Waikato Regional Trail Notes

Mangatāwhiri to Mercer

Last Edited: September 08, 2026 10:11:46 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa section: Follow the Mangatāwhiri River past Dutch-style polders to connect with historic Mercer, where the first invasion of the Waikato took place. Finish on the banks of the Waikato River.

DESCRIPTION

Follow SH2 east for 2 km keeping well off the road shoulder as this is an extremely busy road with a lot of traffic.

Warning. After very heavy rain the canal crossing at km 696 may be flooded and unsafe. In these conditions it may be necessary to continue another 4.5 km on SH 2 to cross the canal on the highway bridge and then walk southwest on the eastern side of the canal.

Serpel Road to Mangatawhiri River - 3.5km

- *SOBO*: turn right from State Highway 2 onto Serpel Road at km 692, and after 350 m enter through a farm gate on the left and follow the line of trees to the farm track. Walk along the farm track and in 620 m turn left at the track junction, then right in 140 m and follow the track for another 450 m to its junction with Dobson Road. Turn right onto Dobson Road and follow the orange TA markers 1.8 km to the Mangatawhiri River stopbank. Climb up the stopbank and check the river depth.
- After heavy rain the river may flood beyond the normal bank and cover the grass area up to the base of the stopbank. In these conditions the crossing point downstream will be too deep to cross safely. It will be necessary to return to SH 2 either via Dobson Road or by walking northeast along the stopbank to use the highway bridge to cross to the eastern side of the Mangatawhiri River.
- If the river is not in flood walk down to the marked path along normal riverbank Turn right and follow the path 450 metres downstream to the crossing point, just before a wooden duck-hunting shelter. There is an orange arrow pointing across the river and a concrete power pole across the riverbed. It's marked on both ends by a steel post carrying and large orange track marker, and at this point the river has a gravel bed. The shallowest place is just downstream from the concrete pole. If you're unable to cross the river due to high water levels, follow the stopbank 2.8 km upstream to State Highway 2. Carefully cross then walk under the road bridge to join the other stopbank, and follow that back downstream to the crossing point

- *NOBO*: Walk upstream on the Mangatawhiri River stopbank until the crossing point, marked on both ends with a steel post carrying and a large orange track marker. The river here has a gravel bed. If you're unable to cross the river due to high water levels, continue along the stopbank for 2.8 km to State Highway 2, carefully cross the road bridge, and walk along State Highway 2 for 3.6 km to rejoin TA at the junction with Serpel Road. If you can cross the river, follow the roughly marked river side path for 450 metres upstream and climb over the stopbank to the farm track. Follow the TA track markers along the farm track (which becomes Dobson Road) for 1.8 km to a marked farm gate and farm track on the left. Follow the track for 450 m to a left turn, then follow it for 140 m to a right turn. Continue along the track for 620 m and follow a line of trees until you reach a farm gate that enters onto Serpel Road. Follow Serpel Road for 350 m and turn left onto State Highway 2. State Highway 2 is one of New Zealand's busiest roads, especially on Friday afternoons and weekends, so be very careful crossing and walking along it.

Mangatawhiri River Track — 2.5km / 1 hour 15 minutes

This track opens up a little-seen corner of New Zealand where you'll overlook the stopbank, a Dutch Polder-style agriculture. It follows the Mangatāwhiri River from the 2.5 km below the SH2 bridge, southwest to the exit at McIntyre Road.

Follow the stopbank, which is on the true left of the Mangatāwhiri River – that is, the left bank as you face downstream. One low-lying area about halfway along may flood, but only after heavy rains. After a 2.5km walk down the stopbank, you'll come to a drainage ditch about 10m wide. At this point, the stopbank and the track route turn left at a right angle and follow the drainage ditch inland for about 1km before finishing at the McIntyre Road end. A pump station is there for an Archimedes Screw, which is part of the drainage.

If you want to see what this land was like before being modified, look across the drainage ditch, and you'll see the natural swamp run by the Auckland/Waikato Chapter of Fish and Game.

- Note: After heavy rain and when the river is running high, this route may be underwater — check conditions carefully, and if the water is high, use Koheroa Roa from SH2 to Mercer as an alternative.

Mercer — 4.5km / 1.5 hours

McIntyre Road is a little-used road serving only a few houses. It has views across the Fish and Game swampland and a relaxing shady section before it reaches the junction with Kellyville Road.

After crossing the railway line, follow the markers into the trees opposite and under the Southern Motorway bridge.

Turn left/south and follow the marked route parallel to the motorway 1.5km to the Mercer Service Centre — where a petrol station, cafe and food court are available for refreshments before you leave the Auckland region and enter Waikato.

CONDITIONS

Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track
- Farming operations Occasionally farm animals. Also temporary electric fences (can be stepped over).
- Open drains
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold
- Few water sources

No dogs allowed

ACCESS

Northern SH2, end of Serpel Road, Mangatawhiri
Southern End: Skeet Rd, Mercer

TRANSPORT

The Auckland region conveniently ends at the Mercer Service Centre, SH 1, Mercer.

It is well serviced by long haul bus companies such as:

- InterCity - P: 09 583 5780 - E: info@intercity.co.nz
- Northliner Express Coach Service - P: 09 307 5873

ACCOMMODATION

- Mercer Motel - 2 Roose Rd, Mercer - P: 09 233 6555 - E: info@mercermotel.co.nz - Newly renovated motel units from $145 per night, there are also cabins for $75 pp and camping is $20 per night for one person and $30 for two people. For camping, check in with the team at Mercer Landing and they'll direct you.

  After Mercer Landing's hours on Monday and Tuesday (see Food and Supply section below) call the Mercer Motel number. You will not able to leave a message but staff may return your call.

- Kellyville Road, Mercer - on the Koheroa Bypass of the Mercer part of Te Araroa. A 1930s bungalow on 2 tranquil rural acres overlooking the Waikato River and surrounding farmland. House has 2 twin guest rooms and a newly renovated bathroom and kitchen. The property sits on the Kellyville tuff ring (volcanic) on Koheroa Ridge (Land Wars) and boasts part of the old coach road to Auckland. A 2.8 km walk West will take you to the Waikato River where you will also find Mercer Museum, Mobile Petrol station, McDonalds, Muddy Waters Irish Pub & Restaurant, Mercer Cheese Shop, Esquires Cafe, Pokeno Bacon Restaurant. Please book via airbnb.com/h/kellyville or email sofiaandreen@xtra.co.nz

FOOD AND SUPPLY

- Mercer Landing Kitchen & Bar – 6 Roose Rd, Mercer – P: 09 236 8641 – Newly renovated restaurant and bar. Open Monday-Tuesday 7:30am to 2:00pm, Wednesday-Sunday 7:30am-Late, with coffee and pastries available for takeaway from 7am daily. Packed lunches available upon request.

EXTRA INFO

Before starting Te Araroa either as a through-walker of the whole country or a section walker, please register on Te Araroa website. Please also visit the website or download the app for detailed maps, trail alerts and other relevant information.

This track is part of the Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa track database. Herenga ā Nuku has maps and advice about public access to the outdoors.

We encourage you to continue gaining the skills and knowledge required for a safe trip. The NZ Mountain Safety Council has lots of free resources and information you can use. These can be accessed via www.mountainsafety.org.nz.

We recommend trying these online learning tools:

- Trip Planning
- Tramping/field Skills
- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

Additionally, check out the range of helpful videos available from the NZ Mountain Safety Council YouTube channel.

Mercer to Rangiriri

Last Edited: November 02, 2026 08:44:37 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa trail section: Follow the Waikato River on this scenic route, but avoid times of flood. There are great views of the river and Whangamarino Wetland, the second-largest bog and swamp complex in the North Island.

DESCRIPTION

Whangamarino Redoubt Track - 2.5km / 45 minutes

This is a very scenic route but the track is basic, hilly and can be slippery – good footwear and reasonable fitness required. From the southern end of Skeet Road, keep going straight ahead, following the fence line and orange markers. When the fence ends, keep following the markers over farmland and through the bush. From the high points, there are great views of the Waikato River and Whangamarino Wetland which is the second-largest bog and swamp complex in the North Island.

Near the southern end of the track is the Whangamarino Redoubt (a historic site from the Māori Wars era). At a stile, you have the choice of going right, past remnants of the war entrenchments and through Department of Conservation (DOC) estate, or straight ahead down to Oram Road. Cross the floodgate bridge and look for a marker on the fence to your right (southbound). For northbound travellers, after crossing the floodgate bridge you turn either left, to follow a path up the hill to the redoubt site, or right on Oram Road to follow the the main route up the hill.

Whangamarino Wetlands Track - 5.5km / 2.5 hours

From the Whangamarino floodgate, follow the markers underneath the railway line and the two highway bridges before coming up onto the banks of the Waikato River and west of SH1.

This section is subject to flooding when the Waikato river floods. In extreme conditions it may be require detours in a few places.

From the south side of the floodgate the trail goes under three bridges. If the water level beside the path under the railway bridge is less than one metre below the level of the path, the track may be flooded further on beyond the two highway bridges. If the path you are on is above water, continue under the railway bridge and the two highway bridges and look for a place to climb the bank and walk along the road edge, outside the safety barrier, until you reach the clear stop bank.

If the water is much higher and you can't get under the bridges, go back to Oram Road and carefully walk across the highway. Traffic is fast, but there are gaps if you are patient. Walk along the stop bank for 3km, past the mythological taniwha lairs, boggy wetlands and landscaped grasslands to the outfall by the former power station.

Meremere Power Station km 709.1 to Dragway Road km 711.7

If the water level has been exceptionally high up to this point, you can stay on the stop bank all the way to Dragway Road. It is much nicer (and quieter) to turn off the stop bank and cross the tiny bridge to follow Te Araroa along the riverbank. Just 30 metres along the path there may be a short section of floodwater. The next 1.7km is usually dry.

At km 711.2 there may be a problem. The trail crosses the end of a pond that forms after heavy rain. It is possible to wade across, but difficult to avoid deeper parts. There is an alternative 0.4km before this pond crossing. At km 710.8 there is a stile (the third or fourth on this section). Looking left you can see some colourful beehives. Ahead of you there may be a large deep pond. Te Araroa goes to the right of the pond, but may reach deep water. It's better to turn slightly left immediately after the stile and walk around the left side of the pond on a dry route through the trees to rejoin Te Araroa at km 711.5.

Continue on south along the marked track until you reach Dragway Road. Turn right (west) and follow the road to the end.

Waikato River - 17.5km / 6 hours

Near the end of Dragway Road, an ignimbrite rock marker marks the trailhead, engraved with a Waikato River verse from a Topp Twins song. Signage indicates walkers are under the protection of the Ngāti Naho taniwha.

The first 9km from Dragway Road to the Te Kauwhata Pumphouse is the most scenic part of the track. It follows farm tracks and the stop bank for 3km before ascending hilly terrain to a height of 35m, with good river views, before descending again to the flats. Kahikatea, cabbage trees and puketea alongside the trail give a hint of the original riverside vegetation. Some short clay sections may be slippery in rain, but these can generally be avoided by taking a slightly higher path along the grassy river bank.

Soon after, the track passes onto another farm frontage, climbing to another river viewpoint before crossing a swamp on a 30m boardwalk and exiting just north of the Pumphouse. The Pumphouse is accessible by Hall Road if you want to arrange a pickup by car here.

The track continues along the stop bank parallel to Churchill East Road for most of the remaining 8.5km to Rangiriri. The quiet road shoulder is an option if you don't like moving past occasional cattle – wear hi-viz and remove headphones.

You will find a new water supply near the pump house at marker km 720.5 – this has been kindly provided by the Te Kauwhata Water Association.

2km south of the Pumphouse, look for Tarahanga, an island that was used in former times as a Māori sentry post to detect invaders on the river. High priests here once uttered powerful incantations and sounded alarms through a rock structure known as Te Pahuu o Ngāti Pou, warning of any impending danger.

Three kilometres along this route, the track diverts on to the road for nearly 2km, then returns to the stop bank again for the final 2km to Rangiriri Bridge. This last section sometimes grazes young bulls so, if you'd prefer, the road is again an option.

The trail ends near an old redoubt where, in 1863, British troops fought Waikato warriors in a bloody encounter. The nearby Rangiriri Battle Site Heritage Centre displays military relics and an audio-visual presentation of the battle.

It's a short off-trail walk into Rangiriri for refreshments at the tavern or cafe.

For those continuing south, it is safer to walk along the riverbank to pass underneath the bridge and then scramble up the bank to cross Rangiriri Bridge on the southern side of the road.

CONDITIONS

Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track
- Farming operations
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold
- Few water sources
- The track is impassable when the river is in flood. The Waikato is a dangerous river. Swimming is not recommended. Water erosion may undermine the bank near the river edge. Supervise children closely.

No dogs, guns, camping or fires.

ACCESS

Northern Start: Skeet Road, Mercer
Southern End: Rangiriri Bridge (Junction of SH1 and Churchill East Road)

TRANSPORT

The Waikato region conveniently starts near the Mercer Service Centre, SH 1, Mercer. It is well serviced by long-haul bus companies.

- InterCity - P: 09 583 5780 - E: info@intercity.co.nz
- Northliner Express Coach Service - P: 09 307 5873

ACCOMMODATION

Mercer

- Accommodation - Kellyville Road, Mercer - on the Koheroa Bypass of the Mercer part of Te Araroa. A 1930s bungalow on 2 tranquil rural acres overlooking the Waikato River and surrounding farmland. House has 2 twin guest rooms and a newly renovated bathroom and kitchen. The property sits on the Kellyville tuff ring (volcanic) on Koheroa Ridge (Land Wars) and boasts part of the old coach road to Auckland. A 2.8 km walk West will take you to the Waikato River where you will also find Mercer Museum, Mobile Petrol station, McDonalds, Muddy Waters Irish Pub & Restaurant, Mercer Cheese Shop, Esquires Cafe, Pokeno Bacon Restaurant. Please book via airbnb.com/h/kellyville or email sofiaandreen@xtra.co.nz

Rangiriri Trail Host

- *Before Rangiriri*
  A peaceful place to rest and recharge before Rangiriri - semi-rural homestay 5km east of marker 720.5. Pickup available from Pumphouse by arrangement. STAY: cosy guest room (queen pillow-top bed) or private flat tent space. Includes hot shower + home-cooked meal (kaitahi tātou) with friendly reo Māori speaking whānau + gentle rescue dog Kiwa. Enjoy some downtime, kai whakanoa & learn about our culture if you like, nau mai haere mai. TRANSPORT: 8am kura run to Huntly (Mon–Fri) can drop-off at Rangiriri Bridge (km 729). Grounded in manaakitanga – we love to host our Te Araroa hīkoi whānau. Bedding, towels & kai provided. Koha is appreciated rather than a fixed fee.
  Please message Lani 020 494 3920

Rangiriri

- *Camp Rangi* - 16 Rangiriri Road (Come to the Pink Ice Cream Shop). Flat grassed tent sites available for $20 per night. Bunk Wagon available for $35 per night. Rooms in the Villa Available ($45 for single room or $75 double). Shower, toilet, and basic kitchen facilities along with power and wifi are available for all guests included (including tents). We also have a covered courtyard for your relaxation and comfort. Text Reggie 022 527 4210.

- *Rangiriri Hotel* - 8 Rangiriri Rd, Rangiriri (pub, bar, food and accommodation) - P: 07 826 3467. Tent camping at $10 per tent, with an additional $10 for a shower. Tent sites are grassed and very flat, and are around the back of the Hotel in front of the separate house. A water tap is available for use by campers, as are toilets in the Hotel. Single and double rooms are also available at $90 and $140 respectively.

EXTRA INFO

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Rangiriri to Huntly

Last Edited: September 28, 2026 07:19:26 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa trail section: Follow the Waikato River past a golf course to reach Hakarimata Reserve.

DESCRIPTION

Huntly Riverbank Track - 21km

Once you've crossed the bridge, continue a further 150m around the first corner where there is a stile to take you across the first fence to the riverside track which runs parallel to Te Ohākī Road. On a clear day, you'll see the orange-topped chimneys of the Huntly Power station standing in the distance. Stay on the path , which mostly follows the stopbank. crossing several stiles

After 7km, the track comes up to the Huntly Golf Course. The track follows the river, keeping behind a screen of trees, safe from the golf balls that ping up the 16th fairway. At the tee, it's safe to come out. The clubhouse is nearby and opens most weekends for hot food, maybe even a beer. Walkers are welcome.

The track follows the stopbank out to Te Ohakī Road, to circumvent the Huntly Power Station's ash ponds. It stays on the road verge for another kilometre before ducking back onto the stopbanks, crossing Māori land between Te Ohaaki Marae and the river, then exits back onto the road. For the last 200m, it enters shady bush through the sculpture park in front of Huntly Power Station.

From the Sculpture Park, continue south along footpaths/road margins on Te Ohakī Road, then Harris Street, then Riverview Road (which becomes Hakarimata Road). Turn right (south-west) into Parker Road. Walk 800m along this road to the Department of Conservation's Hakarimata Scenic Reserve.

HISTORY

Signage at the track start offers walkers the protection of the taniwha, Tarakokomako, and names the seven now-vanished ancestral villages and the two existing marae en route.

Look out for the plaque carved with a taniwha and a greeting from Tainui:

- Kia tūpato kia pai tō hīkoi - Walk the path in safety
- Me te titiro whānui, kia koa - Look deeply and learn
- Ki ngā taonga kei mua i a koe - From your surroundings

A short detour beyond the sculpture park opposite Huntly Power Station, hidden from sight, is a modernist sculpture - an immense and strikingly Māori figure - with poupou standing up from a reflective pool. This depicts the 1995 settlement of a grievance dating back to the 1860s when the largest land confiscation of any tribe was imposed on Tainui.

1.5km in, past Maurea Marae, there's a monument to the Ngāti Naho chief, Te Wheoro, whose personal history embodies the extraordinary stresses of colonial rule on Waikato Māori as they argued strategies to preserve tribal identity. Te Wheoro sided at first with the Crown. In 1857, he spoke against setting up a Māori king and, at the great conference of Māori leaders at Kohimarama in 1860, spoke again in favour of the Government. Governor Grey's British troops invaded Waikato territory in July 1863. In November that year, the British Troops overcame the Māori redoubt at Rangiriri, forcing the Māori King, Tāwhiao, out of Ngāruawāhia to sanctuary around Waitomo and Te Kūiti. In the years that followed, Te Wheoro acted as an intermediary for the Government's negotiation with the King. As a Māori MP over the next two decades, Te Wheoro witnessed Government decisions he saw as racist and finally became an implacable critic of the Native Land Court. He came to believe local self-government was right for Māori and in 1884, in company with Tāwhiao, he travelled to England to petition Queen Victoria for a redress of Māori land seizures.

CONDITIONS

Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track – the Glenmurray Bridge is one lane with a very narrow footpath
- Bulls – there are one or more jersey bulls along the section between Rangiriri Bridge and Huntly Golf Course. They can be particularly aggressive at times. If a single bull is kept in a field by himself there is a reason for the isolation. Watch out for a bull among a group of cows and be prepared to get out of the field
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold
- Beware flying golf balls
- The Waikato River is dangerous – don't swim in the river. Water erosion may undermine the bank near the river edge. Supervise children closely.

No dogs, guns, camping or fires.

ACCESS

Northern Start: Rangiriri Bridge (Junction of SH1 and Churchill East Road)
Southern End: Hakarimata Scenic Reserve, end of Parker Road

TRANSPORT

Huntly

- InterCity - Major North Island routes - W: - E: info@intercity.co.nz - P: 09 583 5780 - (call centre open 7am-8pm)
- BusIt (Huntly and Hamilton) - 0800 205 305
- Huntly Taxis - P: 07 828 0100

ACCOMMODATION

Trail Hosts *before Huntly*

- *Chris and Karen*, we have a lifestyle property 200m from km 734 in the North Waikato.
  We are 5 mins away from a New World Supermarket which I can take you too. We have room for tents or a self contained one bed unit (advance bookings for this would be necessary). Meals can be provided if required. A spa is available to soak the weary body. Please contact via messenger or 027 290 3656. Look forward to meeting you.

Huntly

Accommodation is available in Huntly, across the Tainui Bridge from the Te Araroa route on the eastern side of the river:

- Lake Hakanoa Huntly Motor Camping Grounds and Holiday Park - 5 Taihua St, Huntly - P: 027 497 8925 - 15 tent sites, 42 power sites, 4 onsite caravans, cabins. On the shores of Lake Hakanoa E - davecarol@xtra.co.nz
- The Essex (2km beyond the southern trailhead) - 151 Main St, Huntly - P: 07 828 7179
- Manor Views - 24 Upland Rd, Huntly - P: 07 828 0171 or 021 959 562

Huntly Trail Hosts

- Huntly - A comfy bed – one queen bed or two singles available, sorry no tent space available.
  We offer evening meal and sometimes breakfast depending on time and will make depending on dietary requirements.
  Hot shower / laundry facilities
  Spa pool available
  We have two cats who are indoor cats only – (in case people have allergies)
  Pick up and drop off available depending on time (we work between 7am and 5pm)
  Rural outlook – peace and quiet
  We accept Koha for services.
  Hosts are Colin and Dawn

  Contact phone number is 027 545 4006 – Please text only with at least a days notice so I can make sure we are set up for walkers.

  We are approximately 4.1km off trail, at the north end of Huntly, east side.

FOOD AND SUPPLY

- Fred's 4 Four Square - Gordon Rd, Huntly - P: 07 828 7438
- Countdown Supermarket - 16/18 Tūmate Mahuta Drive, Huntly - P: 07 828 2041 Open 7.00am-9.00pm

EXTRA INFO

Before starting Te Araroa either as a through-walker of the whole country or a section walker, please register on Te Araroa website. Please also visit the website or download the app for detailed maps, trail alerts and other relevant information.

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- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

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Hakarimata Walkway

Last Edited: August 28, 2026 15:10:12 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa section: The Hakarimata Track is hilly and arduous but the bush and views are worth it. You can walk the Hakarimata Walkway from either its southern end, near Ngāruawāhia, or northern end, closer to Huntly. There are car parks at both ends of the track.

DESCRIPTION

Hakarimata Walkway - 13km

The track from Parker Road starts on the Kauri Loop Track, which leads up a long flight of steps, then levels out to an open area with views to the north. Take the Kauri Loop Track west of the Lower Lookout to walk on past an old pā site and through bush to the large kauri trees. A few minutes further on, there's the kauri grove bush viewpoint. This loop track takes you through to the Upper Lookout.

The Hakarimata Walkway starts from the Upper Lookout. Head in a southerly direction for 20 minutes to the southern lookout where there are excellent views south across Hamilton. The Walkway continues along the undulating crest of the Hakarimata Range with occasional views out to the west and east.

Approximately 500m southeast of high point labeled 314 on the map (at km 759.1), there is a rough exit track heading down in an easterly direction past the old quarry to Hakarimata Road on the western banks of the Waikato River. It's obviously used by locals as a shortcut to town, but it is tight in places.

The main ridge track continues southwards to the Hakarimata Trig at 374m high. Walking 200m south of the trig, take the track leading down towards the Mangarata Stream. This track - "the Summit Track" is a tremendous success story, where the local community have adopted it as a community wellbeing tool, and it won't be uncommon to see locals heading up or down the track (often multiple times) in their quest for better health outcomes. Kia kaha!

The track then comes out on Brownlee Avenue, which connects with Hakarimata Road. Follow the road southeast until reaching the Waingaro Road Bridge over the Waipā River. The track officially ends on the eastern bank.

If you are after amenities, continue east across the railway and Great South Road to reach Jesmond Street - the main business road in the small township of Ngāruawāhia.

CONDITIONS

Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track - take care on the one lane bridge
- Poisons & traps
- Few water sources

No dogs allowed.

TE AO MĀORI

Just north of Hamilton, Ngāruawāhia is a significant place for Māori. It is the home of the Māori King and the magnificent Tūrangawaewae Marae. The marae is open only once a year, during the annual regatta, which is held on the nearest Saturday to 17 March. Ngāruawāhia is located at the junction of two great rivers - Waikato and Waipā. These rivers were once important canoe routes; later they served European settlers. Taupiri Mountain, which watches over Ngāruawāhia, is sacred and contains the Waikato's most significant Māori burial ground. You can walk to the summit for views of the region.

ACCESS

- Northern Start: Hakarimata Scenic Reserve, end of Parker Road
- Southern End: Waingaro Road bridge, Ngāruawāhia

This is a one-way track but it can be walked as return trips to the summit from either end. The track can also be accessed at the Hakarimata summit (374 m) via the Hakarimata Summit Track. The northern section starts from Parker Road, off Hakarimata Road, approx. 7 km south of Huntly and approx. 11 north of Ngāruawāhia. The southern section starts from Waingaro Road, off Hakarimata Road, approximately 3 km south of Ngāruawāhia.

ACCOMMODATION

- RiverBed Motel, 13 Market St, Ngaruawahia. P: 07 8248360: E - arrowlodge@callplus.net.nz
- *Kandoit Earthship* 11g Waingaro Rd, Ngaruawahia. Located in a quiet bush clad area, just a short 10-min. walk from the Hakarimata Summit track at Brownlee Ave end, km 762.9.
  Shower, WiFi, phone charging available and outdoor composting toilet. Tent sites: $10 per person. Private bedroom: $60 per room (Another payment option is a one-hour contribution to odd jobs, if needed)
  Nearby Amenities: 10-minute walk to a supermarket and laundromat. Nighttime glow worm viewing nearby – a must-see! Please contact first: Brian & Karen Gubb 027 271 3400
- *Richelle Whittaker*, 1 Thickpenny Lane, Ngaruawahia. near km 762.9. We have lots of space for many tents. We also usually offer for hikers to have dinner with us. Hikers can use our bathroom and kitchen facilities. Donation appreciated. We also have a swimming pool which hikers can use. M: 027 489 8030

FOOD AND SUPPLY

- New World Supermarket - 7 Galileo St, Ngāruawāhia - P: 07 824 8275
- Breaking Bread Cafe - 2 Newcastle Street, Ngaruawahia - 10% off food and drink when Te Araroa trail pass is shown.

EXTRA INFO

Functional facts: Approximate population of 5000, limited accommodation, basic shops.

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Ngāruawāhia to Hamilton - Te Awa (The River)

Last Edited: August 28, 2026 09:19:10 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa trail section: Follow part of Te Awa, a riverside path made for cyclists and walkers.

DESCRIPTION

Te Awa - Riverside Path - 22km

Immediately after crossing the Waipā River, take a sharp left into Sampson Street and follow it around, joining Broadway Street, then onto the Lower Waikato Esplanade.

Follow this under the railway line and road bridge and immediately after the road bridge, join the paved path. You are now on Te Awa cycle/walkway. Follow through to the riverside reserve. Across the river is the Tūrangawaewae Marae, a very significant marae of the Māori people of New Zealand and the official residence and reception centre of the head of the Kīngitanga (the Māori King Movement).

Te Awa continues along the river, continuing south as you leave Ngāruawāhia. You'll see the Ngāruawāhia Golf Course to your right and shortly after a spectacular green bridge will appear. Cross the bridge and you will now be on the true right of the river.

The path will take you to Horotiu Bridge Road, where you'll cross back over the Waikato River, and down onto Te Awa along the river, with a small deviation away from the river just past the Fonterra dairy plant.

The path ends at the Centennial Steps to Alma Street, after passing under Claudelands Road Bridge

CONDITIONS

Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track – stay as far off SH1 as possible
- Be aware of cyclists on cycleway into Hamilton from Horotiu

TE AO MĀORI

Just north of Hamilton, Ngāruawāhia is a significant place for Māori.

It is the home of the Māori King and the magnificent Tūrangawaewae Marae. The marae is open only once a year, during the annual regatta, which is held on the nearest Saturday to the 17th March. Ngāruawāhia is located at the junction of two great rivers - Waikato and Waipā. These rivers were once important canoe routes; later they served European settlers. Taupiri Mountain, which watches over Ngāruawāhia, is sacred and contains the Waikato's most significant Māori burial ground. You can walk to the summit for views of the region.

ACCESS

Northern Start: Waingaro Road Bridge, Ngāruawāhia
Southern End: Pūkete Road, Hamilton

TRANSPORT

- InterCity - Major North Island routes - PH 09 583 5780 - E: info@intercity.co.nz
- BusIt - (Huntly and Hamilton) - P: 0800 205 305
- Ngaruawahia to Hamilton Central bike ride via Te Awa Trail. 2 Hour trip, $39.00. Luggage transport option, $10.00. 08:45am transfer (subject to change) 2 days notice needed. Ph: 027 265 5504 E: rentals@riverriders.co.nz

ACCOMMODATION

- Riverbed Motel 13 Market St, Ngāruawāhia. P: 07 824 8360 - E: riverbedmotel@gmail.com
- or detour west to - Waingaro Hot Springs Hotel and Camping Ground - 2263 Waingaro Rd, Ngāruawāhia - P: 07 825 4761 - E: waingaro.hot.springs@outlook.com
- *Kandoit Earthship* 11g Waingaro Rd, Ngaruawahia. Located in a quiet bush clad area, just a short 10-min. walk from the Hakarimata Summit track at Brownlee Ave end, km 762.9. Shower, WiFi, phone charging available and outdoor composting toilet. Tent sites: $10 per person. Private bedroom: $60 per room (Another payment option is a one-hour contribution to odd jobs, if needed) Nearby Amenities: 10-minute walk to a supermarket and laundromat. Nighttime glow worm viewing nearby – a must-see! Please contact first: Brian & Karen Gubb Ph - 027 271 3400

FOOD AND SUPPLY

- New World Supermarket - 7 Galileo St, Ngāruawāhia - P: 07 824 8275 Open 7.00am -9.00pm daily

EXTRA INFO

Before starting Te Araroa either as a through-walker of the whole country or a section walker, please register on Te Araroa website. Please also visit the website or download the app for detailed maps, trail alerts and other relevant information.

This track is part of the Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa track database. Herenga ā Nuku has maps and advice about public access to the outdoors.

We encourage you to continue gaining the skills and knowledge required for a safe trip. The NZ Mountain Safety Council has lots of free resources and information you can use. These can be accessed via www.mountainsafety.org.nz.

We recommend trying these online learning tools:

- Trip Planning
- Tramping/field Skills
- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

Additionally, check out the range of helpful videos available from the NZ Mountain Safety Council YouTube channel.

Hamilton City

Last Edited: November 06, 2026 16:53:52 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa section: Located on the banks of the Waikato River, Hamilton is one of the most populous cities in New Zealand. Hamilton is known for its award-winning Hamilton Gardens, green spaces, river banks, gourmet eateries and colourful street art

DESCRIPTION

Follow Te Awa (a combined walk-cycle way) south through Braithwaite Park along the (true left) bank of the Waikato River to just south of (having passed under) the Claudelands Road Bridge. From here, you will travel through the city as follows:

Leave the walkway and take the Centennial Steps up onto Alma Street. Head past the Novotel Tainui and turn left/southeast into Victoria Street. Almost immediately, turn right (southwest) into Garden Place, an open-space mall. At the far side of Garden Place, turn right and walk through the Centre Place Shopping Centre to Ward Street (or if after hours, continue through Garden Place past the Hamilton City Council building to the Ward Street/Anglesea Street intersection). Follow Ward Street southwest to the corner of Ward and Tristram Streets.

Here, walk west through Norris Ward Park and the far side of the park on Seddon Road. Follow signs onto the Western Rail Trail, which runs adjacent to the railway line, past the Hamilton Railway Station to Killarney Road. Walk west along Killarney Road and through the Dinsdale Roundabout to Whatawhata Road on the southwest side.

Follow Whatawhata Road until turning left (south) into Melva Street. At the end of this street is Tills Lookout.

Continue south-westward across farmland on a paved city walk-cycleway, turn left (southwest) into Wallace Road, turn right (northwest) into Taitua Road and walk down the road to the Taitua Arboretum.

CONDITIONS

Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track - some walkways are shared with bicycles. Take care crossing roads.

ACCESS

Northern Start: Pukete Road, Hamilton
Southern End: Taitua Arboretum, Taitua Road

TRANSPORT

Hamilton Transport Centre - National/regional bus services, shuttle services and taxis - Corner of Bryce and Anglesea Sts - P: 07 839 6650 - Facilities include - Café, toilets, showers, bike and luggage lockers, telephones and parking.

- InterCity - Major North Island routes - E: info@intercity.co.nz - P: 09 583 5780
- BusIt (Huntly and Hamilton) - P: 0800 800 401
- Dalroy express (Hamilton - Auckland, New Plymouth and Hāwera) P: 0508 465 622
- Hamilton International Airport - 15km south of the city - Air NZ - P: 0800 737 000
- Super Shuttles - P: 0800 748 885 or 09 522 5100 -E: reservations@supershuttle.co.nz - Airport shuttles
- Minibus Express - P: 0800 64 64 28 or 021 685 099 - test "bus" to 9090 and they will call you. E: info@minibus.co.nz

Local transport

- Free Hamilton City Centre buses - leave every 10 minutes Monday - Friday: 7am-6pm Mon-Fri and 9am-1pm Sat-Sun
- BusIt - P: 0800 205 305
- Hamilton Taxis - P: 0800 477 477

ACCOMMODATION

There are many options available at a variety of levels, including the below:

- Microtel Backpackers - 140 Ulster St, Hamilton - P: 027 957 4848 - E: info@microtel.co.nz
- Eagles Nest backpackers - 937 Victoria St, Hamilton - P: 07 838 2704
- YWCA Hostel - Corner of Clarence and Pembroke Sts, Hamilton - single or twin share rooms at $50 per person, per night P: 027 756 4402 - E: hostel@ywcahamilton.org.nz
- Forty winks Backpackers Hostel - 267 River Rd, Claudelands, Hamilton - P: 07 855 2033

Detour to campsite

- Hamilton City Holiday Park - Camping, cabins and self-contained units - 14 Ruakura Rd, Hamilton - P: 07 855 8255 - E: hchp@xtra.co.nz

Trail Host After Hamilton

- *Taitua Road*, km 793.6. Rural property between Hamilton and Whatawhata. Tent space, a meal and shower if needed. Koha would be appreciated but is not compulsory. We have a big lawn with 2 friendly dogs and a space inside if the weather is not favourable. Please call Matthew Snodgrass M: 021 352 818

FOOD AND SUPPLY

- Pak'nSave Supermarket - Clarence St, Hamilton - P: 07 839 4056 Open 7.00am -10.00pm daily.
- Countdown Supermarket - Cnr Anglesea and Liverpool Sts, Hamilton - P: 07 834 1490 Open 7.00am -10.00pm Daily
- Ginger and Honey Cafe - 1369 Victoria Street, Beerescourt, Hamilton - 10% off food and drink when Te Araroa trail pass is shown.

EXTRA INFO

- Hamilton's Taitua Arboretum is a collection of mature trees on 20 hectares of open pasture, lakes and woodland gardens linked by a network of walking tracks and bridges. The park also features great views and wonderful birdlife. Open 7 days from 8am to half an hour before dusk. Admission free.
- i-SITE Visitor Information Centre — 120 Victoria Street, Hamilton — P: 0800 426 45866 E— info@visithamilton.co.nz
- DOC Waikato Area Office — 73 Rostrevor Street, Hamilton — P: 07 858 1000

Before starting Te Araroa either as a through-walker of the whole country or a section walker, please register on Te Araroa website. Please also visit the website or download the app for detailed maps, trail alerts and other relevant information.

This track is part of the Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa track database. Herenga ā Nuku has maps and advice about public access to the outdoors.

We encourage you to continue gaining the skills and knowledge required for a safe trip. The NZ Mountain Safety Council has lots of free resources and information you can use. These can be accessed via www.mountainsafety.org.nz.

We recommend trying these online learning tools:

- Trip Planning
- Tramping/field Skills
- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

Additionally, check out the range of helpful videos available from the NZ Mountain Safety Council YouTube channel.

Waipā Walk

Last Edited: November 06, 2026 14:55:28 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa trail section: This walk uses footpaths, back roads, state highway road margins, pasture and river esplanade. Follow the bypass during lambing season.

DESCRIPTION

Whatawhata Road - Waipa River Track - 17 km

From the Taitua Arbortum, head west on Taitua Road, turn left (south) onto Howden Road and continue straight ahead until it runs into O'Dea Road. At the end of O'Dea Road, continue over the stile – up the steps and onto the track for 2km to Walsh Road. Turn right (north) onto Walsh Road and follow this until it turns left at km 797.7.

Leave Walsh Road and continue north on Jane Cove Lane South for 125 m to a farm gate. Continue straight ahead through the date onto a gravelled farm road, passing through a second farm gate on the left. Be sure to shut all gates behind you. The track dips down to cross a bridge over a stream. Follow the farm road on the other side for another 100 m to a T-intersection. Turn right for a short distance through a third farm gate. A Te Araroa signpost marks the intersection with Jane Cove Lane North. Turn left and walk 100 m to Whatawhata Road. Turn left again and walk 1km into Whatawhata where walkers can get refreshments at the petrol station and tavern.

Northbound. From Whatawhata Gas station walk east on Whatawhata Road towards Hamilton. After 1.2 km turn right into Jane Cave Lane North. Walk 150 m to Te Araroa signage and a farm gate on the right leading to a gravelled farm road. After 15 m turn left on the farm road and follow it down to cross a bridge and up to another farm gate. Remember to close all gates through the farm. Turn right (south) and then continue straight along Jane Cove Lane South and Walsh Road to the end where a grass track goes east

> *NOTICE: Reported Dec 2023, there may be bulls present on the section of trail between O'Dea Road and Walsh Road. Stay alert, give them plenty of space, and take your headphones out.*

Walk west on SH23 through the settlement of Whatawhata, over the Waipā River bridge and take the first left (south) into Te Pahū Road. Here you will leave the road to walk on the true left bank of the Waipā River.

Look for a track behind the church, on the river side of the fence, and follow the orange markers. The track runs through pasture and swamp to a footbridge and in some places goes along a farm race – please, always give way to cattle.

At one point, the track heads back onto Te Pahū Road and across a road bridge (Paratawa Stream) before orange markers lead back onto the river reserve. Then it's back onto Te Pahū Road to the junction with Old Mountain Road. The Karamu Walkway is closed during lambing season, 4th August to 10th November. When the walkway is closed do not use Old Mountain Road, continue south on Te Pahu Road. See trail Alerts for up to date information.

Walk 4.5km southwest on Old Mountain Road (well past the quarry) to the start of the Karamu Walkway (km 818.7). See note below on seasonal bypass.

Karamu Walkway (Kapamahunga Range) - 8.5km / 3-4 hours

From Old Mountain Road, follow the white and/or orange markers southwards over farmland in the Kapamahunga Range. Note the entry point off Old Mountain Road is a little obscure.

After 3.5km, you pass a rural airstrip to the west and the end of Waikoha Road to the east. Keep following the markers south for another 3km. As you come downhill to the river, continue further along the northwest side of the river, skirting behind the limeworks, before coming out at the junction of Fillery Road and Limeworks Loop Road.

Follow the road southwest until reaching the DOC picnic area by the Kāniwhaniwha Stream. To access Karamu Walkway from the Karamu end (northbound), turn off Limeworks Loop Road onto Fillery Road, cross the one-lane bridge then follow the signs along a farm track to the carpark.

CONDITIONS

Kapamahunga Walkway

Note - this route closes for lambing 4 August to ~~31 October~~ *10 November*, or later as may be determined by the farm manager. From km 805.6 please walk 7km south on Te Pahu Road, then a further 5km west on Limeworks Loop Road to re-connect to the route.

Potential hazards:

- Vehicles on road or track
- Farming operations - please give way on all farm races.
- River crossings - Never cross flooded rivers - No access along Waipā River banks if in flood.
- Open drains
- Few water sources

No dogs allowed.

ACCESS

Northern Start: Taitua Arboretum, Taitua Road
Southern End: DOC picnic area, Limeworks Loop Road

ACCOMMODATION

Whatawhata

- The Village Cafe - 1 Rothwell Lane, Whatawhata - Free camping at the cafe with plenty of space, courtesy of owner Genevieve. Free WIFI toilets water and power. Cafe closes at 3 but you're welcome to just roll on in and set up. Please do NOT set up your tent before the cafe closes.
- *Karakariki Valley shepherds hut*. We have accommodation for TA walkers on our farm. The location is near Whatawhata village. The cosy shepherds hut sleeps 2 and includes a kitchenette with gas cooker and a lovely hot shower. There is also lots of space for tenting. There is a long-drop toilet. Phone charging is available. It is a very peaceful private spot on our farm. We can collect walkers from Whatawhata village and drop them back. A koha to cover our expenses would be appreciated. Please phone Anita on 021 0805 1626.

Karamu

- *Karamu Homestead*. 966 Limeworks Loop Road, Karamu. We provide campsites & a bunkhouse for people on the trail at our spectacular farmstay. $30 gets you cooked breakfast, great coffee and a hot shower. free wifi.
  Some sites are under cover. P: Stewart Best 027 272 7010. Approximately 1 km along Limeworks Road, east of the southern end of Karamu Walkway at km 819.2

FOOD AND SUPPLY

- Whatawhata Service Centre (fuel and basic groceries), 1335 Horotiu Road, Hamilton - Corner SH 23 and SH 39 - P: 07 829 8225

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Pirongia Traverse

Last Edited: August 28, 2026 11:36:08 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa trail section: Cross Pirongia Forst Park, through native bush and over the 959m summit of Pirongia.

DESCRIPTION

Pirongia Traverse - 19km

This traverse of Pirongia Mountain starts with the Department of Conservation's Nikau Walk – an easy stroll south from the Kāniwhaniwha carpark, following the stream through a forest of plantings. Shortly after leaving the farmland and just before a circular walk through beautiful native forest, you take the Tahuanui Track leading towards the southeast. Here, you will find a picnic/campsite clearing with toilets and the last opportunity for swimming before starting the ascent to the summit.

The Tahuanui Track then climbs steadily up a ridge through stands of tawa to the summit ridge where several tracks converge on the 959m summit of Pirongia. So far, this should have taken roughly 4-5 hours. 30 minutes beyond the summit in a westerly direction is the Pahautea Hut. It is generally a good idea to stay overnight in this hut and continue south the following day.

Pahautea Hut is covered by the Trail Pass. Please read the Trail Pass information on the website at https://www.teararoa.org.nz/the-trail-pass/ to decide whether the Trail Pass or an individual hut payment is right for you. The hut has to be booked through DOC either way, but can be paid for with the Trail Pass, the DOC Backcountry Hut Pass or direct payment on the booking page

Information from DOC regarding Pahautea Hut:

For both the hut and campsite, you must book. Even though the campsites are free of charge, a booking is required to secure your place.

Backcountry Hut Passes can be used at this hut. To pay with your Backcountry Hut Pass, create/update your account on our (DOC's) booking system. Under 'Apply for a discount', select 'Backcountry Hut Pass Holder' and upload a scan of your pass. Once we've verified your pass, it will automatically be applied when you make a booking.

From the hut, you continue westward on boardwalks, following the Hihikiwi Track with good views to the south. 1km below Hihikiwi Peak and about 600m before Te Akeohikopiro Peak, you take a new spur track heading off in a southwestern direction. Follow this all the way down to Pirongia West Road.

What to expect on a tramping track:

- The track is mostly unformed with steep, rough or muddy sections
- Suitable for people with good fitness. Moderate to high-level backcountry skills and experience, including navigation and survival skills required
- The track has markers, poles or rock cairns. Expect unbridged stream and river crossings
- Tramping/hiking boots required.

CONDITIONS

Potential hazards

- Poisons and traps
- Small stream crossings
- If weather is bad, it's advised to stay in the hut until it clears
- Few water sources
- Hut water may need to be treated

Weather on Pirongia

Weather conditions can change rapidly, especially at higher altitudes. Always carry a change of clothing, wet weather gear and sufficient food to cater for any emergency.

Pirongia weather forecast - NIWA

NIWA 3-day forecast

No dogs allowed.

ACCESS

Northern Start: DOC picnic area, Limeworks Loop Road
Southern End: Junction of Pirongia West Road with Omanawa Stream

ACCOMMODATION

Trail pass

Kahiwhaniwha Campsite - km 824.7 - Included in The Trail Pass

Pahautea Hut - km 833 - Included in The Trail Pass (Bookings required)

Pahautea Campsite - km 833 - Included in The Trail Pass (Bookings required)

- Pahautea Hut is the only hut in the park. Sleeps 20 people on two platform bunks with mattresses. It has a water supply (recommend you treat the water) but no heating or cooking facilities, so you should take a portable cooker. There are also campsites and a camping shelter at the hut. Fires are not permitted.

EXTRA INFO

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- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

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Pirongia to Waitomo

Last Edited: October 30, 2026 16:42:37 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa trail section: Travel over farmland, an airstrip, old logging routes and lush forest, with some great views on the way.

DESCRIPTION

This is a sometimes steep, rough tramping track with some backcountry road walking.

Pirongia to Waitomo - 45km

From the Omanawa Stream, follow Pirongia West Road in a southerly direction. After 2km, you'll reach the intersection with Pekanui Road. Cross over it and continue south/southwest along Te Rauamoa Road. After 5.5km, you'll reach SH 31/Kāwhia Road. Turn southeast (left) and follow it 2.7km and turn southwest (right) into Kaimango Road. Follow Kaimango Road for 7.5km to reach the intersection with Honikiwi Road.

At Honikiwi Road veer west (right) to remain in Kaimango Road and walk another 200m to the small carpark and stile on the south (left) side of the road.

Cross the stile onto a formed farm road and follow the orange markers. Then 2km after the rural airstrip, look out for double orange markers. It is not obvious but the track goes through a gate here (while the farm road continues on) and into a bush track on an old timber trail.

Keep following the orange markers over high point #405 and past #513 – Omaru, and through to a woolshed near the north end of Māhoe Road.

Take the gravel Māhoe Road which extends beyond the woolshed, and keep heading south 500m past a Department of Conservation sign; "Ōmaru Scenic Reserve".

Caution: on the bush track and gravel road from km 860.5 to km 866 hikers should be aware of nighttime pest control using firearms. Camp only at Putaki Shelter, a large, red half-round barn with rainwater and toilet at km 864.2, or at DOC's Omaru Scenic Reserve on the Old Putaki School Site Memorial Rock at km 865.3 km

From the Mahoe Rd sign and gate at km 865.7 the trail is on NZCF land until the 868.5 Exit Gate - also strictly no camping or fires

The route heads due east following a fence line, with a couple of up and downs and small waterway crossings, however these can be crossed easily.

1km in, you will encounter a grass airstrip. It will likely not be in use, however, please take caution. If the airstrip is in use, do not cross until invited, please note as below:

This airstrip is a high-risk area. If the airstrip, and/or the fertiliser shed adjacent, is in use – wait where the signs indicate, attract the attention of the site manager, and await their instruction to cross.

After crossing the airstrip, continue along the marked fence line some 400m, which eventually joins a graded track. Follow the track 700m until a stile takes you across a fence and into a neighbouring property. The route continues to follow a fence line 1.5km through cut scrub until crossing another stile by the edge of more mature forest.

A lovely walk through the forest follows – navigate carefully the first 500m along the ridge, then it is slippery when wet on the downhill slopes. There is a crossing of the Moakurarua Stream partway along the track. In "normal" weather, the stream will be no deeper than knee height but can rise after heavy rain. Be prepared to wait it out and if that's the case, it is recommended that you head north back along the track to higher ground.

Once you are over the stream, there is a gentle uphill before entering a track - lookout for the markers on the right. The track is based on the old logging routes, note the hand-formed rock cuttings. Occasionally you'll get a good view out across the forest.

Follow the markers through to the northern end of Ngatapuwae Road.

Walk (approx. 2.5km) the length of Ngatapuwae Road (south/southeast) into Te Anga Road. Down the hill and just before the roundabout intersection, it joins up (to the right) with DOC's Waitomo Walkway which follows beside the Waitomo Stream through a mixture of shady forest and open farmland. Turn east and follow the track into Waitomo Village. (Note: The Waitomo Walkway crosses Te Anga Road, so it is possible to walk the final 1km to Waitomo Village along the road).

CONDITIONS

Potential hazards

- Vehicles
- Farming operations - Leave gates as you find them
- River crossings - never cross flooded rivers - one stream before connection with Ngatapuwae Road is dangerous after heavy rain
- Respect private land
- NO dogs, camping or fires.
- This is a sometimes steep, rough tramping track with some back country road walking.
- *Caution*: on the bush track and gravel road from km 867.9 to km 873.4 hikers should be aware of nighttime pest control using firearms. Camp only at Putaki Shelter, a large, red half-round barn with rainwater and toilet at km 863.3, or at DOC's Omaru Scenic Reserve on the Old Putaki School Site Memorial Rock at km 865.3
- *Caution:* The airstrip is a high risk area. If the airstrip, and/or the fertiliser shed adjacent is in use - wait where the signs indicate, attract the attention of the site manager, and await their instruction to cross. DO NOT cross until invited.
- *Note:* that just before Ngatapuwae Road (when tramping south) you have to wade the Moakurarua Stream. The crossing here is unsafe when in flood, so do not attempt the Māhoe Road to Ngatapuwae Road when there's been persistent rain in the area.

ACCESS

Northern Start: Junction of Pirongia West Road with Omanawa Stream
Southern End: Waitomo Walkway carpark, Waitomo Village

TRANSPORT

- InterCity - P: 07 348 0366 - E: info@intercity.co.nz

ACCOMMODATION

South of Pirongia

Trail Hosts

- *Jo's Funny Farm*. 10yrs a Trail Angel. A great stop after a muddy mountain descent, rest & refuel before a long section to Waitomo. 60m from the Kawhia Road, Kaimango Road intersection at km 848. Follow the signs from Kaimango Road (Trail Angel Way) intersection. Signs are at my gate. Plenty of room. Tent sites & indoor beds available, shower, dinner and breakfast options to choose from. Prices at the gate. Vegetarian options available but sorry, no vegan. Comments can be found on FarOut app at the Kawhia, Kaimango Rd intersection spot. Txt Jo with number of people who want to stay 022 013 5713 or call 07 871 0601. Phone service can be irregular so if you don't get a reply from me, come on in anyway.
- *Putaki Campsite*, Mahoe Road, km 864.2. Campsite with shelter and toilet (under construction April 2025). Provided by Te Araroa Waikato Trust with support from NZ Carbon Farming

Waitomo

- YHA Waitomo - 600 Waitomo Caves Road, Waitomo P: 07 878 7649 E: waitomo@yha.co.nz
- Waitomo Village Chalets & Kiwipaka backpackers - Hotel Access Rd, Waitomo - P: 022 641 5143 - E: stay@waitomochalets.com

  10% Discount for all Te Araroa walkers on accommodation plus $10 Continental breakfast (Normally $20). We have onsite laundry and plenty of relaxing space in our shared dining and kitchen areas! Ask our amazing staff for anything and they'll do their best to help
- Waitomo Top 10 Holiday Park - 12 Waitomo Village Road, Waitomo - P: 0508 498 666 freephone or 07 878 7639 - E: stay@waitomopark.co.nz
- Waitomo Caves Hotel - Hotel Access Rd, Waitomo - P: 07 878 8204 - E: info@waitomocaveshotel.co.nz
- Hamilton Tomo Group - 155 Te Anga Rd - On the trail route 1.5km before Waitomo Village - Friendly caving club hut with plenty of bunk rooms, free hot showers, kitchen and large communal sitting room with wood burner and large deck. There is also space on the grounds for camping and outbuildings for drying gear. - $25pp/night for a bunk or for camping - Booking is via www.htg.org.nz

FOOD AND SUPPLY

- The Waitomo Glow worm Caves Visitor Centre - 39 Waitomo Caves Rd, Waitomo - P: 07 878 8227 or 0800 456 922 freephone. Also includes a Restaurant and café.

EXTRA INFO

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- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

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Pehitawa Track

Last Edited: August 26, 2026 09:39:42 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa trail section: Most of this section crosses farmland and bush but includes a small portion of road margin. Expect hills with 150m ascents and descents. It pauses on top of high karsts to gaze across the King Country's low agriculture and tumbled limestone hills that rise to formidable volcanic summits – north to Pirongia, east to Pureora, and south to Ruapehu.

DESCRIPTION

Pehitawa Track - 17km

From Waitomo Village, take the Hotel Access Road past the Tavern and School. Before the cattle stop, climb the stile on the left-hand side and follow the track completed in 2020 along a section of the Waipa Faultline, which runs north south through the district. Here Limestone is uplifted on the western side.

Cross Fullerton Road, then a stile, and follow the orange markers SE across open farmland, then up through a small gate and climb a hand-formed track. You'll pass some enormous boulders - these are thought to have come from the Mangakino explosion - some 60km away!

Once up and over the ridge, the track descends steeply through bush — this is very slippery when wet, so take care — and exits onto more farmland where you'll again follow markers SE along the fence line, climbing again through bush and onto a ridge. Climb through regenerating bush and the track takes a 90-degree turn towards the west, running through what Te Araroa veterans will remember (fondly?) as the infamous "Te Kuiti Tunnel of Gorse", now nicely opened up and easily passable.

Exiting the bush, head over a stile and follow the marked fence to the next stile; then continue along the fence line — now on the other side of it — and drop down to a farm race (giving way to any animals found on it). This is the farm of John Were. Look for a stile on the NE (left-hand) side after crossing a farm bridge over a stream and then head for a suspension bridge over the Mangapu River.

Once over the suspension bridge, the track heads through Pehitawa Forest (Queen Elizabeth II Trust-covenanted land and one of the finest remaining stands of Kahikatea trees). Follow markers up a ridgeline to a fence near the top of the hill and over a stile to Oparure Rd.

Cross over the stile on the southern side of Oparure Rd onto Wicklow Farm. Follow markers through several paddocks and over stiles for roughly a kilometre to reach a farm track. Follow this farm track for 2km to reach Gadsby Road. Go about 50m down Gadsby Rd, to then turn right up the driveway for 153 Gadsby Road (you'll see a Te Araroa marker). The trail follows the flank of Pehitawa Mast Hill (264 metres), and descends through to the northern end of Brook Park. There are many trails in this council owned reserve, but try to follow Te Araroa markers down to Bosco Cafe on SH 3. Opposite the cafe, there is now a riverside path all the way to the south end of Te Kuiti with multiple entry points through town.

The Brook Park route may be closed for lambing between 1st July and 30th August. Leave the track at km 901.7 and exit via Gadsby Road to SH 3. Check Alerts and Trail Status for details.

Note two fine statues – a tribute to Sir Colin Meads (one of NZ's finest rugby players) adjacent to the railway station, and the shearing statue at the south end of Rora St.

West of the Statue Te Tokanganui a noho can be seen, this historic marae was built in 1873 under the director of the Maori leader and prophet Te Kooti.

CONDITIONS

- Vehicles on road or track
- Farming operations – move steadily and quietly through livestock
- Open drains
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold
- Steep, muddy and slippery in parts

TE AO MĀORI

The history behind the historic British holly and Māori pōhutukawa trees:

In 1883 Māori chief Mahuki seized a railway surveying party, Wilson Hursthouse and others. Mahuki remained furious at Hursthouse's role in sacking the peaceful village of Parihaka. The pākehā peered from their prison shed to see Māori writing their names on pigs before slitting the pig throats. Around then, the door of the cell crashed open and there stood their rescuer, Te Kooti, himself an outlaw. Whitinui Joseph, great grandfather of the All Black Jamie Joseph, and a kinsman of Mahuki, celebrated the peace by planting two trees - a British holly and a Māori pōhutukawa - on the spot where this happened.

Brook Park offers a country setting with panoramic views of Te Kūiti. The park is used as a farming operation by the Te Kūiti High School Charitable Trust, but pedestrian access is allowed at all times. Care must be taken not to disturb the sheep, especially during lambing, usually 1st July to 30th August.

Noted tree collections are scattered throughout the Park, i.e. Black Walnuts, Pinus Radiata tree crops, Rhododendrums including native trees such as Kauri and Rimu. In addition a recently developed Memorial Arbor offers a spectacular array of colourful trees in a peaceful setting.

ACCESS

Northern Start: Waitomo Walkway carpark, Waitomo Village

Southern End: Rora Street, Te Kuiti

TRANSPORT

- InterCity - P: 09 583 5780 - E: info@intercity.co.nz

ACCOMMODATION

- Motel Te Kūiti - Cnr Carroll and King Sts, SH3, Te Kūiti - P: 07 878 3448 - E: info@moteltekuiti.co.nz
- Panorama Motor Inn - 59 Awakino Rd, Te Kūiti SH 3 - P: 021 128 6380 - E: office@panoramamotorinn.co.nz
- *Garnett Family Camp* – The perfect place to have a zero day! 15 min walk to New World Supermarket. Please txt Simone before you arrive (as there are limited spots) 021 036 5114. Camping and beds available. Camping $30 cash p/person, Bunk Beds (sheets and pillow) $40 cash p/person.
    - Facilities: Hot shower, toilet, cozy lounge area, large back garden, kitchen (hot plates/cooking equipment/microwave/fridge/jug/milk/tea&coffee). Wifi, places to charge phones. There is a laundromat in town.
    - Private room available $80 (sleeps 2)
    - Check in 3pm and out by 10am (unless staying 2 nights).

Trail Host

- Steve Joyce - P: 027 435 8087 - On offer is beds, sometimes a caravan. Shower, internet, washing machine. Usually a feed and a cold one in the fridge. $20/person

FOOD AND SUPPLY

- Te Kūiti Superette - 205 Rōra St, Te Kūiti - P: 07 878 8333
- New World Supermarket - 39 Rora Street, Te Kūiti - P: 07 878 8072 Open 7.00am - 8.00pm Daily

EXTRA INFO

- Te Kūiti i-Site Visitor Information Centre - 160 Rōra St, Te Kūiti - P: 07 878 8077
- DOC Maniapoto Area Office - 78 Taupiri Street, Te Kūiti - P: 07 878 1050 - E: maniapotoao@doc.govt.nz

Before starting Te Araroa either as a through-walker of the whole country or a section walker, please register on Te Araroa website. Please also visit the website or download the app for detailed maps, trail alerts and other relevant information.

This track is part of the Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa track database. Herenga ā Nuku has maps and advice about public access to the outdoors.

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We recommend trying these online learning tools:

- Trip Planning
- Tramping/field Skills
- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

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Te Kūiti to Pureora

Last Edited: October 30, 2026 17:32:56 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa trail section: Follow Mangaokewa Stream and see primaeval forest, but take the alternative route during lambing season.

DESCRIPTION

Mangaokewa Reserve Track - 3km / 1 hour

Avoid this track when river is in flood.

Mangaokewa Reserve is a pleasant place for picnics, bush walks, swimming and other passive recreational activities. Public toilets are available within the picnic area. With the re-opening of the bridge at km 911 the reserve is now easily accessible from Te Araroa.

Overnight camping is not permitted at Mangaokewa Reserve. Check local signage for current information.

From the shearing statue, continue south along Waitete Road for just over 1km, then turn left onto Ahoroa Ford West Road, taking care as it passes through operational areas with heavy vehicles. Head alongside a wire mesh fence then turn right down by the river (without crossing the river).

Follow the Mangaokewa River along, heading upstream. The track skirts the Waitete Sawmill, and Graymont Limeworks (with a furnace producing burnt lime for roadworks, and also producing lime ground for many uses, such as toothpaste and topdressing). You will pass an old cement works, then cross over the river on a vehicle bridge.

Once across the river, the track follows a disused quarry road to an abandoned lime quarry site, with pipeline and wooden towers remnants (limeworks and lime quarrying is a traditional Te Kūiti industry). The track ascends beyond the quarry to an elevation of 100m, with good views back across Te Kūiti and up the valley ahead. (Te Kūiti High School students built the picnic table at this viewpoint, along with the footbridges across the small creeks).

The track enters bush for the last kilometre, passing one pretty waterfall en route.

The old suspension bridge at the reserve has been replaced by a new bridge giving access to the Mangokewa Reserve. Te Araroa now uses the track on the western side of the river leading south from the reserve.

Mangaokewa River Track - 15km / 5-6 hours

~~The Mangaokewa River Track is closed every year from 1 August to 31 October for lambing.~~
~~Navigate safely around a road alternative — or skip directly ahead to the Timber Trail (Pureora Forest).~~
~~Please do not attempt to walk this route when it is closed.~~

Lambing has now finished for this year

In the Mangaokewa Reserve, this track follows the Mangaokewa River throughout.

From the north end, there are tracks on both sides of the river between km 903.3 and km 905.6. Te Araroa walkers should cross to the western side and reach the Waiteti Viaduct carpark via the new bridge. There may still be the remains of a large slip on the western track. Follow the Mangaokewa River Track past a second bridge at km 905.6

Just after the bridge at km 905.6 you will find a picnic table and area to camp if needed. *Caution:* The land above the track just after this from km 905.6 to km 909.7 is managed by NZ Carbon Farming. There is ongoing pest control work in this property, often with the use of firearms at night. For your own safety, please *DO NOT* camp anywhere in this section and *DO NOT* deviate from the trail.

Update for northbound walkers July 2023: With the re-opening of the bridge at km 903.3 you can continue on the west (true left) bank

The first 2.5km of the bush is groomed and nearly predator-free thanks to the Mangaokewa Reserve Trust, which was allowed to release native birds in the area. You will then pass a huge kahikatea tree, and through the riverside bush may glimpse stalactites encrusting the far edge of the limestone gorge. The trail then crosses a fence which was put in to keep sheep out of the reserve.

Just beyond here, you'll see one of the best sights of the walk, primaeval forest on the far side of the river — the unfarmed side. The track stays on farmland, passes an abandoned long-drop toilet, slides through tōtara groves and has some great picnic spots on the way through. There are one or two steep slopes you may need to inch down slowly, so please take care in this area, particularly when wet underfoot. It enters the shade of pine and eucalyptus forest near the southern end, then follows a farm track that takes you through to Mangaokewa North Road (Note: there'll be a gate on a grass median track which evolves into a road).

- Note: If you are wanting to be picked up here, you'll need to have pre-organised transport out — it's a long way from anywhere and there is usually no traffic.

Mangokewa Road and SH 30 - 37km

Continue southeast on Mangaokewa Road and follow it in an easterly direction for approx 8.5km. It'll turn northwards for 2km, then turn easterly again (at the intersection with Waipā Valley Road on the west side). Keep following it (it starts to turn south) for another 12km to meet up with SH30. Turn left (east) onto SH30 and walk for 8km. Turn off the highway onto Maraeroa Road on the south side. After 1.5km, take the road leading east-north-east for another 2km until reaching DOC's Pureora Forest Park Headquarters.

CONDITIONS

- Vehicles on road or track - take care on roads. *When road walking, walkers should should wear high visibility clothing or accessories, not wear any earbuds, and remain vigilant for traffic. Walk on the right side of the road, facing oncoming traffic, where possible.*
- Farming operations
- Forestry operations can mean occasional closures
- Avoid when river is in flood
- *Caution:* The land above the Mangaokewa River Track from km 897.8 to km 901 is managed by NZ Carbon Farming. There is ongoing pest control work in this property, often with the use of firearms at night. For your own safety, please *DO NOT* camp anywhere in this section and *DO NOT* deviate from the trail.

NIWA 3-day forecast

ACCESS

Northern Start: Rora Street, Te Kūiti

Southern End: Pureora Forest Park, Barryville Road

TRANSPORT

Transport from Te Kuiti to Pureora at the start of the Timber Trail. Call Val Parry passenger service, M: 021 154 3618

ACCOMMODATION

Trail Pass

Ngaherenga Campsite - km 956.4 - Included in The Trail Pass (Bookings required)

Other accommodation

- *Garnett Family Camp* – The perfect place to have a zero day! 15 min walk to New World Supermarket. Please txt Simone before you arrive (as there are limited spots) 021 036 5114. Camping and beds available. Camping $30 cash p/person, Bunk Beds (sheets and pillow) $40 cash p/person.
    - Facilities: Hot shower, toilet, cozy lounge area, large back garden, kitchen (hot plates/cooking equipment/microwave/fridge/jug/milk/tea&coffee). Wifi, places to charge phones. There is a laundromat in town.
    - Private room available $80 (sleeps 2)
    - Check in 3pm and out by 10am (unless staying 2 nights).
- Mangaokewa North camping. Some excellent local landowners (Sam and Laura) have established a campsite where the route passes through their property, approximately 200m south of the Mangaokewa North road-end at km 918.6. There is space for camping, a picnic table, toilet, water supply and basic shelter. There is a $5pp charge which will help with their upkeep, payable into an honesty box there so please carry some cash from Te Kūiti (or from Taumarunui for NOBOs).
- DOC's accommodation options include Ngaherenga campsite and the Pureora Cabins (self-contained) at km 955.3 in the beautiful surroundings of Pureora Forest Park (which lies between Te Kūiti, Taumarunui and Lake Taupō and is easily accessed by SH 30 and SH 32). Pureora Cabins, Village Road, Barryville, just off km 963 - W: 020 406 397 74, E:- bookings@pureoracabins.nz

FOOD AND SUPPLY

- There is no retail shop or petrol station in Pureora.

EXTRA INFO

- DOC Pureora Base — 198 Barryville Road, Pureora (off State Highway 30. It is 20 kms east of Bennydale) P: 07 878 1080 E — pureora@doc.govt.nz

Before starting Te Araroa either as a through-walker of the whole country or a section walker, please register on Te Araroa website. Please also visit the website or download the app for detailed maps, trail alerts and other relevant information.

This track is part of the Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa track database. Herenga ā Nuku has maps and advice about public access to the outdoors.

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We recommend trying these online learning tools:

- Trip Planning
- Tramping/field Skills
- Basic Navigation
- River Safety

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Pureora Forest - The Timber Trail

Last Edited: November 05, 2026 08:19:52 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa trail section: The Timber Trail passes through magnificent podocarp forests of rimu, tōtara, miro, mātai and kahikatea, as well as some exotic forestry and more open vegetation, offering extensive views of the surrounding landscape.

Utilising historic bush tramways, old bulldozer and haul roads, the track features 35 bridges, including 8 large suspension bridges (the longest being 141m) and showcases the historic Ōngarue Spiral, a marvel of engineering.

DESCRIPTION

500m east of DOC’s Pureora Forest Headquarters is the Ngaherenga campsite, halfway between the two is the entry point to the Timber Trail.

It is recommended you plan to walk between formal accommodation locations on this route — Ngaherenga to Bog Inn Hut (20km), to Piropiro Flats campsite (18km), to #10 campsite (26km), to the campsite at the Ōngarue terminus of the Timber Trail at Bennetts Road (17km), this will take you four days. Then into Taumarunui the following day (26km). Trail surfacing is good (it is also a cycleway), so faster walkers may like to do big days. However, you should be aiming to stay at these locations.

Timber Trail to Taumarunui - 104km

Commence along the Timber Trail on well-graded track for approx 9km through the Pikiariki Ecological Area to the junction with The Toi Toi Track. This takes you up and over the summit of Mt Pureora (a 1hr 30 deviation) to take advantage of some of the King Country’s most panoramic views of Lake Taupō, Mt Ruapehu and the Kaimanawa Ranges.

Descending from Pureora summit and rejoining the Timber Trail, the route again follows the cycleway to the turn-off for the Bog Inn Hut. Leave the Timber Trail here, and shortly after, a short track will lead to Bog Inn Hut for those wishing to sleep there. When leaving Bog Inn Hut, a short connecting path will put you back onto the Timber Trail, without the need to backtrack.

Heading south, you’ll soon cross the first of the spectacular suspension bridges on this route, and another shortly after. The faint of heart shouldn’t look down.

It’s largely downhill from there to bathrooms at Harrisons Rest Area, then a further 12km to Piropiro Flats campsite.

Leaving Piropiro Flats, you'll climb through tawa and tānekaha forest to the 141m Maramataha Bridge, which will take the breath away. Further onwards, you will come to a cleared area known as 'the terminus', which was the most northern end of the 1950's Ellis and Burnand tramline. There are toilets at Mystery Creek and the #11 Camp, and shortly after, you'll be at the #10 Camp, also with toilets. km 1,017.6

From #10 Camp, it's mostly downhill all the way, with the Mangakahukahu Bridge and remarkable Ōngarue Spiral the highlights of the day's walk.

At Bennett Road, a campsite has been purpose-built for Te Araroa, with plenty of space to camp, a shelter and a toilet in the adjacent carpark. You should look to stay here and then walk the 26km into Taumarunui the following day. There are no appropriate locations to freedom camp en route to Taumarunui.

From Bennett Road, follow the Ngakonui-Ōngarue Road west, which runs onto the Ōngarue Back Road, which is the route towards Taumarunui, some 24km away. Just north of Taumarunui, you'll reach a roundabout — continue straight onto Golf Road and follow it for 2.5km turning right/south onto Short Street, then left/east into Hākiaha Street (SH4), the main street of Taumarunui — a supermarket, food outlets, bank, pharmacy and more are available on this street.

CONDITIONS

- Vehicles on the road or track
- Poisons and traps
- Forestry operations
- Small stream crossings
- Weather extremes

Mt Pureora weather - NIWA

NIWA 3-day forecast

Seasonal restrictions

Hunters with dogs or guns may use the Timber Trail for access to the backcountry. Numbers of hunters are especially high during the stag-roaring months of March and April, and during spring (September, October and November)

Dog access

Dogs require a DOC permit. Contact the relevant DOC office to obtain a permit.

ACCESS

The Timber Trail begins in Pureora Forest and is easily accessed off SH30 between Te Kūiti and Mangakino.

The central part of the trail can be accessed from Piropiro campsite at the end of Kokomiko Road, Waimiha, and from Ōngarue, via SH4 at the southern end. There is highway signage near Pureora and Ōngarue to direct riders to the ends of the trail.

TRANSPORT

Timber Trail Operators

- *Timber Trail Shuttles* - We provide end to end services on the timber trail including shuttle transport, bike hire, accommodation and hospitality. We can deliver a rental bike to Pureora Village for the two day ride. A standard mountain bike - 2 day hire is $135 which includes delivery (between 9.30 and 10 am), helmet, bag transfers and a day pack. Bags can be transferred to Piropiro for collection at the lodge and then transferred to Ongarue at the end of the trail. For questions and bookings P - 0800 785 500 E - info@timbertrailshuttles.com

- *Epic Cycle Adventures TA Special*
  Take a break from walking and cycle the Timber Trail. EPIC CYCLE ADVENTURES offers a variety of options:

  - *Option 1*

    - We meet you at Pureora with bikes and daypacks at around 9-30am on day 1.
    - We take your backpacks to Camp Epic-see www.thetimbertrail.nz
    - You ride down to Camp Epic (40km), stay overnight and then ride out, finishing in Ongarue. We bring your backpack out.
    - $175pp for bike hire, bag transfers and staying at Camp Epic on a tent site in your own tent- this includes a DIY dinner and breakfast and hot shower. The dinner is a ready-made meal and breakfast is cereals, eggs, toast, spreads, tea, coffee etc. You prepare your own meals from ingredients supplied

    -Add $80 if you would like an ebike

    -Add $75 if you would like upgrade to a luxury glamping tent

  - *Option 2*

    - If you are on a tight budget you can stay at Piropiro campsite (free). It is a basic DOC campsite- no showers or cooking facilities
    - We meet you at Pureora with bikes and daypacks at around 9-30am on day 1.
    - We take your backpack down to Piropiro. You ride down, collect your backpack at Camp Epic and then walk to Piropiro Campsite (400m) and overnight. The next morning you drop your backpack at Camp Epic and ride out to Ongarue. We bring your pack out
    - $120 for bike hire and bag transfers

    PLEASE NOTE: Space at Camp Epic is limited on Saturdays and public holidays. If you want to ride on a weekend you will likely need to stay at the DOC campsite.

    - Call Paul 022 023 7958 email paul@epiccycleadventures.com

Transport in Taumarunui.

- Taumarunui Canoe Hire and Jet Boat Tours - P: 0800 226 6348 or 027 226 6348 or 07 895 7483 email: tmncanoehire@gmail.com

ACCOMMODATION

Trail Pass

Ngaherenga Campsite - km 963.3 - Included in The Trail Pass (Bookings required)

Bog Inn Hut - km 979.4 - Included in The Trail Pass

Piropiro Campsite - km 1,000 - Included in The Trail Pass

Ongarue Campsite - km 1,041.8 - Private $

Other Accommodation

- DOC huts in the Pureora Forest Park

  Bog Inn Hut — 4 bunks, mattresses and heating — Topo50 maps — Grid reference: NZTM2000, E1828988, N5726201

  Note: Hut tickets must be purchased from DOC offices prior to your tramp. (or use Trail pass)

- Timber Trail Lodge — located adjacent to the Trail at Piropiro — P: 0800 885 6343 — E: stay@timbertraillodge.co.nz — Dorm and private accommodation, including dinner and breakfast.
- Camp Epic — is located at the 40km marker on the Timber Trail. Tent site and glamping accommodation options. Communal kitchen/dining and the best hot showers in NZ. Breakfast is included in your stay. Ph 022 023 7958

Taumarunui

- Taumarunui Canoe Hire and Jet Boat Journeys - P: 0800 CANOE4U or P: 027 226 6348 - E: tmncanoehire@gmail.com Free camping on site in Taumarunui, free pickup in town with your groceries for the river. We will help you make all your bookings for the river all the way to Whanganui, and we will give you a thorough safety briefing before you leave Taumarunui with coffee and hot bread. Rest days here are very welcome, along with a walker container with bunks, a hot bush shower, BBQ area (Laundry coming soon). Fridge and food storage are available, and we will bring your food along with your canoes and more barrels to Whakahoro. Splash out, we can store your fridge food.

- Taumarunui Holiday Park - 100 State Highway 4, South, Taumarunui P: 07 895 9345 - E: taumarunui-holiday-park@xtra.co.nz
- Grandads Cottage - 298 Miro St, Manunui — P: 07 895 7358 — E: grandadscottage298@gmail.com Budget accommodation, camping, internet available - This is no longer short visitor accommodation.
- Kellys Motel - 10 River Rd, Taumarunui - P: 0800 554 000 or 07 895 8175 - E: stay@kellysmotel.co.nz

Alexender Spa Motels - Check-out time 10am, 50 metres to RSA and restaurants, 14 Studio and 2 Family Studio Units. 6 Marae Street Taumaranui

Forgotten World Adventures Motel — is directly across the road from New World, the BP, McDonalds and Pizza store in Taumarunui. The number is 0800 7245 2278

Hikumutu Youth Camps, 874 Hikumutu Road, km 1054.3 Camping and indoor accommodation

FOOD AND SUPPLY

Timber Trail Lodge -We serve food for 'walk-in' customers between 1 pm and 4.30pm with pizza and refreshments. We also have some basic shop items for sale such as drinks and snacks. P - 0800 885 6343 E - stay@timbertraillodge.co.nz

EXTRA INFO

The Timber Trail

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42 Traverse

Last Edited: August 25, 2026 09:02:38 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa trail section: The 42 Traverse is a 46 km multi-use track through the Tongariro Forest Conservation Area. It is one of the best challenging mountain biking tracks in the North Island. It is also a stunning walk for Te Araroa walkers and other trampers.

DESCRIPTION

Taumarunui to Owhango - 27 km

From Hākiaha Street (SH4) in Taumarunui, head south (Turaki Street and Morero Terrace) to cross the Whanganui River and get onto Hikumutu Road for a long but pleasant walk through the countryside. Follow Hikumutu Road through the small settlement of Hikumutu, past a brief encounter with the Whanganui River, then east to Ōwhango. You'll join Kawautahi Road just before you get to Ōwhango, then follow that east 1km to SH4. Then walk north 200m on SH4 and turn right/east into Omatane Road on the southern edge of Ōwhango. Follow Omatane Road, Onga Street and Whakapapa Bush Road to the start of the 42 Traverse. It is 27km from Hākiaha Street in Taumarunui to Ōwhango.

The 42 Traverse track, used by Te Araroa between Owhango (km 1,086,3) and the junction with Waione/Cockers Track (km 1,109,5), was previously closed by DOC due to a slip at km 1,105,6. DOC have since re-opened 42 Traverse and provided an optional bypass track from km 1,100.9 to km 1,107.6. The ground continues to slump but the slip is crossable on foot

42 Traverse (including Waione/Cokers Track) — 35km / 1.5 days

This track follows the 42 Traverse four-wheel drive road for the first 22km. In wet conditions, this can be very muddy and slippery. This branches off along the Waione/Cokers DOC track, then on to Access Road #3 for about 6km before joining SH47. Continue on SH47 northeast; there is the junction with SH46 where there is accommodation. The Waione Track Bypass marked on some maps between km 1,100,9 and km 1.103.7 is no longer necessary

Access Road to Ketatahi Road via SH 47 and SH 46 - 13km

Note, this route previously deviated north from Access Road #3 to visit Te Pōrere Redboubt. However, we now encourage walkers to remain on Access Road 3 to respect this culturally significant site.

A 7.5km road walk from the exit of Access Road #3 to the turnoff for the start of the Tongariro Alpine Crossing (a further 1km up to the carpark) is along a sealed highway, broken only by a small settlement near the junction of SH46 and SH47 that has some accommodation including Tongariro Holiday Park. This is the last comfortable campsite before the Tongariro Crossing.

The next official campsite is at DOC's Waihohonu Hut, 30 km away. Make sure you have enough water for the crossing before you start. There are no streams on the mountain, and the creek just after Ketatahi Carpark is undrinkable due to its high alkali content. Water may be available at the Oturere Hut and Campsite km 1,148.4. The hut is closed for renovations, but the water tank is accessible.

Although not the official Te Araroa route, it is possible to make a day trip from Taumarunui to experience the Tongariro Alpine Crossing northbound, then kayak/canoe the upper reaches of the Whanganui River to Whakahoro and on to the Pipiriki/Whanganui River

CONDITIONS

- The 42 Traverse has a variety of users - share the track with care and consideration.
- Take care following rainfall as stream levels rise quickly. Only cross waterways after checking they are safe.
- Dogs with a DOC permit for recreational hunting or management purposes only.
- 4WD vehicles are not permitted from 1 May – 30 November.
- The T42 mountain biking, running and walking event is held annually in early May.

Tongariro Alpine Crossing (Red Crater) weather - NIWA

ACCESS

About 16 km along SH47 from National Park Village, turn into Kapoors Road. Follow this for about 6 km to the start of the track at the road end.

TRANSPORT

There are several shuttle companies providing morning pick-ups from nearby towns and delivery to the track start, i.e National Park, Ōhakune, Tūrangi and Taupō. They include:

- Ruapehu Scenic Shuttles — Ōwhango — P: 020 4111 4648 — E: ruapehushuttle@gmail.com
- Owhango Adventures- Ōwhango - Along with canoe hire services and accommodation offerings below, we can help with a variety of tailored transport options in the area for 42 Traverse, Tongariro Alpine Crossing, and Whanganui River. Contact us to see if we can help. P: 0800 2 CANOE/07 895 4854 - E: info@owhangoadventures.co.nz
- Tongariro Expeditions — Shuttle service to the Tongariro Crossing — P: 07 377 0435 E: info@tongariroexpeditions.com (to/from Taupō, Tūrangi, Ketetahi, Whakapapa) — Multiple return times from the northern end of the track (6km from the Holiday Park).
- Dempsey Buses — 25 Seddon Street, Raetihi 4632 — P: 06 385 4022 — info@dempseybuses.co.nz

ACCOMMODATION

Taumaranui

- Hikumutu Valley Lodge (10km South of Taumaranui on trail) - P: 022 402 4639 – E: info@Hikumutu.com - backpacker style accommodation, $35 pp ($20 pp for those registered to walk Te Araroa). Includes bunk rooms with private lockable cupboards (mattress, pillows and bottom sheet provided with the option to add a duvet for an additional $5). Camping is available for $25 pp or $15 for registered walkers. Private rooms are available and priced separately. Facilities include Wi-Fi and heating, equipped communal kitchen, shower and washing facilities and a communal dining and living space. We're happy to receive and hold packages for our guests, send to 874 Hikumutu Road, RD2, Hikumutu, Taumarunui, 3992. Please include your name, contact details, and estimated arrival on the box.

- Ruapehu Unique Stays - Our in the Hills Hikumutu Tiny House is on the trail, 7km south of Taumarunui (sleeps up to 3 people) and two options in the NZ native forest on the edge of Taumarunui just 2km from the trail perfect for a rest day or restocking in town (Edge of Town Cabin sleeps up to 2 people and Wonderforest sleeps up to 4 people). E: RuapehuUniqueStays@gmail.com - P: +64 20 438 3909 - Facebook: Ruapehu Unique Stays

Ōwhango

- Ōwhango Adventures - P: 0800 2 CANOE / 027 678 6461 - E: info@owhangoadventures.co.nz - W: www.canoewhanganuiriver.com - Free night accommodation at Owhango Adventures Base included with canoe bookings. Canoe hire for Te Araroa Whanganui River Journey is $250 Per Person for bookings of 2 x - 4 x people. $210 Per Person for bookings of 5 x people or more. If you would like to buy extra groceries for your journey we can collect from Taumarunui and store in our industrial chiller and food storage until your arrival for free of charge. We can also store and transport Mountain bikes and Equipment and drop them off for you at the end of your Whanganui River journey free of charge with bookings. Thorough safety briefings included with all relevant equipment and safety gear required. We will meet you at Whakahoro on the morning of your journey departure with all your canoes/barrels and equipment, then meet you at Whanganui Top10 Holiday Park with all your gear and equipment at the end of your journey. Washing Machine available on site. BBQ and varied kitchen facilities available on site. Hot showers and toilets available on site. Free WIFI available on site. If you require assistance with planning your adventure on the Whanganui River please feel free to ask whether you are booked with us or not. Free camping available to all Te Araroa Trail walkers available at our Base in Ōwhango.

End of route

- Tongariro Family Holiday Park - State Highway 47, Tongariro - P: 07 386 8062 - Camping, cabins and units. Highly recommended spot to rest up and recoup between 42 Traverse and Tongariro Alpine Crossing. Halfway point between Taumarunui and National Park
- Cross X Roads camping at 2010 Rotoaira Road, Tongariro Forest, on SH47 just north of the intersection at km 1,134.1 where Te Araroa turns right onto SH46 (Lake Rotoaira Road) towards the northern end of the Tongariro Crossing. Basic paddock site. TA hikers $10 per night. Campsite has a composting toilet, fresh water, amazing mountain views and very wide open space. If we are running transport for the Crossing on any given day that we may have TA hikers staying, we are happy to drop them at Ketetahi carpark entrance at no cost as we are going there to pick up customers anyway. Hosts Ma 021 0272 2828 and Shane 021 053 8882. Walkers please phone, no need to book through the website

FOOD AND SUPPLY

Ōwhango

- Blue Hill Cafe, Owhango located on the main highway in Owhango next to the mechanics and opposite the public restrooms.

EXTRA INFO

Before starting Te Araroa either as a through-walker of the whole country or a section walker, please register on Te Araroa website. Please also visit the website or download the app for detailed maps, trail alerts and other relevant information.

This track is part of the Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa track database. Herenga ā Nuku has maps and advice about public access to the outdoors.

We encourage you to continue gaining the skills and knowledge required for a safe trip. The NZ Mountain Safety Council has lots of free resources and information you can use. These can be accessed via www.mountainsafety.org.nz.

We recommend trying these online learning tools:

- Trip Planning
- Tramping/field Skills
- Basic Navigation

- River Safety

Additionally, check out the range of helpful videos available from the NZ Mountain Safety Council YouTube channel.

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42 Traverse Track Bypass

Last Edited: September 22, 2025 13:38:56 NZST

INTRO

In 2023, a large landslide covered about 150m of the 42 Traverse Track. Following professional advice that the debris is not yet stable, DOC established this bypass and advised no one to cross the landslide area.

DESCRIPTION

There is a large landslide on the 42 Traverse Track. DOC advice remains that it is not safe to cross the landslide. It may still be unstable, particularly in wet weather.

There is a bypass track around the landslide for walkers and cyclists. It follows an old bush track (see map). It should be marked by signs at intersections, but consult your map or GPS if you are unsure.

Cyclists should dismount their bikes for the bypass section as it is steep and slippery.

EXTRA INFO

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