

East Creek Road  
(Plath to Rolley Road - Atherton/Herberton area)

Here is a great little backroad that's an interesting drive and has some good features along the way. A rumour that Plath Road went somewhere interesting had me following a lot of rough tracks to nowhere, however coming in from the Rolley Road side at Wondecla it's easy to find your way.

Just south of Wondecla, near Herberton, Rolley Road heads east. Not long after the bitumen turns to dirt you come to some signs at a fork in the road. The authorities have been very considerate here upgrading the road and putting in appropriate signage advising that cars, motorbikes and horses are welcome here if you stick to some basic rules. At this intersection about 6 km from Wondecla the track right (south) takes you to the carpark at Hall's Falls after about 1 km. Hall's Falls is not well known but is quite a nice little spot. It's a short 5 - 10 min walk along an increasingly rough little goat track through the low vegetation to the top or lower section of the falls - depending on which trail you end up on. There's a really good, deep swimming hole there for the warmer months. Access beyond the carpark is one of those "at your own risk" type situations and not recommended for the wobbly of feet.

The road continues past the carpark but more on that later. It's conventional vehicle access up to this point.

Back at the signed intersection the road roughens up a bit as it descends down to the first of a couple of creek crossings. Both creek crossings are worth a brief explore and both have trails heading off to the north that are quite rough but beckoning further exploration on foot, motorbike or horse. After the second creek the road rises steeply and after about 15 km from Wondecla you are at the turnoff to Drover's Lookout. Feel free to walk up the short trail as it's only 50 m. It's a good afternoon vantage point over the farmlands to Bartle Frère and Bellenden Ker. A short walk through the low vegetation will get you to an uninterrupted viewpoint.

It is all downhill from here as the road continues through the typical wet scleryphyll forest of the Herberton Range and down to pick up Plath Road (turn left) and eventually the Atherton Ravenshoe Road - a distance of around 26 km with the detours.

As I said, it's a very pleasant drive through nice forest and there are opportunities for creekside picnics as well as potential bushcamping. It can be managed in a non 4WD with good clearance and care in the dry season. However, with a 4wd you can make a circuit drive out of it. Continuing past the Hall's Falls carpark the road takes another route down to join up with the "main" road just near where it joins Plath Rd. This is definitely a 4wd experience as there are some steep, loose grades to be encountered.

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