

Okahu Stream canyon v4a3III*

Herekino forest Kaitaia

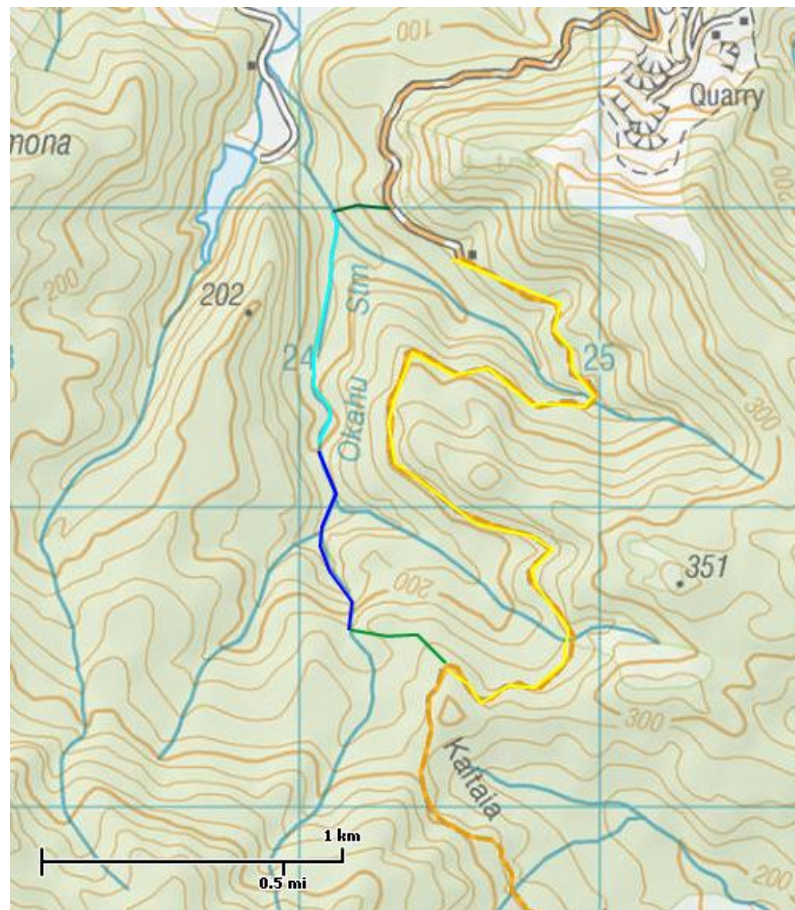
Canyon Information paraphrased from emails with Chris Stephenson

Public Access: 1h30

“Just south of Kaitaia, head up what is known locally as the Kiwanis track. (This is on the map as the [Kaitaia walkway](#). See the [DOC website](#)) This track goes from the end of Larmers Rd towards diggers valley. 1hr from the Carpark, just back from the top saddle on the Kaitaia side there exists a track descending a spur to the right. (marked with dazzled bits of tin). This goes about 15 or 20mins before arriving at the said stream, which immediately plunges over a set of falls.

Canyon Descent: 3-4hrs

The main pitch is a waterfall totalling just over 100m. I know this because a 100m rope tied at the top is just short of the bottom.



Conveniently, there is a chain around a big grunty tree at the top, allowing for a nice pull through down to a ledge about 40m below, where some helpful person has put bolts for a traverse line and anchor.

From here, the remaining drop can be broken in 2 by using a big Puriri in the stream bed as an anchor. We always used a single 100m rope for this, but 2 50s would do!

From the bottom, no more vertical gear needed, but a couple of cool smaller waterfalls remain to be jumped off. It's another 90 to 120 mins to the exit point

The smaller waterfall jumps...are all just below the tributary on the true left. There's one that a slide, maybe 5 m vertically, then immediately a jump of 2 or 3 m, then a few hundred metres of flat, a jump of 1m, a few hundred flat, then a climb down of 4 or 5 m...it'd be a jump if the big log washed out! After that pretty flat for the last few hundred metres to the track out.

Escapes:

There is potential to escape most of the way down. The waterfall was an old water collection site back in the day, so there's a rough pipe track in the bush on the true left most of the way down. It really is rough though...pig hunter territory. It is possible to climb back up through steep bush from the ledge on the main drop, and you can bypass it totally on the true right...not much fun if you do though!

Return: 30mins

The way out is up the second major tributary on the true right...there's a track just metres downstream from this. If you miss it, you just pop out into farmland, and realise you've gone too far.

Water/Equipment

We always used a single 100m rope, but 2 50s would do! I've been there once in high flood, which was pretty exciting...not for the faint hearted. Not usually a wetsuit trip, just a couple of pairs of polyprops, and be prepared to swim a couple of times. This is the real far north after all.”