

## Application of funds for Wilberhorse Canyon

**Name of applicant:** Tom Johns

**Evidence of competence:**

Although I have only been canyoning for three years at this point I have been in the outdoors since I was born, I have 7 years of experience as a caving guide and also climbing guiding experience and some time spend in a whitewater kayak.

I also have experience route setting and bolting in crags around the North and South Island, both refitting existing routes and developing new ones and spent several years travelling the world climbing including some big walls and ground up first ascents.

**Canyon names:**

For this application I am focusing on materials already used in the exploration of the Wilberhorse Canyon and materials needed for the retrofitting of the Wilberhorse Canyon. Below is a complete list of canyons already done and potential projects within the valley;

**So far:** Takahe Stream, The Lion King canyon, Hut Stream, The Big Idea, The Little Idea, and The Wilberhorse canyon.

**Future projects include:** The middle finger project, the scarcliff line and “that shitty dangerous gully that you should never go in” that last one is an actual quote from a shepherd when I asked about it.

**Project Information:**

**Wilberhorse Canyon**

**Work intention:** Retro-fitting 6 existing anchors to bring all anchor stations up to NZCA bolting COPs. Installing an additional new anchor station on the 110m pitch to split it into two more manageable pitches. Retro-bolting 3 anchor stations to remove reliance on boulder anchors.

**Existing work:** The original descent and anchors were placed during the 2017/2018 canyoning season.

**Project Timing:** Anchors will be upgraded during the 2018/2019 summer season.

**Existing anchors:** 14 pitches total  
20x Stainless 10mm tru-bolts = XXX  
10x Stainless ring hangers = XXX  
5x Stainless hangers = XXX

**Total:** \$276.00

**Planned work:**

10x stainless 10mm tru-bolts = XXX  
10x Stainless 10mm hangers = XXX  
4x Stainless ring hangers = XXX  
10m webbing = XXX

**Total:** \$199.50

**Why should the project be supported?**

Opening up the Wilberforce has created a potential Haast Pass of Canterbury with the current trips providing the backbone of the area. The potential for further development within the same area as the current trips will create a veritable smorgasbord of high quality trips within striking distance of Christchurch where a growing population of canyoneers live.

The canyons also get people excited, they all put people in an amazing location and while they present a challenge they also have a variety of fun features which add a sporting aspect to what is otherwise a very alpine setting.

**How does this project mitigate impact of the trips and align with best practice?**

So far we have mitigated our impact by installing markers on the Takahe Stream track to ensure that people stay to the track as best they can. We have also cut a small track through the scrub for the Idea canyons to bypass the scrub and allow people to stay to the track.

We have to the best of our ability equipped the trips with bolts that are in line with the best practises. During the first descents we used expedition anchors (cord) on stainless 10mm bolts so that we can re-equip them with hangers during subsequent descents. We have also been through Hut Stream and Takahe and installed extra bolts at single bolt stations and where using slings on trees or shrubs would destroy the vegetation.

Bolts have been placed where the chances of them being destroyed by floods or debris has been minimised and also placed to keep people in the stream (unless unsafe) to minimize damage to Flora. We also threw rocks at a stoat that we saw in an attempt to protect the local birdlife.

**How will the project maintain or improve safety?**

This redevelopment aspect of this project will improve safety in the Wilberhorse canyon by bringing all the anchors up to NZCA bolting specifications of the minimum of two long life bolts per station connected in an appropriate fashion with appropriate hangers and rings, this will upgrade single bolt stations and replace cord expedition anchors.

**Permission:**

The canyons that we have developed so far have been on a mixture of private and DOC land. Where applicable we have gained permission from landowners to both use their land to access the canyons and also to complete descents. As part of best practise it has been made clear within the guides and topos that before trips can be done access permission must be given by landowners.

**Significance of the expedition:**

Canterbury seems to have been lagging behind the development seen in the Wanaka/Queenstown areas, the Nelson Lakes/Able Tasman region, the West Coast and basically everywhere until the last couple of years (thanks Nola, Grant and James).

The Wilberforce Valley presents an opportunity to open up a high concentration of high quality canyons in the heart of Canterbury adding to the stock of rad trips to get people excited about canyoning in the area and to develop their skills. The Wilberforce Valley and the quality of the trips that it contains will hopefully drag people into canterbury canyons, get them fizzing for more canyoning and lead them to tell everyone about how rad canyoning is as a sport.

**Bank Statements showing expenses so far:**

I have a rolling stockpile of bolts and hangers which are used as needed so sadly I didn't do one large purchase for the Wilberhorse canyon development, because of this I don't have specific invoices.

Provided are my bank statements for purchases made for the materials that have been used in the development of the Wilberforce Valley so far. I have worked out how many bolts and hangers were used for the Wilberhorse Canyon and totalled the cost of these in the project information section.