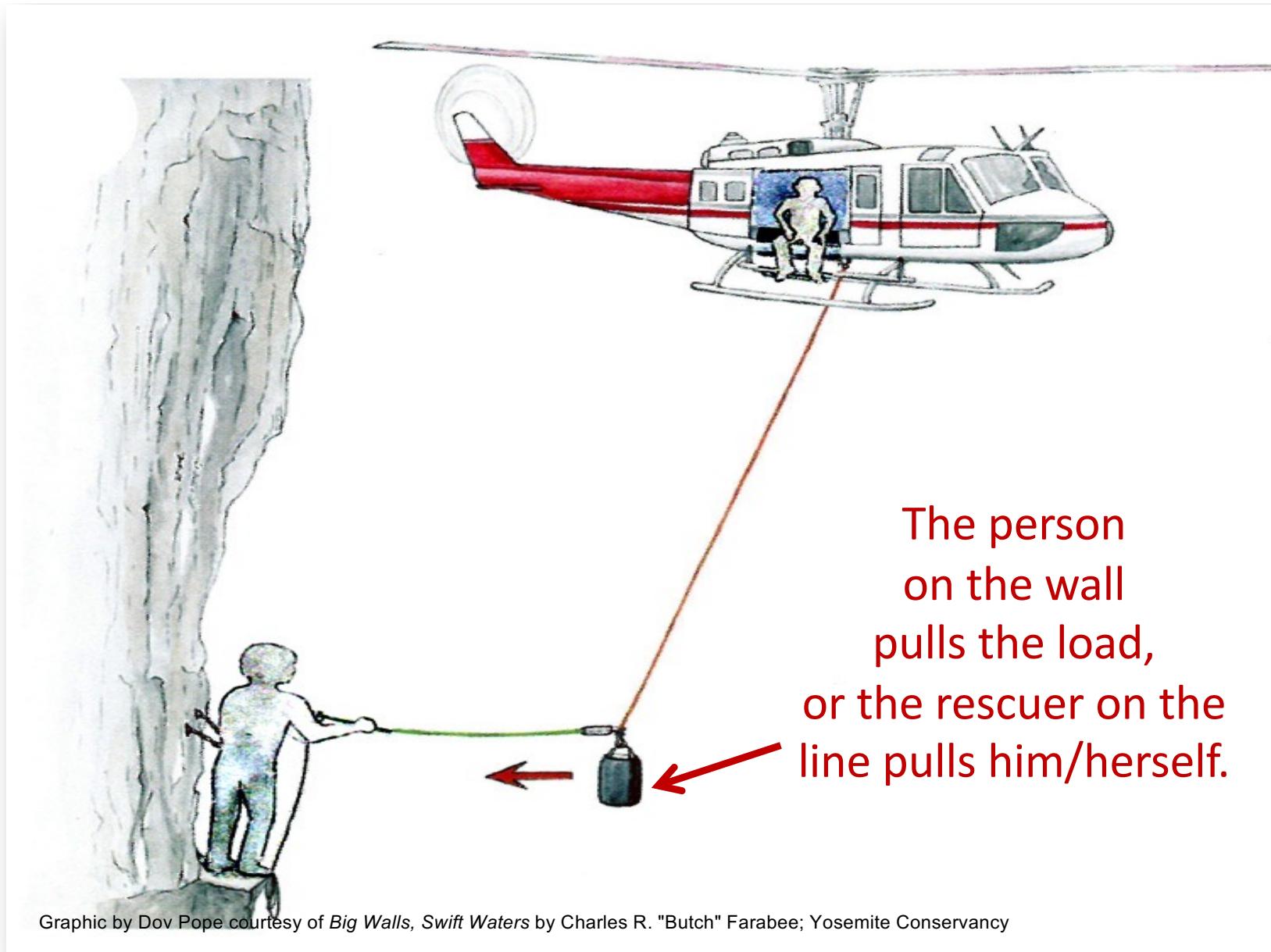


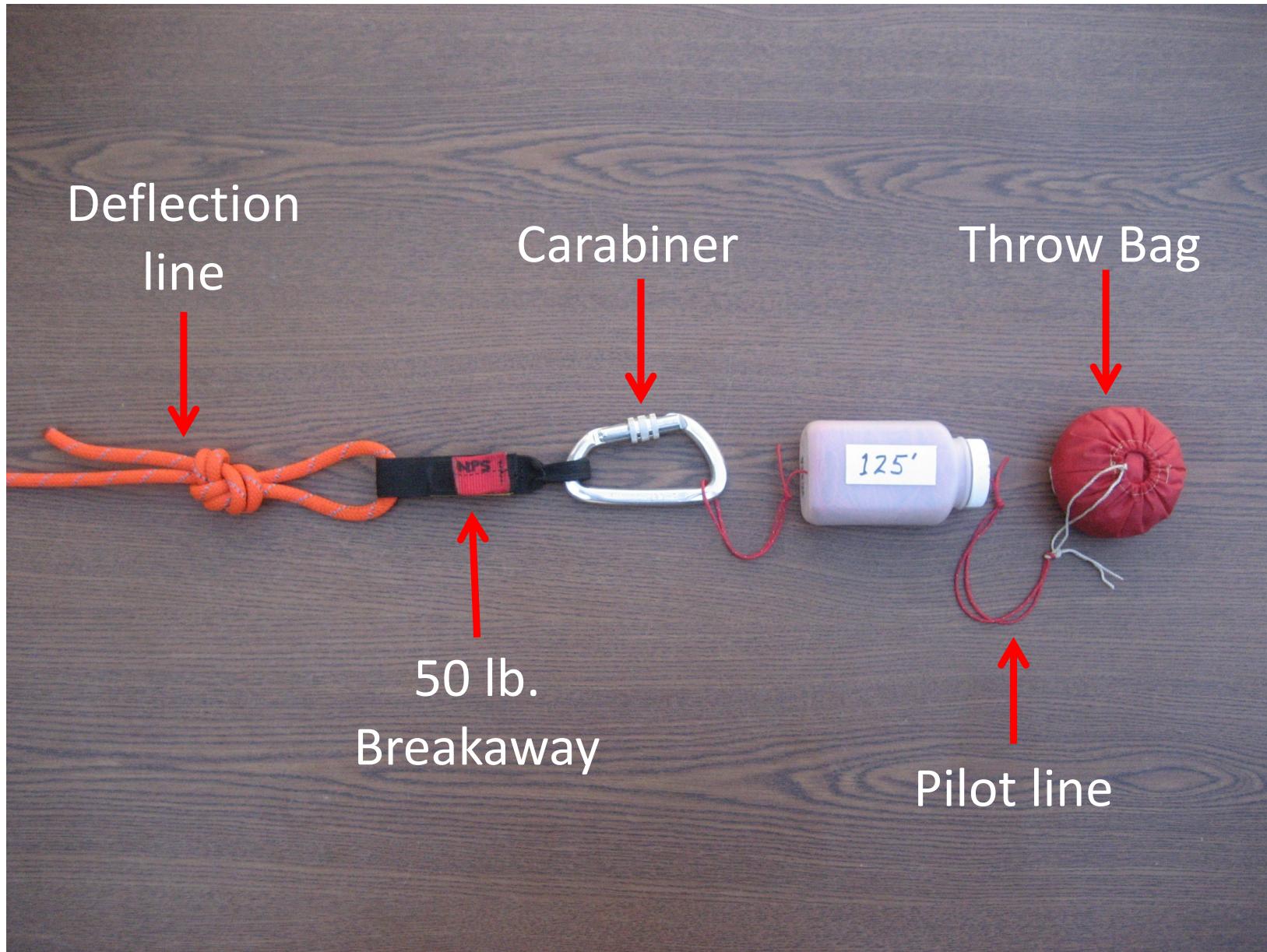




Graphic by Dov Pope courtesy of *Big Walls, Swift Waters* by Charles R. "Butch" Farabee; Yosemite Conservancy







Helicopter Offset Insert & Extract Video



In Conclusion

- Pros & Cons for Each Technique
- Right Solution Depends On:
 - Your Team
 - Your Terrain
 - Your Rescue Challenges
 - Your Resources
- All Techniques Require Training

Questions/Comments



Contact Information

Charley Shimanski

- charley.shimanski@gmail.com
- [001.303.909.9348](tel:001.303.909.9348)
- www.alpine-rescue.org

Dave Weber

- davidchristopherweber@gmail.com
- [001.801.673.2392](tel:001.801.673.2392)
- www.mountainrescuecollective.com

