



PEAK

Creek v6a4IV ★★

Location

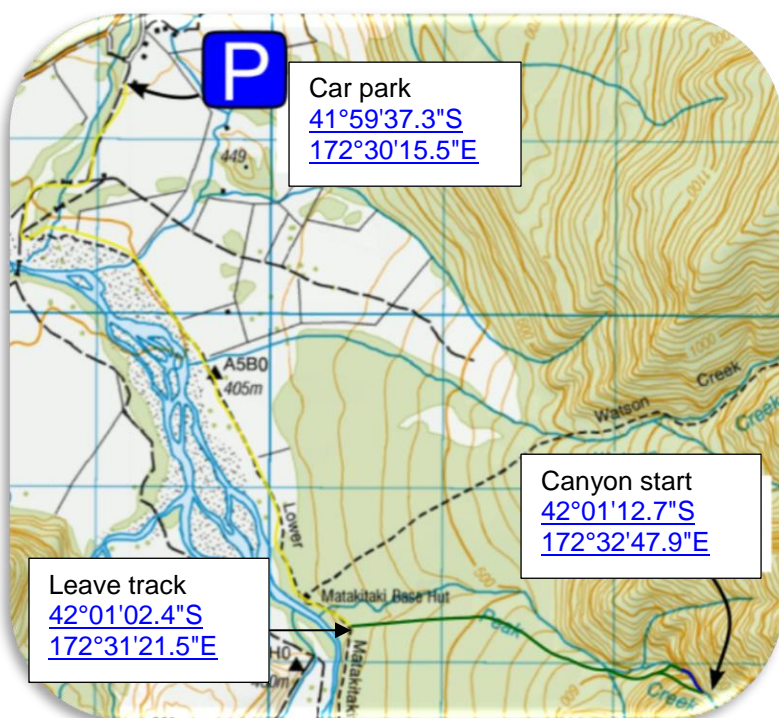
Matakitaki Valley, Nelson Lakes National Park

Character

The test piece of the Top of the South! Reasonably short but very technical canyon. Abseils have strong vertical flow and its either difficult to avoid getting your arse kicked! That, plus the hanging belays, deviations, and tricky pack management make it a challenging day out.

Map

BS23 Matakitaki.



Approach by Car

Drive to the start of the Lower Matakitaki Track which is 40km from Murchison (via Mangles Valley Road).

Approach on Foot

From the carpark walk or cycle (access times assume walking) 4km on flat 4WD track till it crosses Peak Creek. Head up through open beech forest on the true left of the creek (2km, ~400m ascent). Beware of wasps! It is reasonably straight forward to head straight up and into the canyon, staying near to the bluffs on the side of the creek, and entering at 800m altitude via a short downclimb directly above R1.

Rock

Hard greywacke / semi-schist.

Water

High flow canyon, given its enclosed nature. Vertical flow unavoidable in several places.

Catchment

10.6 km²

Anchors

Single and double bolted anchor stations. Some may not survive floods. Very few natural anchor options.

Gear

Minimum 2 x 50m ropes. Spares recommended.

Route Description

The first drop is straight forward. Anchors of R2 are tucked behind the rock at the pool outlet, so make an awkward climb up the rock or stand right on the lip and lean out. Expect to be in strong vertical flow at the end of R2. The flow of R3 can be avoided by bridging most of the way down. There's a 50m section of walking before R4; escape may be possible at this point. R4 is an awkward traverse line across the flow to the R5 anchors - careful not to slip down over the lip. R5 follows a dry shelf on the true right and there are two deviations to keep you out of the flow. This keeps you out of a foamy pit with a big log in it (the "pothole of terror"). R6 begins from a convenient rock bulge ("The Lorax"). Half way down R6 you must enter the water above the rooster tail. Pick your line and be prepared to get flushed over the edge. R7 is reasonably straight forward - jump through the flow at the bottom and across the turbulent pool. It is then a 2km walk back to the track.

Time

Vehicle park to start of canyon	2h
Canyon descent	4h30m
Return to vehicle	1h30m
Total	8h

Flash Flood Danger

High. Few places to get above flood levels.

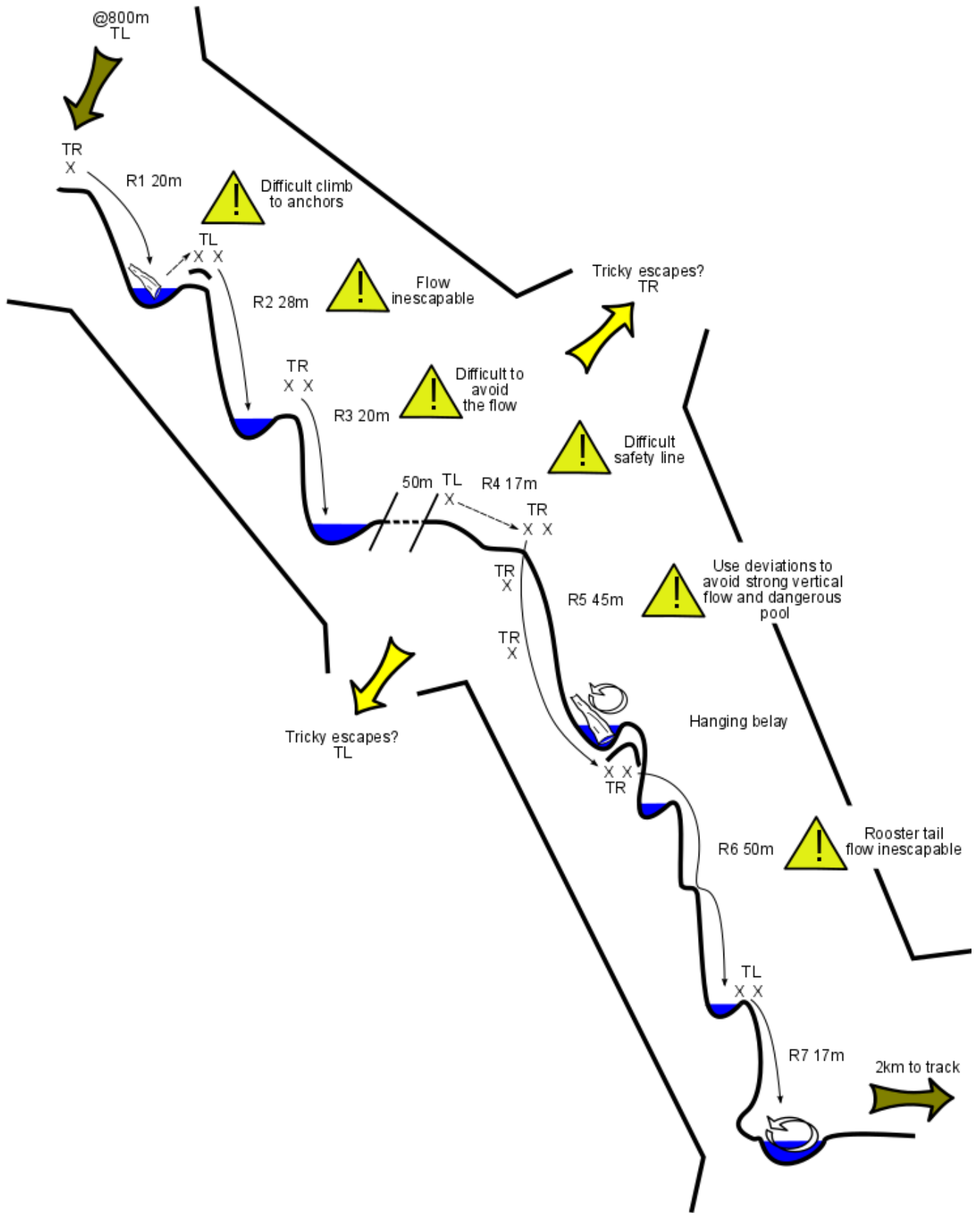
Escapes

Fully enclosed, except for possibly after R3.

Notes

First descent: Lee Den Haan, Toine Houtenbos, Richard Bramley, 5/11/2016. Fun to Effort Ratio: (4.5 + 5) / 3.5 = 2.7

<https://youtu.be/t32J-MW4VuU>



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and Toine Houtenbos
www.kiwicanyons.org



Richard Bramley bridging his way down R3
Photo by Toine Houtenbos



Avoiding the pothole of terror (R5)
Photo by Lee Den Haan



Richard Bramley choosing a line across/down the rooster tail of R6
Photo by Toine Houtenbos



Looking back at R5, R6, and R7 from the bottom
Photo by Toine Houtenbos

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Topo by Richard Bramley
and Toine Houtenbos
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