

## Pfeifer Biv via Waharoa Saddle, Arthur's Pass National Park

The route to the bivouac begins at Morrison Footbridge over the Otira River, just off SH73. It then follows Te Araroa Trail before turning south, following Paratu Stream. Travel up the stream is relatively easy, just make sure to stick to the true right fork at the 560m contour.

At around 800m, the route leaves the main flow of the stream and continues on to Waharoa Saddle (975m) following the northernmost tributary. There are views from the stony saddle to the Otira and Lake Kaurapataka. From the saddle, the track follows a rooted and gnarled path up to the Aicken Range, climbing to Pt1364.

Travel is fine on the ridgeline and there are views into the Deception Valley and the surrounding mountains. Things get more rugged at the 1400m contour, with a rocky scramble up and over into the next basin. If you're lucky, you might meet some of the bopping residents of the basin, a community of pīwauwau (rock wren).

After a brief traverse leading south-east, there's a good route up a fault scarp over the spur to the north of Pt1580. From there, Pfeifer Bivouac can be seen below in a basin dominated by 1704m Mt Pfeifer.

From Pfeifer Bivouac, it's possible to descend to the Lake Kaurapataka Track by crossing over into the first basin to the east of the bivvy, being sure to ascend a little to avoid the scrubby bluffs to the north.

Once in the basin, head through spotty scrub along a small scarp that leads onto a bench. Two cairns here mark the route onto the long scree slide below. This scree is very steep at the top so don't attempt to enter it too high, unless you are good at flying. Once on the scree, travel should be swift. At the bottom of the slide, a faint track can be picked up leading to the route along the true-right of Pfeifer Creek.

From here, it's a relatively easy boulder hop or bush bash for approximately one kilometre before the route joins with the Lake Kaurapataka Track. Following that track up Lake Creek leads to Lake Kaurapataka, which has some nice camping spots.

Continuing north on the Lake Kaurapataka Track, to reach the Taramakau River and Te Araroa Trail. If river levels are low it's possible to ford the Otira River opposite Aickens Corner to join SH73. Otherwise, follow Te Araroa Trail along the flood route which undulates for 5km back to the footbridge.

### Wild File

**Access** Footbridge on SH73

**Grade** Difficult

**Time** Two days. SH73 to Pfeifer Bivouac via Waharoa Saddle, 4-6hr; To Lake Kaurapataka Track, 4-6hr; To SH73 via Te Araroa Trail, 2-3hr

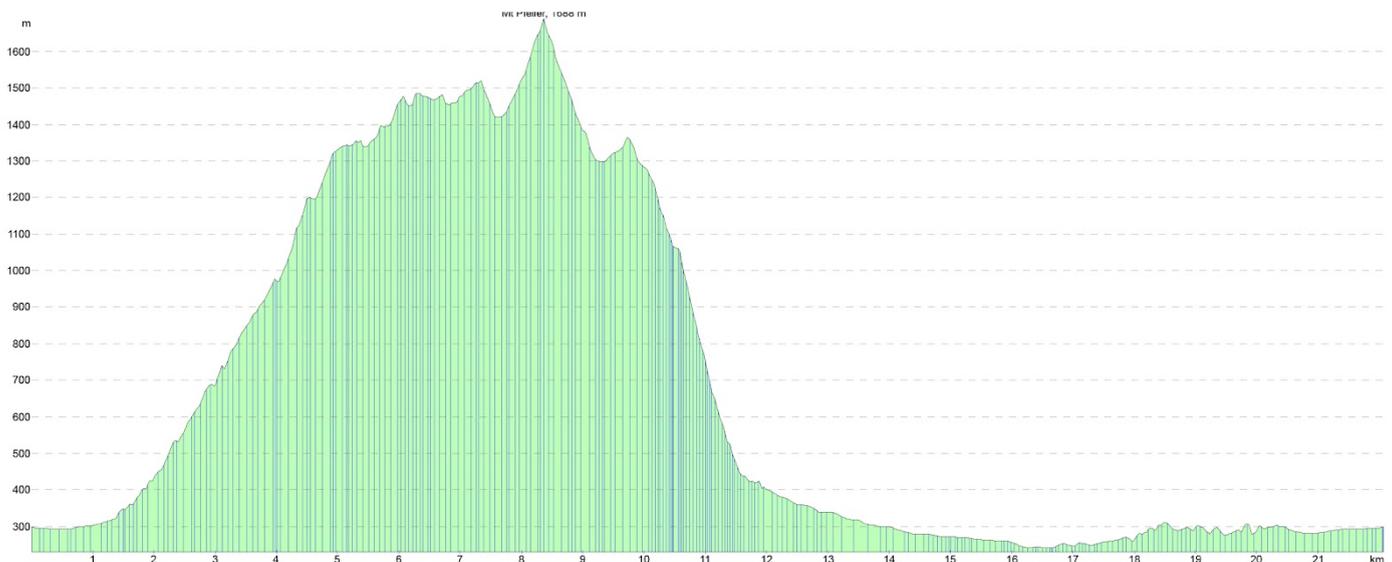
**Distance** 22.1km

**Total ascent** 1885m

**Accommodation** Pfeifer Bivouac (free, two bunks)

**Map** BU20, BV20

### Elevation



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