



BAREFOOT

Burn v4a2III ★

Location

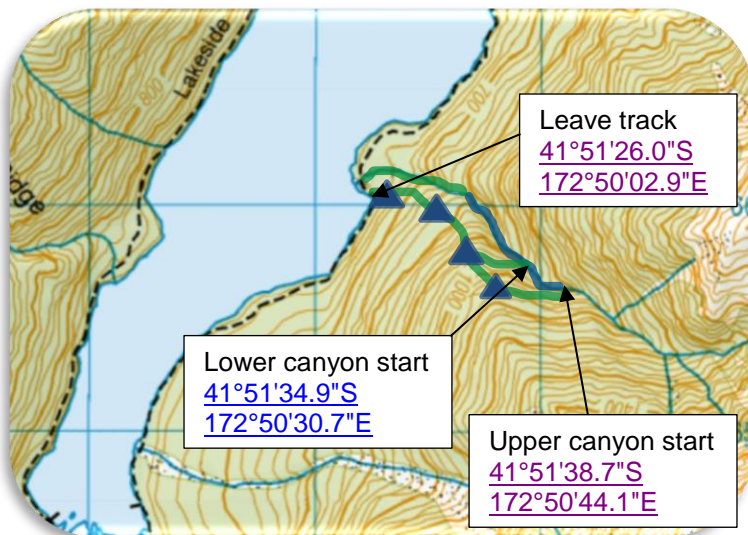
Lake Rotoiti, Nelson Lakes National Park.

Character

Medium flow canyon with mostly beautiful steep, clean abseils. The lower canyon offers great bang for your buck and can be combined in a day with Lower Chandler – but remember to take your shoes off when crossing the didymo infested Travers River.

Map

BR24 Kawatiri (Approach), BS24 Mt Robert (Canyon)



Approach by Car and Water Taxi

From the center of St Arnaud, drive 500m south on Kerr Bay Road to the [lakefront](#). Take a water taxi ([rotoitiwatertaxis.co.nz](#)) to the end of the canyon. The water taxi is flexible with timing if you have a sizeable group. Alternatively, it's a 45m kayak or 1.5h walk (7km).

Approach on Foot

Follow Lake Head Track past the canyon to find blue and pink triangles leading off the main track. Follow the blue triangles (a trapping line) through open beech forest up the TL of the stream. At ~920m, you can traverse and enter the lower canyon above R7, via an easy scramble. Alternatively, follow the blue markers up a steep and narrow spur that heads slightly away from the stream. At 1050m traverse towards the stream without losing altitude. There are a few places to easily enter the canyon above R1 (go too high and you'll see a series of cascading waterfalls not worth canyoning).

Rock

Solid greywacke bedrock in most places, although some loose sections.

Water

Medium flow, enough to make some of the abseils exciting. No horizontal water hazards.

Catchment

2.9 km²

Anchors

Well equipped with a mix of double bolt anchors and natural tree and root anchors.

Gear

2x 40m minimum.

Route Description

The upper canyon has some very nice rappels, but a few messy walking and downclimbing sections detract from it a little. R5 and R6 are the highlights, which are nice long abseils in the flow. The canyon flattens out for a distance after R6, which allows easy entry if you want to only do the lower canyon.

The lower canyon is the better than the upper, with sizeable back to back rappels in a committing slot and virtually all rappels are in the flow. There is a very active slip above R10 & R11, so do not linger! It may be possible to downclimb R10 depending on the state of the slip. R12 is the crux, which involves jumping across the flow or a wild ride to the bottom.

Time

Kerr Bay to end of canyon	1h30m
End of canyon to top of lower canyon	45m
Top of lower canyon to top of upper	30m
Upper canyon descent	2h
Lower canyon descent	2h
Return to Kerr Bay	1h30m
Total	8h15

Flash Flood Danger

Moderate. Small catchment but committing sections.

Escapes

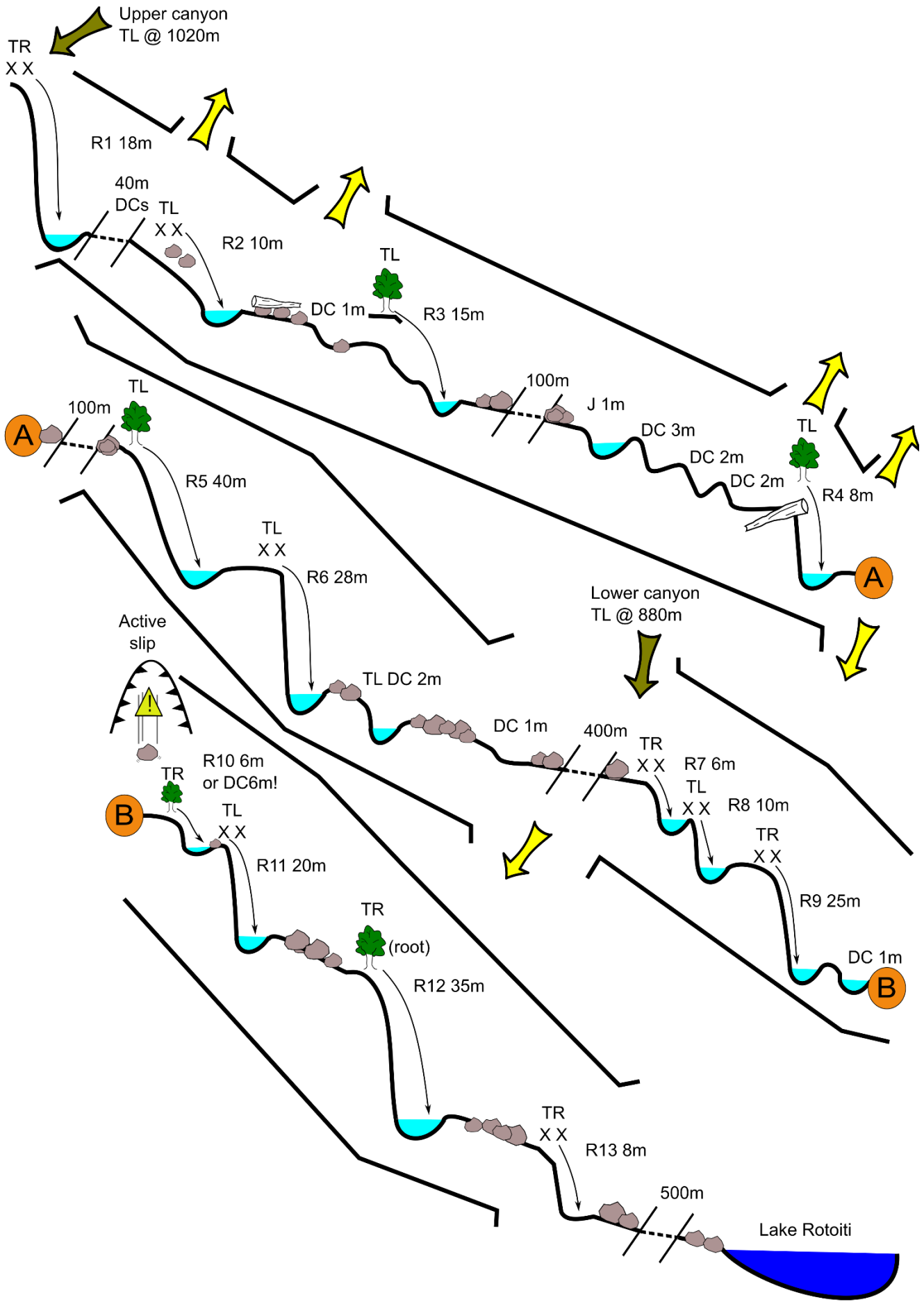
Some easy escapes available at the open flat sections.

Notes

First descent on 20/03/2014 by Toine Houtenbos, Riki Brown, Diana Harl and Mike Illingworth.

Fun to Effort Ratio: $(4 + 4) / 4.25 = 1.9$

"Riki and Diana walked in and out on bare feet...(why?), noticed afterwards that it was a bad idea because their feet were burning, a burn is a watercourse in Gaelic (Mike is Scottish)!"



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Topo by Daniel Clearwater
and Richard Bramley
www.kiwicanyons.org



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