

LAHAR GULLY

260 Series Map: Ruapehu, T20

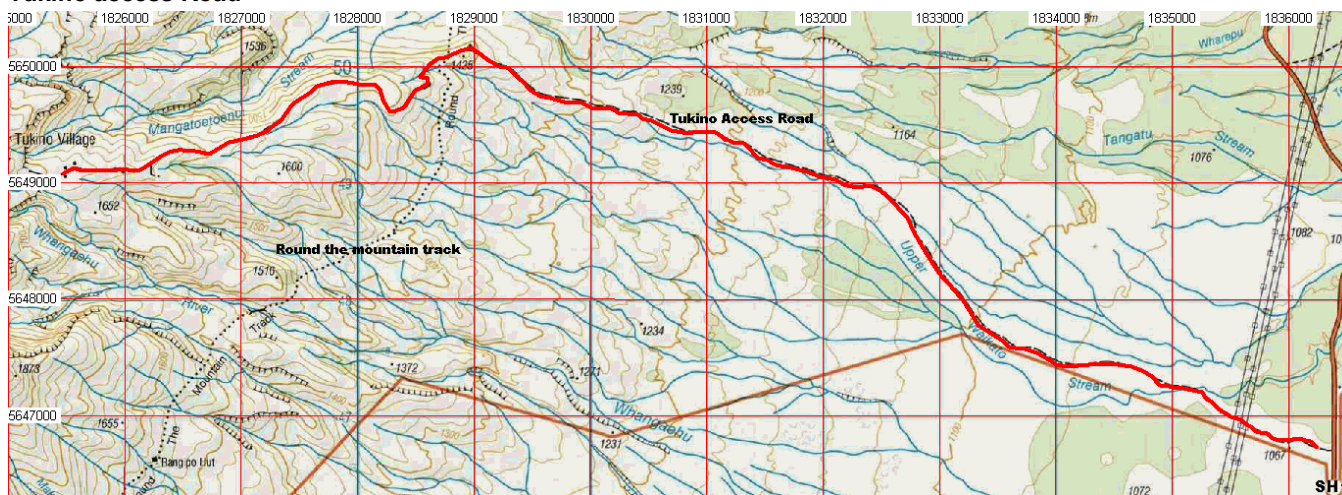
Topo50 Map: BJ35 Waiouru

How to get to START: The route follows SH1 down the Lake, through Turangi and along the Desert Highway. Exit the Desert Highway by turning right on to the **Tukino Mountain Road** – taking note of the signs at the start about 2 wheel drive vehicles and not attempting to drive off-road. Follow the gravel road again taking note of the notices about the area being an army training ground. Variants of the road weave around a little bit but follow the poles and note that there are now some rougher sections where the previous wintertime “puddles” have been filled with fresh stones and gravel. Park at the side of the road (Waypoint **LG1**) 3 kilometres from SH1.

Rough description: 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. There is no path to follow but the poles marking the edge of the army area are a very good guide. The walking is on soft “Lahar” material with very few rough areas to traverse, unless excitement is being sought.

The walk comprises a simple loop over to, into and up the valley of the Whangaehu River where the man-made bund can be seen which is part of the interventions constructed to try and keep any Lahar flow from the mountain within this river valley. If time and conditions allow the “round-the-mountain” track can be reached along with the Rangipo Hut. (Refer Tukino Road to Rangipo Hut).

Tukino access Road



Start of the tramp on the Lahar Plain



View from the bund

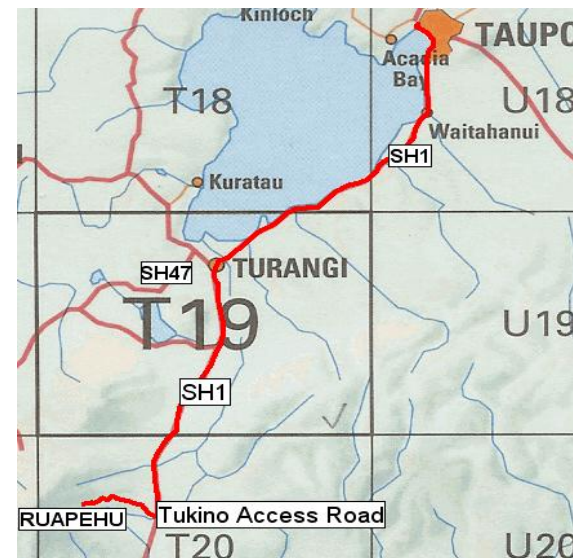


Detail: From the side of the access road (**LG1 1134masl**) look for the line of poles marking the edge of the army area and walk parallel and to the right of them (westwards then southwestwards). The featureless nature of the area can be seen in the photograph above which was taken on the way out from the tramp. The line of poles always seems to be coming round in a clockwise direction in front of you but before any of the poles is reached there is a short ascent and the wall of the constructed bund (**LG2 1233masl**) is surmounted.

NZ Grid GPS: Geodetic Datum 1949

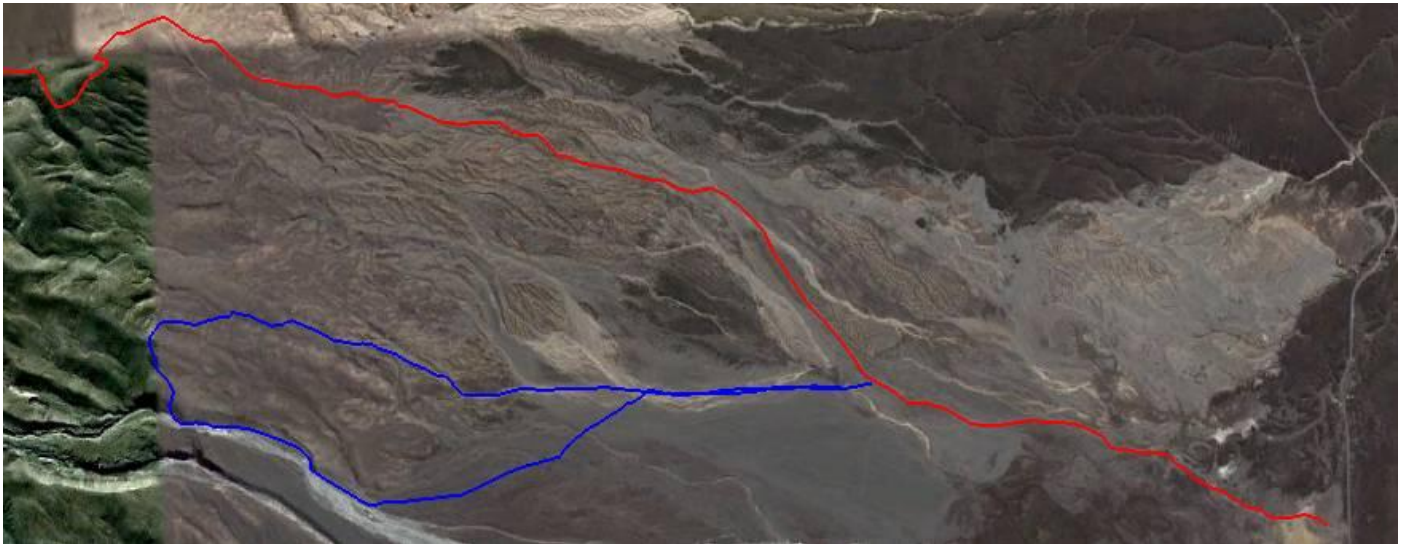
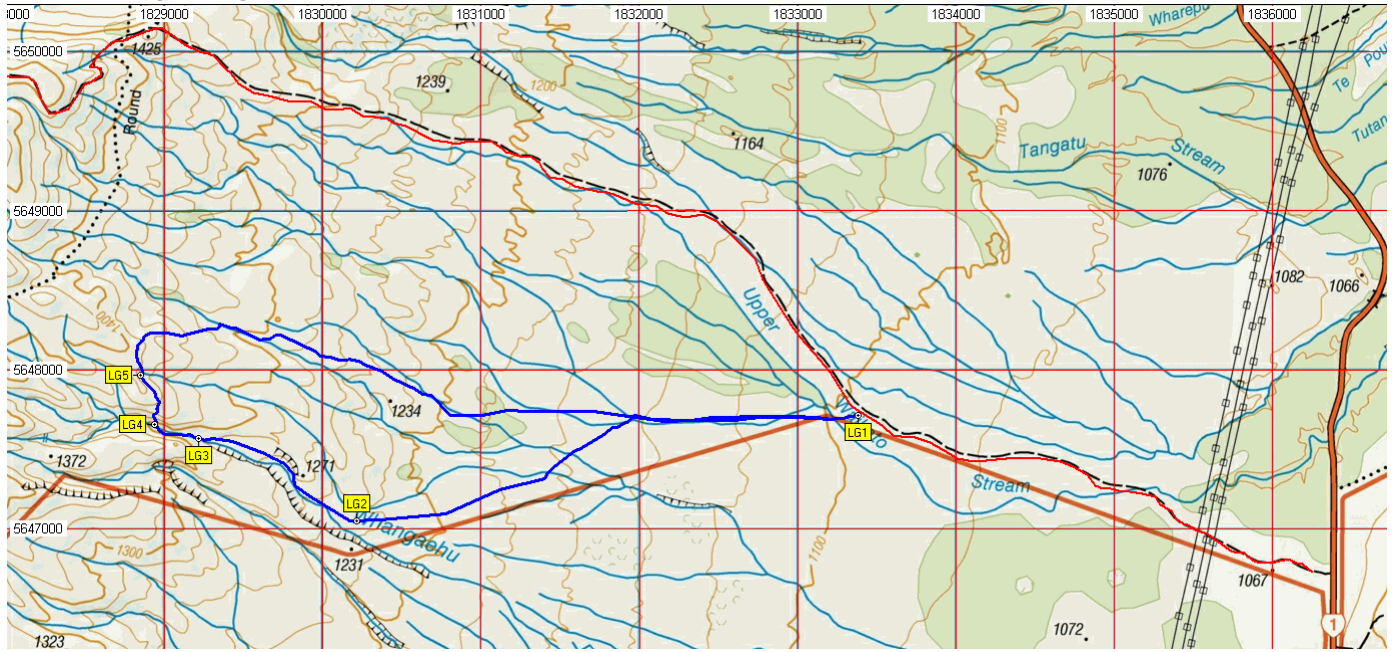
NZTM GPS: NZTM on WGS84

Access



Distances are taken from the Police Station in Taupo and the route is shown as the red line.

Map and Google Image with GPS data

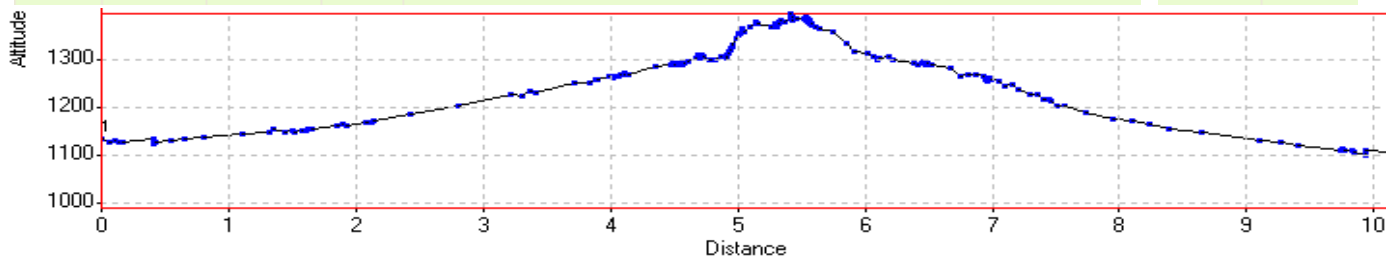


Waypoints NZ Grid

NZTM Grid

Name	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
LG1	2743436	6209372	1134	Side of Tukino access road 2 - 3km from Desert Highway (3:50 min round trip with lunch)
LG2	2740269	6208706	1233	Lower end of Lahar bund on Whangaehu River (1:05 mins)
LG3	2739269	6209225	1295	Entering narrow, gorge area on Whangaehu River (1:45 mins)
LG4	2738992	6209315	1308	Bottom of scree slope up to the right, moderate ascent
LG5	2738904	6209626	1374	Small, sheltered valley head as lunch spot (2:15min)

Easting	Northing
1833373	5647447
1830205	5646779
1829204	5647297
1828927	5647388
1828839	5647699



From this point the route follows the stream line in a north-westerly direction and the going gets more interesting especially when the narrow gorge (**LG3 1295masl**) part of the valley is reached – see below. In and around here there are several traverses across very loose, soft volcanics and care must be taken or a rapid descent down to the stream will result.

Upper reaches of the gully



The rough nature of the walking can be seen on the left. Once this point is reached it is advisable to look for the easiest route up right (north) out of the valley; by continuing up-valley, there is a route but this comprises very steep loose, scree slope slopes (**LG4 1308masl**) which will tax the less confident.

Once the rough scree slopes were conquered the route was a northwards sweep round a valley head, where lunch can be taken (**LG5 1374masl**).

After this the plan is then to keep to the crests of the spurs which gradually descend in a south-easterly direction back towards the Desert Highway. It is worthwhile when near the lower end of the spurs to keep on the right hand side (south) of the final stream-line which has rocky outcrops and these outcrops are better avoided.

Final route of the most recent Lahar flow



Total walking time is about 3:30 minutes with 20 – 30 minutes extra for lunch etc - and altitude gain is about 250 metres.

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| Notes: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Garmin Summit GPS• WP = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit• masl = metres above sea level as recorded by GPS unit |
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