

THE BULLS RUN CANYON LEADING TO THE - LOWER RANGIHAU GORGE V3A3II ★★

WRITTEN BY PETE SMITH.

Location

Coromandel Coroglen

Character

The Bulls Run gets better the further down you go, until you meet the Rangihau Gorge. With its three gargantuan 25m wide waterfalls and deep jump pools, the gorge itself is amazing. There is even a rock arch to dive through in one of the pools!

With such an impressively wide gorge, there is a very large catchment.

Do not underestimate this canyon, in poor weather it will get smashed along with you, if you do not carefully plan your trip.

Map Park at the red dot.

Walk up to around 380m and drop into the Bulls run



Drive

From Auckland to Tairua 1hr 50mins. Hamilton to Tairua 1hr 45mins. Then head north for 20mins up state highway 25 to Coroglen.

Turn left at the Rangihau road. Drive for 15-20 mins down a rough road until you meet the Rangihau river ford.

A 4WD vehicle is recommended on this road or at least a high clearance vehicle, the road is rough in places.

Parking:

Park before the ford on the right or cross the ford and park there.

Walk

Follow the road up for 5 mins to a locked gate, proceed around the gate where trampers are allowed only. This track drops down and crosses the Rangihau river once more via a rocky ford. (linesmen access) Then once more the track steadily ascends up to the start point at around 380m. Head down into the Bulls run canyon.

Rock

Mixed Volcanic.

Water

Very changeable flow with a lot of evidence to support massive flow at times in the Rangihau.

For reference - <http://riverlevelsmap.waikatoregion.govt.nz/cgi-bin/hydwebserver.cgi/points/>

[details?point=1731&catchment=17&trType=1&trParam=0%5C](#) This link is not the Rangihau river level, but the confluence of Waiwawa at the Rangihau Rd Ford.

At 0.40m the flow was reported as high, but manageable with care, by competent canyoneers. This level corresponds to 20mm of rain in one day in Whitianga. As ever the river levels will be subjective depending on the direction of weather front dropping the good stuff.

Anchors

Trees down the Bulls run, with bolted ring anchors and double bolt belays in the lower gorge section of the Rangihau river. There may be a fixed rope river right above the technical jump (no guarantee it will survive any flood). This is a tricky jump in low flow. Without the fixed rope in place you will need to commit to this jump. We also assume some of anchors will go missing in a flood! Check with the local community on conditions prior to your descent.

Gear

2 x 60m worked well for us with the biggest pitch around 33m in the Bulls run.

Route description.

Follow the track up as the map indicates, enter the Bulls Run canyon - At the bottom you will enter the Rangihau lower gorge. Go on a scenic tour upstream to the three waterfalls (Orange and white waterfalls on map) before heading down stream, the scale is impressive. Once at the bottom of the canyon the walk out is around 40 mins.

Times with a group of 4

Walk up 45min. Bulls run Canyon 2.5hrs. Rangihau lower gorge 2hrs. Walk out 45mins. Total 6hrs

Flood danger

High in adverse weather, especially in the Rangihau gorge.

Escapes

Lots of escapes possible from the Bulls run stream. Escapes before entering the bottom of lower gorge itself are possible. You could bail out at river left and hike out over the hill - Once committed below the large jammed log, there are no escapes until after the 22m waterfall, especially in high flow!!

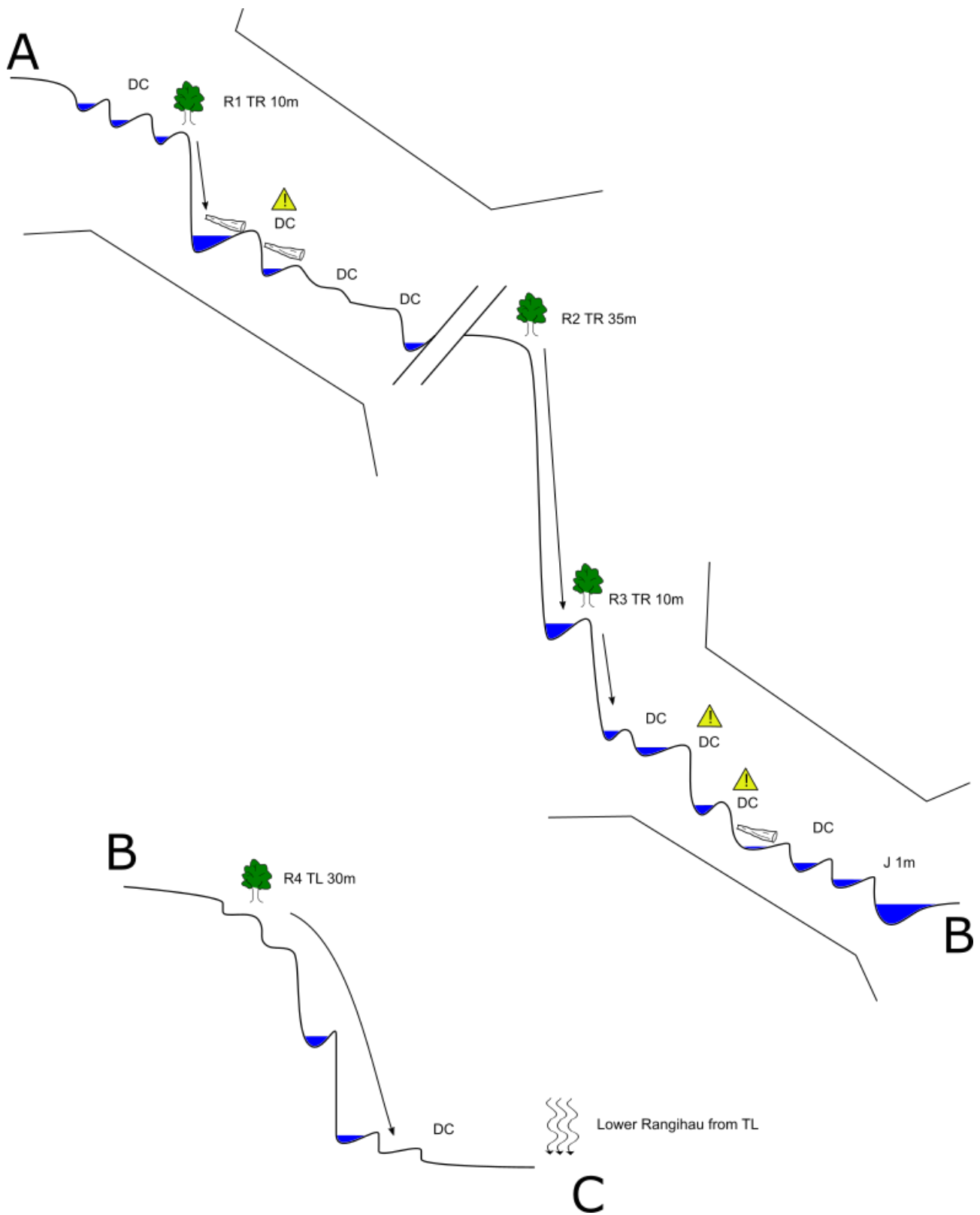


The magnificent 25m wide, three waterfalls section, up stream (lower gorge)

Notes

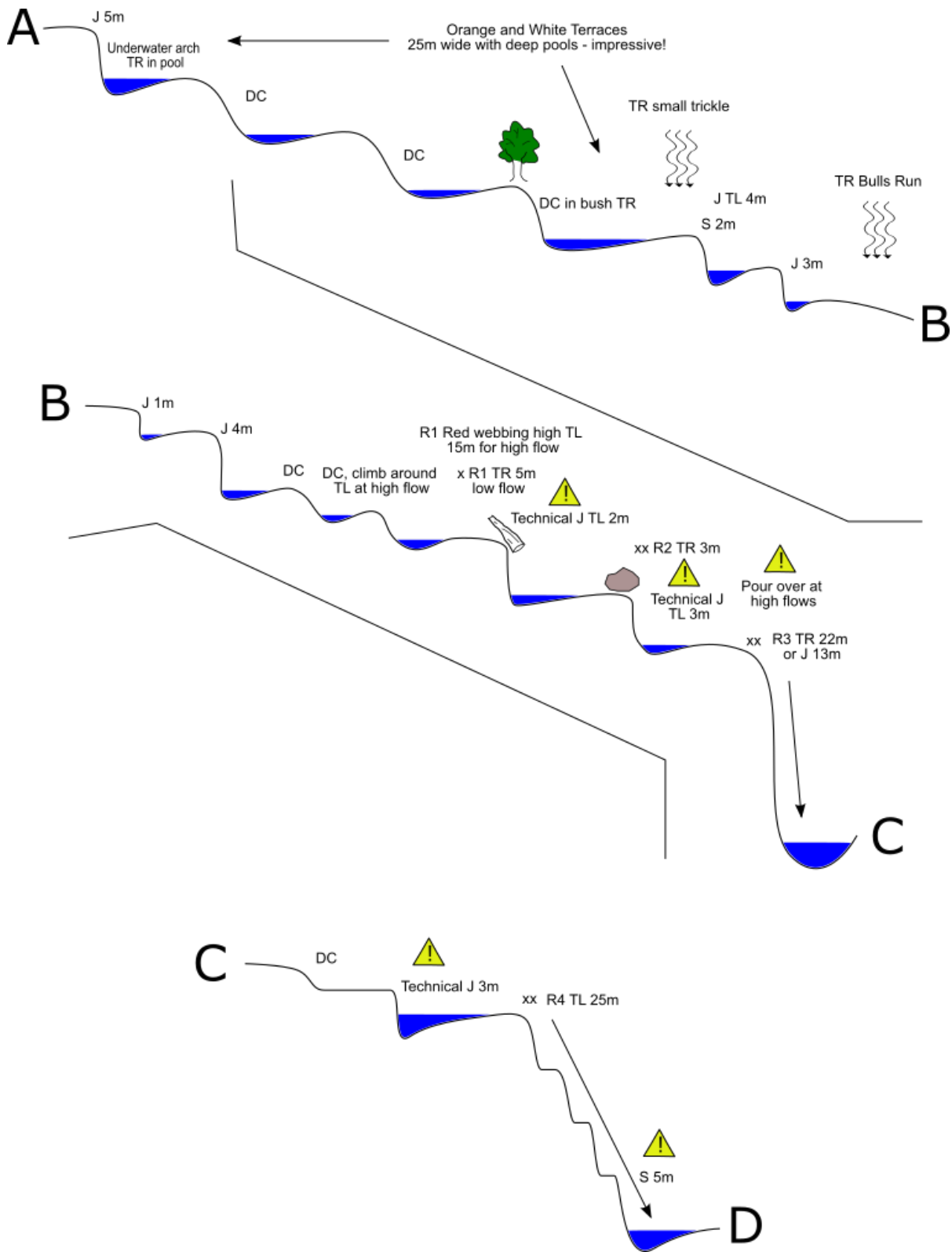
Good camping is available at the Coroglen campsite. The local pub, the Coroglen Tavern, will cater for your daily nutrition and beverage intake as required :-)

Bulls Run v3a2II ★



First Descent/ James Mclean, Sach Knight, David Meikle, Pete Smith 2/4/21
Drawing James Judd

LOWER RANGIHAU GORGE V3A3II ★★



Rangihau Lower gorge
 First Ascent/Descent James Mclean, James Judd, Pete Smith 27/2/21 Drawing James Judd
 from a sketch supplied by Pete Smith (Yes we did Ascend the canyon)

