



DOROTHY

Falls v4a3II ★★

Location

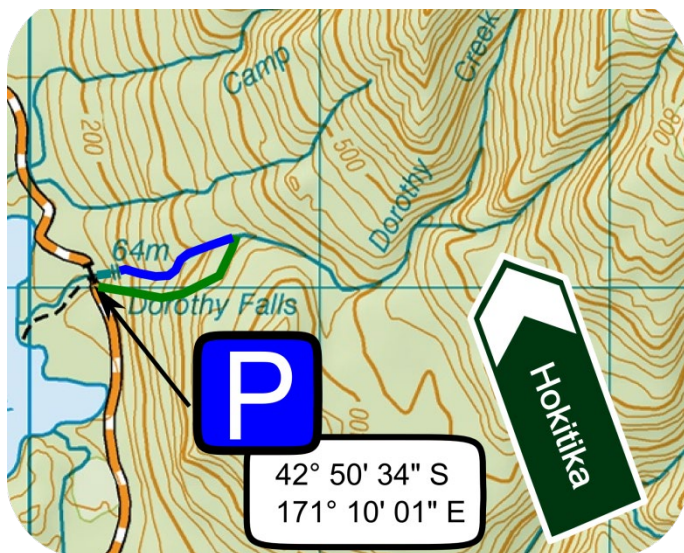
Dorothy Falls, Lake Kaniere, Hokitika

Character

A moderate gradient enclosed stream in the upper section with several jumps. Longer, more open rappels in the lower section.

Map

BV19 Lake Kaniere



Approach by Car

From Hokitika, Head south east on Stafford St, which becomes Kaniere Rd. 19.5km from Hokitika, you will reach Lake Kaniere. Turn left then right onto Hans Bay Rd. Follow the lake past a DOC campground and then continue on Dorothy Falls Rd (gravel) until you cross Dorothy Creek and reach a DOC car park.

Approach on Foot

First, follow the short track to scout the flow at Dorothy Falls. Then, from the car park, climb the true left. There is an informal trail at first, but it soon disappears – navigation and routefinding skills required. The access route is steep in places and has a couple of tricky tree-climbing moves near R7 that may need a hand line and passing of packs. Continue up until the terrain flattens around the 330m contour and you can easily access the stream.

Rock

Granite.

Water

Low to moderate volume at normal levels. Several jumps and pools.

Catchment

2.5 km²

Anchors

Bolted and natural anchors – take webbing and maillions to repair/replace as needed.

Gear

Minimum of 2x 50m ropes. Natural anchor kit.

Route Description

There are a number of short drops over slabs, logjams or boulder piles into deep looking pools. Many of these can either be down climbed, rappelled or jumped. However, the water is dark brown, like Coca-cola, making it impossible to scout the pool without actually getting in and feeling for obstacles.

R5 is a beautiful drop, where the whole stream disappears over a fault line and into a fantastic section of canyon. Choose the left for a shorter, wetter pitch, or right for longer dryer. Be careful with rope retrieval on R6 – they can sometimes stick.

The canyon then opens up, with several open drops and some scrambling before arriving at Dorothy Falls. Use a belay or handline to reach the exposed anchor. From the anchor all the water is funnelled into the rappel path, making it the trickiest rappel, though there are several ledges on the pitch where you can pause clear of the current. It is easy to escape and walk back to the car if it looks too intimidating.

If the pool is deep enough (scout the dark waters carefully) You can end the rap early, and jump from slabs on the TL.

Time

Car park to start of canyon	1hr
Canyon descent	3-4hr
Return to car	1min
Total	4-5hr

Flash Flood Danger

Moderate. Reasonably small drainage, medium commitment.

Escapes

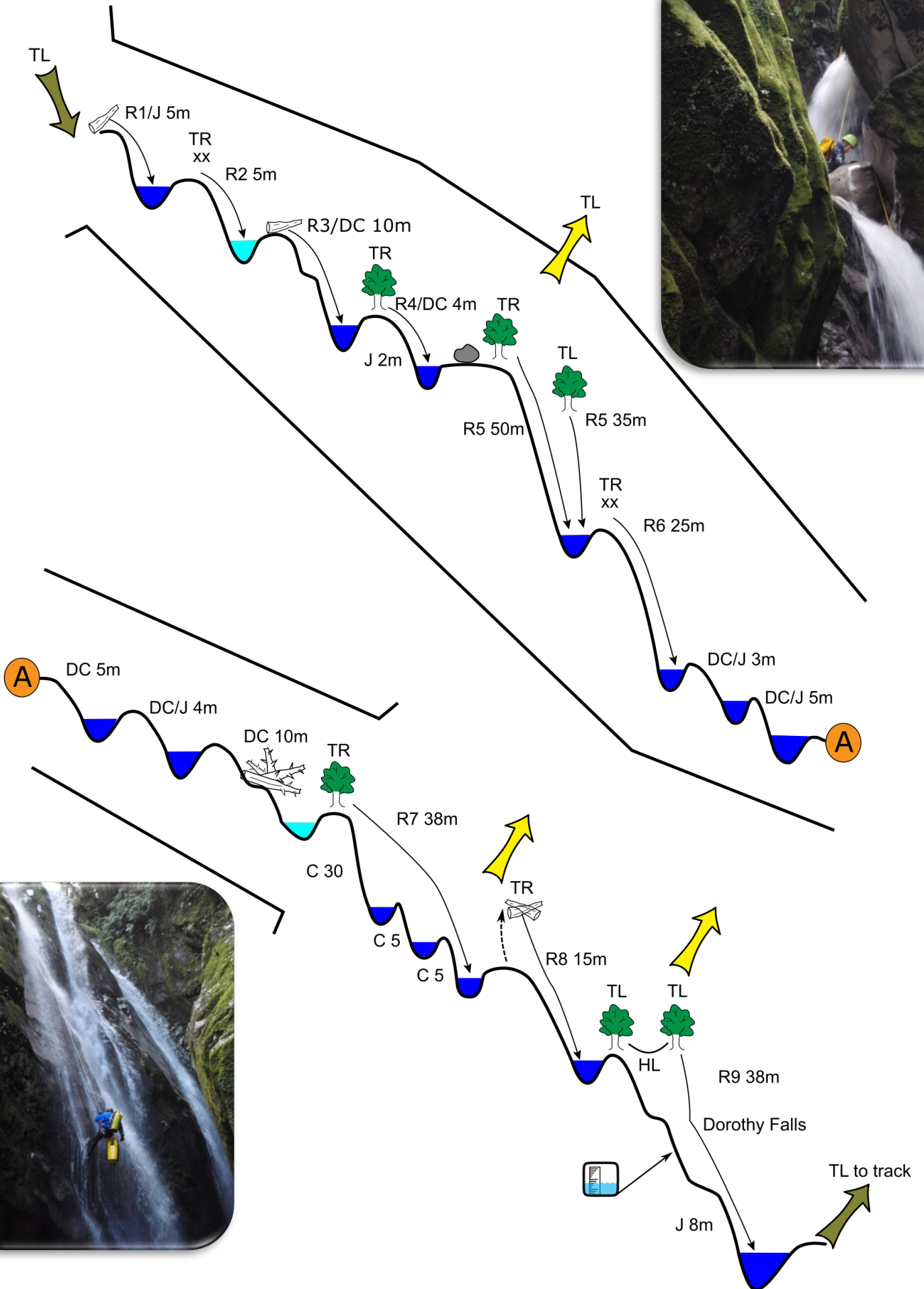
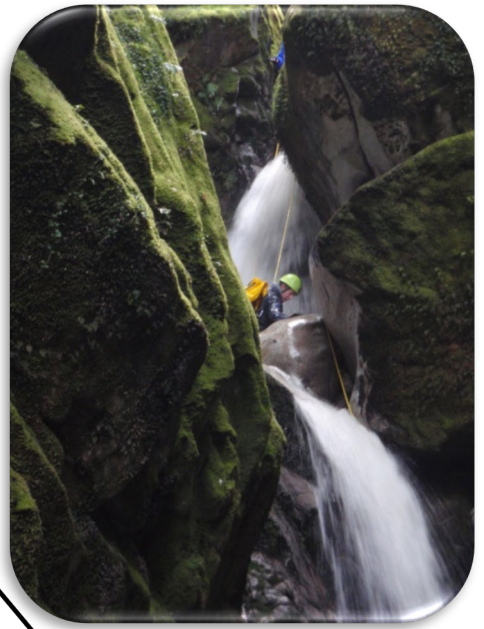
The upper canyon section is fairly enclosed although it is possible to escape at the top of R5.

Notes

The canyon was descended from the 330m contour. There may be more canyon above this point.

Original Topo was made by Grant Prattley in 2009. Updated by Dan Clearwater.

Updated 1 December 2025
www.KiwiCanyons.org



DOROTHY

Falls v4a3II ★★

Updated 1 December 2025
www.KiwiCanyons.org