



Huts

The huts in this area work 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.

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.

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

Mingha – Deception Route guide (west to east)

Arthur's Pass National Park



0800 DOC HOT
362 468
For safety hazards and
conservation emergencies

Cover photo: Whio/blue duck in the Deception River.
Photo: Jamin Barkley

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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Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai



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Summary



Time: 1–2 days (shuttle required).

Grade: Expert route.

Best season: Summer, autumn and early winter.

Experience: Unformed track suitable only for people with high-level backcountry skills (remote area), navigation, river crossing and survival skills and experience. River crossing skills essential.

Required maps: NZTopo50: Otira BV20.

Hazards: Flooded rivers, avalanches, steep drop-offs and bluffs.

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. Be aware that the weather in the mountains can change very quickly. Take appropriate clothing and equipment.

Crossing the alps via two river valleys

The Mingha – Deception Route forms the 30.5 km leg of New Zealand’s most iconic multi-sport race – the annual Coast to Coast event. Part of Te Araroa Trail, this route can be walked from the east or west. This guide covers the west to east route; east to west is detailed in a separate guide

This section of the track crosses Arthur’s Pass National Park, following the Deception valley route in the west, over the Southern Alps / Kā Tiritiri o te Moana at Goat Pass (1,070 m) and then follows the Mingha River down to Klondyke Corner.

For those not training for the Coast the Coast, the route finishes about 3 km earlier at State Highway 73 (SH73) by Greyneys Shelter.

If you’re only going as far as Goat Pass Hut, it is easier to take the Mingha Track from the east.

Getting there

The west coast side of this trip starts at Morrisons footbridge, about 5 km west of the Otira township on SH73. Car parking options are limited, and we advise not leaving vehicles on the roadside longer than one day. There are better car parking options at the eastern end of the route.

A return shuttle service runs daily along SH73 between Greymouth and Christchurch.



River crossing experience is essential

Both the Deception and Mingha Rivers can be dangerous. Do not attempt this trip when these rivers are high or when bad weather is forecast. Travel up the Deception River requires up to 30 compulsory river crossings.

Rivers can flood at any time of year. If rivers and side streams are in flood, seek shelter and wait until water levels fall before crossing.

Route from west to east

Morrisons footbridge – Deception River – Goat Pass Hut

Time: 8–9 hr, 14 km one way



The western part of this route involves a lot of riverbed travel; route times are highly changeable depending on the current state of the river crossings.

From SH73, Morrisons footbridge crosses the Ōtira River. Follow the marked route through river flats on the true right of the Deception River until the river narrows about 1.5 km upstream of the bridge. From here, cross to the true left and continue upstream. The route up the Deception valley crosses the river numerous times with travel mostly being in the riverbed, although there are some tracked sections.

After travelling upstream for about 11 km, a prominent creek (Dorreen Creek) joins the Deception River on the true left. A marked track begins here on the true right of Dorreen Creek. The track re-emerges beside the river about 1 km on from Dorreen Creek. Cross here and be sure to spot the orange marker on the other side indicating the location of Upper Deception Hut (6 bunks).

From Upper Deception Hut, the route involves scrambling and boulder hopping up the riverbed and through adjacent bush (sometimes on distinct sections of track that may be marked) for around 1 hr, before a final crossing of the Deception River (on the true left). At this point, you leave the Deception River to scramble up a steep side stream for about 500 m to reach Goat Pass Hut (20 bunks).

The hut has a radio linked to Arthur’s Pass Visitor Centre. Calls can be made during office hours, 7 days a week, for weather forecasts and information. Goat Pass Hut has no fireplace and can be extremely cold.

Lake Mavis – side trip

Time: 2 hr one way

For those at Goat Pass in the summer with some extra time on their hands, the 500 m climb to Lake Mavis is worthwhile. Climb the steep tussock and scree on the spur running east from Goat Pass, then follow the ridge route marked with cairns – perhaps the easiest access to a high-level lake in the park. Good route-finding skills are required as its only occasionally marked with cairns.



This area is subject to avalanche activity during the winter. During heavy snow conditions, we advise visitors not to travel this route unless sufficiently well-equipped and experienced to assess the conditions and choose a safe path through avalanche terrain.

Goat Pass Hut – Mingha River – Greyneys Shelter

Time: 5 hr, 10 km one way

From the hut, the track passes through subalpine scrub while crossing over Goat Pass (1,070 m) before descending to the headwaters of the Mingha River. Cross the river and follow the marked track on the true right to reach Mingha Bivvy (2 bunks).

For the next 3 km, the track undulates through bush before it steepens for a short section to reach Dudley Knob. The track passes through bush for another 1 km, sidling high above the Mingha Gorge before emerging onto the expansive flats of the lower Mingha River.

Continue heading downstream for 3.5 km, aiming for the power poles and the Bealey River in the distance and crossing the Mingha River where necessary. Once you reach the Bealey River, cross it above its meeting with the Mingha River. The rivers are constantly changing course so you will need to find the best place to cross.

Once you have crossed the Bealey River, follow a four-wheel drive track beside the railway until you reach a pedestrian tunnel under the railway. This brings you to SH73 with the Greyneys car park across the road.

Those running the Coast to Coast need to continue along the Bealey riverbed for a further 2–3 km to come out at Klondyke Corner.