

Doubtful Hut, Lake Sumner Forest Park

Wild file

Access From SH7, 5km south of Boyle Village. Marker poles guide you to the river ford

Grade Easy

Time 2hr

Distance 6.23km to hut

Accommodation Doubtful Hut

Map BU23, BU22

Description

The Lewis Pass in the central South Island is a captivating region of long, easy valleys decked with grassy flats, bordered by thick mats of forest and overlooked by rocky summits often carrying large amounts of snow during the winter months.

Yet during the longer summer and early autumnal days, when the rivers are often low and clear, the valley floors provide sure access to the hinterland for a modest walk among the peaks.

Doubtful Valley, near the Boyle River end of the St James Walkway is one such catchment which offers seclusion and beauty among the hills so long as you are prepared for a wet start - the Boyle River must be forded at the highway to access the valley track.

Dipping into the clear, swift water at dawn can be daunting and involves some care and preparedness for a thigh-deep crossing to the far bank. The flats are broad, the track well marked and the gradient easy enough to set a good walking pace to cruise the 6km to the hut.

Though there are a few small side streams to rock-hop over, which take the edge off the pace a little, and a little matagouri to skirt. The last section near the hut is comprised of thick forest, mature red beech in fact, a magnificent forest tree favouring the lower flats and hillsides throughout the Lewis Pass.

There's a small gorge in the river here which is quite beautiful and worth taking the time to view from off the side of the track. Once through this section, the next grassy flat is at hand and the old Doubtful Hut, which provides rather dubious shelter from rain and wind with its weathered profile, cracks and ageing iron.

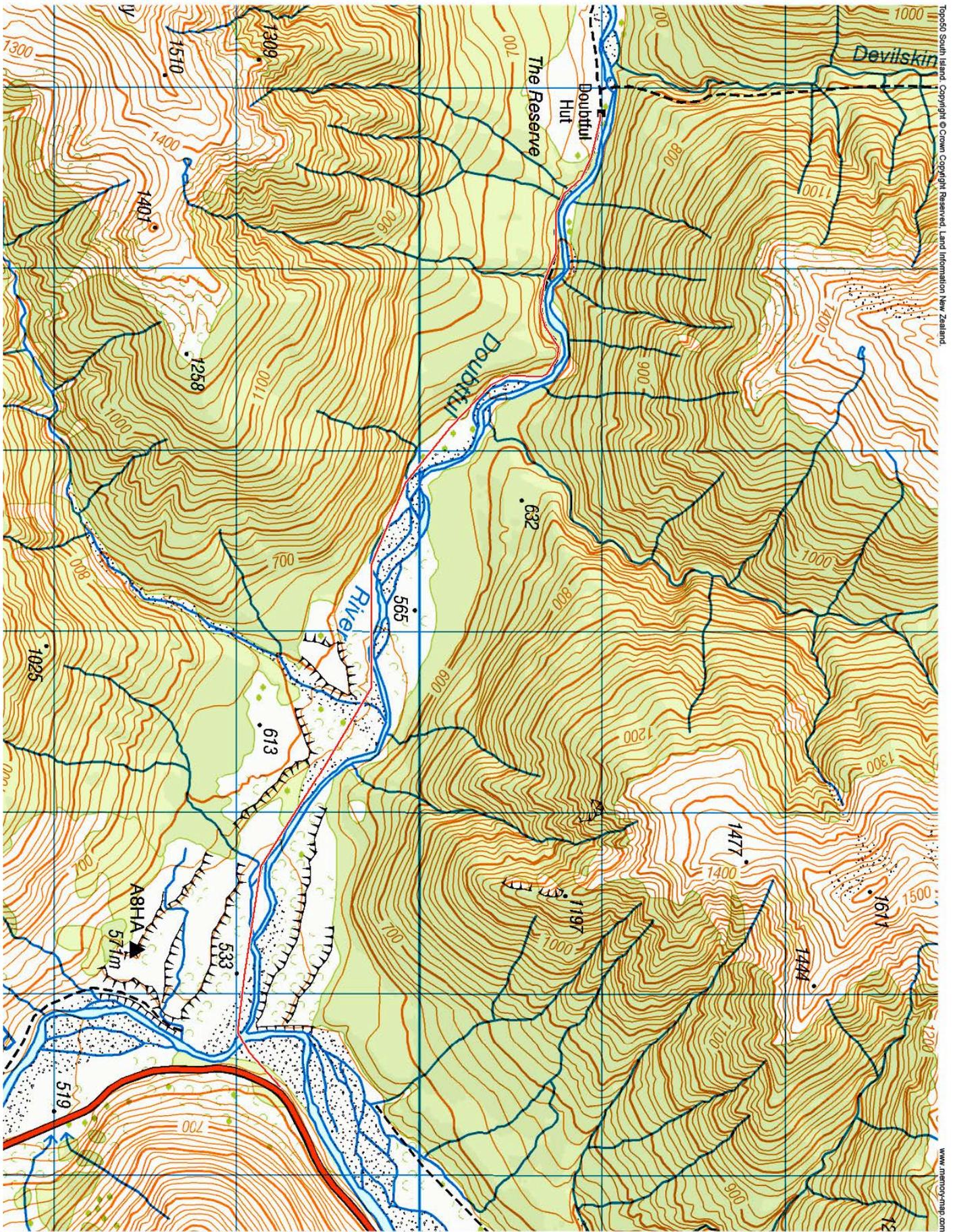
It's a neat place to visit though, to sign your name in the hut book, see who's about, or has been, and then journey on up valley.

Elevation Profile



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Disclaimer: While every effort has been made to map this route correctly, Wilderness Magazine does not take responsibility for any errors in the route. Users should use discretion when planning their routes and gather as much information as possible before departing.



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