

NATURE AND CULTURE **Log driving  
in the Helvetesfossen waterfall**



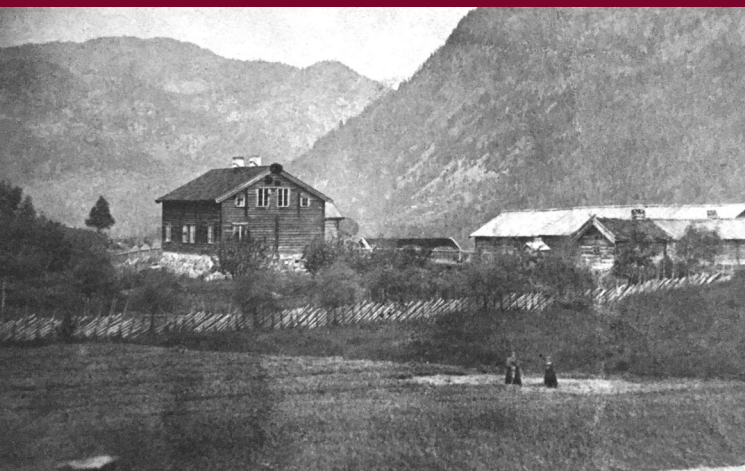
Source: West-Telemark Museum, Photo: Jostein Granlid

**TIMBER FLOATING IN THE RIVER** began in the late 16th century. Logs were driven from the mountain villages in the west, down the River Tokkeåi to Dalen and then across Lake Bandak and down the Telemark Canal. The Nederbøfossen waterfall posed a big challenge to the log drivers. The logs would plunge down the waterfall before shooting out of the water in all directions. They ended up in a huge log jam that was both dangerous and difficult for the drivers to disentangle. The reason for the jams was the big hole at the bottom of the waterfall which would suck in the logs before ejecting them again and tossing them to the side. The Nederbøfossen waterfall was therefore given the nickname Helvetesfossen (Hell's Waterfall). A bridge was later built across what became known as Helveteshylen.

**WHAT WILL  
YOU SEE  
ON THE HIKE**

**ÅSLAND FARM**

served as a thingstead – a legislative assembly – during the Middle Ages.  
Photo: Unknown. Year: 1860.



NATURE AND CULTURE

**The giant brown trout**



Fly Casting World Champion Mikael Blomberg.  
Photo: Kai Brattestå.

**LAKE BANDAK AND THE RIVER TOKKE-ÅI** are home to the original species of sea trout that migrated inland after the last Ice Age around 10–12,000 years ago. The sea trout got trapped inside the network of fjords as the ice cap receded and the land began to rise. The delta in

the River Tokkeåi is a breeding ground for the giant brown trout. This underwater greenhouse creates the nutrients that the trout needs to grow big enough to feed on the shoals of whitefish in the big lakes. The trout in Lake Bandak typically lives for 15–25 years and can weigh more than 15 kg. In the 1850s the English gentry discovered the abundant fisheries in Dalen. The travel journals of these first recreational anglers speak of spectacular hauls with “a great many trout” and of the River Tokkeåi being a “first-rate trout river with pools that any keen angler would be delighted to cast his fishing line into”. The prospect of catching the giant trout continues to attract anglers to Dalen. From the bridge you can watch the trout as it migrates upstream in the autumn.



www.hikingtelemark.com  
www.visitdalen.com

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Layout: Nina Akerstveit / trykk Erik Tandhe Nilssen as

**THE PROSPECT OF**

catching the giant trout is attracting anglers to Dalen.

Photo: Yngve Ask.



9 KM CIRCUIT / 3 HOURS  
MEDIUM HIKE →

**Dalen – Telemark**

HIKE **Helveteshylen**

THEME **The suspension bridge  
across Hell**



Photo: Luke Tennant



**THE NAME HELVETESHYLEN** has been in use since the days when timber was floated on the River Tokkeåi.

Photo: Old postcard.





# Description of the hike

## THE HIKE STARTS BY TOKKE KULTURHUS.

Follow the footpath along the football field behind Tokke Kulturhus and cross the River Tokkeåi twice. Turn right after the second bridge and then take the first left. After 2 km you will reach the suspension bridge across Helveteshylen. After the bridge, cross route FV38 and continue along the path through cultural landscapes, then woodland, before ascending the steep hillside. On your way back you will be crossing the Heibøåi stream, once the source of water for one of Norway's very first power stations, supplying electricity to Dalen Hotel. As you approach Dalen you will arrive at a scenic vantage point, equipped with a bench for the weary rambler. After descending from the vantage point, cross the Skafsåvegen road and turn right at the Åsland farm. Here you can stop to enjoy the views of Lake Bandak and the Telemark Canal before returning to the starting point by Tokke Kulturhus. Please note there are two alternative shortcuts back to the starting point along the route. These are marked in blue on the map.

## Driving directions

The trail starts by Tokke Kulturhus. Driving westwards on route E134: turn off the main road in Høydalsmo and follow route Fv45/Fv450 to Dalen. Tokke Kulturhus is on your right just after the centre of Dalen. If you are coming from Vrådal or Åmot, take route Fv38 to Dalen. Tokke Kulturhus is on your left just before the centre of Dalen.

**P** Use the car park by Tokke Kulturhus/School.



At [hikingtelemark.com](http://hikingtelemark.com) you will find an overview of accommodation for hikers.

**You are responsible for your own safety during the walk. Treat the countryside and grazing animals with respect. Take only photos, leave only footprints. Please take your rubbish home with you. Enjoy the trip!**

**Film:** Log driving in West Telemark on YouTube.



**Map:**  
Tokke  
1:50 000



**Access:** May-October.  
**Highest point:**  
244 m above sea level.



Equidistance 10 m

..... = mainroute

..... = shortcut



Photo: Jostein Hellevik, Dalen Villmarksenter