



RED GRANITE

Creek v4a4III ★★ ★

Location

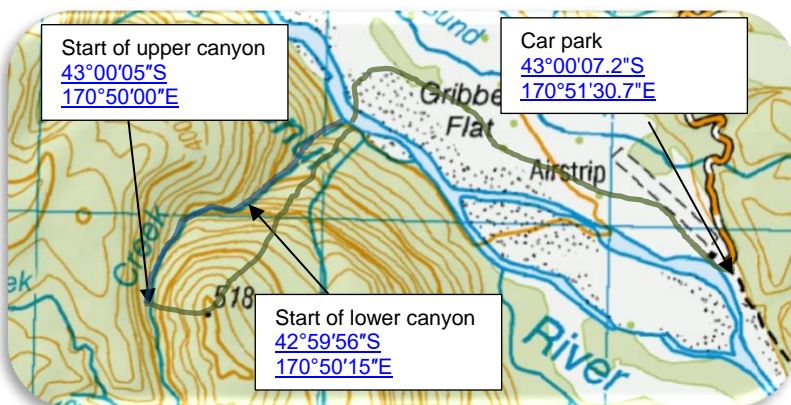
Tributary of the Mikonui River, near Ross.

Character

A fantastic, open granite canyon with big waterfalls and pools. In the words of a notorious potty-mouthed West Coast kayaker "sandy jumps stacked like pedophiles around a playground".

Map

[BV18 – Kokatahi](#)



Approach by Car

Turn down Totara Valley Rod, just north of Ross, and drive 30 minutes to the road end. There are multiple small fords, but they are usually passable in a 2WD.

Approach on Foot

From the car park, jump over the gate at the start of the DOC track and then immediately scramble down towards the river. Follow the 4WD & cattle tracks down the river bed through the gorse. Wade across the Mikonui River (waist deep normally) when you're directly opposite or slightly past Red Granite Creek. Enter the bush on the true right of the canyon and climb straight up. After ~60m of climbing you will reach a large slip (visible from the Mikonui). From the top, do your best to follow the rough track which climbs through the bush to high point 518, then heads south along the ridge for 200 metres before dropping steeply to the creek. To access the lower canyon, half way up the large slip (as it starts to steepen), look for a cairn and a large rimu tree. Enter the bush there and sidle into the canyon.

Rock

Granite gorgeous granite.

Water

Medium flow. Lots of swimming across deep pools. No significant aquatic features at normal flow.

Catchment

11km²

Anchors

Double bolt anchors and trees.

Gear

Minimum 2 x 40m ropes.

Route Description

There is a great initial series of rappels and jumps before the only significant walking section in the canyon. Then after a few small jumps and down climbs you turn the corner and get a view of numerous large waterfalls below you and the Mikonui valley beyond. You can enter this lower part of the canyon at the top of R3 if you want a shorter day. This is the steepest part of the canyon, which has 6 large rappels, including various jumps from ledges.

The R8 anchors are accessed via a ledge near a pour over. This is easy at normal flows, but at high flows it might be hard to avoid getting washed over (you would need to stay on rope).

You can climb through or around the sieve above R9. The second to last waterfall (R9 & R10) is an impressive low angle chute that is best avoided except perhaps at very low flows. Instead, climb up to the ledge on the true right and rappel along it, clipping a deviation part of the way along, till you reach double bolt anchors above the huge pool below. From these anchors, abseil part way down and jump the final 12m. The anchors for the final rappel are tucked in behind a big boulder.

Remember to carefully check all pools – some are not as deep or clean as they look.

Time

Vehicle park to start of canyon	2h
Canyon descent	4h30m
Return to vehicle	30m
Total	7h

Flash Flood Danger

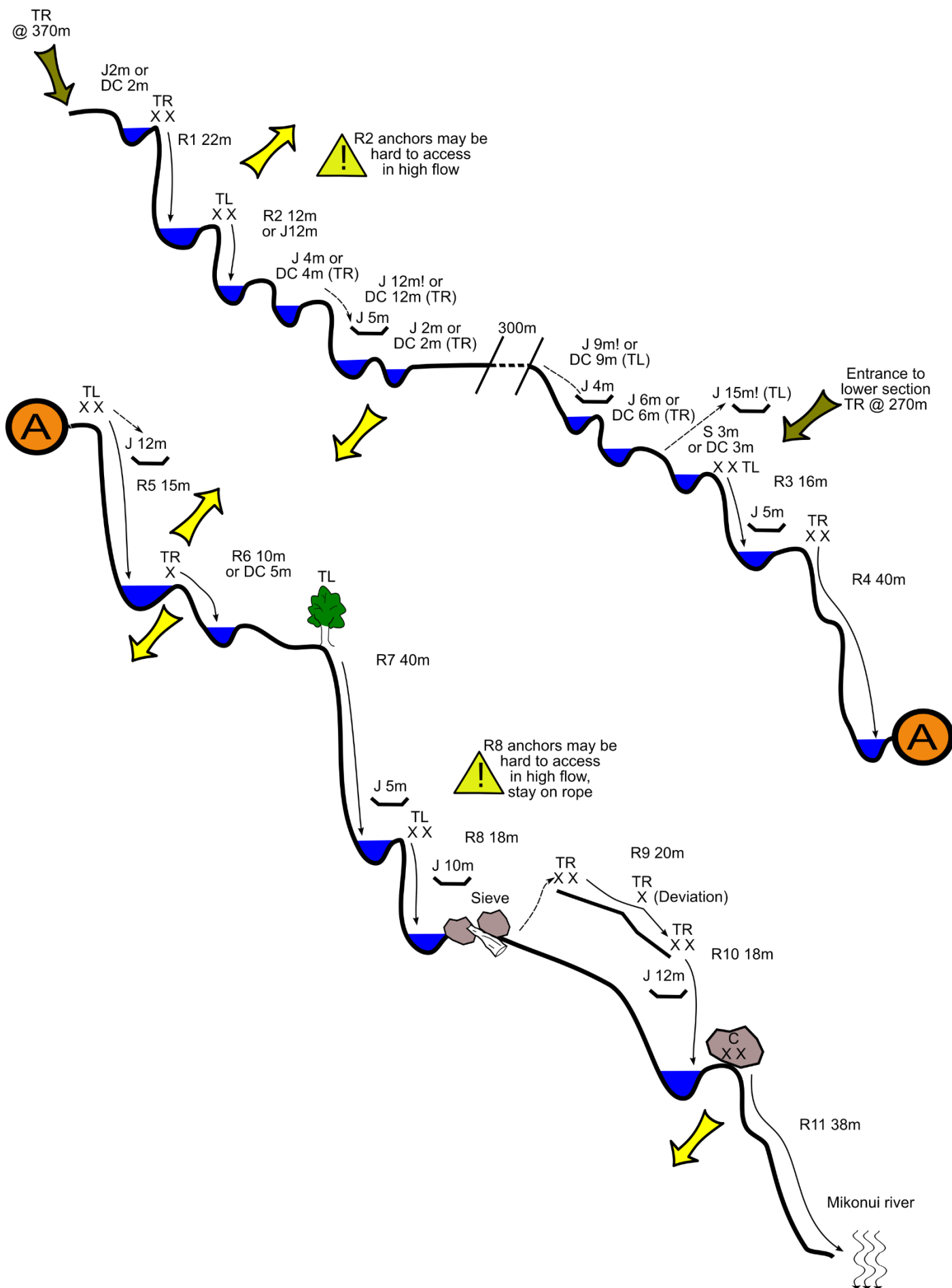
Low (large catchment).

Escapes

Quite a lot of escapes, particularly in the upper section. The lower section is more enclosed, but there are still escapes (the most obvious are marked on the topo).

Notes

The upper section was first kayaked in 2009. First full descent: Lee Den Haan and Richard Bramley, 28/11/2017.



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Topo by Lee Den Haan and
Richard Bramley

www.kiwicanyons.org



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