



BASIN CREEK

Canyon v4a3II ★

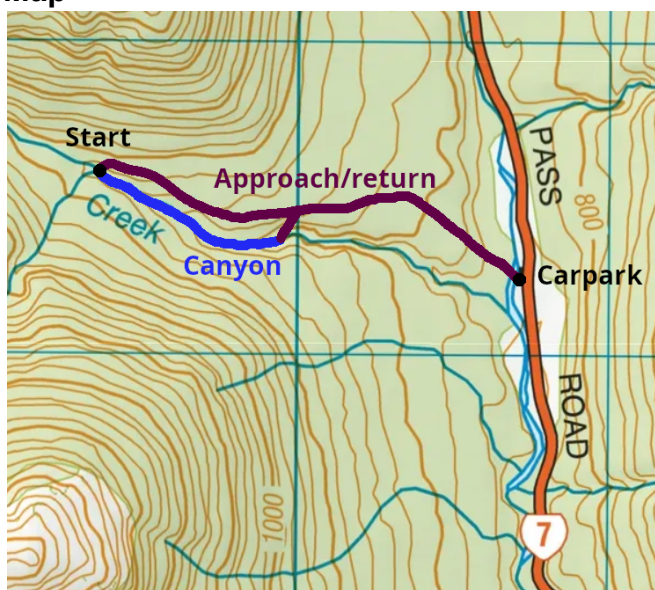
Location

Lewis pass

Character

A short canyon with a particularly impressive pitch. Mostly low angle in a bedrock gorge with beautiful blue pools.

Map



Approach by Car

Park at the large gravel bay next to a barn, directly opposite Basin Creek.

Approach on Foot

Cross the Lewis River immediately after leaving the car. Approach uphill on the true left. Soon there is a large area of windfall that must be crossed or possibly skirted around. There is an excellent track marked with metal tags (not shown on NZtopo50) that follows the creek close to the top of the gorge. The track is faint early on and disappears through the windfall but re-appears shortly after and makes for fast travel. Follow the track until you are next to the open creek above the canyon.

The Lewis River is infected with Didymo. Please bring a bucket and some detergent to disinfect your footwear and legs after the crossing.

Rock

Greywacke

Water

Medium flow. Although there is reasonable flow there are only a few swims.

Catchment

5.9 km²

Anchors

Mostly double bolted anchors.

Gear

At least one rope, 40m+ recommended.

Route Description

The first 150m of the canyon follows an enclosed stream carved through greywacke bedrock. There are several straightforward downclimbs in this section.

The first rappel is the highlight and technical crux of the route, with a 15m drop in a narrow slot, and a dramatic rooster tail at the bottom. Access the anchor using a handline, and 2m below the anchor is a redirect bolt that can help to guide you away from the midway pool. The redirect was placed to minimise the swing when traversing, but is hard to clip. All bolts for this feature are on the true left.

After R1 the canyon continues for 200m. There is a straightforward 5m pitch into a large but shallow pool, and an awkward 3m pitch that may be downclimbable. After this the canyon gradually opens back into a stream. Bushbashing up the true left of the gorge will return you to the track.

Time

Vehicle park to start of canyon	1hr
Canyon descent	1h30min
Return to vehicle	1hr
Total	3h30m

Flash Flood Danger

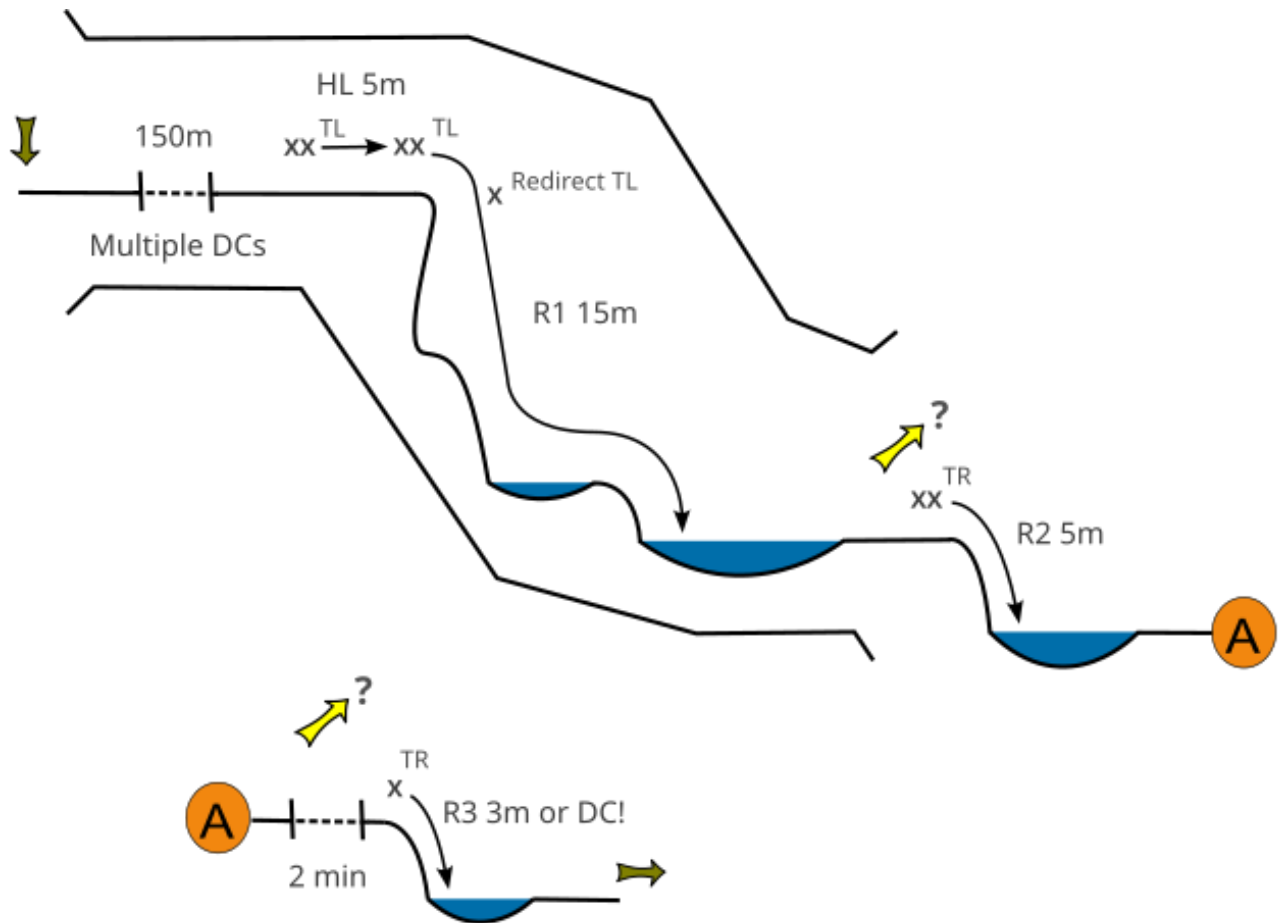
Low, after R1 escapes should be possible.

Escapes

Some likely escapes noted on the topo diagram. There may be others.

Notes

First descent: Amy Burney, Ben Fletcher, Christian Miller, and Lulu Jordan - November 2025.



Basin Creek Canyon v4a3II*, Lewis Pass

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*Topo by Amy, Ben, Christian,
and Lulu*

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