

WAIHAHA RIVER Bike Trail

260 Series Map: Kuratau, T18

Topo50 Map: BG34 Piropiro & BG35 Tihoi

NZ Grid GPS: Geodetic Datum 1949

NZTM GPS: NZTM on WGS84

How to get to START - Exit Taupo on **SH1** North.

- Near the top of the hill go left to **Poihipi Road**
- Follow the road out past the Wairakei Forest then left to **Whangamata** Do **NOT** turn left at the next sign for Kinloch but go straight ahead till you reach SH32
- At the T-junction to **SH32** (Western Bay Road) turn left and proceed for about 10km
- About 2km south of the Waihaha Road junction cross the **Waihaha River** bridge
- Immediately on crossing the bridge turn left into the **Scenic Reserve Car Park**

The surface of the car park has recently upgraded and leads to a shelter (**WP01478masl**) at the start of the track for the Great Lake Trail. However, for security reasons some may prefer to park in the original car park which is in full view of the state highway.

Rough description: A long, moderately hard tramp due to the distance involved covering 26 kilometres, if the full walk to the track end near Whakatonga Point on Lake Taupo is completed. The track is superb as it is an easy grade bike track and part of the Great Lake Trail. Scenery is wonderful with great views of the Waihaha River, waterfalls, landform and geology plus the varied vegetation encountered. Variations can be an out-and-back walk or exit via the paper road which leads on to Waihaha Road. There will be other choices soon.

Detail: From the car park (**WP01478masl**) head virtually due east past the shelter and on to the trail to pass the bright orange toilet and through the bike gate. Within minutes pass a seat for the weary and, on going round the bend, cross the wide suspension bridge (**WP02472masl**) – the bridge is wide to accommodate the cyclists so watch out for speeding bikes. Ten minutes later cross a wooden bridge (**WP03461masl**) to find the track heading virtually due south through an attractive area dominated by Manuka.

Five hundred metres further on there is a seat (**WP04483masl**) with great views of the Waihaha River. It will have been noticed that to date there has been little change in altitude and most of the progress has been on the level, but that will change and quite some ascending will be done to get down towards Lake Taupo.

Access



Road access red, tramp is the blue

Great Lake Trail



Wide suspension bridge



Studying the river views



Sloping wooden bridge



The track now turns to the NE and a series of zig zags starts to gain altitude (**WP05494masl**) till a high point or pass is reached (**WP06511masl**) then a descent to the SE commences. A small promontory overlooking the river is reached in about an hour (**WP07492masl**) from where great views up and down the valley are available. To date the tramp has apparently been in forest but, in fact, farmland has been close all the time, this is evidenced when fenced farmland is seen (**WP08483masl**).

Interesting geology on the track



Waterfall



Toilet at track end

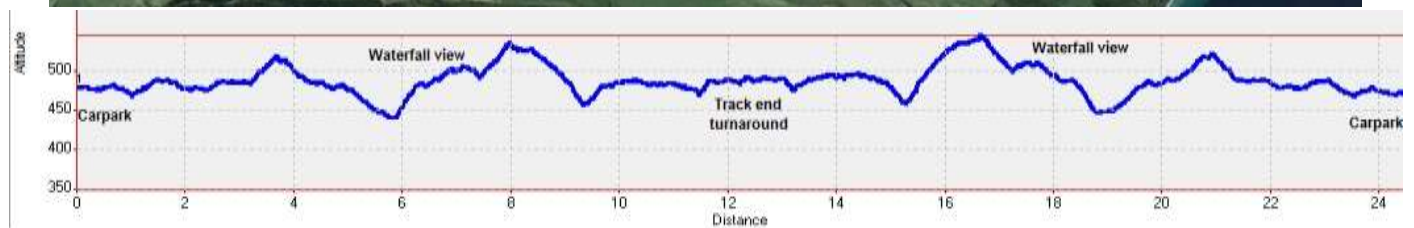
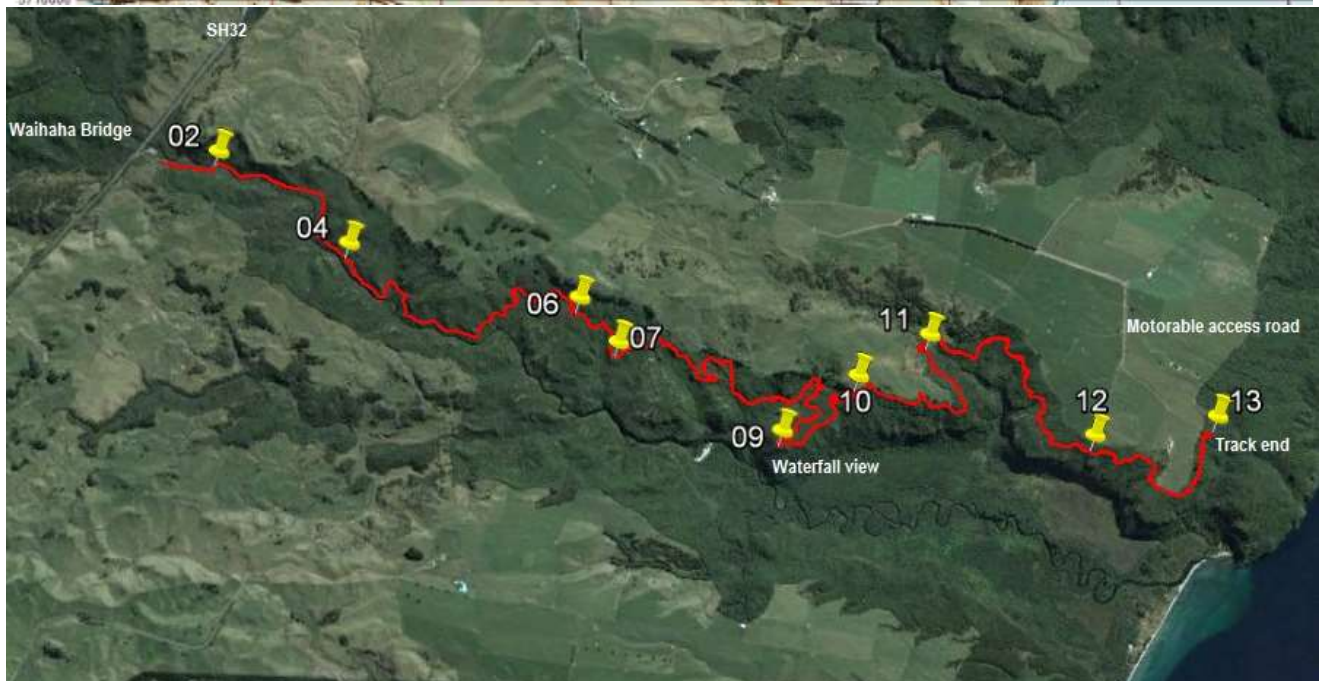


After one hour forty five to two hours there is another viewpoint (**WP09502masl**) where the waterfall can be seen – people can reach this waterfall by kayak from Lake Taupo. From here the track heads NE again on a ridge walking parallel to a deer fence (**WP10502masl**) before swinging round to the east then the north-west before a series of zig zags (**WP11477masl**) heads downhill to the SE. There is a vegetation change in this area with many more ferns etc and some huge Punga straddle the track at about 11km distance (**WP12470masl**). From here it is about one and half kilometres to another orange toilet near a cross roads and the track end (**WP13487masl**). There are signs that the track is extending to Waihora and the gated exit to the paper road that leads to Waihaha Road are highly visible with ample signage.

Car park and paper road



Map and Google Image with GPS data



N...	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
01	1833395	5713003	478	Car park off Western Bays Road at Waihaha River bridge at track end shelter
02	1833671	5712965	472	10min (350m); Bend in the track to left passing seat and on to suspension bridge
03	1834260	5712797	461	18min (1.01km); Wooden bridge in area dominated by Manuka
04	1834382	5712442	483	24min (1.5km); Seat with great valley views
05	1835505	5712227	494	45min (3.3km); Working up zig-zags with view of high pass to SE
06	1835647	5712106	511	53min (3.7km); High point then downhill to the SE
07	1835847	5711859	492	1:02min (4.2km); Viewpoint with good views up and down stream of the Waihaha
08	1836086	5711981	483	1:05min (4.5km); Bend in the track below fenced farmland
09	1836732	5711351	502	1:41min (6.9km); Good view of river and waterfall to the SW
10	1837159	5711638	531	2:10min (7.9km); On ridge heading NE parallel to deer fence
11	1837558	5711850	477	2:26min (9.1km); Zig-zags downhill
12	1838448	5711275	470	2:52min (11.1km); Giant Punga straddling the track in heavily vegetated area
13	1839123	5711359	487	3:18min (12.4km); End of track with signs for Waihora extension track & acces to exit road

Notes:

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

GPS Data: Total GPS measured distance 26.08km
 Total (flat) map distance 24.47km
 Elevation gain 614m