

Most people will have the strength to do this. If you are by yourself there is a lever and instructions on its use in the cableway cage. It is really only possible to use the lever if you have strong arms!

From the cableway continue across bouldery riverbeds and gorse-covered flats toward Seven Mile Creek. Green and yellow poles mark the easiest way. Keep an eye out for a short track on your right. This leads down to Dillon Hut (10 bunks). If you reach Seven Mile Creek you've missed the turn-off which is 200 metres back.

Alternatively, a little further on from Dillon Hut is the old Dillons homestead. This is an older alternative with considerable character.

### Seven Mile Creek – SH 73

**Time: 2 – 3 hours**

It's an easy walk out down Taipo River following a 4WD track. As the Taipo runs into a gorge the track veers away from the river and climbs over a small saddle. The track ends on SH 73 about 10 kilometres west of Jacksons Tavern.

### Seven Mile Creek – Kellys Creek

**Time: 6 hours**

This is a fine-weather-only alternative. From the hut, walk to Seven Mile Creek. This is the last place for water until the tarns on Kelly Range. Follow the creek bed upstream until the banks draw close together. Orange markers and a sign show the start of the track on the true left. The track passes old mining water races and climbs through forest of twisted rātā for about 600 vertical metres. Once at the bush line you are halfway to the hut and there is still a 300-metre vertical climb to the top of Kelly Range. The superb views above the bush line make the long climb worthwhile. The route across Kelly Range is marked with pole markers, which are easy to find on a clear day, but almost impossible to find in low visibility or snow cover.

Carroll Hut (10 bunks) is situated in a tussock basin east of the saddle. It does not have any form of heating.

From Carroll Hut the track runs directly across the tussock in front of the hut to the lip of the basin. A benched section of track descends by sidling down across steep scrub to the bush line. Once in the bush it drops more steeply and emerges at Kellys Creek, five minutes from the main road. Time from Carroll Hut to the road, 1 hour 30 minutes.

Note: Parties walking into the Taipo from Kelly Range may have difficulty finding the track in poor visibility. From

Carroll Hut the poles go past the tarns on Kelly Saddle and run along the north-western side of Kelly Range above Seven Mile Creek. When you get to the large tarns on Kelly Range, the poled route turns and drops down the spur to the track to Seven Mile Creek. The broken and fault-scarped spur is very confusing to follow down to the bush track to Seven Mile Creek. Make sure you find the poles to take you down the correct (lower and most northern) ridge.

### Hut fees

Please purchase tickets before using the huts.

	Bunks	
Anti Crow Hut	6	Standard
Carrington Hut	36	Serviced
Julia Hut	6	Standard
Julia Hut (Old)	4	Basic
Mid Taipo Hut	6	Standard
Dillon Hut	10	Standard
Dillons Homestead Hut	10	Basic
Carroll Hut	10	Standard

Serviced – 3 tickets per person/night

Standard – 1 ticket per person/night

Basic – Free

### Further information

For information, hut tickets, intentions cards, maps, weather forecasts and track condition updates:

#### Arthur's Pass National Park Visitor Centre

Main Road, Arthur's Pass

Phone 03 318 9211

8.00 am – 5.00 pm (summer),

8.30 am – 4.30 pm (winter)

arthurspassvc@doc.govt.nz

#### Hokitika Area Office

Sewell Street, Hokitika

Phone 03 756 9100

Suggestions for corrections or improvements should be emailed to: [recreation@doc.govt.nz](mailto:recreation@doc.govt.nz)

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# Harman Pass– Taipo River– Kelly Range



## Route guide 3

ARTHUR'S PASS NATIONAL PARK



Department of Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

## General information

**Time:** 3 – 4 days (shuttle required)



**Grade:** Route

**Note:** Mountaineering equipment and experience required in winter/spring.

**Experience:** Suitable for well-equipped and experienced back-country trampers only

**Best season:** Summer and autumn, extreme avalanche danger in winter and early spring.

**NZTopo50:** Otira BV20, Moana BU20 (NZMS260: Otira K33, Wilberforce K34

**Hazards:** Flooded rivers, rock-fall and avalanche.

**Safety:** Safety is your responsibility. This route guide must be read in conjunction with *Tramping in Arthur's Pass National Park*, a free brochure with important safety information.

**Note:** true left and true right refer to the side of the valley or river when facing and looking downstream.

## Introduction

This route takes you from open east-coast river flats, over a rugged, untracked alpine pass into the rainforest of the Taipo River. Finish by climbing up and over Kelly Range, or by continuing down the Taipo River to the road. The terrain is demanding and has numerous crossings of swift, alpine streams. Suitable for fit, well-equipped people experienced in off-track travel. Snow covers the route during winter and spring.

 This route passes through several known avalanche paths. During heavy snow conditions, we advise visitors not to travel this route unless sufficiently equipped and experienced to assess the conditions and choose a safe path through avalanche terrain.

## Getting there

The trip starts at State Highway 73 on the true right bank of the Waimakariri, just south of the Waimakariri road (about 10 km east of Arthur's Pass village)

### SH73 – Carrington Hut

**Time:** 4 – 5 hours

See *Arthur's Pass National Park Route Guide 1*.



### Carrington Hut – Harman Pass

**Time:** 3 hours

From Carrington Hut follow the track to the riverbed of White River. As you walk upstream, look for a place to cross White River to get to Taipoiti River on the opposite bank. If there is a need to use the Clough Cableway because of high river levels, we advise against continuing the route as you will experience further difficult river crossings later on.



If there is snow up the Taipoiti, the route will be difficult. During winter and spring, avalanches can funnel into the gorge over the cliffs.

Climb and scramble up through the steep gorge, crossing from side to side when necessary. At the top of the gorge, waterfalls tumble over impassable cliffs. Pass these waterfalls. The poled route to Harman Pass starts near here, beside a small stream.

Once out of the Taipoiti gorge you can see the main Taipoiti branches into two streams, each running down a deep gully. A well-worn cairned and poled trail crosses the true left branch relatively soon then climbs upwards, well above the true right gully. As the second stream becomes smaller and more open, cross it; a short walk and you are at the top of Harman Pass. (If you are walking down from Harman Pass, enter the Taipoiti well to its true left to avoid the bluffs and waterfalls).

### Harman Pass – Julia Hut

**Time:** 4 hours

From the large cairn on Harman Pass veer down slightly right and survey your route ahead carefully. Be aware that there is an intersection of routes here. Ensure that you are following the correct route towards Mary Creek; do not follow the route towards Ariels Tarns and Whitehorn Pass. Head for the marker pole down the slope and on the right. The route down to Mary Creek is marked with poles through the bluffs down to Mary Creek. Cross the creek and climb to the terrace by scrambling up an obvious break in the low bluffs.

Once on the terrace, sidle high to avoid the gorges of Mary Creek. Route-marker poles show the way to the open riverbed of Mary Creek. There is a worn trail for some of the way. Do not descend to Mary Creek until you can see a route all the way down. The steep and slippery descent through scrub is harder than it looks.

Cross Mary Creek and boulder-hop downstream following the marker poles. From the last pole continue along the true right bank. It takes at least an hour and a half to get

from the last pole to the start of the bush track to Julia Hut. The beginning of the track to Julia Hut starts on the true left of Mary Creek as the forest comes down to both sides of Mary Creek. This track is well-marked with orange markers.

As you reach the bush line start looking for a good place to cross Mary Creek to the track opposite. From the bush line Mary Creek drops into a gorge and travel on the true right is difficult. Follow the track to the swingbridge that crosses Mary Creek a few hundred metres above its confluence with Julia Creek. Cross this bridge and follow the track for 300 metres to Julia Hut.

The newer Julia Hut has 6 bunks and an efficient stove. The older Julia Hut (4 bunks) is a few minutes further down the track.

### Hot spring

The spring seeps through the gravel riverbank. By digging a pool in the gravel you can create a hot bath for two people. A bit of excavating, and damming a channel of cold water to the hot pool, gets the temperature just right.

To reach the hot spring, follow the short section of track, opposite the front door of the new hut, down to the river. Boulder-hop down the true right until just before you reach a gorge. At this point the characteristic sulphur smell marks the spot.



Do not immerse your head in the spring as there is a risk of contracting amoebic meningitis.

### Julia Hut – Seven Mile Creek (Dillon Hut)

**Time:** 6 hours

Follow the track down the true right of Taipo River and over the 3-wire bridge across Tumbledown Creek. It takes 2 hours to reach the swingbridge across the Taipo. Mid Taipo Hut (6 bunks) is about twenty minutes downstream from the bridge across scrubby flats.

From the hut continue over open flats for a short distance before entering the forest and crossing Hura Creek. After heavy rain Hura Creek quickly becomes impassable. Once across Hura Creek follow the river flats for five to ten minutes until a section of track climbs and bypasses a gorge. Continue over easy flats or in the riverbed on the true left of the main Taipo River until the river narrows. Dunns Creek and other side creeks are forded along the way—in heavy rain these side creeks rise quickly and may become impassable.

An extremely steep track takes you up and over a bluff to Scottys Cableway. Crossing a cableway is quicker and easier if a companion winds the carriage from either bank.