

TARANAKI FALLS

260 Series Maps: Ruapehu, T20, T19, S20 and S19

Topo50 Maps: BH34 Raurimu & BJ34 Mnt Ruapehu

NZ Grid GPS: Geodetic Datum 1949

NZTM GPS: NZTM on WGS84

How to get to START: Exit Taupo on SH1 down the lake to Turangi then you have the choice:

- Follow the Desert Highway (SH1) and turn off right on to SH46 for Rangipo. Meet SH47 at a T-junction and turn left then turn off SH47 on to SH48 signposted for Whakapapa and the Chateau, or
- In Turangi turn off SH1 on to SH41 on the right and then turn left off SH41 on to SH47 and proceed as above. This route is shown in opposite
- Pass the Chateau on the left and park (01) in the car park on the right which has toilets and is quite safe for vehicles compared to some other car parks
- If you need any information the Whakapapa DoC Centre is on the opposite side of the road to the car park entrance.

Rough description: A short (7km), loop or out-and-back walk that can be taken on a foul day – wind, rain plus low cloud – when it is just not possible to do much else from Whakapapa. It is possible to do the loop in either direction and the choice might be influenced by conditions as the lower track used on the return in this write-up is more protected from the elements. Total distance, as measured by GPS, is 7.32km with about a 300m gain / loss in altitude and it takes just over an hour either way.

Detail: Turn left out of the car park opposite the Chateau (01 1070masl) and immediately turn right to walk along the road up the side of the Chateau for a few minutes. Near the end and just at the small car park (02 1141masl) there is a branch track off on the left; this is the planned return track. Stay on the track sign-posted Tama Lakes, this section of track is well manicured for the less adventurous tourist walker but does allow fast easy progress though the gravel surface can burn the feet

As can be seen on the map track alignment is pretty close to the one mapped and there is no danger of losing the way as it slowly gains height but in inclement weather all this section of track is rather exposed; on bad days do the walk in the opposite direction as the falls are reached on more sheltered track. There are five bridged tributaries of the Wairere Stream to cross, one of these on a largish wooden bridge (05 1175masl) before reaching the Wairere Stream (06 1214masl) just after passing the signed “edge of lava flow” on the left and is reached in about an hour from the start. From the bridge looking upstream to the right gives a good view of Mt Ruapehu. At the crest of the next upslope there is then a good view of Ngauruhoe with a sign (07 1202masl) indicating left for Whakapapa (via the Taranaki Falls) and slightly right for Tama Lakes.

Wairere Stream & Ruapehu



Taranaki Falls



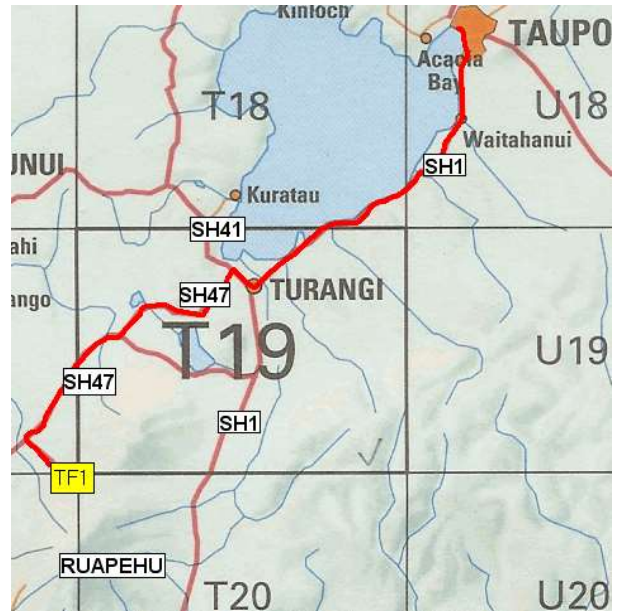
Taranaki Falls in deep winter



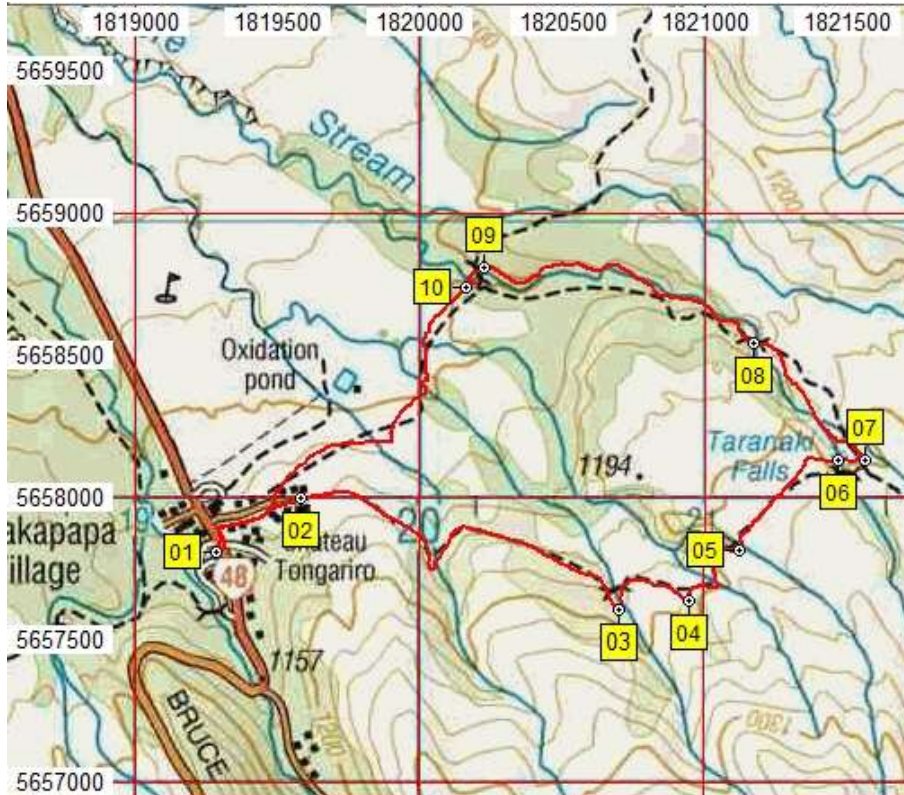
There is now a flight of fairly steep but easy steps to descend to end up on level track with a good views of the Taranaki Falls, some people do wander over and have a dip in summer-time whilst in the winter the whole area can be rather slippery due to the spray freezing everything it reaches. There is a nice semi-round seat for picnics or lunch. The track now parallels the Wairere Stream heading NW to W and sometimes approaching closely to the stream. There is a bridge (08 1084masl) over a small gully about 500m after the falls then there is a track junction at a bridge (09 1067masl) where the track to Mangatepopo goes off to the right over the bridge heading NE – this is not a good track!

To get back to Whakapapa there is now the odd slope – with steps – to ascend as there are several small incised valleys to cross but all have bridges and a good view (10 992masl) of the Chateau can be had on emerging from the forest, there is also a good view of some of the service structures for the Chateau – Poo ponds!!! The track is again first rate and soon leads to the aforementioned car park up behind the Chateau and only minutes from the starting point.

Access



Map and Google Image with GPS data



GPS Data

From : 24-Jun-15 09:52:13
 To : 24-Jun-15 12:42:12
Moving time 2:16min
 Time taken : 2:49:58
 Total Distance : 6.698 Km
GPS Distance 7.32km
 Minimum Speed : 0.030 KPH
 Maximum Speed : 6.082 KPH
 Average Speed : 2.365 KPH

Minimum Altitude : 1089 Meters
 Maximum Altitude : 1223 Meters
Overall GPS ascent 295m

NB Total distance shown above 6.7km is shorter than GPS distance 7.3km as it is a "flat map" measurement whilst the GPS includes the slopes

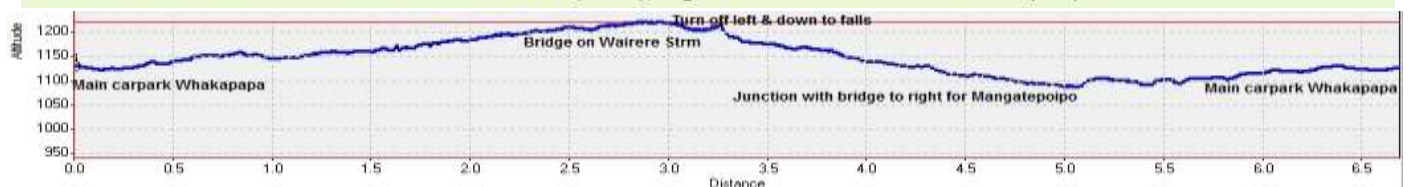
Turn left for falls with Ngauruhoe view



View of the Chateau



Name	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
01	1819288	5657809	1070	Car park with toilet opposite the Chateau
02	1819583	5658000	1141	6min 44sec (413m); Car park at head of Tama Lakes track up behind the Chateau
03	1820697	5657609	1190	35min (1.87km); Bridge in open on very good tourist grade track
04	1820946	5657639	1204	42min (2.21km); Bridge over valley after ascent parallel to large gully
05	1821122	5657818	1175	53min (2.6km); Largish wooden bridge
06	1821474	5658132	1214	1:08min (3.16km); Bridge on Wairere Stream with rocky area on left above falls
07	1821566	5658133	1202	1:11min (3.27km); Y-fork with sign for Whakapapa (Left & down) and Tama Lakes (Straight)
08	1821172	5658542	1084	1:42min (3.88km); Bridge on gorge 500m past Taranaki Falls
09	1820226	5658811	1067	2:10min (5.02km); T-junction with bridge to right for Mangatepoipo Hut
10	1820160	5658742	992	2:17min (6.7km); Edge of forest then views of Chateau poo ponds



- Notes:**
- **GPS** Garmin GPSmap 62sc
 - **WP** = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit
 - **masl** = metres above sea level