

Tukino Road to Rangipo Bridge (Lahar Gully)

Map: Ruapehu, 1:50,000 T20 – refer Figures 1, 2 and 5

GPS: Geodetic Datum 1949 – refer Figure 5 (NZ Grid)

How to get to START: The route to the start can be traced in Figure 1 down **SH1** from Taupo through Turangi and then down the Desert Highway (**SH1**).

Exit the Desert Highway as in Figure 1 turning right onto the **Tukino Access Road** shown as a pink line in Figures 1 and 2 – taking note of the signs at the start about 2 wheel drive vehicles. Alignment of the Access Road is shown as the pink line in Figure 2 with the road ending at Tukino Alpine Village. The red line is the tramp route.

Follow the gravel road and at the obvious **Y-fork go right** as turning left is posted as Army territory. Variants of the road weave around a little bit but follow the poles and in wintertime watch out for some minor puddles to rather large stretches of wet flooded areas.

The **2 wheel-drive car park** is reached in 15 minutes and a further 20 minutes is required to reach the **4 wheel-drive** track near the repeater station with twin masts. On the day in question the vehicle was parked at **WP RH01** at about 1300 metres, as seen in Figures 2 and 3, a few hundred metres below the masts.

There is a locked gate soon after the “masts” so it is advisable to park in the car park or other safe place off the road.

Rough description: An easy round-trip of 3-4 hours including rest and refreshment breaks, so easy in fact that 5 or 6 year olds can complete it with some encouragement. There are a few areas where care has to be exercised since in the summer the ground is rough with ankle turning opportunities and, in wintertime, some of the slopes could be slightly icy. There is an overall height gain of about 150 metres, a few climbs that get steeper as the walk proceeds but none of these are too severe.

The aim of this tramp was to view the valley of the Whangaehu River down which the Lahar of March 2007 poured, the main target being to see the damage to the bridge over the gully.

Figure 2 Tukino Access Road

Figure 1 Access to Start and Map Sheet

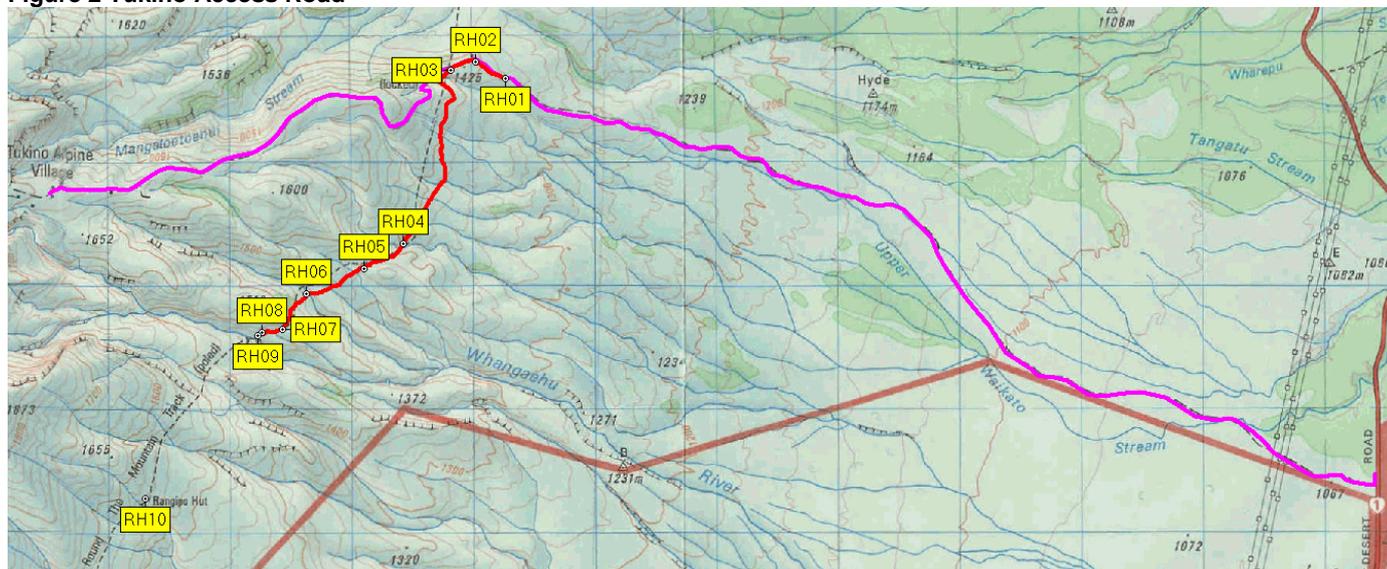
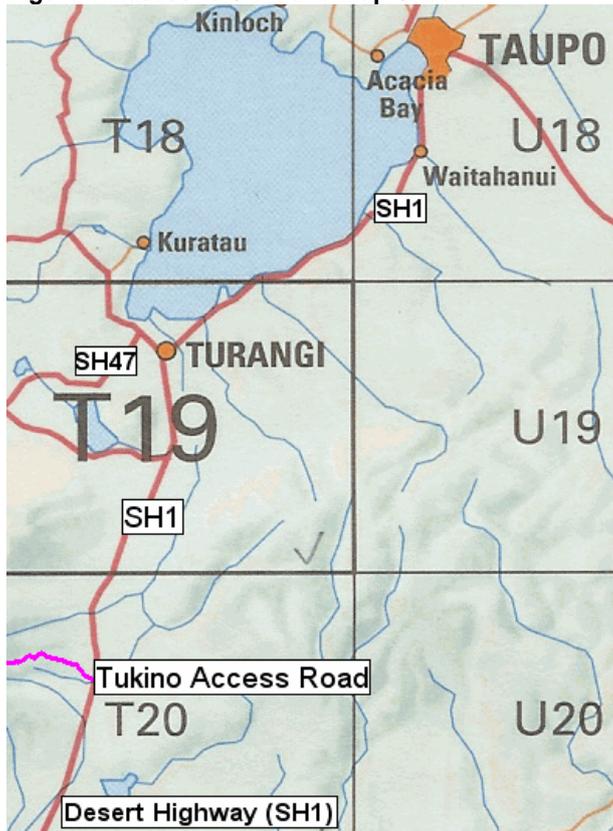


Figure 3 The Bridge



Figure 4 Upstream towards Ruapehu



Total distance to the gully of the Whangaehu River is 3.9 kilometres giving a total walk of just under 8 kilometres, unless the tramp is extended to reach the Rangipo Hut.

After crossing the gully (Whangaehu River) there are less than 2km to go (GPS gives 1.7km) with another 110metres altitude gain to reach the Hut (RH10 1560masl).

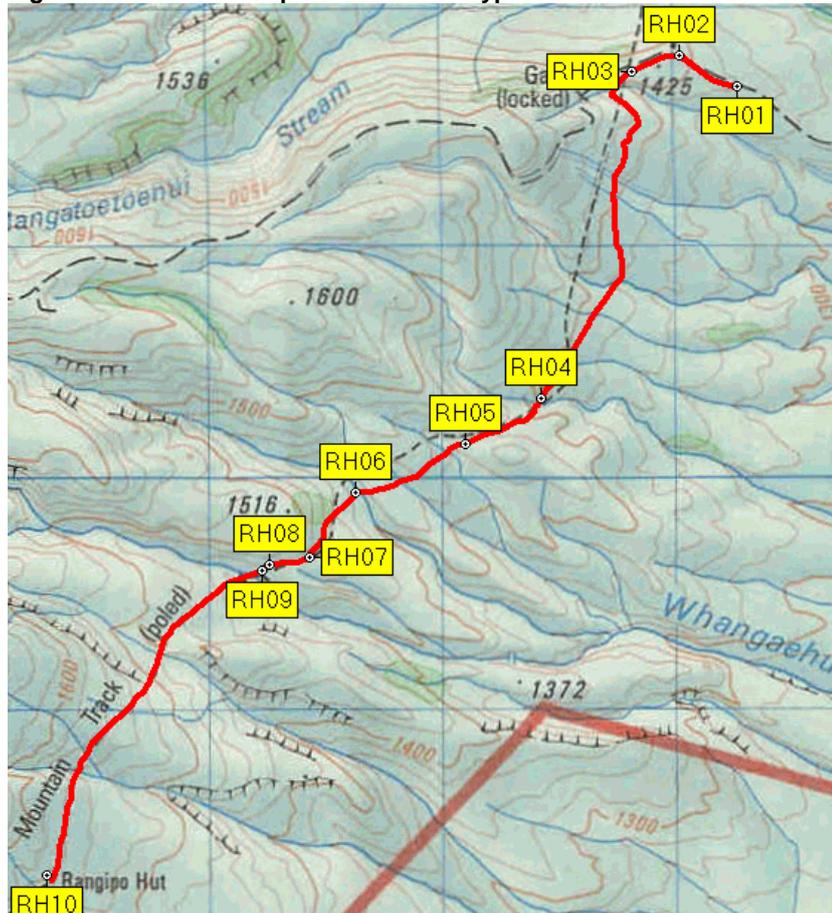
Detail: The Tukino Access Road leads to the Tukino Alpine Village which previously was a ski centre; you will see some of the huts or lodges from the Round-the-Mountain track as the walk proceeds. Due to “not the best skiing conditions or access” the area has now been taken over for use for Outward Bound or outdoor skills and training for youngsters.

From the suggested car park (RH01 1321masl) walk up the road to the radio masts (RH02 1345masl). Stay on the road heading in a WSW direction for 5 minutes to where the “Round-the-Mountain” track crosses the road (RH03 1351masl) and turn left off the road onto the well sign-posted track heading off in a SE direction.

As can be seen in Figure 3 the present track does not quite follow the line of the mapped track and it does “wiggle” about a little bit but basically heads SSW crossing a few minor stream lines on the way. In Figure 3 the red line is the GPS trace and lies to the east of the mapped track.

Within 35 minutes the first of the larger stream (RH04 1376masl) line is crossed and the track follows then runs parallel to a minor, sandy stream bed to climb up onto the next crest or ridge.

Figure 5 Extract of Map with Critical Waypoints



Name	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
RH01	2739283	6211653	1321	Park on N side of Tukino Access Road 200m before radio masts
RH02	2739036	6211792	1345	Radio masts on Tukino Access Road 5 min from car
RH03	2738828	6211721	1351	Junction with Round-the-Mountain track on Tukino Access Road 5 minutes wsw from masts
RH04	2738433	6210320	1376	Into first sizeable gully after 35 minutes on the Round-the-Mountain track (RMT)
RH05	2738107	6210125	1432	Scroggin stop 1 hour 10 minutes along the RMT
RH06	2737637	6209914	1409	Whangaehu River tributary with steeper, rougher slopes 1:10 minutes along the RMT and 1:25 from car
RH07	2737434	6209640	1461	First Lahar warning sign above Lahar Gully (Whangaehu River)
RH08	2737267	6209608	1455	Lahar sign and view of Lahar Gully plus Rangipo Bridge (1 hour 40 min walk)
RH09	2737230	6209581	1449	Closed entrance of Rangipo Bridge as damaged by Lahar of March 2007
RH10	2736302	6208276	1560	Rangipo Hut

Figure 6 The Radio Masts



Figure 7 Round-the-Mountain Track Crossing



Figure 8 Warning Sign Lahar Gully



Figure 9 Rock Bridge over Gully



The well poled track can be seen a fair distance ahead most of the time as it winds its way up and down through the various stream lines. After about 1 hour 10 minutes the footing gets a bit rougher and loose whilst the slope down into one of the tributaries (RH06 1409masl) of the Whangaehu is steeper than previously. Once cresting the far side of this valley the first of the “Lahar” warning signs is encountered – this sign may be out of date now but it is a good historical marker (RH07 1461masl).

A few minutes later there is a second sign (RH08 1455masl) with a good view of the Lahar gully (Whangaehu River valley) and the damaged bridge – this point being reached within about 1 hour 40 minutes of leaving the car park.

Figure 10 Bridge over Whangaehu River

As can be seen in Figure 8 the bridge was closed in the aftermath of the Lahar and trampers continuing on to the Rangipo Hut (Refer Figure 3) had to either use the rock bridge as seen in Figure 9 or walk upstream some meters and ford the river.

The section of track shown in Figure 3 from the bridge to the Rangipo Hut has not been checked for realignment by GPS and the track is the one shown on the map.

Notes:

- **GPS** Garmin Summit on **Geodetic datum 1949** with good signal
- **WP** = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit
- **masl** = metres above sea level (as recorded by GPS unit and may not agree exactly with map spot heights)

TTC Walks and Tramps

Name	Map	Notes	Rough description
Bridge to Nowhere	260-R19 and R20	Feb 2007	A thought provoking tramp of two nights and three days through the area settled after World War 1 by returning soldiers who were allocated the land as a reward for their efforts.
Castle Hill Rock	260-T20 - Ruapehu	Mar 2005	Fairly easy five hour round trip with coffee / tea and lunch stop on fairly good footpaths, slightly overgrown in places with moderate slopes to summit walk with good views.
Foxglove Clearing via Dooley's Hut	260-U19 Kaimanawa	Jan 2007	A moderate walk of about 4 hours including rest and refreshment stops which is best attempted in the company of someone who knows the area and tracks.
Kerosene Can Knob	260-U19 - Kaimanawa	June 2006	A moderate walk of about 5 hours "in the woods" with the highlight being a rusty kerosene can hanging from a tree on the top of a ridge in the Kaimanawas.
Dooley's Hut	260-U19 - Kaimanawa	Oct 2006	A moderate walk of about 5 to 5:30 hours which is best attempted in the company of someone who knows the area and tracks.
Horopito	260-S20 - Okahune	Oct 2006	A walk of two distinct halves of about 5 hours to 5:30 minutes on a pretty rough track in places, especially near the start of the tramp down into the first valley.
Ketetahi Hut & Blue Lake	260-T19 - Tongariro	Aug 2005	This tramp is moderate to fit depending on the variation that is done.
Lahar Gully	260-T20 Ruapehu	Nov 2006	This is an easy walk of 3 - 4 hours that can be tackled when conditions dictate that walking at altitude or in exposed places should be avoided.
Lake Surprise	260-S20 - Okahune	Sep 2006	A moderately stiff walk of 5 hours to 5:30 minutes on a pretty rough track in places, especially near the start of the tramp down into the first valley.
Mangaehuehu Hut	260-S20 - Okahune	Dec 2006	This is an easy in-and-out walk of 12.7km distance taking 4 - 5 hours including rest and lunch stops. The path is part of the Round The Mountain track
Mount Tihia	260-T19 Tongariro	Aug 2005	An easy to moderate walk with somewhat of a steep start from a car park at the side of SH47 only a few kilometres out of Turangi.
Mount Tihia Circuit	260-T19 Tongariro	Sept 2006	A long walk not to be undertaken lightly or without having someone along who knows just where they are going and reliable navigation skills.
Okataina Walkway	260-V16 Tarawera	Sept 2006	This can be a long walk as it can take 3 to 3:30 minutes one way down Lake Okataina, hence you could be looking at 7 hours if you do full length in and out.
Pinnacles Hut & Pinnacles	260-T12 Thames	Aug 2005	A long moderate / fit (8:30 minutes) walk from Kaueranga Hut to the Pinnacles via the Pinnacle Hut, Dancing Camp Dam, Hydro Camp and Billy Goat Landing.
Punchy's Road	260 - U19 Kaimanawa	Aug 2005	A moderate, adventurous outing on this mainly uncharted tramp to slowly build up a circular walk passing through Merrilies Clearing for the future.
Pureora & Bog Inn Hut	260 - T17 Whakamaru	Aug 2005	An easy to moderate, muddy, slightly tricky tramp of 5 hours using the Link Track which passes between Titiraupenga and Pureora then down to Bog Inn Hut in Kakaho Forest Park
Rapurapu Kauri	260-T15 Putaruru	Jun 2005	This was first attempt at a new easy walk and, due to circumstances, little detail is available.
Scoria Flats to Whakapapa	260 - T20 Okahune	Aug 2005	An easy to moderate A to B walk of 5 to 6 hours using part of the round the mountain track and passing by the Whakapapa Hut.
Silica Rapids	260-S20 Okahune	Jul 2005	An easy 2 hour out and back or circular walk on a well formed track through Montane forest (beech / silver birch for the Europeans) to Silica Rapids
Tama Lake & Taranaki Stream	260-T19 Tongariro and T20, S19 & S20	May 2005	A long, moderate circular walk in the moderate to fit category lasting about six and a half hours which starts and ends at the Chateau in Whakapapa.

Tama Ridge Loop	Tongariro T19 and Ruapehu T20	Dec 2006	A relatively long but non-taxing walk of 5 hours over 20km from the car park near the desert highway into the Waihohonu Hut then upwards
Tarawaere Dam and Billy Goat	260-T12 Thames	April 2005	A moderate to fit six hour walk including coffee break and lunch stop.
Tauranga Taupo Waterfall	260- T19 + U19	Sept 2006	A tramp which is not too demanding physically but which does have a few sections requiring a fair amount of nerve and skill in descending and ascending
Te Iringa	260 U19 Kaimanawa	Dec 2006	An easy, in-and-out walk of 4 hours which can be done on even a very wet, rainy day. This is a supeRH forest area.
Three Huts	260-T19 Tongariro	Aug 2005	This is a three day, two-night, moderate to fit tramp passing the Waihohonu Hut and sleeping at the Otutere then Ketetahi Huts.
Titiraupenga to YMCA Hut	260- T17 Whakamaru	Jul 2006	An easy to moderate, muddy in places, slightly tricky tramp with lots of roots and "anti-hobbit" sized steps of 3:45 hours.
Tongariro Crossing	260-T19 Tongariro	Feb 2007	A walk over the crossing reaching over 6,000 feet (about 2,000m) altitude covering something over 20km in 6 – 7 hours requiring a fair degree of tramping skill, fitness and planning
Tukino Alpine Hut	260-T20 Ruapehu	Jul 2005	A moderate to fit round-trip walk of 5 hours including coffee / tea stop and lunch break. There are a few areas where scrambling is required up low bluffs
Tukino Trot	260-T20 Ruapehu	Jul 2006	A moderate round-trip of 4 hours including coffee / tea stop and lunch break. There are a few areas where care has to be exercised.
Two Jons Camp	260-U19 Kaimanawa	June 2005	A moderate to easy walk of 4 – 5 hours which should not be attempted without having someone along who knows the area and tracks.
Umukarikari	260-T19 Tongariro	June 2006	A moderate to fit tramp which is steep up to Sharp Cone at 3 hours 15 minutes [1472 masl] – with 5 hours 30 min Umukarikari summit included.
Urchin	260-T19 Tongariro	Sept 2006	A moderate walk of about 4 – 5 hours depending on whether the Trig Point of Urchin is the target or if the walk is extended along the ridge above Waipakihī River valley.
Ureweras - Casino etc	260-V16 Tarawera W16 Waimana	Jan 2007	A hard tramp off Galatea Road in Urewera back-country taking three days and two nights with overnights camping at or sleeping in two DOC huts or bivouacs – Casino and Waihua.
Vern's Camp from Minginui	260 - V18 Whirinaki	Sept 2005	An easy to moderate tramp of just over 5 hours with very little altitude gain or loss involved through very pleasant native forest
Waihaha River and Hut	260 - T18 Kuratau	Jul 2006	A very pleasant easy to moderate 5 – 6 hour round trip from SH32 parallel to the Waihaha River up to the Waihaha Hut.
Waihohonu Huts	260 - T20 Ruapehu	Aug 2005	This is an easy to moderate one-day tramp passing the new Waihohonu Hut , visiting the old historic Waihohonu Hut then return via Ohinepango Springs.
Waikaremoana Local Walks	260 W18Waikaremoana	Oct 2006	Two easy, pleasant, short walks for those recovering from the Waikaremoana Great Walk or by those waiting for others to complete the big one.
Waikaremoana	260 W18Waikaremoana	Oct 2006	The drive from Taupo takes roughly 3 hours covering 160km. The tramp takes 4 days with 3 nights in DOC Huts round Lake Waikaremoana and over Panekiri Bluffs
Wainora Kauri	260-T12 Thames	April 2005	A relatively easy, three hour round trip to large Kauri tree with eight river / stream crossings and steep climbs on a sometimes rocky path.
Waipakihī Valley	260-T20 Ruapehu	Aug 2005	An easy, if somewhat wet, tramp of 4 – 5 hours up the Waipakihī River and back. The walk is wet because there are nine (9) river crossings.
Whakapapanui Track	260-T20 Okahune	Aug 2005	An easy 2 hour out and back or circular walk through Montane forest following the Whakapapanui stream down stream from near the Chateau in Whakapapa Village.
Whanganui Bay & Whakarawa Trust	260 - T18 Kuratau	Aug 2005	An easy walk of 3 to 4 hours, depending if the waterfall is visited, going into and out of this Marae. This walk is on private land hence permission required.
Whirinaki Track	260-V18 Whirinaki	Aug 2005	Several variations of moderate to fit walks are possible walking from the car park on Plateau Road in the forest area to Minginui via the Central Whirinaki Hut and the "cave".