

TAMA RIDGE LOOP via WAIHOHONU

260 Series Maps: Tongariro T19 & Ruapehu T20

Topo50 Map: BJ35 Waiouru

How to get to START: Exit Taupo down the lake on **SH1** through Turangi on to the **Desert Highway** (SH1) for just over 15 km.

- **Turn right off** Desert Highway just after the Rangipo Intake Road on gravel, motor track signed **Waihohonu Track**
- Drive in the few hundred metres and off-load in the car park (**TR01**).

The route to the start can be followed opposite and takes about 1 hour driving.

Rough description: A relatively long but non-taxing walk of 4 - 5 hours over 20km which can be considered in sections:

From the car park (**TR01**) near the desert highway into the old Waihohonu Hut (**TR05**) is an easy, if somewhat boring, walk taking between 1:15 and 1:30 min. The boring part is only boring if you have done it several times as the view of the mountain is great on clear days. No difficult sections apart from a few steps in places

From the old Waihohonu Hut there is a bit of a climb up the path towards the Oturere Hut but the slope eases once the path is left (**TR06**) and the NW ridge running up to Tama is followed. No path here but the footing is pretty good with the uppermost part of the ridge reached in a bit over an hour from the Hut.

Near the top of the ridge (**TR07**) before the rocky summit the route loops off down-slope to the left / WNW – avoiding the bluffs – on to a long easy, sandy slope running to the SE and parallel to the ridge. From the high-point of the ridge to the bottom of the sandy slope (**TR08**) takes less than 30 minutes. An even easier route off the ridge heads into the valley from **TR07A** and saves about 30 minutes of uphill grunt.

From the bottom of the sandy slope there is a river crossing then the “Round-the-Mountain” track (**TR10**) is picked up and the Old (Historic) Waihohonu Hut (**TR11**) can be visited. After that it is basically the reverse of the start of the tramp and the 9 odd kilometres from the bottom of the sandy slope back to the car park takes plus or minus 2 hours 15 minutes.

Detail: The walk into and out from Waihohonu Hut can be, if done too often, become a bit of a boring “blast” but it is not taxing and the chance to stretch the legs does exist at the start and end of the day. Features are the view of the mountain, a bridge 15 minutes after starting and another just before reaching Waihohonu, some spectacular erosion of bits of the path and a view of the path a long way ahead. Full details can be found in other write-ups including “Three Huts – Waihohonu to Ketetahi” and “The Waihohonu Huts”. If you “blast” it this takes just over an hour but relaxed walking gets you there in 1:30.

From the Waihohonu Hut the path towards Oturere is taken and this section starts off with quite a steep climb. About 25 minutes out from the hut there is a minor crest (**TR06**) and the route bears left off the marked track and continues up the ridge as seen on the map. There are vestiges of a path in places and the ground cover starts as tussocks then becomes stony and boulder covered in places – it can be windy on this section. Approximately 1:15 minutes from the hut there is a sandy crest (**TR07**) just below the rocky high-point on the ridge and the route starts to descend off the ridge to the left (NW) - keep an eye open to ensure the route taken does miss the bluffs that exist.

Study of the map in shows that the route more or less goes in a semi-circle and crosses a minor stream line on to a long, soft sandy slope heading downhill parallel to the ridge and runs south-eastwards. This slope is a bit over 1 km long and has a few trees and bushes near the bottom (**TR08**) where lunch can be taken as there is soft seating and shelter from the wind – from leaving the ridge this takes about 26 minutes (about 3 hours overall).

About 15 minutes further on down slope the route enters a dry (on the right day) stream line and this is followed for 5 minutes or so then exited on the right (**TR09**) up a short, relatively steep bank and over the top of a minor ridge to face a river crossing which can mean wet feet at 1.6km and 27 minutes from the lunch spot. Very soon (4 – 5 minutes) after the river crossing the poled, Round-the-Mountain track is met (**TR10**) and the route goes downhill to the left. If the red, shorter route is taken then virtually all river-walking is avoided till the river is crossed just before meeting the round-the-mountain track at **TR10A**. Five or six minutes down this track there is a T-junction with the branch to the right going to the old, historic Waihohonu Hut (**TR11**) which is well worth a visit as it adds only a few minutes to the walk. The hut is reached in 40 minutes (2.3km) from the lunch stop. After rejoining the main track the new (2010) Waihohonu Hut (**New Hut** 1103masl) is passed on the left only metres before the junction for the old Waihohonu Hut (**TR04**). From this junction it is 1 hour 15 minutes or so back to the car park.

Heading up the ridge towards Ngauruhoe



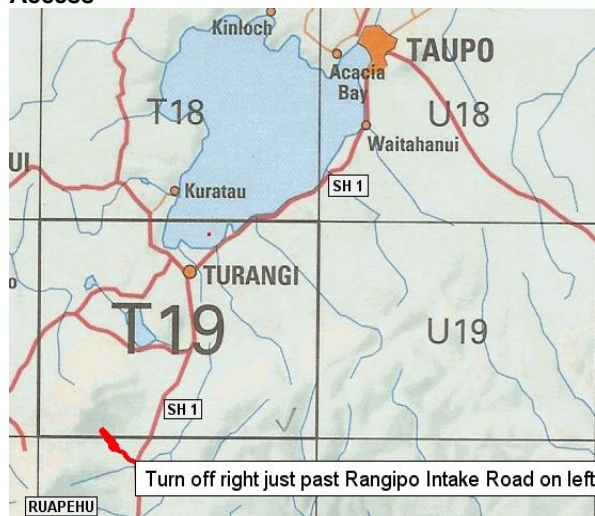
Sandy descent slope



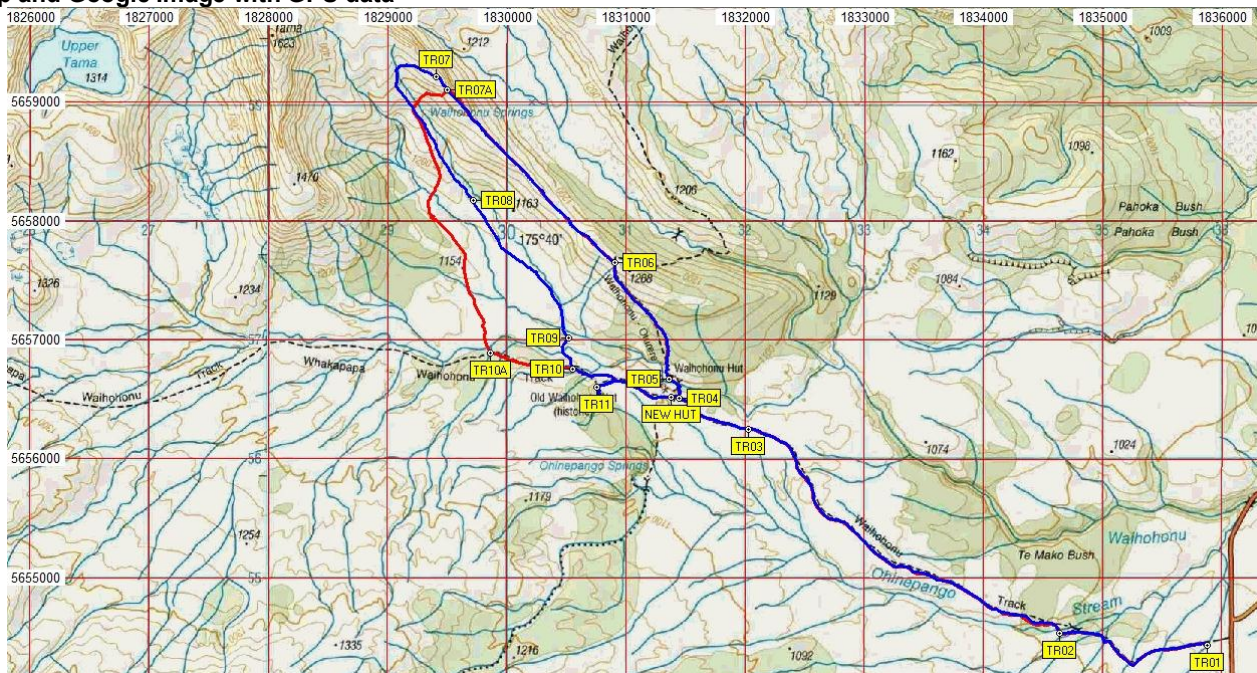
NZ Grid GPS: Geodetic Datum 1949

NZTM GPS: NZTM on WGS84

Access



Map and Google Image with GPS data

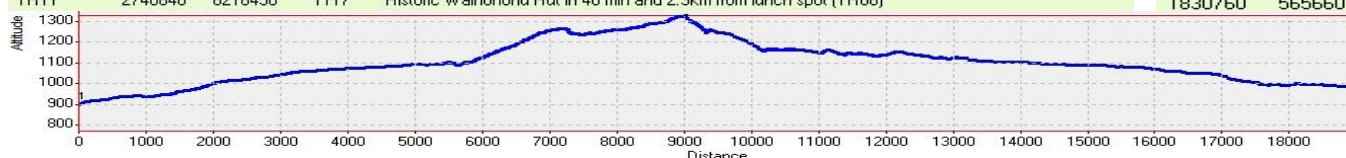


Waypoints – NZ Grid

Name	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
NEW HUT	2741464	6218370	1103	Site of new Waihoihoi Hut 2010
TR01	2745957	6216282	959	Waihoihoi Track car park 100m off SH1 and 60 min from Taupo
TR02	2744717	6216387	983	Bridge 15min walk from car park
TR03	2742107	6218102	1090	Enter trees on track 1 hour walk
TR04	2741530	6218359	1098	T-junction at 5.4km and 1:11minutes from car park - go right for Waihoihoi Hut
TR05	2741445	6218522	1097	Waihoihoi Hut at 5.6km and 1:17 minutes from car park
TR06	2740988	6219501	1251	Crest on path 24 minutes from Waihoihoi Hut, left off path along ridge to NW
TR07	2739493	6221060	1349	Sandy, stony crest just before rocky outcrops on ridge 1:15 from Hut, start loop to left
TR07A	2739582	6220951	1326	False top on ridge and alternate point to head down to valley on SW
TR08	2739804	6220023	1158	Lunch stop in trees at bottom of long sandy descent 1.7km and 26 min from leaving ridge crest (TR06)
TR09	2740604	6218868	1110	Leave stream line up right in 22min and 1.5km from lunch (TR08) spot to cross river in 100m
TR10	2740634	6218606	1121	Meet poled track in 31 min and 1.8km from lunch spot (TR08) and go left
TR10A	2739946	6218740	1134	Meet ploed Whakapapa Waihoihoi track at new steps and bridge
TR11	2740840	6218450	1117	Historic Waihoihoi Hut in 40 min and 2.3km from lunch spot (TR08)

NZTM

Easting	Northing
1831383	5656521
1835880	5654436
1834639	5654540
1832027	5656255
1831449	5656511
1831364	5656674
1830907	5657653
1829410	5659211
1829500	5659102
1829722	5658175
1830523	5657019
1830554	5656757
1829865	5656891
1830760	5656601



Note: Blue route from 2008 and red route in 2010 which avoids quite so much river walking

Historic Waihohonu Hut



Old Waihohonu Hut



New Waihohonu Hut – construction April 2010



After viewing the old hut back-track and soon join the main track that was followed on the way in first thing in the morning – it is then a bit of a slog at the end of quite a long day back out to the car park. From the lunch spot back to the car park takes 2:15 minutes at a steady walk and about 3 hours if taking it easy on this last 9km section.

Notes:	GPS	Garmin GPSMap 60CSx
	WP	Waypoint as taken by GPS unit
	masl	metres above sea level (<i>as recorded by GPS unit and may not agree exactly with map spot heights</i>)