Canterbury Regional Trail Notes

Lewis Pass Road Bypass

Last Edited: September 22, 2025 14:26:17 NZST

INTRO

A safe road bypass along Lewis Pass Road, in the event that the Boyle River is unsafe for crossing. Use the wet weather bridge at Windy Point

DESCRIPTION

St James Car Park (Boyle Village) to Windy Point - 11.5km / 2hr

Follow the Tūi Track sign and markers to the highway and then on the landward side of the fence on the left to a driveway leading to the old Boyle Base Hut. Cross the road here and follow the markers down to a terrace, and then along to the Boyle River.

If safe to cross, ford the Boyle River where markers indicate and continue down the true right bank on river flats to the confluence with the Doubtful River. Follow the St James Car Park (Boyle Village) to Hope-Kiwi Lodge notes in the Boyle to Arthur's Pass section.

If the river can't be crossed safely then back-track and continue down on the road shoulder for about 2 hours to the sign-post marking the entrance road to the Lake Sumner Forest Park at Windy Point. You will pass the Engineers Camp along the way. There is a car park and shelter at Windy Point, a short distance down the entrance road. This marks the alternative, and traditional, start point to the Harper Pass Track.

TRANSPORT

- Hanmer Hiking Services offers affordable and flexible TA trailhead connections between Hanmer and Boyle Village/ Windy Point from $25pp (for a four person trip). Please contact us on 027 264 0848 or via our Facebook page for bookings or enquiries.

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.

Boyle to Arthur's Pass

Last Edited: August 27, 2026 10:35:56 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa section: This tramp follows a historic crossing of the Southern Alps at Harper Pass (962m). Māori used the route to access pounamu (greenstone) on the West Coast, and European settlers used it for access and supply purposes during the gold rush of the 1860s. Harper Pass is named after Leonard Harper, who, at 20 years of age, became the first European to cross the pass and reach the West Coast in 1857.

DESCRIPTION

The old Māori and settler route of the 19th century fell into disuse from 1867 following the development of an alternative route through Arthur’s Pass, which provided more direct access to the Coast.

In the 1930s, the track was reopened and four substantial huts were constructed by the Physical Welfare Division of the Department of Internal Affairs in an attempt to recreate the Milford Track’s model for tourism success. While the Harper Pass Track has never reached the Milford Track’s status, it still affords a quality tramping experience of relative ease.

Things to keep in mind

- On the West Coast side of Harper Pass, the route requires numerous crossings of the Taramakau and Otehake Rivers. Trampers with river-crossing skills and experience will find these rivers passable in normal to low flows but impassable when river levels are high. Extra food should be carried to enable trampers to backtrack or to wait until river levels subside.
- In a number of areas, this route requires a lot of self-navigation as it is not fully marked. Generally, this is straightforward though you’ll want to be carrying GPS, maps and a compass to assist you.
- The traditional Harper Pass Track starts at Windy Point and ends at Aitkens.

St James Car Park (Boyle Village) to Hope-Kiwi Lodge - 27.5km / 8 hours

Follow the Tūi Track sign and markers to the highway and then on the landward side of the fence on the left to a driveway leading to the old Boyle Base Hut. Cross the road here and follow the markers down to a terrace and then along to the Boyle River.

If safe to cross, ford the Boyle River where markers indicate and continue down the true right bank on river flats to the confluence with the Doubtful River.

If the river can not be crossed safely, back-track and continue down on the road shoulder for about 2 hours to the signpost marking the entrance road to the Lake Sumner Forest Park at Windy Point. You will pass the Engineers Camp along the way. There is a car park and shelter at Windy Point, a short distance down the entrance road. This marks the alternative and traditional starting point to the Harper Pass Track.

After fording the Doubtful River where marked, the track continues down the true right of the Boyle River and joins a farm track that leads onwards to a deer fence. Follow this fence until markers show the track heading uphill through mānuka and beech forest towards the main Hope Valley track. Te Araroa joins the Harper Pass Track proper here. Turn right, and the track climbs through mānuka scrub and farmland to the beech forest's edge. Once inside the forest, the track sidles above the Hope River to Hope Shelter, and a basic hut (6 bunks) can be found, which is old but still in reasonable condition. There is no water supply at the hut itself, so a walk down to the river could be required.

DOC estimate 4 hours from Windy Point to Hope Halfway Hut (Hope Shelter) (8 km)

Beyond Hope Shelter, the track continues through the forest and then breaks out across grassy flats. The track then crosses the Hope River on a swingbridge. Across the bridge, there is a junction with the track to St Jacob's Hut. From here, Te Araroa heads south on the track to Hope-Kiwi Lodge, situated in a large clearing near the forest edge.

DOC estimate 3 hours from Hope Halfway Hut to Hope Kiwi Lodge (7 km)

Hope-Kiwi Lodge to Hurunui Hut — 18km / 6 hours

Below Hope-Kiwi Lodge the track crosses open cattle flats and then climbs through the bush towards Kiwi Saddle (677m). A lookout nearby affords good views of Lake Sumner. Beyond the saddle, the track descends towards the lakeshore and to a swingbridge over Three Mile Stream. Cross the bridge, continue to the lake head and beyond up the Hurunui River's true left side. Keep to the marked track until it deviates across the valley to another swingbridge, this time over the Hurunui River. Once on the other side of the river, the track climbs and sidles for about 30 minutes to Hurunui Hut, a modern hut with sleeping platforms and elevated views over the valley below.

After crossing the Hurunui swingbridge southbound, dismount on the left side. There is a short steep climb to reach the path, which then sidles to the right above the bridge anchors. It may seem logical to turn right immediately at the end of the bridge, but this leads to a dead-end and forces a rough scramble up to rejoin the track.

Hurunui Hut to Hurunui No.3 Hut - 10km / 4-5 hours

The track descends from the hut through the mānuka forest to the open flats of the valley floor. About 2-thirds of the way, a sign indicates access to a hot pool (look for the steam rising from the stream just before that). Another sign at the pool warns; "Amoebic meningitis is fatal and caused by water entering nasal passages. Do not immerse head". As long as you ensure your head stays above the water, feel free to swim in the pool, as it is a Te Araroa highlight.

The sign indicating the hot spring may not be visible. Southbound walkers will encounter a small warm-water stream running down a rough rock face. The trail climbs the bank another 20 m past the warm steam, and the pool is accessed via a short side trail that may be marked with a small rock cairn.

Beyond the hot spring, the track continues through flats and forest on the Hurunui's true right all the way to Hurunui No.3 Hut. While one of the original 4 huts on the route, the No.3 Hut remains a comfortable (16 bunk) hut. It has an unusual-looking DOC research building nearby.

Hurunui No.3 Hut to Locke Stream Hut — 15km / 7 hours

Soon after leaving the No. 3 Hut, the track crosses Cameron Stream. An emergency 3-wire bridge can be used here to avoid getting wet feet. Continue across the flat towards Cameron Hut (4 bunks). This hut offers basic emergency accommodation for anyone in need. There is a fireplace, and the bunks were rebuilt in early 2021.

Beyond Cameron Flat the track leaves cattle country and ascends towards Harper Pass Bivvy, a cramped 2 bunk box with one tiny window and a helpful sign on the door that reads 'fire exit'.

From the bivvy, the track crosses the Hurunui headwaters and climbs more steeply for 30 minutes to Harpers Pass. Kiwi are present in the area in reasonable numbers and can be heard at night. Watch out for their 3-pronged footprints as they are sometimes visible where the ground is soft.

On the West Coast side of the Pass, the track drops steeply and crosses the Upper Taramakau River to the true right side. It continues down to a swingbridge, which takes trampers to the true left side. From here, it is about 1.5 hours downstream to Locke Stream Hut.

Locke Stream Hut is another Physical Welfare Division classic. It was built in 1940 with hand-hewn timber by 65-year-old packman, Sam Burrows. The hut was restored in 1993 through a bequest from Tom Beeston's estate.

Locke Stream Hut to Morrison footbridge via Aitkens - 21.5km / 6-8 hours

Beyond the hut, travel is down the Taramakau River through bush and open river terraces — though some pieces of track are affected by river damage. Travel is often in the riverbed and can require numerous river crossings that become impassable after heavy rain.

Kiwi Hut (6 bunks) is located approximately halfway down the Taramakau (8km/3.5hr from Locke Stream Hut) and a 15-minute walk from the Kiwi Hut junction.

Cross the Taramakau (to the true left) approximately 1km after the Kiwi Hut junction and then cross the Otehake River to continue on the true left of the Taramakau. When the rivers are running high, the Otehake may be the more dangerous of the two as it has a larger catchment. If the Taramakau River looks doubtful, it may be wiser to return to Kiwi Hut and wait for the rivers to drop.

Previous advice to walk down the true right of the Taramakua from Kiwi Hut to cross just past Pfeifer Creek, following a 4WD route, has had to be changed as the river now cuts close to the right bank opposite the Otehake confluence, causing walkers to venture onto private property and pass private huts. Landowners have required DOC to modify the route

After crossing the Otehake River the route is then mainly on the true left all the way down to the sign-posted turn-off onto the Flood Track to the Morrison Footbridge - though due to river movement at times, travel may be through the riverbed and require crossings.

Trampers wishing to exit to the Aitkens carpark on SH73 should continue on the Aickens Track across the river flats and carefully ford the Otirā River at the marked point, aiming approximately towards the radio aerials on the far bank. Choose the crossing point with care, as the river may form deep pools. It may be shallower upstream from the radio aerials, which are near the exit track to SH73

From Aitkens, turn left for 22km to Arthur's Pass, a small alpine village, or turn right for 73km to Greymouth on the West Coast.

To rejoin the Te Araroa route after crossing the Otira river at Aickens turn left and walk 3.2 km along SH73 to Morrison Footbridge. Beware of fast traffic and rail crossings along the highway. There are paths beside the road for some parts.

Meanwhile, Te Araroa continues left on the Flood Track for 2hr and joins with the Mingha-Deception Track at the Morrison Footbridge. The Flood Track is poorly formed, through the bush and involves a series of sharp climbs and descents along a steep face above the Otirā River - when the Otirā River is low, walkers may prefer to walk along the riverbed, though carefully judge the water level before attempting this. The flood track was cleared of

obstacles in January 2021 but remains a difficult route, best avoided if the river is low enough for safe travel along the river bed. Cross the footbridge to access SH73. There is a carpark across the road.

Mingha — Deception Track

This route forms the mountain run component of the celebrated Coast-to-Coast race. Top athletes complete it in around 3 hours. On the Deception side, the track is rough and not regularly marked. However, in good conditions, it is a reasonable route which most trampers take 2 days to complete from Morrison Bridge to Bealey River. The route involves many river crossings, so is vulnerable to bad weather. Do not attempt it in heavy rain or when heavy rain is forecast. Come prepared to wait out flood conditions. The area is home to rare and protected blue duck/whio. DOC asks for sightings to be reported to staff at the Visitor Centre in Arthur's Pass.

SH73 (Morrison Bridge) to Goat Pass Hut — 14.5km / 8-9 hours

Coming from SH73, cross the Otira River on the Morrison footbridge and follow the Deception River up the true right side across river flats. Cross to the true left and follow rock cairns through the lower gorge, re-crossing the river where necessary. Continue up to Good Luck Creek. Upper Deception Hut, which is easy to miss, is located a short distance beyond, on the true right side.

Beyond the hut, trampers can pick their way upwards, mostly in the riverbed though there are some small tracked portions under bush cover. There is a final steep climb over rough terrain to get up to the Goat Pass Hut (20 bunks), located a short distance below the pass itself. This hut has a radio link to DOC's visitor's centre at Arthur's Pass, which trampers can use to obtain weather forecasts and other information. The last 2 km from Upper deception Hut to Goat Pass Hut is arduous and may take 2 hours Northbound. Late in the afternoon it may be safer to stay the night at Upper Deception Hut

Goat Pass Hut to SH73 Bealey River — 9.5km / 5 hours

From the hut, the track improves significantly but still has many river crossings. The track crosses Goat Pass on boardwalk sections and then descends towards the bush line into the Mingha Valley. The track departs the river course towards Dudley's Knob to avoid a difficult gorge and continues down to the Lower Mingha flats. Look for a safe crossing of the Bealey River near its confluence with the Mingha River and continue down towards Greyney Shelter (this is only a day shelter - no camping) on SH73. The track line rises to the road along the way. The closest campsite alternatives are Klondyke Corner on the banks of the Waimakariri and Avalanche Creek in Arthur's Pass village, both $8/person/night.

CONDITIONS

Experience: Suitable for well-equipped people with previous backcountry tramping and river-crossing experience.

Best season: Summer, autumn and winter

Required maps:

- NZTopo50 Moana BU20
- Haupiri BU21
- Lake Sumner BU22
- Boyle BU23

Hazards: Flooded rivers, steep drop-offs

Safety: This route guide must be read in conjunction with Tramping in Arthur's Pass National Park (PDF, 762K) (opens in new window), and New Zealand's Outdoor Safety Code (external site).

Before setting out, check the latest track conditions and avalanche advisory with the

Before you go, tell someone your plans and leave a date to raise the alarm if you haven't returned. To do this, use the New Zealand Outdoors Intentions process (external site) on the AdventureSmart website. It is endorsed by New Zealand's search and rescue agencies and provides three simple options to tell someone you trust the details about your trip.

Arthur's Pass (Carroll Hut) weather - NIWA

Arthur's Pass (Carrington Hut) weather - NIWA

Arthur's Pass (Avalanche Peak) weather - NIWA

Arthur's Pass (Visitor Centre) weather - NIWA

NIWA 3-day forecast Arthur's Pass

TRANSPORT

Getting there/away - **To Christchurch and Greymouth**

- East West Coaches - E: book@eastwestcoaches.co.nz - P: 027 201 8825

Greymouth

- Atomic Shuttles - P: 03 349 0697
- East West Coaches - E: book@eastwestcoaches.co.nz - P: 027 201 8825

ACCOMMODATION

Trail Pass

Hope Halfway Hut - km 2,129.3 - Included in The Trail Pass

Hope Kiwi Lodge - km 2,136.6 - 20% discount on hut stay with The Trail Pass (Bookings required).
Camping next to hut included in The Trail Pass - camping bookings required

Hurunui Hut - km 2,154.3 - Included in The Trail Pass

Hurunui No 3 - km 2,164.3 - Included in The Trail Pass

Camerons Hut - km 2,168 - Included in The Trail Pass

Harper Pass Bivy - km 2,173.6 - Included in The Trail Pass

Locke Stream - km 2,179.7 - Included in The Trail Pass

Kiwi Hut - km 2,187.7.5 - Included in The Trail Pass

Upper Deception Hut - km 2,218.7 - Included in The Trail Pass

Goat Pass - km 2,215.2 - Included in The Trail Pass

Mingha Bivy - km 2,217.7 - Included in The Trail Pass

Hut information

- Hope Kiwi Lodge - 20 bunks
- Hurunui Hut - 15 bunks - a modern hut with sleeping platforms and elevated views over the valley below
- Hurunui No. 3 Hut - 16 bunks - While one of the original 4 huts on the route, the No. 3 Hut remains a comfortable 16 bunk hut.
- Locke Stream Hut - 18 bunks
- Kiwi Hut - 6 bunks
- DOC's Goat Pass Hut - 20 bunks - This hut has a radio link to DOC's Visitor's Centre at Arthur's Pass, which trampers can use to obtain weather forecasts and other information

Arthur's Pass

- Mountain House Arthur's Pass - 84 West Coast Road, Arthur's Pass Village, Canterbury 7875, P: 03 318 9258 E:mountainhouseap@gmail.com Now stocking Backcountry Cuisine meals. Bounce boxes accepted $20. Details in Resupply + Bounce Box section below
- Arthurs Pass Motel and Lodge - 03 318 9099
- Arthurs Pass Alpine Motel - Main Rd (SH 73), Arthurs Pass Village, W Coast Rd, Arthur's Pass - P: 0800 900 401 or 03 318 9233

Greymouth

- YHA Greymouth Kāinga-Rā Backpackers - 15 Alexander St, Greymouth - P: 03 768 4951
- Global Village Travellers Lodge BBH - 42-54 Cowper St, Greymouth - P: 03 768 7272

Many other accommodation options are available in Greymouth.

FOOD AND SUPPLY

Resupply + Bounce Box

- Arthurs Pass Alpine Store and Tearooms - P: 03 318 9235 - fuel also available
- Mountain House Arthur's Pass - 84 West Coast Road, Arthur's Pass Village, Canterbury 7875, P: 03 318 9258 E:mountainhouseap@gmail.com.
  - Bounce boxes accepted. $ 20 cash only. Monday to Sunday 8am to 4pm
  - Please make it easier to find your box among hundreds of similar boxes. Use coloured pens or tape. Draw a picture on the box to make it stand out. Reading names on stacks of boxes takes time
  - UPDATE 16th December 2025
    Due to a few issues with NZ Post and the local agent in Arthur's Pass, if you are wanting to send packages to Arthur's Pass, we recommend that you use NZ Couriers, rather than NZ Post.

Greymouth

- New World Supermarket - 128 High St - P: 03 768 4441
- Woolworths Supermarket - 174 Māwhera Quay - P: 03 769 9210

EXTRA INFO

General information

- DOC's Arthurs Pass National Park Visitor Centre — SH73, Arthur's Pass — P: 03 318 9211 — E: arthurspassvc@doc.govt.nz

Greymouth

- Greymouth i-SITE Visitor Centre — 1 Mackay St, Greymouth — P: 03 768 5101 — E: info@westcoasttravel.co.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.

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.

Arthur's Pass to Rakaia River

Last Edited: October 16, 2026 14:31:45 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa section: One of the highlights of this section of Te Araroa is passing the alpine Lake Coleridge (Whakamatau) situated in a glacier-formed valley. When you reach the Rakaia River, you'll see one of the largest braided rivers in New Zealand.

DESCRIPTION

Klondyke Track - 9km / 2-3 hours

The Klondyke Track is a Te Araroa-specific link. It reduces the road connection between the Deception-Mingha and Harper River Tracks.

The track starts at the Mingha and Bealey River junction. It heads south on the flood control bank, initially following orange marker poles (these turn off to the Greyney Shelter carpark that is no longer a campsite, despite the old label on maps). Continue following the flood control bank, and carefully cross the railway line into the gravel quarry; a poled and marked route starts at the Bealey River / Greyney's Creek junction following a terrace beside the river towards the Klondyke Corner Campsite, this is also a predator control line (yellow markers). At Klondyke there is a basic campsite with a pavilion, carpark and toilets.

The track beyond Klondyke Corner remains on the true right bank of the Bealey River. There are occasional marker poles which lead to the Waimakariri River confluence. Cross the river as water levels allow and climb up to SH73 before the Bealey Spur settlement. If the Waimakariri is up, trampers are able to cross on the road bridge, about 1km to the west.

The Bealey Hotel, which is 12km east of Arthur's Pass and 150km west of Christchurch, is a good point where trampers can organize transport, with most operators passing on their way to Arthur's Pass or Christchurch.

From Bealey Spur, continue east on SH73 and follow the road's shoulder to Cora Lynn Rd. Turn right here and walk past the Arthur's Pass Wilderness Lodge and through the gate marked 'Cass-Lagoon Track'. The track ends at the car park a short distance further along. Bealey Hut (6-bunks) is a five-minute walk beyond the car park, up the track and on the right-hand side.

Harper River Track

The initial section to Hamilton Hut is on DOC's Cass Saddle–Lagoon Saddle Track and through Craigieburn Forest Park. The final portion of the track is adjacent to Glenthorne Station and finishes at Harper Rd. Here trampers are able to walk a route based on an unformed legal road, which runs along the Harper River fringe.

Cora Lynn Road - 1km

From SH73 walk up Cora Lynn Road, signposted Wilderness Lodge

Cora Lynn Carpark to Hamilton Hut - 15.5km / 7-8 hours

The track climbs a short distance from the carpark to Bealey Hut, a basic 6 bunk hut off on a short side trail to the right. Beyond the hut, the track continues to climb through beech and exotic forest. It then traverses the broad north face of Mt Bruce, initially through the forest but then through open tussock country. This is up towards Lagoon Saddle.

From the Saddle, follow board-walked sections down to the bushline. Lagoon Saddle A-Frame Shelter (2 people) is a short distance lower down. The track then descends to the Harper River. The next section down to West Harper Hut has numerous river crossings, but these are straightforward in normal conditions.

West Harper Hut, with its dirt floor and canvas bunks, provides historical interest and welcome shelter in poor weather. Beyond the hut, the route is an all-weather one. The Harper River is crossed on a swing bridge. There is also a swingbridge across Hamilton Creek near Hamilton Hut.

Hamilton Hut to Harper Rd - 19km / 5-6 hours

Return to the sign at the true left side of Hamilton Creek. From here Te Araroa heads down to the Harper River confluence, beyond which the track follows the Harper River downstream. For much of the way, an old 4WD track can be used but this leads to numerous river crossings.

If the river is high, it is possible to remain on the true left all the way down to the Pinnacles without too much additional effort or time, except for a spot where a ravine has formed. This means a river crossing cannot be avoided. The river can pool adjacent to this point, so if the water is high, waiting it out or retreating to Hamilton Hut could be the wisest course of action.

The track remains within Craigieburn Forest Park until about a 1/3 of the way down to the Pinnacles. It then enters Glenthorne Station (we ask that respect is given when on this station and please stick to the route — no shortcuts. If you do, you will be charged with trespassing by the landowners) on a route based on an unformed legal road. This is along the fringe of the Harper River on the true left side. The Pinnacles become visible lower down across the river on the true right side.

Below the Pinnacles, the track continues down the Harper River, which trampers need to ford to make further progress. The best place to do this is above the Avoca River confluence. The Avoca, in turn, is crossed separately. Continue down the farm track to Harper Road and cross Harper River on the road bridge.

Harper Road reaches a junction near Harper Village where the Harper River Track ends. If you need somewhere to stay, then there is a free overnight campsite with shelter, toilet and water on Manawa Energy-owned land about 300m distant. This is down the road marked with the "2km to Lake Coleridge" sign. The campsite is signposted on the left-hand side of this road. Water is available from a tap in the campsite, and there is a modern long-drop toilet. A shelter built by Te Araroa benefactor Stephen Yeats in 2022 provides a welcome refuge from rain, wind or sun on the otherwise unprotected site.

For One.nz (previously Vodafone) subscribers only, cellphone connection is possible at the end of the Harper River Track but not at the Harper Campsite, also referred to as the Manawa Energy Campsite. Cell signal starts where the trail leaves the floodbanks and crosses a wooden fence (SOBO) onto a gravel road, and continues past the Manawa Energy work site as far as the plywood signboard. For NOBO, you will pass through the tiny Harper Village to a T intersection. The campsite is to the left, cell signal and Te Araroa northbound is to the right

- Note - it is 48km from Hamilton Hut to Lake Coleridge - only the fastest walkers should attempt to do this in a day. There are NO places to camp between Harper Village and Lake Coleridge, so the recommended approach is to camp at the Harper Village campsite and then go from there to Lake Coleridge in a day — plan to reach Lake Coleridge before 5pm to maximise your chances of hitching a lift out to Rākaia Gorge/Methven. There is now excellent camping and dormitory accommodation at the Powerstation Lodge on Te Araroa at km 2,299.6, just before Lake Coleridge Village. Details below. Otherwise you'll need to walk to Lake Coleridge Village and hitch out that day, or pick up a hitch along Harper Road. There is no other recommended accommodation in Lake Coleridge Village

Harper Village to Homestead Road - 22km / 6 hours

From Harper Village, travel 22km along Harper Road past Lake Selfe, over the Ryton River Road Bridge, past Lake Evelyn and onto Homestead Road. There are toilets at Lake Selfe (km 2,275) and at Lake Georgina (km 2,286.9)

- Note: Take extreme care, this road has a 100km/h speed limit, and drivers are often not expecting walkers. Wear hi-viz clothing/pack cover, and do not use headphones. Stick to the extreme edge of the road. A person who drives this road daily and often picks up walkers has asked specifically for Te Araroa hikers to be reminded that it is safer for hikers in pairs or groups to all move to the same side of the road when a vehicle approaches. If you occupy both shoulders, he has to choose which one to avoid.

At the junction with Lyndon Road turn right and continue onto Homestead Road. Te Araroa's next section, the Lake Hill Track, starts at the stile about 900m down on the right-hand side of the road.

Lake Hill Track - 3.5km / 1¼ hours

The Lake Hill Track provides access to a section of the Lake Coleridge foreshore and joins Homestead Road with Coleridge Intake Road. In the process, it follows a narrow strip of public land which adjoins the private property.

- Note: Walkers are asked to keep strictly to the marked route and to respect the property rights of the adjoining landowners. This includes giving way to stock and farm operations and adhering to the 'no dogs, camping or fires' conditions of access.

The track starts on Homestead Road at a stile, which is 900m from the junction with Harper and Lyndon Roads. Travel is in the direction of Lake Coleridge and is initially easy and through farmland where stock are likely to be grazing.

After about 700m, the marked route passes through a tussock section as it crosses a wetland fringe. Conditions may be damp underfoot here.

Beyond the wetland, the route joins the edge of a farm track and then veers to the left on a foot track as it approaches the lakeshore. There is a short climb and descent to avoid a bluff, and then about half a kilometre of level lakeside walking before the foot track crosses another farm track.

From the far side of the farm track, the marked route ascends away from the lake. After a short climb, the gradient eases, and the track continues to follow poles towards Coleridge-Intake Road. On its way to the road, the track joins and then departs from a farm track. Trampers need to be vigilant in following the markers to ensure they stay on the legal route.

The track ends on Coleridge Intake Road at the stile next to the farm gate. This is about 1.3km below the intersection with Algidus Road.

Coleridge Intake Road and Arboretum Track - 3.8km / 1¼ hours

Walk south up Coleridge Intake Road (away from the lake) from the Lake Hill Track trailhead towards the Algidus Road intersection. Continue through the intersection on Coleridge Intake Road. Beyond the cattle stop, the road and surrounding land are owned by Manawa Energy Power. Coleridge Intake Road enters a pine forest and veers to the right.

The track leaves Coleridge Intake Road on the right as the road makes a hairpin turn to the left. Look out for markers here and a track that has been cut through the broom. This formed track quickly opens up and, for a few metres, follows the pipes down towards the power station before turning left to enter a pine forest.

Lower down the track leaves the forest, turns right, and descends directly through open country. It enters the Arboretum at a gate on the left and follows a well-formed path passing a number of signposted specimen trees along the way. The track end is through the memorial gate marking the exit from the Arboretum to Hummocks Road.

The Arboretum comprises a site of approximately 2 hectares and was established in 1933 by Harry Hart, who served as superintendent of the Lake Coleridge Power Station for 30 years until 1954. It now contains one of New Zealand's best mature conifer collections, including examples of at least two-thirds of the world's pine species.

Information poster about the Lake Coleridge area.

For camping at The Powerhouse Lodge, km 2,298.2 just before Lake Coleridge Village see details in the Accommodation section

To get around the Rākaia River, turn left on Coleridge Road, then right on Zig Zag Road or continue on Coleridge Road. Turn right at SH77 to cross Rākaia Gorge (24km from Lake Coleridge).

Across the second bridge is Rākaia Gorge Campground. To follow the Rakaia bypass route continue west on SH77, then turn right onto Blackford Road, which becomes Double Hill Run Road to the Te Araroa trailhead at Glenrock. Most hikers will go past Blackford Road and take the first left turn (also SH77) to Methven for rest and resupply (40.5km from Lake Coleridge). Methven has two good supermarkets, two pubs, many great cafés and an excellent campground.

CONDITIONS

Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track take care along SH73 and Harper Rd
  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 adjacent to Harper River
- River crossings - Never cross flooded rivers
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold
- Weather extremes

TRANSPORT

Getting there/away

- Methven Travel - 93 Main St , Methven- P: 0800 684 888 for shuttles to/from Christchurch. More details in Rākaia River to Rangitata River section
- Selwyn Shuttles provide a daily daily service from Powerhouse Lodge to Methven and onto South Rakaia Trail head at Double Hill and return.

  We run a daily service during busy periods and other times it is an on-demand service. Best to contact us the night prior to ensure availability.

  Our usual schedule is:
  10am Powerhouse Lodge - Methven for resupply
  12pm Methven - Double Hill / Glenrock Stream
  1pm Double Hill / Glenrock Stream - Methven
  2pm Methven - Powerhouse Lodge

  Pricing is:
  Powerhouse Lodge - Methven (either direction)
  1-4 $200 minimum
  5-6 $40 each
  7-11 $35 each

  Methven - Double Hill/ Glenrock (either direction)
  1-5 $250 minimum
  6-7 $45 each
  8-11 $40 each

  EFTPOS / PayWave/ credit card available

  We look forward to driving you soon
  Brad Wilson - 021 776 968

ACCOMMODATION

Trail Pass

Klondyke Campsite - km 2,229.2 - Included in The Trail Pass (Bookings required)

Bealey Hut - km 2,236.8 - Included in The Trail Pass

Lagoon Saddle Hut - km 2,242.2 - Included in The Trail Pass

Lagoon Saddle A Frame Hut - km 2,242.3 - Included in The Trail Pass

West Harper Hut - km 2,347.8 - Included in The Trail Pass

Hamilton Hut - km 2,251.7 - 20% discount on hut stay with The Trail Pass (Bookings required).
Camping next to hut included in The Trail Pass - camping bookings required

Manawa Energy (Trustpower) Campsite - km 2,271,3 - Free

Accommodation En route

- The Bealey Hotel - SH 73 12858 West Coast Rd, Arthur's Pass - P: 03 318 9277 - which is 12km southeast of Arthur's Pass and 150km west of Christchurch, offers backpacker and motel type accommodation, a restaurant and bar. Trampers can organize transport from here with most operators passing on their way to Arthur's Pass or Christchurch. ~~The team are also willing to receive bounce boxes for $10. They also offer a pick up service for $10 you can email Matty on stay@thebealeyhotel.com~~
- Arthurs Pass Eco Lodge - Host Helen Nugteren - P: 027 675 1511 - E: helen@arthurspassecolodge.co.nz - Located on the end of Bealey Spur - run by Helen Nugteren who is also a keen tramper and often joins walkers out on Te Araroa. The Lodge offers bed and breakfast, delicious dinners and packed lunches on request. Bookings essential
- DOC Bealey Hut - 6 bunks - is a five minute walk beyond the car park at Cora Lynn Rd, up the track and on the right hand side
- DOC Hamilton Hut - (20 bunks) - a modern 20 bunk hut complete with wood stove and radio link through to the Arthur's Pass Visitors Centre.
- Harper River Campsite - P: Tel: 03 318 5700 - E: helen.stanger@trustpower.co.nz - campsite close to the shore of Lake Coleridge is available near the tiny settlement of Harper Village at the inland head of the lake. To find it, drive through Harper Village and over the bridge across the Harper Canal, then turn left down towards the lake. You'll find the campsite down this road on the left. The sheltered campsite includes tap water (untreated well water) and an environmental toilet, but with no other services in Harper Village users need to be self-sufficient. There is a shelter at the campsite built by voluntary Te Araroa supporter Steven Yeats
- Lake Coleridge Village - camping at The Powerhouse Lodge, 114 Hummocks Rd, Lake Coleridge Village (TA km 2,298.6) is open from late November for Te Araroa Trail Walkers. Per person prices: Tenting $25, bunkroom $35 and Lodge options available. EFTPOS available. Do you own meals and transport arrangements. Wi-Fi, outdoor kitchen, hot showers, laundry facilities and snacks available. Kiwi hospitality at its best. Bounce Boxes can be received and held here. No bookings necessary, register on arrival for camp info and instructions. More info on Facebook or call 022 081 0882. The Lodge is also the pickup and drop off point for Methven Travel. Phone Dave 027 437 5432, Facebook - MethvenTravel Ltd
- Rākaia Gorge Society Camping Ground - 6686 Arundel Rākaia Gorge Rd - P: 03 302 9353 - The campground has tent sites, a sheltered cooking area, showers, toilets and water.

Note: There is no free camping near Lake Coleridge Village. The official campgrounds in the Lake Coleridge area are at Harper Village (free) and Rākaia Gorge (small charge). There are no areas where Freedom Camping is legally permitted between these two campgrounds and with increasing numbers of walkers enjoying Te Araroa, landowners are becoming more likely to move people on who are camping illegally. If you are solely camping you need to plan your journey to use the official campgrounds.

Methven

- Methven Camping Ground - 72 Barkers Road, Methven (next to the A & P show grounds, just a three minute walk to the centre of the township), P: 03 302 8005, M: 021 0818 5546. Daren and Rhonda Saunders. Campsite with use of toilets, shower, kitchen, lounge $15. Cabins for single or double - special rate for TA walkers. No charge for accepting supply boxes E: methvennz@hotmail.com
- Mt Hutt Bunkhouse and Cottage BBH - 8 Lambard St, Methven - P: 03 302 9122 or 027 346 4968
- Alpenhorn Chalet, 44 Allen St, Methven - P: 03 3028779 - E: info@alpenhorn.co.nz
- Methven Lodge and B&B, 182 Main St, Methven - P: 03 3029047 - E: info@methvenlodge.co.nz
- Snow Denn Lodge, 6 Bank street, Methven - P: 03 302 8999 – E snowdenn@xtra.co.nz or find us on Facebook – special Te Araroa rate $37 in dorm rooms 10% discount off private rooms. www.snowdennlodge.co.nz. We can hold resupply boxes $5.00 per box. Call or email us to arrange.

- Big Tree Lodge 25 South Belt, Methven. Phone Peter Wilson 029 0201 2762, email jiaxingyuki@gmail.com 10% discount for TA walkers for phone bookings, No charge for accepting supply boxes. Transport to or from trailheads can be arranged

- Methven Resort 51 Main Street, Methven. Studio room $90 per night (2x people) which includes continental breakfast. Studio room and dinner deal $130 per night (2 people) also includes continental breakfast. We also have discounted rates for groups of 3 or more people. Laundry facilities available for use. Bar and Restaurant open Wednesday - Sunday. P: 03 302 8724 or sarah@methvenresort.com

Christchurch

- St Albans, Christchurch very close to the city centre. Te Araroa alumni from 2019-20 and would someday like to finish the SI part as well. "We have a converted and carpeted garage with sliding door, kitchen and laundry which we can offer to anyone who is in need. Might even have a trundle bed shortly." Also, happy to pickup and drop off any hikers if I'm free as long as they can offer to pay for the cost of the petrol. 022 309 9637 harun.shaikh@gmail.com

FOOD AND SUPPLY

Resupply

- Four Square Supermarket - 33/37 McMillian St, Methven - P: 03 302 8114
- Fresh Choice Supermarket - The Mall, Methven P: 03 302 8050
- *Alpine Sport Adventure Store Methven*
  full outdoor gear shop, open 7 days. We carry the full range of Real Meals, Radix meals, a solid range of suitable TA Trail shoes (Altra, La Sportiva, Merrell and more coming), Bridgedale & Injinji trail socks, gas & cookers (Jetboil, MSR), hiking poles & spare parts/repairs, water filters (Sawyer, Katadyn, Platypus), hydration, repair supplies, sleep mats/bags/pillows, outdoor clothing etc etc. We also work with suppliers to help facilitate the delivery of warranty claims

EXTRA INFO

- Methven i-SITE Visitors Centre - 160 Main St, Methven - P: 03 302 8955 - E: methven@i-site.org

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

Rākaia River Hazard Zone Bypass

Last Edited: August 27, 2026 14:54:51 NZST

INTRO

The Rākaia is a large braided river with an unsettled shingle bed. Even in low flows, it is not possible to safely cross the river on foot anywhere near Te Araroa's trailhead on the north bank. As a result, Te Araroa Trust has declared the Rākaia a hazard zone which does not form part of the trail. Instead, it marks a natural break in the continuum, just like Cook Strait.

The trailheads on either side of the Rākaia make natural beginning or endpoints for Te Araroa section trampers and it is really only through-trampers that have to deal with the issue of getting from one trailhead to the other. Don't risk a foot crossing. Instead, go around the road in a vehicle. Doing so will not compromise the integrity of a through-tramp

DESCRIPTION

The official campgrounds in the Lake Coleridge area are at Harper Village (free) and Rākaia Gorge (small charge). There are no areas where Freedom Camping is legally permitted between these two campgrounds and with increasing numbers of walkers enjoying Te Araroa, landowners are becoming more likely to move people on who are camping illegally. If you are solely camping you need to plan your journey to use the official campgrounds. There is now excellent camping or dormitory accommodation on Te Araroa at km 2,299.6, just before Lake Coleridge Village

CONDITIONS

Do not attempt to cross the Rākaia on foot.

TRANSPORT

- Methven Travel - 93 Main St , Methven- P: 0800 684 888 for shuttles to/from Christchurch. More details in Rākaia River to Rangitata River section
- Double Hill Run Road (Methven to Glenrock) *School Bus* operated by Methven Travel, offers transport to hikers when going up to Glenrock in the morning to collect children and returning to Methven after dropping off children in the afternoon. School days only. Schools start at approximately the end January. $42.09 pp. For *southbound* departs from Methven Travel office 6:00 am. Bookings essential. Email before 5:00 pm previous day info@methventravel.co.nz For *northbound* departs Glenrock trailhead approximately 4:30 pm. Phone booking essential. If there are no bookings and no school children further up Double Hill Run Road the bus won't come up to Glenrock. P: 03 302 8106 M: 027 437 5432.
- Selwyn Shuttles provide a daily daily service from Powerhouse Lodge to Methven and onto South Rakaia Trail head at Double Hill and return.

  We run a daily service during busy periods and other times it is an on-demand service. Best to contact us the night prior to ensure availability.

  Our usual schedule is:
  10am Powerhouse Lodge - Methven for resupply
  12pm Methven - Double Hill / Glenrock Stream
  1pm Double Hill / Glenrock Stream - Methven
  2pm Methven - Powerhouse Lodge

  Pricing is:
  Powerhouse Lodge - Methven (either direction)
  1-4 $200 minimum
  5-6 $40 each
  7-11 $35 each

  Methven - Double Hill/ Glenrock (either direction)
  1-5 $250 minimum
  6-7 $45 each
  8-11 $40 each

  EFTPOS / PayWave/ credit card available

  We look forward to driving you soon
  Brad Wilson - 021 776 968

ACCOMMODATION

Lake Coleridge Village

- The Powerhouse Lodge in Lake Coleridge Village (TA 2,298.6 km) is open Mid November 2024 to March 2025 for Te Araroa Trail walkers. Budget tent sites $25pp, bunkrooms $35pp and Lodge options $50pp. Wi-Fi, outdoor kitchen, hot showers, washing facilities and snacks available. Kiwi hospitality at its best. Bounce Boxes can be received and held here. No bookings necessary, more info on Facebook or call 022 081 0882

Methven

- Rākaia Gorge Society Camping Ground - 6686 Arundel Rākaia Gorge Rd - P: 03 302 9353 - The campground has tent sites, a sheltered cooking area, showers, toilets and water.
- Methven Camping Ground - 72 Barkers Road, Methven (next to the A & P show grounds, just a three minute walk to the centre of the township), P: 03 302 8005, M: 021 0818 5546. Daren and Rhonda Saunders. Campsite with use of toilets, shower, kitchen, lounge $15. Cabins for single or double - special rate for TA walkers. No charge for accepting supply boxes E: methvennz@hotmail.com
- Mt Hutt Bunkhouse and Cottage BBH - 8 Lambard St, Methven - P: 03 302 9122 or 027 346 4968

- Alpenhorn Chalet, 44 Allen St, Methven - P: 03 302 8779 - E: info@alpenhorn.co.nz
- Methven Lodge and B&B, 182 Main St, Methven - P: 03 302 9047 - E: info@methvenlodge.co.nz
- Snow Denn Lodge. Special Te Araroa rate of 10% discount off all rooms. Bookings are recommended. Please phone or email ahead from Rangitata River if N/B or Arthurs Pass if S/B. We are happy to hold resupply boxes for $5.00 per box. Call or email us to arrange. Phone: 027 207 0005
  Email: info@snowdennlodge.co.nz

- Big Tree Lodge 25 South Belt, Methven. Phone Peter Wilson 029 0201 2762, email jiaxingyuki@gmail.com 10% discount for TA walkers for phone bookings, No charge for accepting supply boxes. Transport to or from trailheads can be arranged

- Methven Resort, 51 Main Street, Methven. Studio room $130 per night which includes continental breakfast for 2 people. Coin operated laundry facilities available for use. Easy walk to local restaurants and shops. Bookings recommended - 03 302 8724 or stay@methvenresort.co.nz

Christchurch

- St Albans, Christchurch very close to the city centre. Te Araroa alumni from 2019-20 and would someday like to finish the SI part as well. "We have a converted and carpeted garage with sliding door, kitchen and laundry which we can offer to anyone who is in need. Might even have a trundle bed shortly." Also, happy to pickup and drop off any hikers if I'm free as long as they can offer to pay for the cost of the petrol. 022 309 9637 harun.shaikh@gmail.com

FOOD AND SUPPLY

Resupply

- Four Square Supermarket - 33/37 McMillian St, Methven - P: 03 302 8114
- Supervalue Supermarket - The Mall, Methven - P: 03 302 8050
- Hammer Hardware (for camping supplies, including gas canisters) - 85 Main Street, Methven, P: 03 302 9664 - E: methven@hammerhardware.co.nz
- *Alpine Sport Adventure Store Methven*
  full outdoor gear shop, open 7 days. We carry the full range of Real Meals, Radix meals, a solid range of suitable TA Trail shoes (Altra, La Sportiva, Merrell and more coming), Bridgedale & Injinji trail socks, gas & cookers (Jetboil, MSR), hiking poles & spare parts/repairs, water filters (Sawyer, Katadyn, Platypus), hydration, repair supplies, sleep mats/bags/pillows, outdoor clothing etc etc. We also work with suppliers to help facilitate the delivery of warranty claims

EXTRA INFO

- More information about Lake Coleridge area
- Methven i-SITE Visitors Centre - 160 Main St, Methven - P: 03 302 8955 - E: methven@i-site.org Lake Coleridge Visitor Information

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.

Rākaia River to Rangitata River

Last Edited: August 27, 2026 14:55:37 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa trail section: The track starts on a public access easement over Glenariffe Station, 34km from SH77. It then crosses the 60,000ha Hakatere Conservation Park before finishing in the Heron Basin on a paper road that runs through Castle Ridge Station.

DESCRIPTION

Glenrock Stream to Comyns Hut - 16km / 4-5 hours

From the DOC sign notifying “Access to North Branch Ashburton Stream” the track follows markers through farmland up the true right side of Glenrock Stream – lookout for electric fences. At the 1.7km mark the track crosses the stream and then merges with a farm track that begins to climb towards the conservation park boundary. Along the way the track passes a stand of kōwhai trees. No camping is permissible until inside the conservation park boundary.

From the conservation park boundary, the route zig-zags up an old farm track to Turtons Saddle (1,120m). Beyond the saddle, travel remains on the farm track and is initially east and upwards, but soon turns south sidling then descending towards Turtons Stream’s true left bank. The A-frame hut toilet becomes visible in the lower portions of the descent.

After 8.7km the track reaches Turtons Stream, which is the first water source en route that is both reliable and safe to drink. The track remains on the true left and crosses Ensor Stream 1.5km before A-Frame Hut, a tidy 3-bunk hut near the Comyns Stream’s confluence with Turtons Stream. It takes about an hour from the saddle to reach this hut.

Beyond A-Frame Hut, the track continues down the true left of Turtons Stream for about 2km. This is to the first of 4 river crossings in close succession. The track then climbs and descends into Mutton Gully. Once out of this gully, Turtons Stream is forded a final time. It's then an easy 700m walk to Comyns Hut (8 bunks).

The current Comyns Hut was built in 1957 to replace the original and derelict hut, which was built in the 1890s and still stands nearby. The ‘new’ hut is basic but was improved following restoration work in 2008. The hut door and walls act as an informal and historic register and make interesting reading.

Comyns Hut to Double Hut junction - 16km / 6-8 hours

Note: This part of the track is rough and unformed. Trampers are required to pick their own route between markers which, in poor weather, may not be visible from one to the next. The physical and navigational challenges rise accordingly.

A marker behind the hut shows the route heading west up the North Branch Ashburton River towards Round Hill Creek. Travel quickly becomes confined to the stream bed and involves frequent river crossings. These are straightforward in normal flows.

Round Hill Creek joins North Branch Ashburton as the latter heads north towards Petticoat Lane. From this confluence, Te Araroa continues up Round Hill Creek, past Logan Stream, and then departs to begin the ascent towards Clent Hills Saddle (1,480m). On a clear day the saddle affords great views of the Longman Range, Ricki Spur and the wider Lake Heron Basin.

Care needs to be taken to ascertain the correct route beyond the saddle. Do not descend straight ahead. Instead, continue to the right along the saddle and link to the upper-most track crossing a large scree slope. On the far side of the scree the route continues to sidle through tussock to the next ridge. Marker poles become clear again along the way.

From the ridge, the poles lead down and to the right, diagonally away from the Swin River. Eventually, after crossing 3 further scree slopes, the track reaches a dilapidated fence along another ridgeline.

Follow the fence line down the ridge to a rock cairn and arrow, which indicate the way down and to the right towards the next pole and ultimately to an unnamed stream, which is a tributary to the Swin River. Once across this stream, the final climb begins towards the Mellish Saddle.

The route down from the saddle becomes easier and remains above the true left bank of Mellish Stream. It emerges into the wider Heron Basin and passes a sign-posted junction with a side trail out to the road end at Lake Heron. Continue on the main track for about 1km to another junction near the Swin River, which is crossed on foot but seldom an issue. From here Double Hut (6 bunks) is 1km away on another side trail. Double Hut has 6 bunks and is in reasonable condition.

The side trail to the right provides an exit to the Lake Heron Car Park and then to Hakatere Heron Road. Once on the road, it is a few 100m to the right around the lakeshore to Lake Heron Campground. Or turn left for 16.3km to Ashburton Gorge Road and then left another 39.6km to Mt Somers Village where there is a tavern for meals, a general store and camping accommodation.

Double Hut junction to Hakatere Heron Road (via Manuka Hut) - 14km / 3-4 hours

The track continues south for 6.4km across grassy and gravel flats passing the Seagull and Mānuka Lakes along the way. This is to a junction from where Mānuka Hut (6 bunks) is hidden 300m upstream and to the left.

Note: The next reliable water source on Te Araroa beyond Mānuka Hut is on the Clearwater Track (17.3km ahead).

Beyond the Mānuka Hut junction, Te Araroa continues south for a little over 2km and then turns west to climb to the ridge on Emily Hill’s south flank. The poled track line then sidles down through matagouri bush and spear grass to the flats. From here it's easier going across to a carpark at Lake Emily. At this point, the track leaves the Hakatere Conservation Park and joins with a marked unformed road that divides into Castle Ridge Station. Trampers should take care to follow the markers to avoid straying onto private property.

It's 5km from Mānuka Hut to the Lake Emily carpark and then another 3.2km on the Castle Ridge paper road to Hakatere Heron Road. This is where the Clent Hills Track ends. There is a farm gate across the paper road about 600m before the finish point. This gate should be left as it is found (open or closed).

For trampers continuing south, turn left onto Hakatere Heron Road and walk 4.4km to the Clearwater Track trailhead. This is on the right-hand side of the road just beyond Buicks Bridge.

Clearwater Track - 23km / 4-6 hours

Note: There are no huts en route but camping is permitted at any point down this track.

This high county track passes through the Hakatere Conservation Park on land formally comprised in the 9,119ha Hakatere Station. This pastoral leasehold property was purchased by the Nature Heritage Fund in October 2007 and returned to the conservation estate. Free public access is now afforded, as is protection to significant wetlands and expansive landscapes.

From the south side of Buicks Bridge, which crosses the South Branch Ashburton River, marker poles lead westward across easy, open country. This is towards the gap between Mt Guy and Dogs Hill. At the 5km mark, the track crosses a fence line and later it joins an old farm track, where it stays for another 5km. At this point, the marked track turns left and heads towards a saddle at the western end of Mt Guy. It passes a tarn along the way. From the Saddle, there are sweeping views over Lake Clearwater towards the Harper Range, of Mt Potts, and to, then beyond, the Rangitata River. Follow the fence line down to the creek at the base of the hill. The track then heads south-west towards the head of Lake Clearwater and joins with another old farm track, which continues towards the Potts River but stops at a gate. Te Araroa heads northward here to avoid crossing private property then bends around towards the lip on the Potts River's true left bank. Once on the lip the track stays high and follows the fence line. It then drops steeply into a gully with stream crossing and then opens to the Potts River bed. If the Potts River is running clear then the best travel is usually downstream direct to the carpark at the road bridge.

If the Potts River is discoloured and cannot be crossed, head back and up the other side of the gully. Trampers are then able to remain on the Potts River side of the fence line through to the road. From here it’s a short walk downhill to the car park and trailhead.

It's 18.5km to the left on Hakatere Potts Road to Ashburton Gorge Road, then on to Mt Somers Village and Methven. It's 3km to the right on Hakatere Potts Road to Mt Potts Lodge.

HISTORY

The area is rich in high country history dating back to 1857 when Clent Hills Station was first farmed as a 20,000ha run under licence from the Crown. Over the years the station has survived many incarnations the most recent being the Nature Heritage Fund purchase of 10,000ha, which reduced the station to a rump of 2,000ha within the Heron Basin.

The Clent Hills pastoral lease was in the Buick family from 1923 to 1982. The first 3 years of this tenure was spent eradicating rabbits before stock could be reintroduced to the property.

CONDITIONS

Potential hazards

- Farming operations
- River crossings – never cross flooded rivers
- Small stream crossings
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold
- Weather extremes
- Few water sources – be sure to fill up at Mānuka Hut

ACCESS

Northern Start: Glenrock Stream, Double Hill Run Road

Southern End: Potts River Bridge carpark, Hakatere Potts Road

TRANSPORT

- Double Hill Run Road (Methven to Glenrock) *School Bus* operated by Methven Travel, offers transport to hikers when going up to Glenrock in the morning to collect children and returning to Methven after dropping off children in the afternoon. School days only. Schools start at approximately the end January. $42.09 pp. For *southbound* departs from Methven Travel office 6:00 am. Bookings essential. Email before 5:00 pm previous day info@methventravel.co.nz For *northbound* departs Glenrock trailhead approximately 4:30 pm. Phone booking essential. If there are no bookings and no school children further up Double Hill Run Road the bus won't come up to Glenrock. P: 03 302 8106 M: 027 437 5432.

- Selwyn Shuttles provide a daily daily service from Powerhouse Lodge to Methven and onto South Rakaia Trail head at Double Hill and return.

  We run a daily service during busy periods and other times it is an on-demand service. Best to contact us the night prior to ensure availability.

  Our usual schedule is:
  10am Powerhouse Lodge - Methven for resupply
  12pm Methven - Double Hill / Glenrock Stream
  1pm Double Hill / Glenrock Stream - Methven
  2pm Methven - Powerhouse Lodge

  Pricing is:
  Powerhouse Lodge - Methven (either direction)
  1-4 $200 minimum
  5-6 $40 each
  7-11 $35 each

  Methven - Double Hill/ Glenrock (either direction)
  1-5 $250 minimum
  6-7 $45 each
  8-11 $40 each

  EFTPOS / PayWave/ credit card available

  We look forward to driving you soon
  Brad Wilson - 021 776 968

- Methven Travel - Christchurch to Methven shuttle. Monday, Wednesday, Friday unless committed elsewhere. Departs Christchurch 10:00 am. Departs Methven 12:30 pm. Pickup at Christchurch Airport or Museum. Booking essential. P: Dave 03 302 8106 M: 027 437 5432

- Rangitata bypass shuttle. Now available for pick up and drop off to Mesopotamia and Potts river car park from Geraldine. Contact Brian 022 069 3981

ACCOMMODATION

Trail Pass

A Frame Hut - km 2,307.7 - Included in The Trail Pass

Comyns Hut - km 2,314.5 - Included in The Trail Pass

Double Hut - km 2,330.5 + 0.8 km - Included in The Trail Pass

Manuka Hut - km 2,335.6 + 0.5 km - Included in The Trail Pass

Accomodation En route

- Farm Cottage at Glenrock Station - Double Run Rd (adjacent to Trail) - P: 03 318 5855 - E: andykate@netspeed.net.nz - special $60 pp rate for Te Araroa walkers (self-catering)
- Comyns Hut - 8 bunks
- Double Junction Hut - 6 bunks
- Lake Heron Campground - GPS co-ords -43.49462, 171.15600 - Toilets and water only. (Only Open between 1 October and 30 April)
- Mt Somers Village - tavern for meals, a general store and camping accommodation.
- Mānuka Hut - 6 bunks
- Clent Hills Station Accommodation: pods, cabins, bunkhouse or tent sites available. Prices range from $85 per person to $30 per person. Fully equipped kitchen, laundry and some basic supplies available at office.
  Located 4km from 2,331 up the road towards Lake Heron. InReach or email preferred clenthillsnz@gmail.com or text/call Moana 027 427 8430. For southbound walkers Clent Hills Station can also be reached via Lake Heron by walking west down Swinn River Track before Double Hut and then South on Hakatere Heron Road.
- Mt Potts Lodge - 2131 Hakatere Potts Rd, Ashburton Lakes. P: 03 303 9060, 03 303 9738 - M: Jack Downer (General Manager) 021 527 478 E: info@mtpotts.co.nz - Offers a range of accommodation from powered and unpowered camp sites (32), bunkrooms, deluxe suites, and cottages. We have HOT SHOWERS and refreshments from our restaurant cafe and bar. If stranded at the Potts River trailhead it may be worth walking approximately 3 km to Mt Potts Lodge for some refreshment and access to a wifi connection to phone for transport

Methven

- Rākaia Gorge Society Camping Ground - 6686 Arundel Rākaia Gorge Rd - P: 03 302 9353 - The campground has tent sites, a sheltered cooking area, showers, toilets and water.
- Methven Camping Ground - 72 Barkers Road, Methven (next to the A & P show grounds, just a three minute walk to the centre of the township), P: 03 302 8005, M: 021 0818 5546. Daren and Rhonda Saunders. Campsite with use of toilets, shower, kitchen, lounge $15. Cabins for single or double - special rate for TA walkers. No charge for accepting supply boxes E: methvennz@hotmail.com
- Mt Hutt Bunkhouse and Cottage BBH - 8 Lambard St, Methven - P: 03 302 9122 or 027 346 4968
- Alpenhorn Chalet, 44 Allen St, Methven - P: 03 302 8779 - E: info@alpenhorn.co.nz
- Methven Lodge and B&B, 182 Main St, Methven - P: 03 302 9047 - E: info@methvenlodge.co.nz
- Snow Denn Lodge, 6 Bank street, Methven – P: 03 302 8999 – E snowdenn@xtra.co.nz or find us on Facebook. www.snowdennlodge.co.nz. Special Te Araroa rate $37 in dorm rooms 10% discount off private rooms. Bookings are Essential. Please phone or email ahead from Rangitata River if N/B or Arthurs Pass if S/B. Please note if you don't have a booking you may have to wait an hour to check in! We can hold resupply boxes $5.00 per box. Call or email us to arrange.

- Big Tree Lodge 25 South Belt, Methven. Phone Peter Wilson 029 020 12762, email jiaxingyuki@gmail.com 10% discount for TA walkers for phone bookings, No charge for accepting supply boxes. Transport to or from trailheads can be arranged

- Methven Resort 51 Main Street, Methven. Studio room $90 per night (2x people) which includes continental breakfast. Studio room and dinner deal $130 per night (2 people) also includes continental breakfast. We also have discounted rates for groups of 3 or more people. Laundry facilities available for use. Bar and Restaurant open Wednesday - Sunday. P: 03 302 8724 or sarah@methvenresort.com

FOOD AND SUPPLY

- Four Square Supermarket - 33/37 McMillian St, Methven - P: 03 302 8114
- Fresh Choice Supermarket - The Mall, Methven P: 03 302 8050
- *Alpine Sport Adventure Store Methven*

full outdoor gear shop, open 7 days. We carry the full range of Real Meals, Radix meals, a solid range of suitable TA Trail shoes (Altra, La Sportiva, Merrell and more coming), Bridgedale & Injinji trail socks, gas & cookers (Jetboil, MSR), hiking poles & spare parts/repairs, water filters (Sawyer, Katadyn, Platypus), hydration, repair supplies, sleep mats/bags/pillows, outdoor clothing etc etc. We also work with suppliers to help facilitate the delivery of warranty claims

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.

Rangitata River Hazard Zone Bypass

Last Edited: October 10, 2026 08:24:54 NZST

INTRO

The Rangitata is a large braided river with an unsettled shingle bed. It poses a significant danger to trampers on foot and, as a result, Te Araroa Trust has declared it a hazard zone which does not form part of the trail. Instead it marks a natural break in the continuum like Cook Strait does.

The Potts River and Bush Stream trailheads on either side of the Rangitata make ideal beginning or end points for Te Araroa section trampers and it is really only through-trampers that have to deal with the issue of getting from one trailhead to the other. Trampers should not risk a foot crossing. This does not compromise the integrity of a through-tramp, as it is not part of the trail.

In 2022-23 an experienced southbound tramper, following advice from others who had crossed northbound, began the crossing in fine weather with the river running clear. During the 3 hour walk over the 9 km wide river bed the river changed from clear blue to brown and rose more than two metres, making the last braid impossible, despite there being no rainfall in the immediate area. After initially losing pack (later recovered), poles and tent (not recovered) the hiker was rescued by helicopter.

DESCRIPTION

Geraldine is the gateway town to the Two Thumbs Track and offers a range of services.

The Bush Stream trailhead is 2.5km beyond Mesopotamia Station, 52km from Peel Forest, 60km from the Rangitata River bridge (near Arundel) and 75km from Geraldine.

Transport options are listed below.

CONDITIONS

River crossings - Never cross flooded rivers. Do not attempt to cross the Rangitata.

TRANSPORT

- The Geraldine Community Vehicle Trust can take TA walkers to Peel Forest on weekday mornings. It is not open on the weekend or Public Holidays (Not available until 5 Jan) The cost is $24.00 per person. P: 03 693 1007 - E: geraldine.mini.bus@gmail.com
- InterCity - P: 03 365 1113
- Atomic Shuttles — P: 03 349 0697 — Daily buses to Queenstown and Christchurch
- Uber is coming to Mesopotamia. From 16 December a local driver will be available on Uber for trips from Geraldine or Peel Forest to and from Mesopotamia trail head on the south side of the Rangitata River (km 2,367.9) or Potts River Bridge on the north side the Rangitata River (also km 2,367.9 because there is no Te Araroa Trail between these two points). Estimated price $168 for four people, 5 to 12 people at $40 each. Search Uber for Mesopotamia Station or Mesopotamia Airstrip (not Mesopotamia Iraq), or Potts River Tracks trail Head.
- There is no cellular coverage at either of these trail heads. From Potts River bridge it is possible to get a cellular connection by walking 0.5 km up the hill to obtain a view to the east over Lake Clearwater to Mt Barossa.

ACCOMMODATION

- Geraldine Top 10 Holiday Park - 39 Hislop St, Geraldine - P: 03 693 8147 - E: info@geraldinetop10.co.nz

Trail Pass

Peel Forest Campsite - bypass km 87.7 - 20% discount on serviced campsites (Bookings required)

En route

- Peel Forest Farmstay
  - 10km from SH72 on the road to Mesapotamia Station. Private rooms and bunk rooms available, self-catering. We now also offer transport to and from Geraldine, the Ashburton Lakes area and Mesopotamia trail-head. Contact in advance Steve and Jenny Deans - Home 03 696 3509, Steve 027 305 0400, Jenny 027 746 4267, sjdeans1@outlook.com thedeans@peelforestfarmstay.com Steve and Jenny Deans - P: 03 696 3509 or 027 305 0400 / 027 746 7267 Highly recommended friendly hosts
- DOC Peel Forest Camp — online bookings only — Cabins and Camping. M: 021 461 846. In January only the camp host may be able to provide transport to the Two Thumbs Track trailhead
- Mesopotamia Station. RD 20, Peel Forest - P: 03 696 3738 - E: enquiries@mesopotamia.co.nz - W: www.mesopotamia.co.nz - provides good basic accommodation.

FOOD AND SUPPLY

- Geraldine Community Vehicle Trust offers a service to Peel Forest Store on weekday mornings. Cost $14.00 P: 03 6931007 — E: geraldine.mini.bus@gmail.com
- Fresh Choice Supermarket - 7 Peel St, Geraldine — P: 03 693 8529

EXTRA INFO

- Geraldine Visitor Info Centre is at Mundells Cafe and email is admin@mundells.nz
- For general information about the town and surrounds, including accommodation, eateries and local businesses. www.geraldine.nz 027 555 6524 (Janene)
- DOC Raukapuka Area Office - 13-15 North Terrace, Raukapuka - P: 03 693 1010 - E: raukapukaao@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.

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.

Two Thumb Track

Last Edited: August 27, 2026 10:48:54 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa trail section: This is a fine high-country trail providing a challenging traverse through Te Kāhui Kaupeka Conservation Park. You'll walk from the south side of the Rangitata River through to Boundary Stream at Lake Tekapo.

DESCRIPTION

The start of the track is signposted at the Bush Stream carpark beyond Mesopotamia Station, and is mostly unformed but marked with poles from there. Access is via Rangitata Gorge Road. The huts en-route are classic 8-bunk musterers' huts and add an important historic dimension to this tramp.

Bush Stream car park to Crooked Spur Hut - 10km / 4 hours

- Note: Please see the "Additional Information" for transport details - there is very little traffic past Peel Forest

If driving to the trailhead on Rangitata Gorge Road take care to follow the correct gravel track which forks to the right immediately after passing the Mesopotamia Station farm buildings and passes through the fence line over a cattle stop. The wider gravel track straight ahead is a privately maintained private road and is signposted No Access at the first fence. Please respect farm access restrictions. Te Araroa benefits from landowner's goodwill.

Follow markers from the carpark up towards Bush Stream. The path across the stony matagouri flats is not easy to follow as the marker posts are not always visible over the scrub. The trail crosses a farm road and skirts a small canal. After passing the canal the track crosses a low ridge behind a row of poplars. Walk to the left along this ridge a short distance and look out for a 4WD track heading up towards the gorge across the wide matagouri flats to the stream. This is much easier than trying to find your own path through the matagauri. At the stream travel is up, or adjacent to, the river bed, crossings as required. It is not necessary to zig-zag across the river bed to each orange marker pole. Choose your own route based on the river braids as you find them. These crossings are straightforward in normal flows but can be tricky after rain or during spring when the stream is fed by snow melt. Take extreme care at these times. Crossings are recommended as early as possible in the mornings during the snow melt.

The Sawtooth Bluff can be particularly tricky. Before reaching Sawtooth, approximately 5 km from the start, cross to the left (true right) bank as the stream at Sawtooth is narrow, steep and deep, even in moderate conditions.

The track leaves the stream bed 2.5 km past Sawtooth at a marked point on the left and climbs over a steep ridge to avoid a gorge section, and then descends back towards Bush Stream.

To ford Bush Stream a final time head up the true right bank to find the safest place to cross. Previous advice to cross via an island in mid-stream is now out of date due to changes in the gravel banks. Aim to come out of the steam just above the orange triangle marker. Follow the marker back onto the Bush Stream Track and up to Crooked Spur hut.

From the true left side a formed track climbs towards Crooked Spur Hut (5 bunks). This track was still used for mustering purposes up until 2009. The climb to the hut takes about 1hr.

Crooked Spur Hut is tired but provides adequate accommodation. It's in a good location with views down Bush Stream to the Rangitata River.

Crooked Spur Hut to Stone Hut - 9.5km / 5 hours

From Crooked Spur Hut the track goes west around Crooked Spur and climbs steadily for 1.5hrs to a saddle at 1500m. From the saddle the track descends to cross Pack Horse and Sweeps Streams before returning to Bush Stream. The old stock bridge, which may appear on some maps, has been removed. Cross the river upstream from the narrow gorge to reach Stone Hut. Stone Hut (8 bunks) is in reasonable condition.

DOC have removed the bridge over Bush Stream marked on Te Araroa map 122 at km 2,389.1, and on NZTopo50 map BX18. Local signage indicates the required stream crossing below the hut.

Stone Hut to Royal Hut - 6.5km / 2 hours

Beyond the hut Te Araroa follows Bush Stream to Royal Hut (8 bunks). Prince Charles and Princess Anne reputedly visited as children, hence the hut's name.

Royal Hut to Camp Stream Hut - 14km / 6 hours

The first part of the day involves a climb over the Two Thumb Range via Stag Saddle (1925m), the highest point on Te Araroa.

From the hut cross Bush Stream and follow the poles upwards. The climb to the saddle is fairly steep in places but quite safe in reasonable weather. The contours ease towards the saddle, where cell phone coverage is available. At km 2,398.2 the NZ Topo may shows a trail branching slightly right to climb

towards to the saddle. A better route, sporadically marked with stone cairns, turns to the left to follow a small stream gully up to and around a small rocky spur. The marker poles are widely spaced.

For northbound walkers this preferred route is found by keeping to the right when descending from the saddle

From the saddle the poled route marked on NZ Topo maps follows Camp Stream down to the hut. This is the safest route in bad weather, but the track may be boggy in places.

On a fine day the Ridge Route is preferable as it offers a wide view over Lake Tekapo. Turn right near the Stag Saddle sign and cross higher ground to the tack traversing the bare scree slope visible above the saddle to the right. Descend the ridge line for 10 km past marked peak 1944 and the turn off to Rex Simpson Hut (private) to a 4WD track. While unmarked this route is generally sound underfoot and affords excellent views across Lake Tekapo to Mt Cook. This should only be attempted by people confident in navigating and should not be attempted in poor weather. Turn left onto the 4WD track, which fords Camp Stream on its way to Camp Stream Hut (6-bunks)

The more scenic correct route to the ridge track turns to the right at the Stag Saddle sign and rises higher to cross the wide the scree slope ascending the high ridge visible to the right. Once on the high ridge the track is easy to follow all the way to Camp Stream. Do not attempt to cross the broken rock slope on lower contour between km 2,399.8 and km 2,402.

- Note: Camp Stream Hut is owned and managed by the Mackenzie Alpine Trust who ask for a $10 per person donation to overnight here - please carry some cash and use the honesty box outside the hut.

The alternative marked (and poor weather) route down from Stag Saddle is lightly poled and runs down into the tussock covered Camp Stream Valley. Lower down this valley the 2 routes converge at the 4WD track, turn left here to access Camp Stream Hut, which is on the true left side of the stream. Camp Stream Hut is compact but in reasonable condition.

There is no water supply at the hut so fill up when crossing Camp Stream

Note for Northbound walkers, Camp Steam Hut to Royal Hut

There are two possible routes from Camp Steam, just north of the hut, to Stag Saddle. The DOC sign at the steam crossing indicates Stag Saddle via Te Araroa Trail. This is the valley route, recommended for bad weather when the exposed ridge may be best avoided. The valley route is safer in these conditions but may be swampy.

Te Araroa maps and apps now follow the alternative ridge track to Stag Saddle. To access this going northbound from the stream crossing walk up the 4WD track towards the Coal River Car Park, past two orange marker poles. Turn right at the third pole, which may have an improvised arrow attached, and climb the tussock path to the start of the long ridge leading up to Stag Saddle. Check the Alert or apps for a recent route correction near the top end of the ridge. Watch for the track split between Bunzenberg Peak and Stag Saddle at approximately km 2,400.5

Camp Stream Hut to Boundary Stream carpark - 18km / 5 hours

The track leaves Camp Stream Hut for the Ski Field Road. Trampers leave the hut and follow the track down the true left of Camp Stream, before crossing the Coal River just above the confluence and then continuing on the true left of the Coal River before the steep climb to the road. There is a car park well down the road for those wanting to exit here.

Meanwhile, Te Araroa continues on conservation land parallel with Lake Tekapo and along the base of the Two Thumb Range. The track crosses Washdyke Stream on its way to Boundary Stream where it descends above the true right bank to a car park at Lilybank Road.

Lilybank Road to Tekapo - 15km / 4 hours

- Note: once you cross Boundary Stream, you are surrounded by private land and camping is NOT welcomed - continue all the way to Lake Tekapo Village, or if you wish to camp make sure you do so before crossing Boundary Stream.

Follow the road shoulder 14km south towards SH8.

- Note: wear a high-visibility vest and/or pack cover on this walk and don't wear earphones, as the road is narrow and can be very dusty (poor visibility) in summer.

The road walk ends at the Lake Tekapo Regional Park, which affords lakeside walking for the final 3km section into Lake Tekapo Village.

HISTORY

Te Kāhui Kaupeka Conservation Park opened in April 2009 and resulted from the successful tenure review of the Mesopotamia and Richmond Station pastoral leases.

Mesopotamia Station was once owned by the English polymath, Samuel Butler. The surrounding mountains, wide braided river and hanging valleys give this remote part of the South Island its lost world character, and inspired Butler’s fantastical satire, Erewhon.

New Zealand’s Colonial Secretary Dr Andrew Sinclair was drowned in the Rangitata River after surveying the wide braids of the river system with Julius von Haast in 1861. He was seeking a way through the river to get back to Butler’s homestead. His grave is now marked as an historic site.

In prehistoric times lower areas were most likely forested. However, burning has reduced forest cover to remnants and resulted in the snow tussock cover that predominates today.

CONDITIONS

Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track Lilybank Road
- River crossings - Never cross flooded rivers
- Small stream crossings
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold only take ridge route down from Stag Saddle in favourable conditions
- Weather extremes

Stag Saddle weather - NIWA

NIWA 3-day forecast Stag Saddle

NIWA 3-day forecast Lake Tekapo

ACCESS

Northern Start: Bush Stream carpark, Rangitata Gorge Road

Southern End: Junction of Pioneer Drrive and SH8, Lake Tekapo Village

TRANSPORT

Transport to and from the trailheads is available

- The Geraldine Community Vehicle Trust can take TA walkers to Peel Forest on weekday mornings. It is not open on the weekend or Public Holidays. Closed from December 20th until January 5th. The cost is $24.00 per person. P: 03 693 1007 - E: geraldine.mini.bus@gmail.com

- Rangitata bypass shuttle. Now available for pick up and drop off to Mesopotamia and Potts river car park from Geraldine. Contact Brian 022 069 3981
- Tekapo Shuttle Te Araroa Track extends from Roundhill Road via Lake Tekapo and continues towards the Lake Pukaki area. If you require transportation along this route, please don't hesitate to contact us. https://tekaposhuttlenz.com/contact-us/

Getting there/away

- InterCity - P: 03 365 1113
- Atomic Shuttles - P: 03 349 0697 - daily buses to Queenstown and Christchurch

ACCOMMODATION

Trail Pass

Crooked Spur Hut - km 2,377.9 - Included in The Trail Pass

Stone Hut - km 2,387.3 - Included in The Trail Pass

Royal Hut - km 2,393.5 - Included in The Trail Pass

Camp Stream Hut - km 2,408.3 - Private $10 - Please support this hut, owned by Mackenzie Alpine Trust

En route

- Peel Forest Farmstay - 10km from SH72 on the road to Mesapotamia Station. Private rooms and bunk rooms available, self-catering. We now also offer transport to and from Geraldine, the Ashburton Lakes area and Mesopotamia trail-head. Contact in advance Steve and Jenny Deans - Home 03 696 3509, Steve 027 305 0400, Jenny 027 746 4267, sjdeans1@outlook.com
- Crooked Spur Hut - 8 bunks - This Hut is tired but provides adequate accommodation. It's in a good location with views down Bush Stream to the Rangitata River
- Stone Hut - 8 bunks - This hut is in a reasonable condition
- Royal Hut - 8 bunks
- Camp Stream Hut - 6 bunks - Compact Hut but in a reasonable condition - note this hut is owned and managed by the Mackenzie Alpine Trust who ask for a $10pp donation to overnight here - please carry some cash and use the honesty tin inside the hut.

Accommodation

- Haka House Lake Tekapo - 5 Motuariki Lane - P: 021 221 7085 [formerly YHA Tekapo. Re-opened November 2022]
- Tailormade Backpackers BBH - 9-11 Aorangi Crescent, Lakee Tekapo - P: 03 680 6700 - E: tailor-made-backpackers@xtra.co.nz
- Lake Tekapo Motels and Holiday Park - 2 Lakeside Drive, Lake Tekapo. Shared campsite for hikers $32 pp, no need to book - P: 03 6806 825 or Freephone 0800 853 853 - E: info@laketekapo-accommodation.co.nz
- Lake Tekapo Holiday Park hiker campsite - 2 Lakeside Drive, Lake Tekapo. Shared campsite for hikers $32 pp, no need to book
- Lake Front Backpackers Lodge - 2 Lakeside Dr, Lake Tekapo - P: 0800 840 740
- Fairlie Holiday Park (30min drive from Tekapo) - 14 Allandale Rd, Fairlie - P: 03 6856190 - E: fairlieholidaypark@gmail.com - Kitchen, TV room, library.

Many other accommodation options are also available.

FOOD AND SUPPLY

- Tekapo Services Ltd (4 Square supermarket) - Main Street - Tekapo Twizel Rd, Lake Tekapo - P: 03 680 6809
- Doughboys Bakery - 65 Main Rd, Tekapo - P: 03 680 6655 - Snacks and bakery goods

Bounce Box

- Annie from BeSpoke Cycles is keen to receive and hold your bounce boxes - BeSpoke Bike Tours, 8 Simpson Lane, Tekapo annie@bespokebiketours +64 (0) 21 151 3742 W: www.bespokebiketours.nz

EXTRA INFO

Lake Tekapo Village

- Lake Tekapo Information Centre - State Highway 8, Lake Tekapo - P: 03 680 6686 - W:
- Tekapo Springs Sales & Information Centre - State Highway 8, Lake Tekapo - P: 03 680 6579 - E: sales@tekaposprings.co.nz
- Heartlands Fairlie Resource and Information Centre - 67 Main Street, Fairlie - P: 03 685 8496 - E: fairlie@xtra.co.nz
- Aoraki Mount Cook National Park DOC Visitor Centre - State Highway 80, Aoraki Mount Cook Village P: 03 435 1186 - E: mtcookvc@doc.govt.nz
- Kiwi Treasures & Information Centre - State Highway 8, Lake Tekapo - P: 03 680 6686 - E: kiwitreasures@clear.net.nz
- Twizel Information Centre Market Place, Twizel - P: 03 435 3124 - E: twizelinfo@gmail.com
- Tekapo Tourism - W: http://www.tekapotourism.co.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.

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.

Tekapo to Lake Ōhau

Last Edited: August 27, 2026 10:51:26 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa trail section: Skirt the glacial blue lakes of Tekapo, Pukaki and Ōhau by following canals, shoreline and other pathways.

DESCRIPTION

From Pioneer Dr, continue west on SH8. You'll find shops and food/drink/accommodation along here.

Tekapo to Twizel (via Tekapo Canal) - 54.5km

- Note: The Tekapo Canal route may on occasion close at short notice due to high winds and/or Genesis Energy requirements. Please check the Alerts page prior to your departure.

From SH8, turn south onto Aorangi Crescent then after 350m right into Andrew Don Dr and follow that 2.5km to the Tekapo A Power Station, crossing the outlet flow.

From there continue on the Tekapo Canal Road for 22km (crossing SH8 after 12km, please take care). Te Araroa track branches away from the canal road on the The Pylon Track at km 2,465.5. Cross over the fence using the stile, and follow the marked path through high country tussock until you reach a well formed old farm track at km 2,469.9. Follow this road until the marked route temporarily takes you off this farm track at km 2,474.4 to a mowed camping area near an old stock tank to provide water. The water comes from the canal, so you should filter it. Follow the markers from here back to the formed road and follow it down to a gate onto Hayman Road on the shore of Lake Pukaki at km 2476.5. Cross the fence using the stile, and continue on the A2O.

Cyclists should continue along Tekapo Canal Road to reach Hayman Road just south of Pukaki Power Station.

Head south on Hayman Road, following the A2O Cycle Trail route as it weaves on and off the strip adjacent to the lake. Further south, some 6.5km after Hayman Road leads onto SH8, toilets and drinking water are available at the Lake Pukaki Visitor Information Centre about 1km further along.

It is a further 11.5km to Twizel — continue along the A2O Cycle Trail, crossing SH8 near the former information centre site, then the track heads south into the Department of Conservation's Pukaki Flats Reserve for a further 9km then exits to the highway at Bendrose Reserve. Turn left onto the highway for one last kilometre into Twizel. You'll see finger signs indicating the safest crosspoint just outside the town.

Tekapo - Twizel Road - 4km

This track traces the lower sections of the Mackenzie Basin power scheme to Lake Ōhau and then follows the lakeshore. The track also skirts Lake Ruataniwha.

The track starts on SH8 outside Twizel opposite Ruataniwha Road where Te Araroa's next section to the north is sign-posted. From here follow the gravelled walk/cycleway south for 2km past Meridian Energy's Twizel office, then continue on down the side of the road to cross the spillway and then the bridge over the Ōhau B canal.

Lake Ōhau Track - 28.5km

Once across the canal bridge (i.e. before the salmon farm and Ōhau Riverside Drive) join a formed track that runs along the terrace above Lake Ruataniwha for about 3km. From the end of this track the trail joins Ōhau Riverside Drive and descends around a cove with a large patch of rushes at its head.

Beyond the cove, travel is predominantly on the road to the lake head and beyond along the Ōhau River to the Weir at Lake Ōhau. From the Weir, the Trail connects again with the Alps 2 Ocean Cycleway, skirting around the side of Lake Ōhau for 9km before joining back onto Lake Ōhau Road.

Turn right onto the road and follow the road shoulder to Lake Middleton (DOC campground here), then follow the eastern shore to the lakehead. Return to the road shoulder here and walk past the Alpine Village to a small stand of beech. From this point, there is a good track between the road and Lake Ōhau around to Glen Mary Ski Club.

Lake Ōhau Lodge is another 3km further north along Lake Ōhau Road and Ōmārama, a small tourist village, is 37km to the south, back down Lake Ōhau Road then right into SH8/Twizel-Ōmārama Road.

HISTORY

Lake Ruataniwha is man-made and its dam was built between 1978 and 1981. In addition to storing water for power generation, the lake provides recreational opportunity. It's a world-class rowing venue. It's also where Peter Knight broke a world speed record for Grand Prix hydroplanes in 1996. In doing so he reached a speed of 286.5km/hr.

CONDITIONS

Potential hazards

- Vehicles on road or track be aware of cars on road and cyclists on shared tracks
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold
- Few water sources - please treat water before drinking

ACCESS

Northern Start: Junction of Pioneer Drive and SH8, Lake Tekapo Village

Southern End: Glen Mary Ski Club, Lake Ōhau Road

TRANSPORT

Cycle Options

- As a change of pace you may wish to check out the Official Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail for a list of Official Partners to the Cycle Trail including transport, bike hire and accommodation options. You can also call us on 0800 266 5226 or drop us an email at info@alps2ocean.com. The Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail is free to use by both cyclists and walkers and the two trails (the Te Araroa and the Alps 2 ocean Cycle Trail) follow the same route in parts over this section. Since our paths cross, we would be happy to assist you on your Te Araroa journey or suggest some interesting side trips and sights along the way.
- Alps 2 Ocean offer cycle hire between Tekapo and Twizel/Lake Ōhau, as an alternative to the long walk. P: 0800 425772 - E: info@alps2ocean.co.nz
- Cycle Journeys is pleased to offer Te Araroa walkers bike hire, along with bike and luggage transfers between Tekapo and Twizel, and Twizel and Lake Ōhau More info here. Available: 1 April 2026 - Mid May 2026, 1 October 2026 - End of January 2027, 1 April - Mid May 2027. Subject to availability. Advance booking is essential, and reservations must be confirmed by 1.00pm the day prior to riding. Phone: 03 435 0578 or 0800 22 44 75 (within NZ). Email: info@cyclejourneys.co.nz Check out this link for all TA related info - www.cyclejourneys.co.nz/alps-2-ocean/packages/day-rides/#Te-Araroa
- BeSpoke Bike Tours - offers bike hire and a scheduled shuttle service between Tekapo, Twizel, and Ohau. You must contact in advance using the link above, or info@bespokebiketours.nz

- Southbound
  - Tekapo – Twizel
    - $95pp or E-bike 145pp. Arrive in Twizel around 2pm
    - Pick up and Drop off is at Twizel Holiday Park (122 Mackenzie Drive)
  - Tekapo – Ohau
    - 1-day trip (min 4 people required) - $130pp or E-bike $185pp. Pack drop/bike pick up at Lake Ohau Lodge around 3:00pm
    - 2-day trip - $190pp, E-bike not available. Pack drop off/bike pick up around 2pm on day 2.
  - Shuttle from the exit point of the Richmond Trail at Boundary Stream on Lilybank Road if we have an available driver. Next day bike hire.
- Northbound walkers please enquire.

Twizel

- Daily buses to Queenstown and Christchurch
- InterCity - P: 03 365 1113
- Atomic Shuttles - P: 03 349 0697
- Cycle Journeys - For those preferring to cycle this route, cycle hire is available from Cycle Journeys who can shuttle luggage and collect bikes as needed - Twizel Depot - P: 03 435 0578 M: 027 435 0578 - Christchurch Office - P: 03 377 2060 - (Note the Twizel depot is closed May-September, arrangements can still be made via Christchurch office)

Omārama

- Daily buses from Christchurch and Queenstown
- InterCity - P: 03 365 1113 - W: www.intercity.co.nz
- Atomic Shuttles - P: 03 349 0697 - W: www.atomictravel.co.nz

ACCOMMODATION

Trail Pass

Pylon Campsite - km 2,474.3 - Included in The Trail Pass

~~Pines Campsite - km 2,485 - Private~~ Self contained vehicles only

Lake Middleton Campsite - km 2,525.8 - Included in The Trail Pass

Other Accommodation

- High Country Lodge and backpackers - 23 Mackenzie Drive, Twizel - P: 03 435 0671 - E: info@highcountrylodge.co.nz
- Twizel Holiday Park - 122 Mackenzie Drive, Twizel - P: 03 435 0507 - cabins, backpackers and campsites
- Mountain Chalets - Wairepo Rd, Twizel (Close to trail head) - P: 03 435 0785 - E: info@mountainchalets.co.nz

Other accommodation options are also available.

Lake Ōhau

- There is a DOC campsite on the north shoreline of Lake Middleton, adjacent to Lake Ōhau and immediately before the small Lake Ōhau settlement. Flush toilets and water supply available. No booking required however an $10pp charge payable onsite. (included in Trail pass)
- Lake Ōhau Lodge - 2295 Lake Ōhau, Twizel. Rd - P: 03 438 9885 - E: reservations@ohau.co.nz - Hotel style accommodation (varying from cabins to hotel style rooms), restaurant and bar. There is some cell-phone coverage from high points along Lake Ōhau Rd.

Omārama

- Omārama Top 10 Holiday Park - Located at the junction of Chain Highway (Route 83) and Omārama Ave (Highway 8), Omārama - P: 0800 662 726 - W: www.omaramatop10.co.nz/
- Omārama Hotel - Main Road, Omārama - P: 03 438 9713 - E: rmkelman@xtra.co.nz - older pub style accommodation
- Heritage Gateway Hotel - State Highway 8, Omārama - P: 0800 809 805 - E: heritagegateway@xtra.co.nz - W:

FOOD AND SUPPLY

- Note: Water must be treated if picked up en route, carry plenty of drinking water if you cannot treat water.
- 4 Square Supermarket - 27 Market Place, Twizel - P: 03 435 0875
- Twizel Shopping Mall - 3-18 Market Place, Twizel (Various stores)

Omārama

- Omārama 4 Square Supermarket - 10 Chain Hills Highway, Omārama - P: 03 438 9895 - W: www.foursquare.co.nz

EXTRA INFO

Twizel Information Centre Market Place, Twizel - P: 03 435 3124 - E: twizelinfo@gmail.com

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.

East Ahuriri Track

Last Edited: August 27, 2026 12:17:00 NZST

INTRO

Te Araroa section: the East Ahuriri Track is a gem and provides a good transitional tramp for moderately experienced trampers looking to go the next step, off the heavily used and well-groomed tracks where they've learned their craft and onto Te Araroa's more remote and demanding sections.

DESCRIPTION

East Ahiriri Track - 25km

The track climbs 800m from Lake Ōhau over the Ōhau Range to the Ahuriri River. This is through the Ruataniwha and Ahuriri Conservation Parks. The track has no obvious ground trail for long stretches and the markers are often distant.

The track starts on the 4WD drive track next to Glen Mary Ski Club and climbs to join with the marked A2O cycleway, which traverses across to Sawyers Creek and beyond to Freehold Creek.

Once at Freehold Creek, follow DOC markers up through the beech forest. It's a well-marked and clearly formed track to this point – a good day walk for anyone wanting a return trip from the Ski Club.

Beyond the treeline, the track initially follows the poles and light ground trail towards Dumb-bell Lake. This is on the true right of Freehold Creek. The East Ahuriri Track peels off this track in a southwest direction, and from here, there are regular poles (though they are not always visible from one to the next) along the east side of the swamp. The poles continue on this line until the beginning of the descent into East Ahuriri. Descend with care to the East Ahuriri River.

From here, travel is downstream by the most practical route. There are a few river crossings, but these are straightforward in normal flows.

The track climbs and sidles above the true right bank when it needs to avoid two gorged sections. Along the way, a two-bed hut becomes visible in the distance on the true left side of the river. The going becomes easier as the river opens up lower down.

Quailburn Hut, also known as East Ahuriri Hut, on the true left of the East Branch of the Ahuriri River at km 2,546.6 is owned by DOC but is not maintained. Accommodation is rudimentary but may be welcome in adverse conditions. 9 km before the Ahuriri River Crossing

There is some limited camping shelter afforded by trees at km 2,550.8 km before the Ahuriri River Crossing

The track reaches the first line of pine trees as it emerges into the wider Ahuriri Valley. There are more pine trees further along as you continue straight ahead towards the Ahuriri River, which, in normal flows, is the largest unbridged river on Te Araroa in the South Island.

Camping is usually possible on the grass flats at km 2,553.4 before the river crossing

Ahuriri River Crossing - 2.5km

Follow the fence down to the Ahuriri's bank and look across for the track markers on the other side. They continue about 50m downstream from the 4WD track that cuts down the far bank. Once you've identified this spot, it's time to look for a safe place to cross the river.

- Note: If the Ahuriri cannot be forded safely, continue downstream for about 5km to the Ireland Road Bridge. This provides the bailout option. It is then about the same distance back up Birchwood Road to the trailhead.
- It is not possible to follow the riverbank closely all the way to the Ireland Road Bridge as the river cuts close to the steep bank. If you are walking to the bridge to avoid the river crossing, it is necessary first to climb back up the bank away from the river and then walk the fence line. The farm doesn't mind if walkers follow the fence line on the farm side of the fence above the river, but they do not want walkers taking any of the tracks further into the farm. As of January 2026, they intend to call the police and serve a trespass notice on anyone found elsewhere on the farm.

From the far side of the river, the track follows marker poles straight up the steep bank. The track then turns left and follows the top of the river bank to the next fence line, which marks a right-hand turn and the final walk out to the carpark on Birchwood Road.

CONDITIONS

Potential hazards

- River crossings - Never cross flooded rivers
- Small stream crossings
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold

ACCESS

Northern Start: Glen Mary Ski Club, Lake Ohau Road

Southern End: Birchwood Road carpark, Ahuriri Valley

To exit to Omārama, go left 11.2km to SH8, then left again for a further 17.4km.

ACCOMMODATION

Trail Pass

East Ahuriri Hut (Quailburn) - km 2,544.7 - Included in The Trail Pass

Tin Hut - km 2,565.8 - Private $10

Top Timaru Hut - km 2,579.1 - Included in Trail Pass

Other Accommodation

- There are no official DOC huts between the shore of Lake Ohau and Top Timaru Hut, a distance of 50 km, including a major river crossing. Possible breaks are described in the text below.
- Quailburn Hut (East Ahuriri Hut) (basic, unmaintained) km 2,545
- Camping near trees beside the East Branch of the Ahuriri River, km 2,549.4
- Camping on the Ahuriri River flats immediately before the river crossing. km 2,553.4
- Tin Hut (Privately owned, $10 for Te Araroa hikers) 10.5 km beyond the river crossing, at km 2,565.8
- Top Timaru Hut is at km 2,579.1

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.