



LITTLE UNCLES CREEK

Canyon v4a2III★

Location

Mt Te Kinga, West Coast

Character

A seemingly remote canyon, but with easy access by kayak and a short walk. A deep gorge in places, with abseils from both bolted and natural anchors, and some small pools. Feels similar to Tūhua canyon.

Map



Approach in pink, canyon in dark blue.



Walking approach.

Approach by Car

When driving towards Carew Bay, park at the first layby on the right that allows access to the lake.

Approach by Kayak/Walk

Kayak or packraft from the car to a small beach at the Southern corner of Lake Brunner. Stay close to the shore and weave through the Kahikatea trees in places. The paddle takes about 45 minutes and is very enjoyable. The landing point should be obvious once you are close.

Bear in mind if there are strong winds and waves on the lake it will be harder. Wind is likely to increase throughout the day. Bring sunglasses since you might be paddling towards the sun on the way back.

There is a vague tape track from the beach, follow this horizontally to the open creekbed, which is a good place to repack and clean wet gear to avoid bringing didymo or other lake slime into the canyon. A spray bottle for cleaning will be useful. Walk up the spur immediately TL of the canyon until you're on a sharp ridge at about 280m elevation and see the open creek below you. This should be easy and should take about 30 minutes from the open creekbed.

Rock

Granite/granodiorite. Lots of veins of darker rock.

Water

Low flow

Catchment

2.4 km²

Anchors

6 double bolted anchors, 2 trees, and 2 boulders. Bring webbing and rings to replace the natural anchors.

Gear

2 x 30m ropes, natural anchor materials.

Route Description

Begin with some messy drops onto boulders from natural anchors. The canyon gets better as you go down!

R4 is a great pitch in vertical flow, with steep walls around. At R6 the canyon opens up briefly, and there's a hanging pool to sit in. Some small jumps are possible near R7. R8 goes into a strainer, where the water passes through gaps in a false floor. Climb to the side while on the rope to avoid it. Boulders will probably move between floods but at the time of writing it is also easy to abseil through the gap to the

actual floor about 3m below (setup the anchor for R9 first).

Time

Kayak approach	45 min
Walking approach	45 min
Canyon descent	3hr
Walking return	10min
Kayak return	45 min
Total	5hr30

Flash Flood Danger

Low/medium

Escapes

One likely escape noted after R5, others may exist.

Notes

First descent: Amy Burney, Ben Fletcher, Christian Miller, Jordan Wright, in October 2026.



The sieve below R8.



Hanging pool by R6.



The view from across the lake.

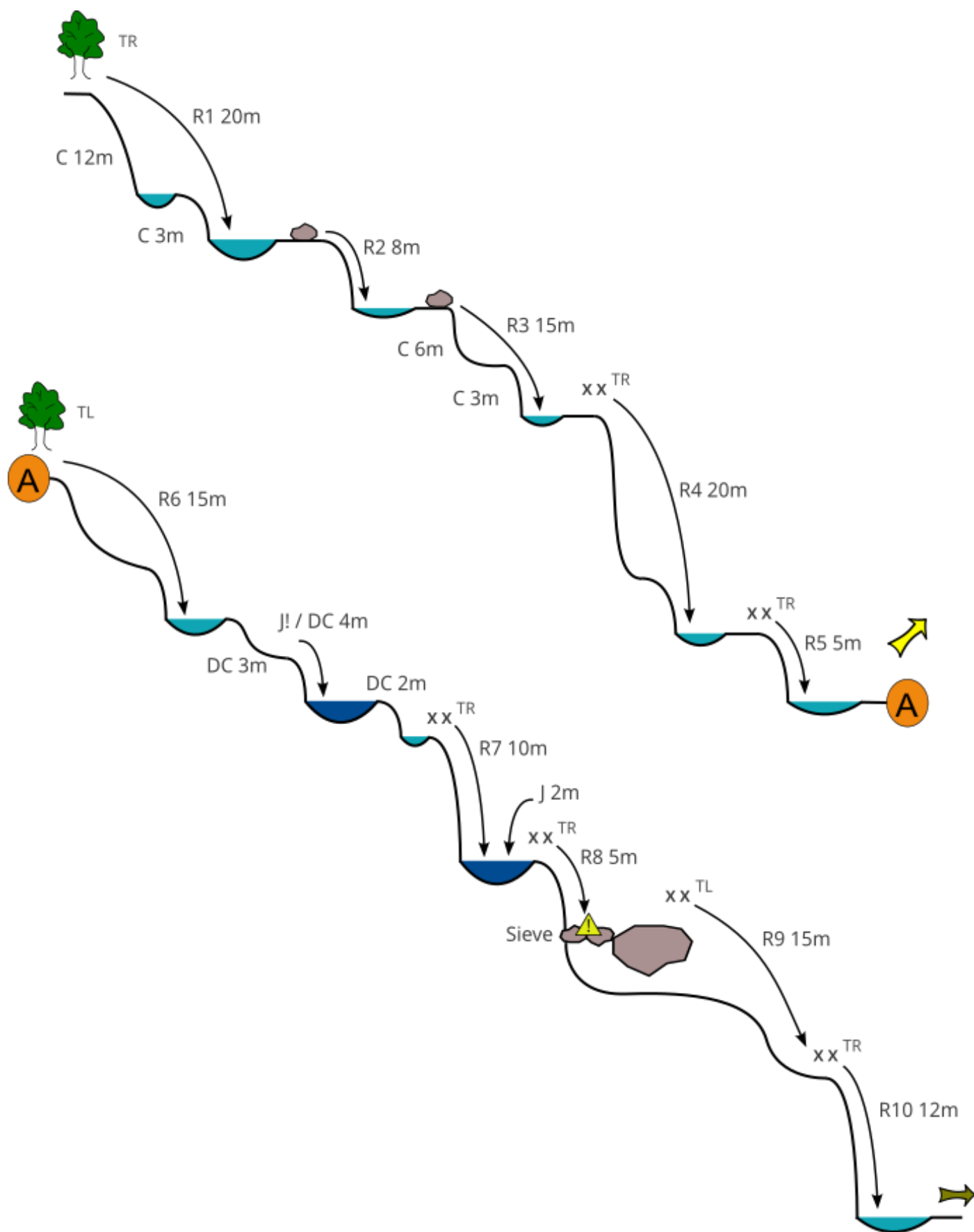
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*Topo by Amy, Ben, Christian,
& Jordan*

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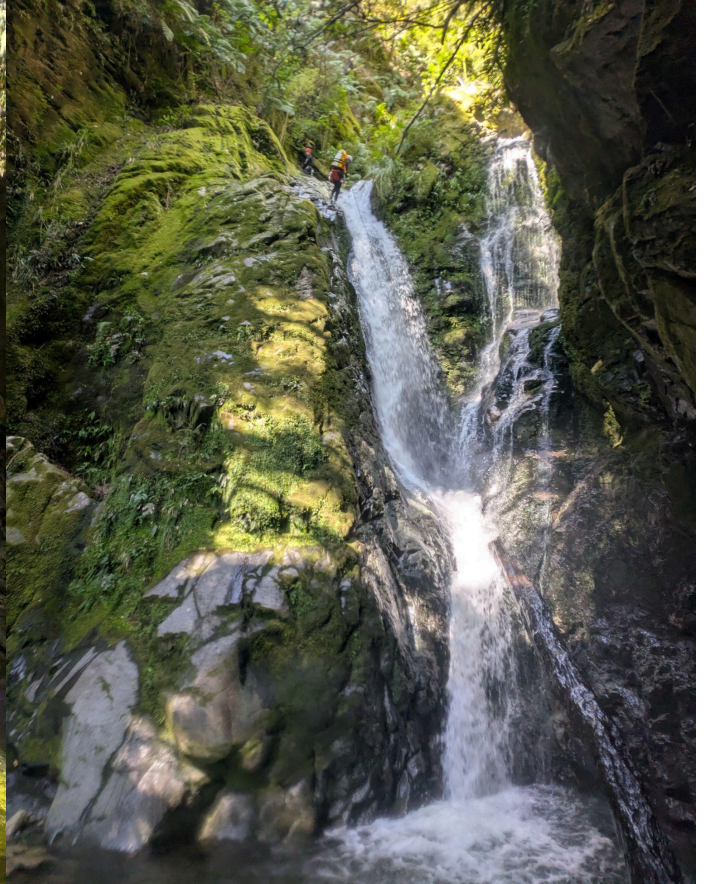
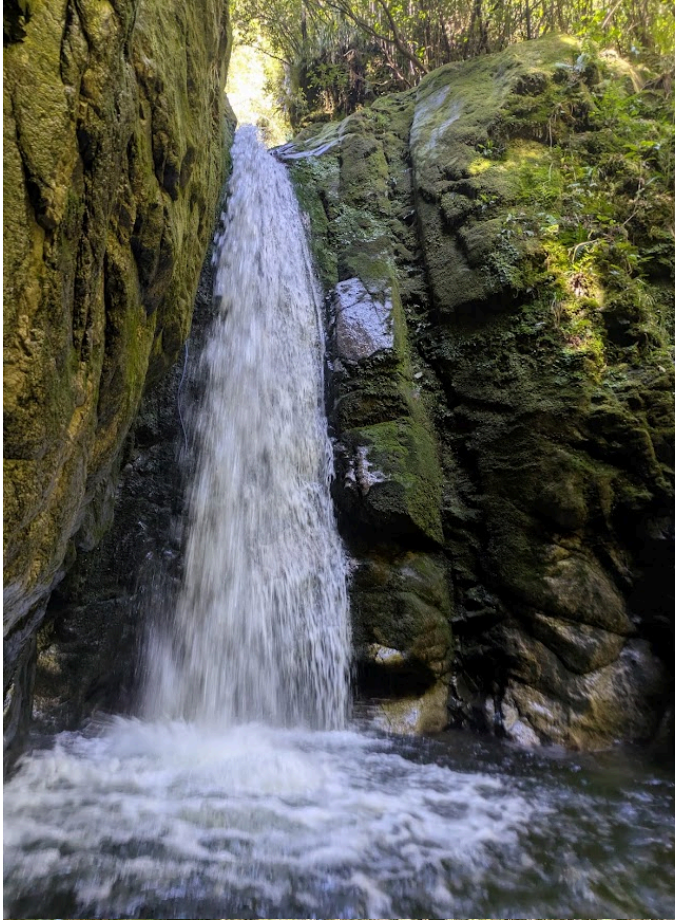
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