Mt Haast, Victoria Conservation Park

WILD FILE
Access A signposted track 1.8km west of Rahu Saddle on SH7
Grade Moderate
Time 3-4hr to summit. Round trip 6-8hr
Distance 2.35km to summit
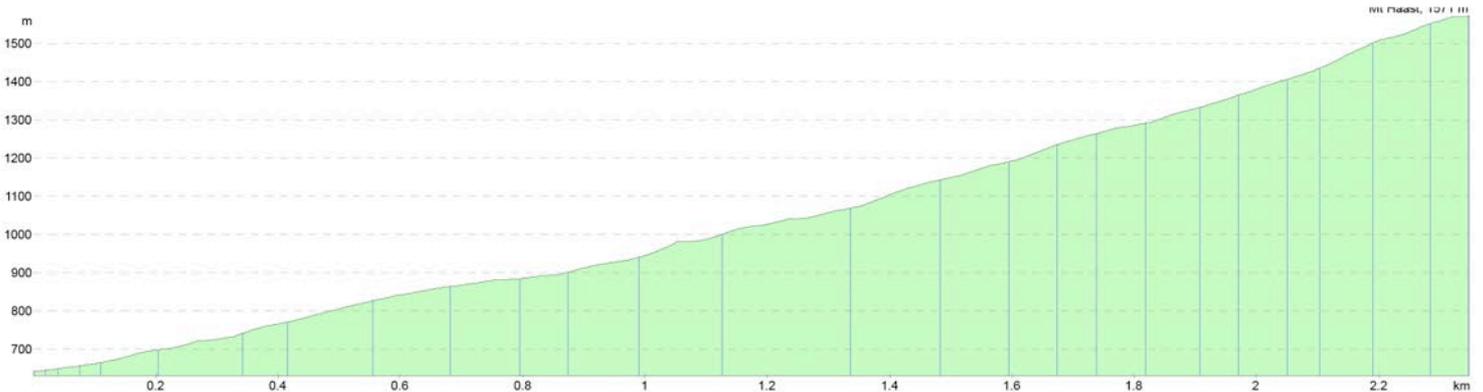**Total ascent** 922m
Map BT22

Description
At 180,000ha, Victoria Conservation Park is New Zealand's largest conservation park. It's reminiscent of Fiordland with reasonably easily traversed tops surrounded by fearsome battlements consisting of forest floor to bush edge bluffs, massive scarps, skinny two-boot-width ridge crests, truncated spurs and alpine cirques.
Mt Haast is modest in altitude, just 1587m, has a track to the bushline and a poled route from there to the top. It's almost 1000m of altitude gain from road to summit, and those metres get steeper as you approach the top.
But first the bush. An easy angled trail begins right beside the highway just west of Rahu Saddle and continues at a pleasant gradient all the way to the bush edge. The forest is mixed and always changing, particularly when heading higher into the subalpine zone. Here, the crunchy fronds of mountain neinei – a flaxy shrub typically found at this level in the west – predominates, creating a carpet of decaying vegetation over the forest floor. The neinei is a harbinger of the bush edge, which you reach soon after.
The ridge crest steepens and narrows as you approach the summit, requiring extra care where over-steepened gullies spiral away beneath the track edge.

Elevation Profile

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www.memory-map.com

Duffy Creek Track

Inangahua River

Twenty Mile Creek

853

600

800

800

009

008

23

24

25

26

27

1308

1512

Mt Haast Route

667

Mt Haast
1587

1437

1100

1295

1300

1434

1437

1100

Rahu River Left Branch

008

7

1412

1274

1200

1540

1500

1200