



MAJOR MAYHEM

Canyon v5a3IV ★★ ★

Location

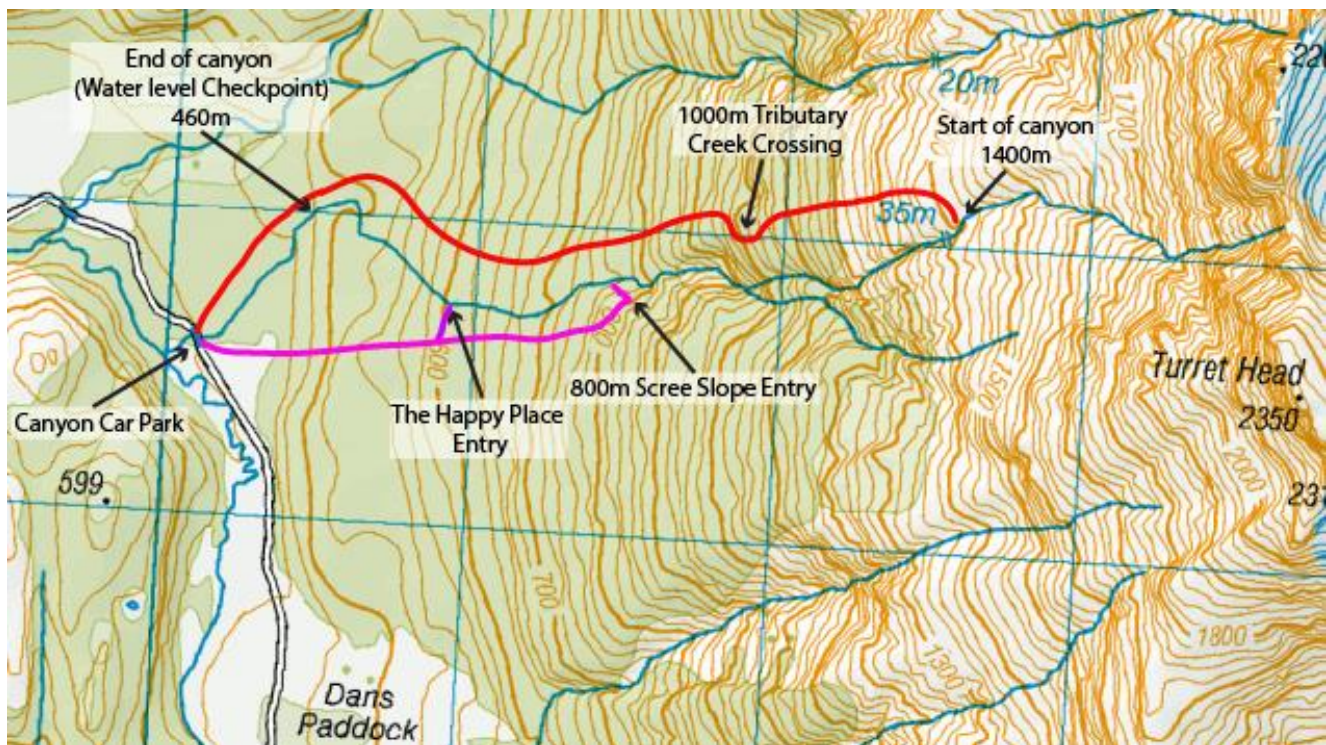
Dart Valley

Character

Big exposed waterfalls in the upper section, with a relentless aquatic slot canyon below.

Map

CA10 - Lake Williamson



Approach by Car

Drive to the 2nd last ford before the end of the Dart Valley road (just after Dan's Paddock). Limited parking on the far side of the ford, on right of dirt road ~25mins from Glenorchy. From Paradise onwards the road is gravel and you must cross several fords. The road and fords are suitable for a 2WD car in normal weather conditions. There is a DOC toilet at the end of the Dart Valley road (10mins beyond Canyon Car Park).

Approach on Foot

Upper section:

From the car park begin climbing on the left side of the creek (looking upstream). If water levels are a concern stop in at the checkpoint at the 460m contour in the creek to compare with the reference photo. Continue climbing, staying reasonably close to the creek. There is a tributary

creek that is easily crossed at the 1000m contour (crossing from North side to South side). The side creek gets steep below and above this location. Keep climbing beyond the tree line in the tussock grass to reach the 1400m contour and the start of the canyon.

Lower Section(s):

It is possible to enter the spectacular lower slot canyon easily from Canyon Left at either the 800m contour via a scree slope downclimb to the creek at 760m, or at the "Happy Place" 600m contour.

From the car park begin climbing on the right side of the creek (looking upstream). If water levels are a concern, stop in at the 460m contour in the creek to compare with the reference photo. Continue climbing through the trackless wilderness until you reach your desired height. The 800m entrance requires a scramble down a scree slope to canyon bottom @ 760m. Alternatively you can easily enter by following the 600m contour to a bench above "the Happy Place" and scramble into the canyon there.

Rock

Schist (I guess)

Water

Medium to Low Flow

Catchment

2.2 km²

Anchors

Majority are bolted anchors with the occasional natural anchor in the more open section of canyon.

Gear

2x 60m Ropes. Keeping in mind large groups will require additional ropes due to hanging belays in the 'Money Shot' falls sequence.

Route Description

Upper Section

The canyon begins high on the hillside well above the tree line. R1 has a handline bolt to safely reach the anchor. The fun begins at the R8 anchors (very exposed) at the top of 'Money Shot Falls'. Care is needed on the overhang at the top of R8 due to loose rocks. The R9 anchors (hanging belay) are located to canyon right (CR) well out of the main flow. R9 anchors are 60m below the R8 anchor station, extreme care should be taken to not descend off the end of your rope!! Canyon opens out slightly after the junction with the South Branch offering a chance of escape. R15 drops you into the 'Green Corner' and an amazing series of waterfalls in the first real narrow corridor, a taste of what lies below.

Lower Section

It is possible to enter the canyon (avoiding the top section) via a scree slope downclimb after R21 (see approach notes).

R22 is a multi-waterfall rappel, be aware of snags when attempting to retrieve your rope. R23 has a deviation anchor on canyon left. Between R24 and R25 is a long section of downclimbing. At R25 you "Enter the 4th Chamber" with no escape until you reach "the Happy Place". R26 "Chuckys Falls" is where you will encounter the first of the notorious log jams (see notes below). "The Happy Place" (between R34 & R35) can be used as an easy entry/ escape point (see approach notes), it is also a welcome spot to catch some sun and prepare for the next section of narrow beginning at R35 and continuing all the way through to the "S Bend" downclimbs. After these downclimbs the canyon abruptly disappears, but the fun is not over. Continue downstream to reach "The Exit Narrows". At the end of the canyon is the water level check point and a short walk back to the car.

Time

Upper Section (to end of canyon)

Vehicle park to start of canyon	3 - 4hrs
Canyon descent	8 - 10hrs
Return to vehicle	10 - 15mins
Total	11 - 14hrs

Lower Section (to end of canyon)

Vehicle park to start of canyon	1 - 1.5hrs
Canyon descent	4 - 6hrs
Return to vehicle	10 - 15mins
Total	5 - 7.5hrs

Flash Flood Danger

The lower section is a sustained slot canyon with high potential for trouble in times of high water or inclement weather.

Escapes

Several options in the upper section (as indicated on the Topo Map). Limited options in the lower Slot Canyon.

Notes

The dangers present in the lower slot canyon (R25 to end of canyon) deserve a special mention. Due to the narrowness of the canyon, any logs that are washed in overtime have wedged creating dams.

At the base of almost every waterfall in the slot section exists a log jam. Gravel has built up behind these dams creating false bottom floors.

The false floors/ log jams are fragile and are likely to collapse at any time, creating two very real hazards:

- The false floor height can and will change over time. This can leave bolted anchors in locations that are unreachable. Due to the fragile nature of the log jams there is little in the way of natural anchors.
- Any collapse is likely to release the water trapped behind the log jam. Potential to create a flash flood is high. This could have a knock-on effect of causing further collapse of log jams downstream.

Any party wishing to descend this section of canyon should take these hazards into consideration and come equipped with sufficient anchor material to cover any incidents. When negotiating the log jams, the phrase "walking on egg shells" should be kept in mind.

First descent:

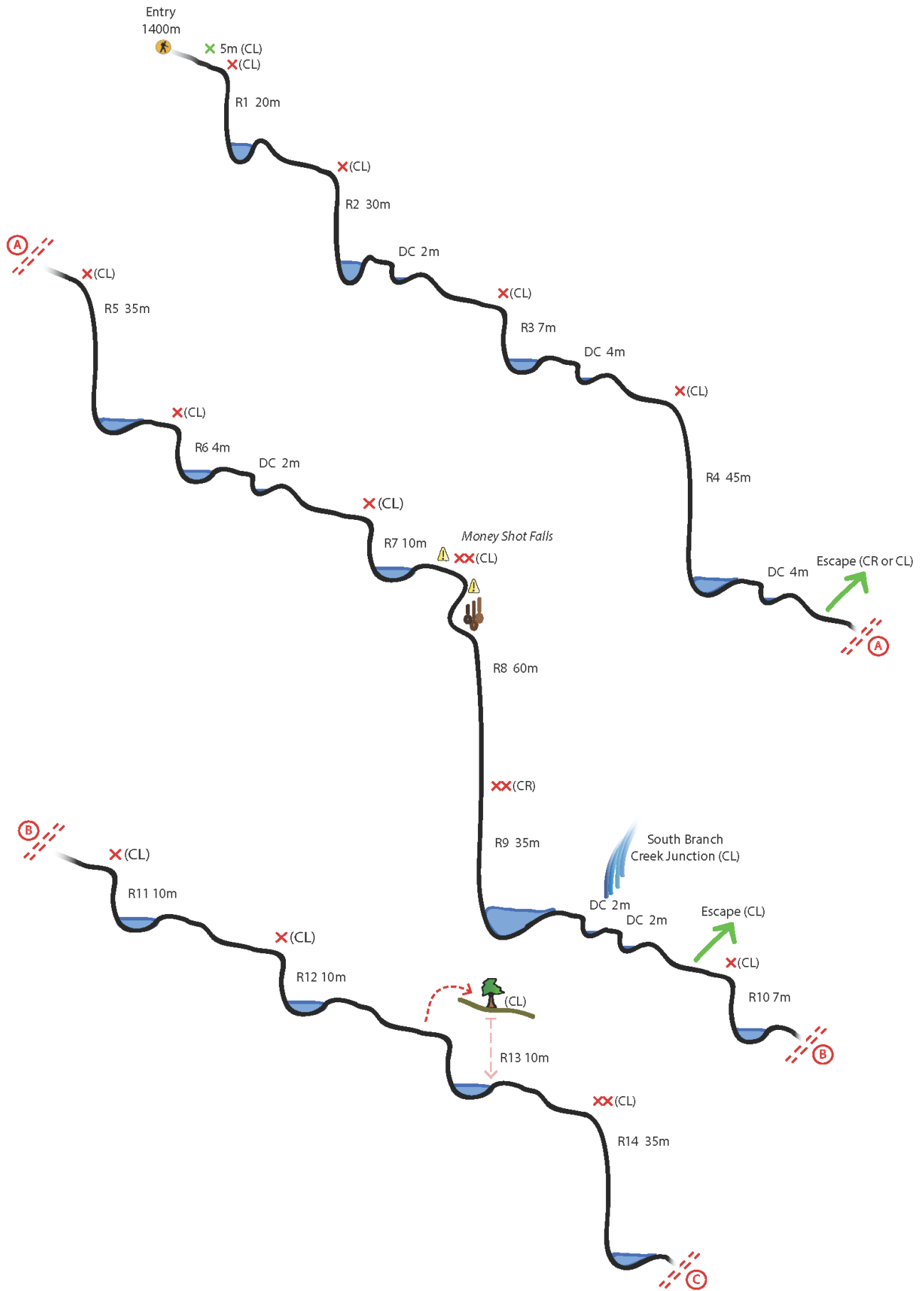
Lower Section (760m to end of canyon)
January 2016 Greg Tilden and Joe Bugden

Upper Section (1400m to Lower Section)
February 2018 Greg Tilden, Canyoning Bob, Kaden Anderson, Taylor Redd and Joe Bugden

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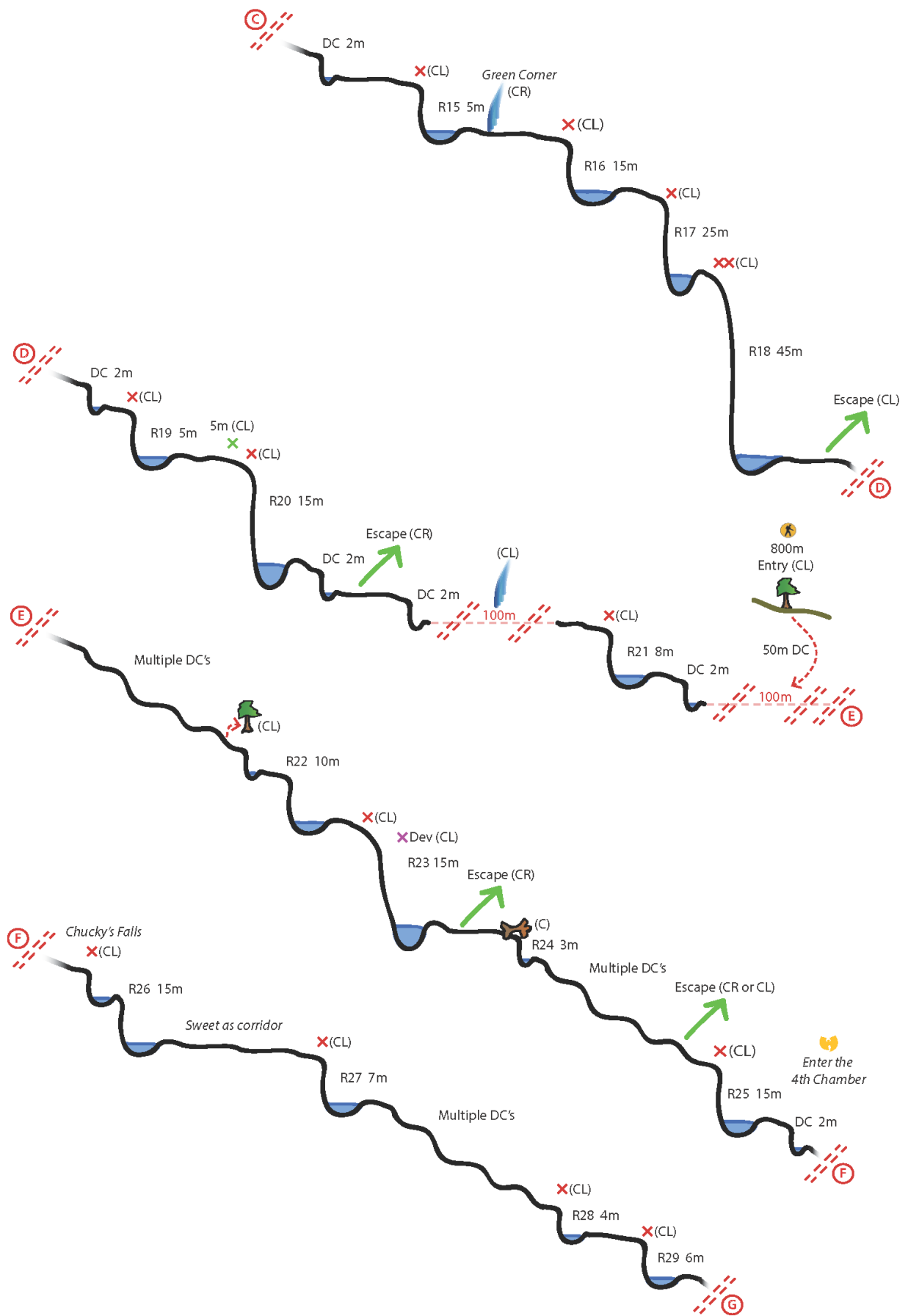
Topo by Joe Bugden
www.kiwicanyons.org



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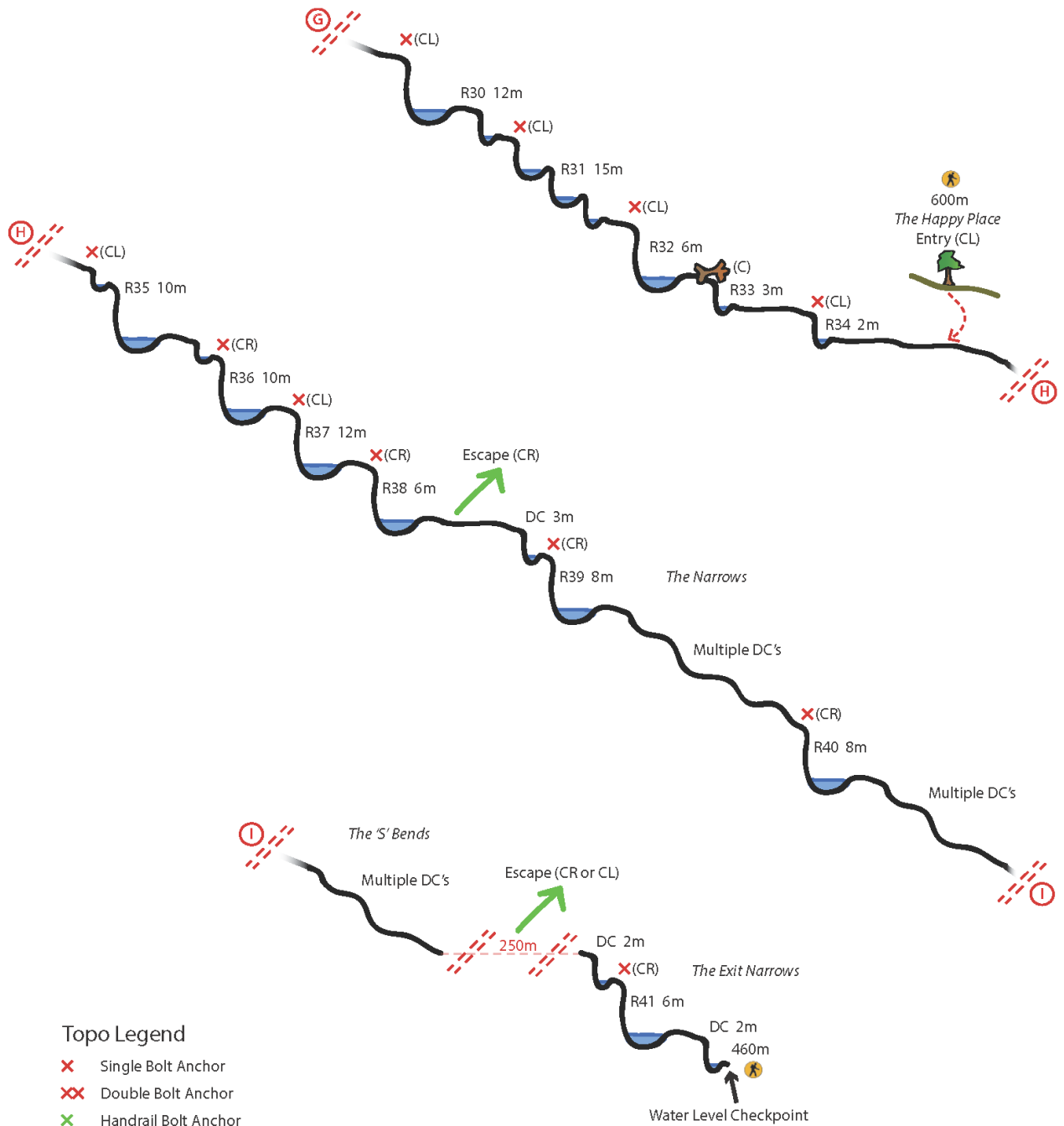
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Topo Legend

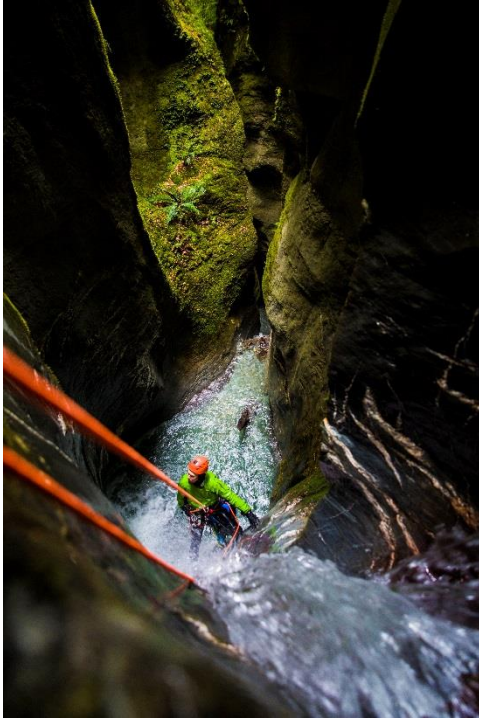
- X Single Bolt Anchor
- XX Double Bolt Anchor
- X Handrail Bolt Anchor
- X Deviation Bolt Anchor
- Natural Anchor (Log)
- Natural Anchor (Tree)
- DC Down Climb
- Requirement to leave watercourse
- Escape Possible
- Warning/ Hazard
- High potential for Rock Fall
- Wu-Tang Clan
- Entry/ Exit Track
- Tributary
- (CL) - (C) - (CR) Canyon Left/ Center/ Right
- Non-technical section

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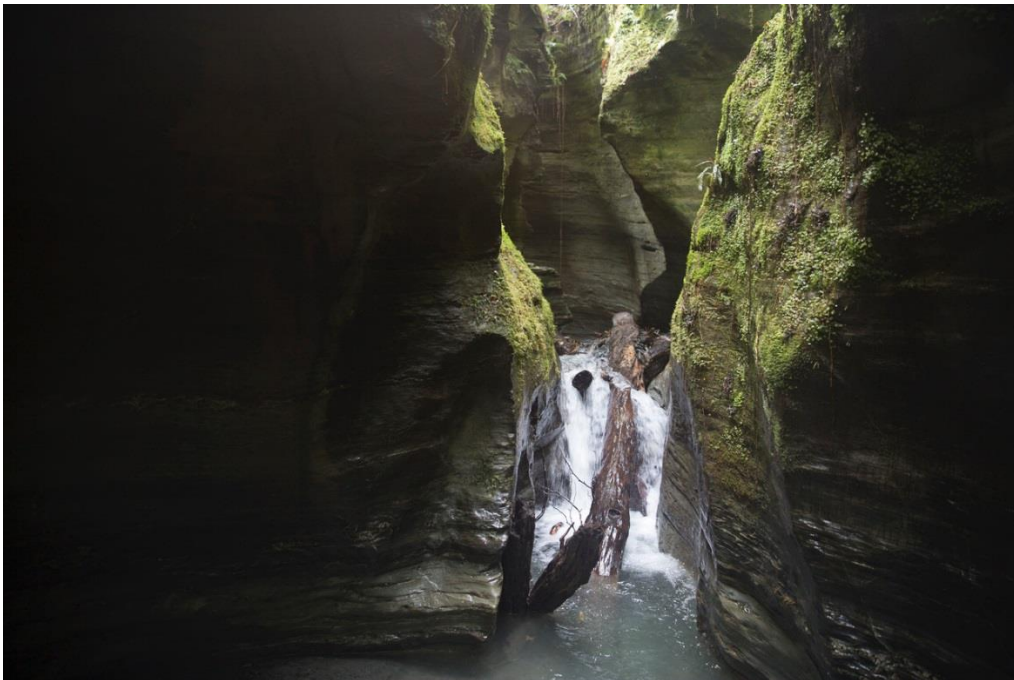
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Scenes typical of the Lower Section



Water Level Check Point (Canyon end @460m)
Water level shown at normal conditions



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