

OPUREKE-UPPER MATAKUHIA TRAMP

260 Series Map: Whirinaki, V18

Topo50 Maps: BH38 Te Haroto & BG38 Wairapukao

How to get to START:

- Exit Taupo on **SH5** for Napier
- Straight on through Rangitaiki
- 40 minutes (52.4km) turn left off SH5 on to **Pohokurua Road**
- Cross bridge to **T-junction and go left** on to Waipunga Valley Road (rough at start)
- At 58.7km a rough vehicle track joins the road from the east; this is the start of the tramp. Coordinates 1905777E / 5686879N, **WP01**. See photograph and map.

How to get to END:

- Continue north along Waipunga Valley Road
- At 70.9km bear right at intersection with Circuit Road (do **NOT** go down Circuit Rd)
- At 71.7km turn very sharp right at the T intersection with Main Road heading east.
- At 73.6km Main Road merges into Pine Milling Road
- At 76.5km continue on Pine Milling Road to the right past the intersection with Plateau Road. Do **NOT** go down Plateau Road despite it being signposted with Whirinaki Tracks.
- At 77.9km (1:20min) park at **Matakuhia Saddle** cross roads. Access to the Matakuhia Valley is via the vehicle track to the south. Coordinates 1912801E / 5694139N, **WP22**.

Rough Description: The Opureke Track commences 10 minutes up the vehicle track from the Waipunga Road. The track climbs to the ridge, then sidles most of the high points before descending into the Matakuhia Valley. Turning north on to the Matakuhia Valley Track one traverses slips and log jams before arriving at the Upper Matakuhia Hut. From there the track is well defined up to the end.

Detail: Opureke Track Section

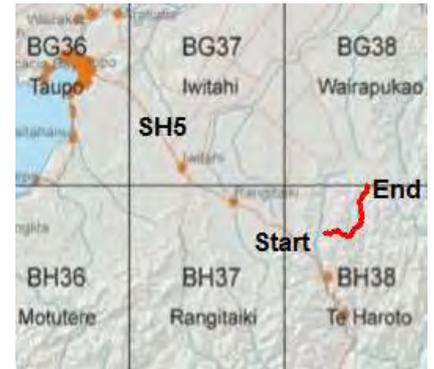
In general terms this track is in poor condition and gets progressively worse, as it heads east into the Matakuhia Valley owing to the lack of maintenance for many years apart from the rare attention of hunters. It is marked by orange triangles plus the odd very old white markers and pink flagging tape at the eastern end. From the start waypoint (**WP01**) the track is well marked and climbs steadily to a saddle (**WP02**) on the northern side of Opureke, which takes around 30 minutes. The observant will note the secateurs embedded in a sapling half way up and partial views up the Waipunga Valley further up. The track then essentially sidles around the high points of the ridge so gradients are very moderate until the high point of the track is reached (**WP03**), also a reasonable spot for morning tea and a rest, after about one and a half hours of walking. Although not steep, the track is slow as care is required owing to often being obscured by ferns. The track continues to sidle on the north and south sides of the ridges. There is one short steep detour not far after the smoko stop. **WP04** marks an abrupt right hand (southerly) turn off the ridge to continue sidling on the southern side of the ridge. Waypoints **05** to **09** mark bends in the track mostly around spur lines or creeks. A major spur is crossed (**WP10**) and the track swings sharply to the north. Not far on from here the track departs from that marked on the map. It is **essential** that **WP11** is identified correctly as it marks a switchback to the southeast and the start of the descent into the Matakuhia Valley. The track markers leading up to **WP11** have been augmented with pink flagging of two generations. The large beech tree at **WP11** has a white marker with a point on it directing the way down. The descent into the Matakuhia Valley contains a few tricky sections including large fallen trees, slopes washed away and narrow guts, and all can be negotiated easily with a moderate degree of care. The track is poorly marked on the descent though more pink flagging has been added. Finally the Matakuhia Stream is reached at **WP12**. Care is required in crossing the stream if it is running high. The track out of the stream has been eroded away so a short scramble is required to regain the track, which almost immediately leads to the junction with the Matakuhia Valley Track, which is signposted (photograph).

The full traverse of the Opureke Track in this direction should take around 3 hours, thus the clear area at the junction provides an ideal opportunity to take an early lunch. If doing an in-and-out walk the return trip is closer to 3.5 hours as the climb back to **WP11** is quite a grunt and the Matakuhia Valley here is 68m lower than the Waipunga Road end.

NZ Grid GPS: Geodetic Datum 1949

NZTM GPS: NZTM on WGS84

Location and Tramp route



All times and distances from Taupo Police Station on Tongariro Domain

GPS Data for start to WP22

Time taken: 7:56

Total Distance: 17.956km

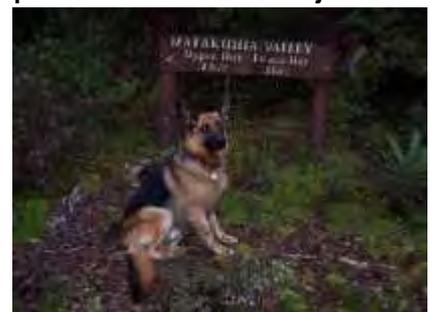
Minimum Altitude: 645m

Maximum Altitude: 1074m

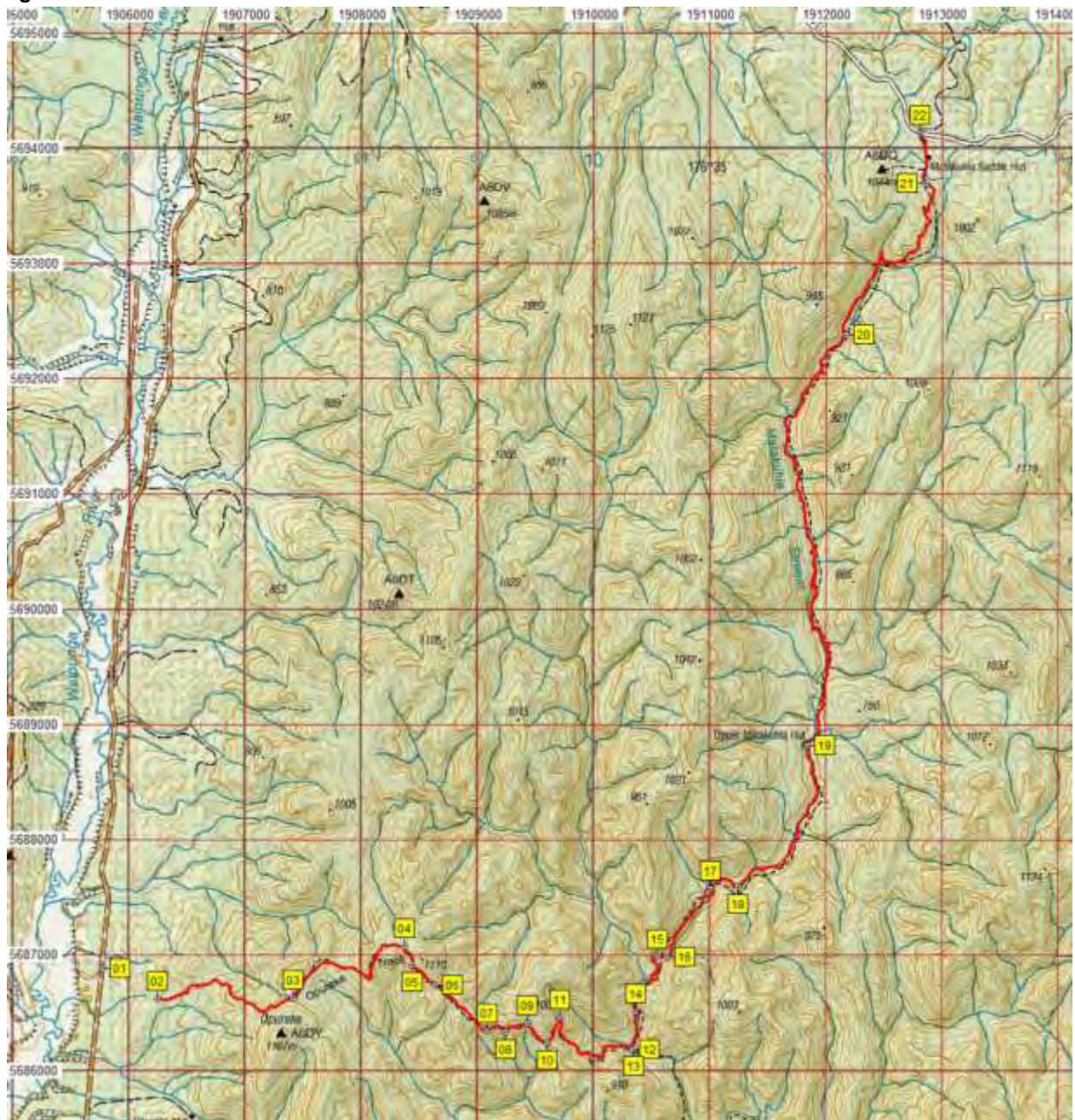
Vehicle track off Waipunga Rd.



Opureke – Matakuhia Track junction.



Map Image with GPS data



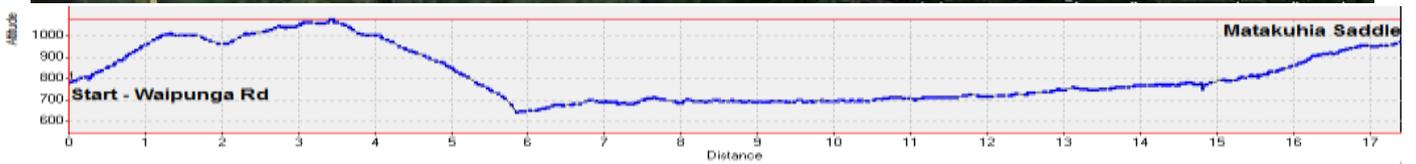
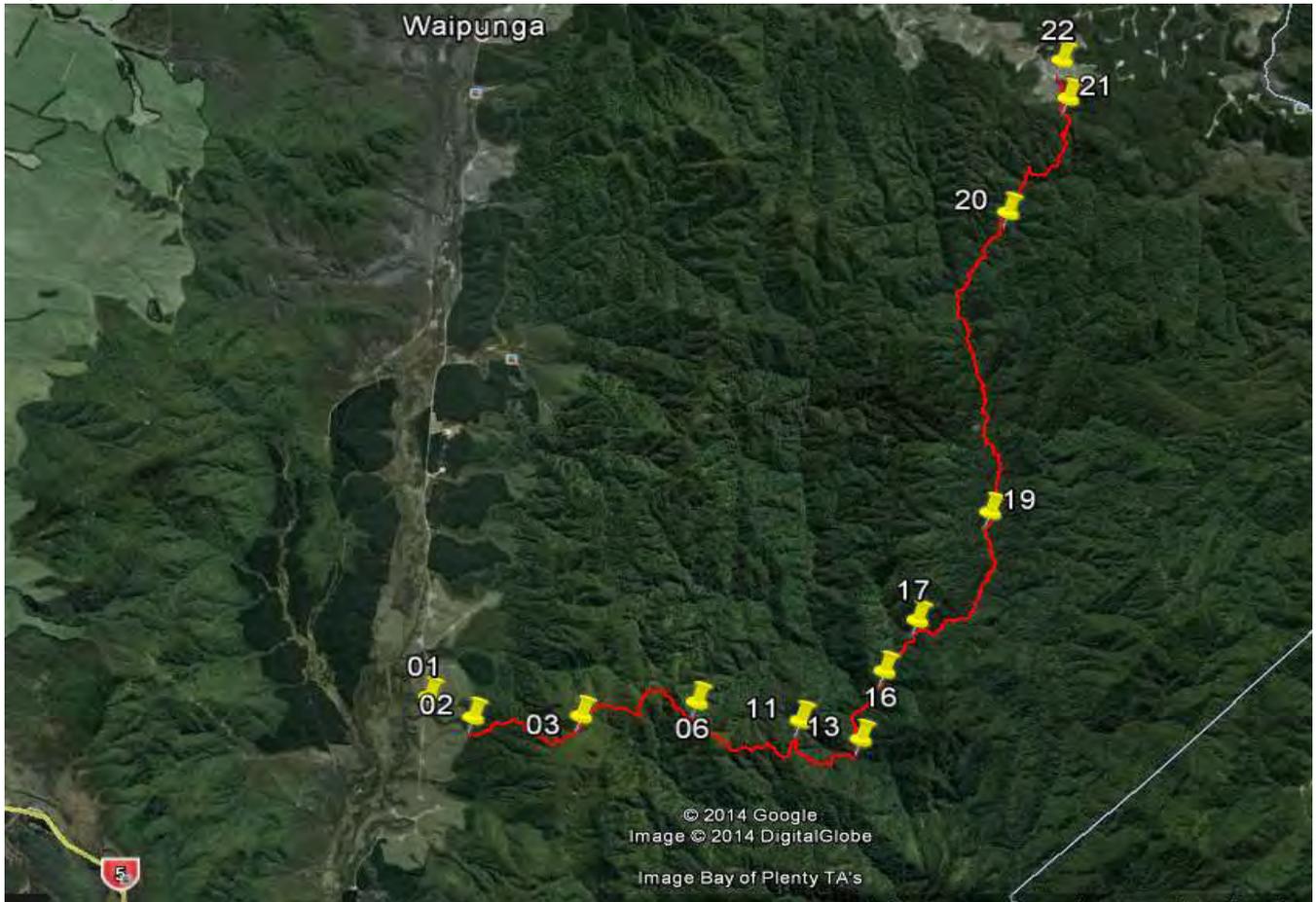
Waypoints – NZ Grid

N.	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
01	2815833	6248652	713	Junction of Waipunga Rd (6.3km from SH5) and access tk to Opureke Tk
02	2816302	6248397	781	11min(0.5km) Start of Opureke Tk off vehicle track up from Waipunga Rd
03	2817477	6248406	1005	45min(1.9km) Saddle below Opureke, start of side
04	2818428	6248849	1042	1:15min(3.2km) Sharp south turn off ridge
05	2818498	6248685	1055	1:20min(3.4km) Distinctive corner on track as track turns back to east
06	2818686	6248513	1057	1:29min(3.7km) Smoko stop more or less at top of track
07	2819139	6248115	1004	1:52min(4.3km) Another distinctive corner on track as track traverses around a spur
08	2819303	6248105	980	1:57min(4.5km) Another distinctive corner on track with track swinging from SE to NE
09	2819483	6248186	939	2:02min(4.7km) Creek with land bridge
10	2819650	6248011	905	2:09min(4.9km) Track crosses major spur and turns sharply to NE
11	2819764	6248233	869	2:17min(5.2km) MOST IMPORTANT waypoint as track switches back to right and commences descent
12	2820377	6247951	645	3:07min(6.2km) Stream crossing
13	2820398	6247965	654	3:09min(6.3km) Junction of Opureke and Matakuhia Tks
14	2820421	6248288	670	3:54min(7.0km) Major log jam in stream, easiest to enter stream and go via true right
15	2820601	6248755	682	4:24min(7.8km) Stream crossing best here
16	2820683	6248760	681	4:30min(7.9km) Re-enter stream and exit to true right bank
17	2821059	6249345	692	4:52min(8.7km) Stream crossing
18	2821300	6249361	697	4:59min(9.0km) First rat trap
19	2821893	6250591	698	5:30min(10.7km) Upper Matakuhia Hut
20	2822226	6254144	774	6:56min(15.3km) Log bridge across stream and start of climb out of valley
21	2822907	6255454	955	7:40min(17.5km) Site of old Matakuhia Saddle Hut, 4WD access to here
22	2822857	6255899	972	7:55min(17.9km) Saddle Road End, 25.5km from SH5

NZTM

Easting	Northing
1905777	5686879
1906247	5686624
1907423	5686634
1908374	5687078
1908444	5686914
1908633	5686742
1909086	5686344
1909251	5686335
1909431	5686416
1909598	5686241
1909712	5686463
1910326	5686181
1910347	5686195
1910369	5686519
1910549	5686986
1910631	5686991
1911007	5687577
1911248	5687593
1911841	5688825
1912171	5692381
1912852	5693693
1912801	5694139

Google Image & Track Profile



Matakuhia Valley Section

Heading north up the Matakuhia Valley the track is poorly marked in places and difficult to follow until the point it crosses on to the true right at **WP16**. The GPS track is somewhat inaccurate as the satellite coverage is erratic in the valley and overall the track delineated on the topographic map is probably more indicative of the actual location.

As the track leaves the junction with the Opureke it crosses slips, which can be quite tricky and at **WP14** it is best to descend into the stream and skirt a major logjam on the true right.

At **WP15** the track is quite close to the stream and it is preferable to enter the stream here and cross to the other side. Looking back one can still see the wooden foundations of an old bridge? The track stays on the true right for a short flat stretch before heading back into the stream, skirting around an eroded section of the track and regaining it at **WP16**. This waypoint is very important to identify as it marks the commencement of the section of the track on the true right.

The track crosses back over the Matakuhia Stream again at **WP17**, another waypoint to get right. From here to the Upper Matakuhia Hut the track is relatively well marked and is probably the most pleasant part of the tramp. **WP18** marks the first pest control trap and there is a sequence of these all the way to the end of the tramp. Some track maintenance has recently been carried out in this section by a Tokoroa based hunter, who also tends the traps.

The Upper Matakuhia Hut is reached after about 2 hours from the junction with the Opureke Track and a good opportunity for afternoon tea.

The track continues up the true left traversing a number of slips and is quite undulating until it reaches a log bridge (**WP20**) across the stream. From here it climbs up the true right until it comes out into scrub near the site of the destroyed Matakuhia Saddle Hut, **WP21**. Another 5 minutes up the vehicle track brings the weary tramp to the van at the road intersection, **WP22**.

The section of track between the Matakuhia Saddle and Upper Matakuhia Hut is described in more detail under the Upper Matakuhia Hut tramp located under Walks on the Taupo Trampers website.

Upper Matakuhia Hut



Log Bridge



<p>Notes:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPS = Garmin GPSMap 60csx • masl = metres above sea level altitude • WP Waypoint as taken by GPS unit 	<p>Total Distance 18km (One way) Total ascent m Walking time 8hrs</p>
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