

Alternative route: Seven Mile Creek to SH73 via Kellys Creek

Time: 6 hours one way

This is a fine-weather-only alternative.

From Dillon Hut, walk to Seven Mile Creek. This is the last place for water until the tarns on Kelly Range. Cross the creek and follow it upstream until the banks draw close together. Orange markers and a sign show the start of the track on the true left. The track climbs for about 600 vertical metres.

Once at the bushline, 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 bushline 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 (standard, 10 bunks) is situated in a tussock basin east of the saddle. It has no heating.

From here, 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 bushline. Once in the bush, it drops more steeply and emerges at Kellys Creek, 5 minutes from the main road. It takes 1 hour 30 minutes to reach the road from Carroll Hut.



The route across Kelly Range may be difficult to find under low-visibility conditions. From Carroll Hut, the poles go past the tarns on Kelly Saddle and run along the northwestern side of Kelly Range above Seven Mile Creek.

When you reach 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 the bush track to Seven Mile Creek. Make sure you find the poles to take you down the correct (lower and most northern) ridge.



Huts

Carrington Hut needs to be booked in advance – visit doc.govt.nz/hut-bookings.

All other huts in this area operate on a first come, first served basis. Purchase hut tickets before you leave from any Department of Conservation (DOC) visitor centre, selected isites and outdoor stores, or visit doc.govt.nz/backcountry-hut-pass.

Further information:

Arthur's Pass National Park Visitor Centre

104 West Coast Road, Arthur's Pass 7654

8.30 am – 4.30 pm daily

PHONE: 03 318 9211

EMAIL: arthurspassvc@doc.govt.nz

doc.govt.nz

Care for Aotearoa



Protect nature

Keep your distance and don't feed wildlife. Follow any rules restricting dogs, fires, drones or vehicles.



Be prepared

Stay safe in the outdoors by following the Land Safety Code.

- ▶ Choose the right trip for you.
- ▶ Understand the weather.
- ▶ Pack warm clothes and extra food.
- ▶ Share your plans and take ways to get help.
- ▶ Take care of yourself and each other.



Keep NZ clean

Use toilets where provided. Take all rubbish with you.



Show respect

Respect others, respect culture.



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai



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Cover photo: Harman Pass. Photo: Dave Hegan

This information was accurate at the time of printing. For the latest information on DOC's policies and facilities, visit doc.govt.nz.

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o Aotearoa**
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Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Harman Pass (Carrington Hut to Kelly Creek) route guide

Arthur's Pass National Park



Summary



Time: 3–4 days (shuttle required).

Grade: Expert route.

Note: Mountaineering equipment and experience are required in winter and spring.

Best season: Summer and autumn. Extreme avalanche danger in winter and early spring.

Experience: Unformed route suitable only for people with high-level backcountry (remote area), navigation and survival skills and experience.

Required maps: NZTopo50: BV20 Otira, BU20 Moana.

Hazards: Flooded rivers, rockfalls and avalanches.

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

Safety: This route guide must be read in conjunction with *Tramping in Arthur’s Pass National Park*, a free brochure with important safety information, and New Zealand’s Land Safety Code. Before setting out, check the latest track conditions and avalanche advisory with the Arthur’s Pass National Park Visitor Centre.

Good knowledge and preparation will make or break this trip

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.

Getting there

The trip starts at State Highway 73 (SH73) on the true right of the Waimakariri River, just south of the road bridge over the river (about 10 kilometres east of Arthur’s Pass village), or at Klondyke Corner on the true left if the Waimakariri River is low.



Suitable only for fit, well-equipped people experienced in off-track travel. The terrain is demanding and you will be crossing many swift alpine streams. This route is covered with snow during winter and spring and 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.

SH73 to Carrington Hut

Time: 4–5 hours one way

For information on the route to Carrington Hut, visit doc.govt.nz/carrington-hut-route.

Carrington Hut to Harman Pass

Time: 3 hours one way

From Carrington Hut (serviced, 36 bunks), follow the track upstream to the bed of the White River. As you walk upstream, look for a place to cross the river to get to the Taipoiti River on the opposite bank. Note: The Clough Cableway shown on the topographical map has been removed. Cross White River only when the water level is low.



Snow in the Taipoiti River gorge will make this route more 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. The poled route to Harman Pass starts just above the waterfalls in a side stream.

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

Harman Pass to Julia Hut

Time: 4 hours one way

From the large cairn on Harman Pass, veer down and slightly right – take care to 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 is marked with poles through the bluffs down to Mary Creek. Cross the creek and climb to the terrace by scrambling up an obvious worn trail in the low bluffs. Route-marker poles show the way across the terrace to the open riverbed of Mary Creek. The descent to Mary Creek is relatively steep with low vegetation.

Boulder-hop downstream following the marker poles crossing the creek until you reach a large orange marker on the true left. The track to Julia Hut starts here and is well marked with orange markers.

Follow the track to the swing bridge 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 (standard, 6 bunks) has an efficient stove. The older Julia Hut (basic, 4 bunks) is a few minutes further down the track.

Hot spring

A spring near here seeps through the gravel riverbank. By digging a pool in the gravel, you can create a hot bath for two people. 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. The characteristic sulphur smell here marks the spot.



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

Julia Hut to Seven Mile Creek (Dillon Hut)

Time: 5–7 hours one way

There is damage in this section of the trip that slows down travel.

Follow the track down the true right of the Taipo River and over the three-wire bridge across Tumbledown Creek. It takes 2 hours to reach the swing bridge across the Taipo River. Mid Taipo Hut (standard, 6 bunks) is about 20 minutes downstream from the bridge.

From the hut, continue over open flats for a short distance before entering the forest and crossing Hura Creek. Note that Hura Creek quickly becomes impassable after heavy rain.

Once across Hura Creek, follow the river flats for 5 to 10 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 – note that these side creeks rise quickly and may become impassable after heavy rain.

An extremely steep track takes you up and over a bluff to Scottys three-wire bridge. From here, continue across the bouldery riverbed and gorse-covered flats towards Dillon Hut (standard, 10 bunks). Orange poles mark the easiest way.

Alternatively, a little further on from Dillon Hut is the old Dillons Homestead Hut (basic, 5 bunks). This is an older hut with considerable character.

Seven Mile Creek to SH73

Time: 2–3 hours one way

It is an easy walk out down the Taipo River following the old four-wheel drive track. A marked track in the bush bypasses a section where the river runs hard against the bank. Before the Taipo River runs into a gorge, the track veers away from the river and climbs over a small saddle. The track ends on SH73 about 10 kilometres west of Jacksons.