



Falls Creek Canyon V5A5 IV***

Approach by Car: SH94 to Milford, passing the divide, and park at Falls Creek on the obvious [gravel clearing](#) on the side of the road. Park to allow room for buses to stop here!

Approach By Foot: From your parked car, cross the Falls creek bridge and check water level at the bridge. Continue up the DOC Falls creek track on the TR side of Falls creek until [-44.82601733 168.07800368](#), the DOC track will be around 50m from the creek, so head on down and enter the creek. Continue downstream for approx 250m until a small section of downclimbs just before the main 80m waterfall. To avoid the potentially dangerous access across a pour over to the first anchor, scramble up TR into the bush and then down climb to the top of the 80m waterfall. You can gear up here as well, as there is no need to wear wetsuits for the 250m walk downstream from the track if you don't want to.

Canyon Entry: R1 is a 80m multi pitch abseil into the cauldron. As you look down, take a few gulps as you calm your nerves and prepare for some waves down below! The bottom of this abseil is relatively safe, no undercuts, and often is able to be walked around the edge of the pool on the TR.

Canyon Descent: The canyon has steep walls with very few escapes. It opens a couple of times, but is generally very enclosed. Water hazards exist even in low flows, and at normal or higher flows it demands even more respect. Some pools can have significant swell in them (up to half meter waves in normal flows even) and not all are deep so check before jumping. The pool at the base of R7 has almost no room to stand around in, and requires a crossing of a pourover to get to R8. This canyon topo only documents the canyon to the last major waterfall (R8). Falls creek does continue for another hundred meters or so in an open, cascading waterfall style fashion. The author decided against developing this section as the best parts are done by this time and anchors are not durable in the cascading sections. The FD team has done the whole section to the road.

Exit: After the last waterfall (R9), follow the obvious ledge system (which is extremely slippery- don't slip off, the pool is hard to escape, especially in higher flows) to the TR and meet up with the Falls creek track. Finish with beers you stored under the bridge and bask in the glory of tourists admiring your bravery!

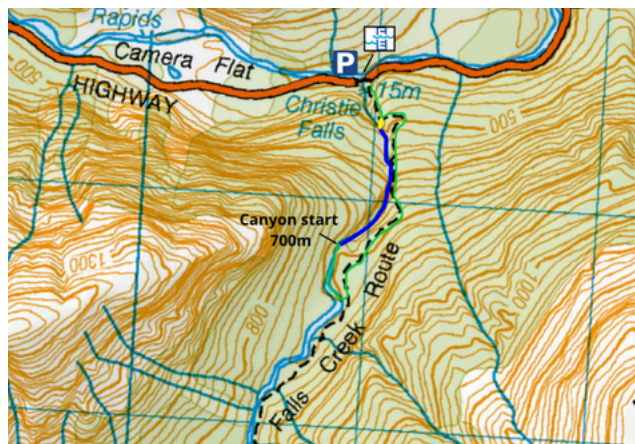
Escapes: No escapes have been verified, and the 2 marked ones may potentially end in bluffs as the terrain is very steep! So treat the canyon as inescapable!



Average Water Level



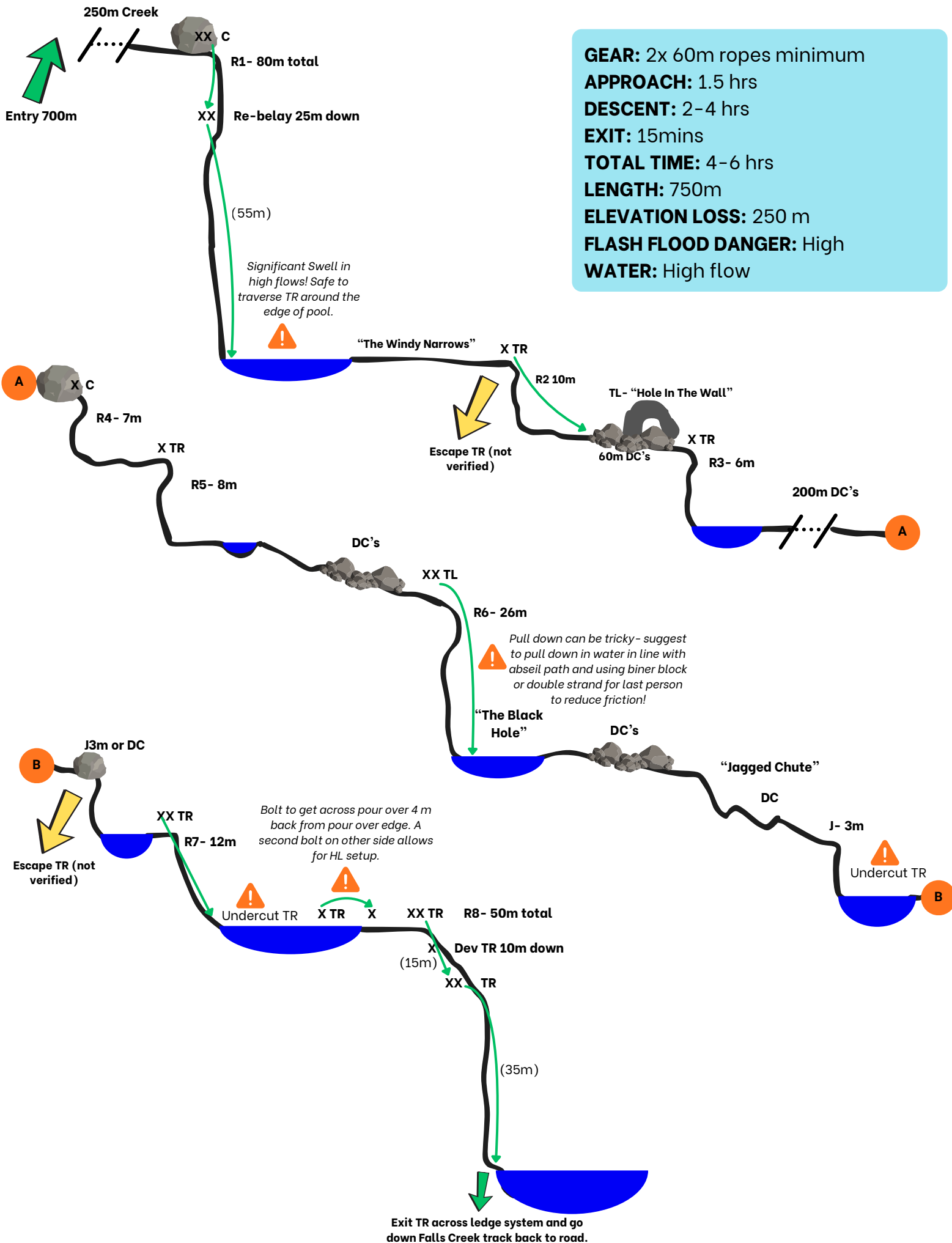
High Level



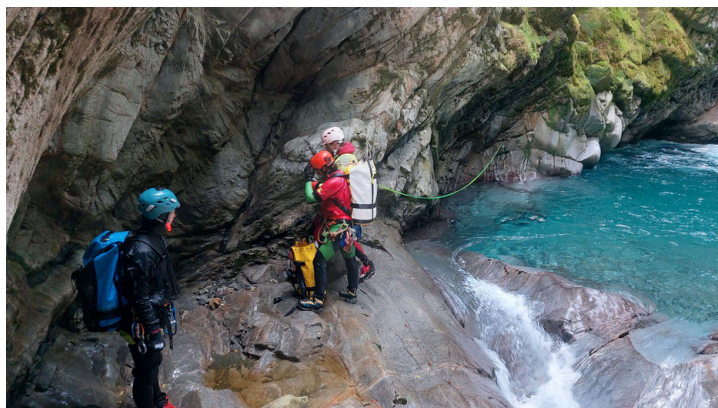
A Note On Water Levels: Small changes in the water level at the bridge greatly impact canyon hazards! At low levels, competent teams find it straightforward, but above-average levels introduce extra hazards and significantly increase difficulty, requiring teams with good A5 canyoning experience.

Above photos taken from the same place- note the size of the pool flows.

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Disclaimer: No responsibility or liability is taken for any harm, death or loss of property resulting from this document's use. Topo features, descriptions and notes may not be accurate and could be misleading. You must carry anchor building materials, be experienced, and use your own judgment when canyoning, especially in this canyon. Flooding events can strip anchors and change the layout, features and conditions. Insufficient experience may result in death! First descent: Dave Vass, Tristan Barette & Alain Rohr 2007. Topo drawn by Patrick Timm (2021) for personal use.



The access across the pour over to R8 from R7 pool.



Halfway through the Windy Narrows



A recent change in Jan 2026, photo taken at base of R5 looking downstream - a DC into the small pool ahead - it looks turbulent but is chest deep on this trip.



DC's through the jagged chute - its grippy rock, and looks harder than it is!



Section of pretty DC's and walking.



Photo by Alex M.

The jump after the jagged chute - note its not high but you need to launch out and swim hard (more so in high flows). You also cannot see around the corner and must avoid the undercut on TR.



Looking back at R4.



Looking back at the compulsory 3m jump after the jagged chute. Undercut on TR.



Looking into The Black Hole



Looking back at R8.