

WAIHORA to WAIHAHA

260 Series Map: Kuratau, T18 and Whakamaru T17

Topo50 Map: BG34 Piropiro & BG35 Tihoi

How to get to START:

- Exit Taupo on **SH1** North.
- Near top of the hill out of Taupo, left into **Poihipi Road**
- Follow the road out past the Wairakei Forest then turn left into **Whangamata Road**, signed for Kinloch
- Do **NOT** turn left for Kinloch but go straight ahead to T-junction
- At **SH32** (Western Bays Road) turn left and pass Tihoi Mill Rd on RHS after about 3.5k
- About 3.5km south of here turn right on signs for Pureora Forest and Lagoon near the Waikokomiko Stream
- Follow this gravel road for about 7km to reach **Car Park WP01**^{666masl}

Rough description: A very strenuous 7-9 hour A to B day tramp or a relatively relaxed overnighter stopping off at the Waihaha Hut. Day one is hard work and the DOC quoted 6 hours are required whilst for Day two the 9km walk out from the hut to the Western Bays Road is an easy 3 hours. This tramp can be tackled in either direction but anti-clockwise is slightly easier – going anti-clockwise gives a total ascent of 694metres and a total descent of 900metres.

Detail: To begin is an easy stroll to the WNW on wide forest tracks with a small junction (**WP02**^{681masl}) off to the right after a few minutes – ignore this badly overgrown teaser. Soon some slippery clays on the slope are encountered and these can be tricky if wet.

All through this area there seems to be an abundance of wood-pigeons, creaking wings everywhere. The odd small hunters' campsite, with attendant abandoned bottles etc, is passed with the most obvious one just before a bit of an ascent starts. The first severe slope downwards is tackled after about 90 minutes and care must be taken though there is nothing too tricky or overly steep – this section is still a walk and not a scramble.

Once up the other side after crossing the Pikopiko Stream (**WP03**^{767masl}) there are some boggy areas then it is on to meet the junction with the Weraroa Track (**WP04**^{881masl}) which also goes on to Bog Inn Hut. By continuing to the SW at this junction it seems it is a long way on reasonable slopes in superb forest till the Mangatu Stream is approached. Study of the map shows that the track followed is not where the map (Topo50 series) shows but generally lies east of the mapped track. All through this area there are many Fuchsia and a lot of young Rimu trees

After around four and a half hours things start to change as the descent (**WP05**^{584masl}) to the Mangatu Stream (**WP06**^{560masl}) commences, there are some very steep sections indeed but generally there are good hand-holds in the form of protruding roots – for those that like a scramble it is good fun but some do develop wobbly knees. The location of this descent has changed over the past few years but this was the area where there used to be a rope to assist one on the ascent / descent.

Start of the descent



The Mangatu Stream crossing



Hammock sized spider's web



Once feet-wetting getting over the stream has been completed some severe oxygen deficit will be experienced getting up the rather serious grunt of a slope to crest the ridge (**WP07**^{678masl}) – however the pain is relieved to a large extent by the abundant bird life, including Kaka, in this area. Minutes after this there can be minor confusion when a huge windfall lies over the track (**WP08**^{629masl}) but the route is easy, duck down under the tree and go hard left upslope. From here on the track improves and soon the Waihaha Hut is reached (**WP09**^{577masl}) within somewhere around six hours walking.

The Waihaha Hut is a 10 bunker, is in a very pleasant spot, is in relatively good order, has ample coal supply for heating and the previous rat problem does seem to have been solved. There are clear sign posts all around the hut indicating where the various tracks go and the track to use leaves the clearing just past the toilet in the SE corner and wiggles about a bit but basically is heading east..

From here on the track approaches tourist level though there are still a few rough bits and be aware that there can be bikes coming in from Western Bays Road. The forest soon gives way to lower scrub and a huge long straight through this allows you to see a long way ahead. The eastern end of this has a small meadow area which makes a good spot for 'smoko'. On leaving this scrubby area there is a 30 minute ascent to crest a ridge, but the slopes are not severe and there is a very good viewpoint rock at the eastern extremity (**WP11**^{599masl}).

The track is a bit rough on the descent down from here but it takes only minutes to reach what is the last main feature of the tramp – the swing bridge over the Mangatu Stream (**WP12**^{486masl}), this is the stream that was forded just before the Waihaha Hut. From here it is only 30 minutes more to reach the end of the track at the bridge over the Pikopiko Stream on SH32, Western Bays Road where there is a car park (**WP13**^{478masl}) off left at the southern end of the bridge.

NZ Grid GPS: Geodetic Datum 1949

NZTM GPS: NZTM on WGS84

Access



Road access the blue line
Tramp route is the red

Total Distance : 23.838 Km

Maximum Speed : 13.810 KPH

Average Speed : 0.979 KPH

Minimum Altitude : 476 Meters

Maximum Altitude : 899 Meters

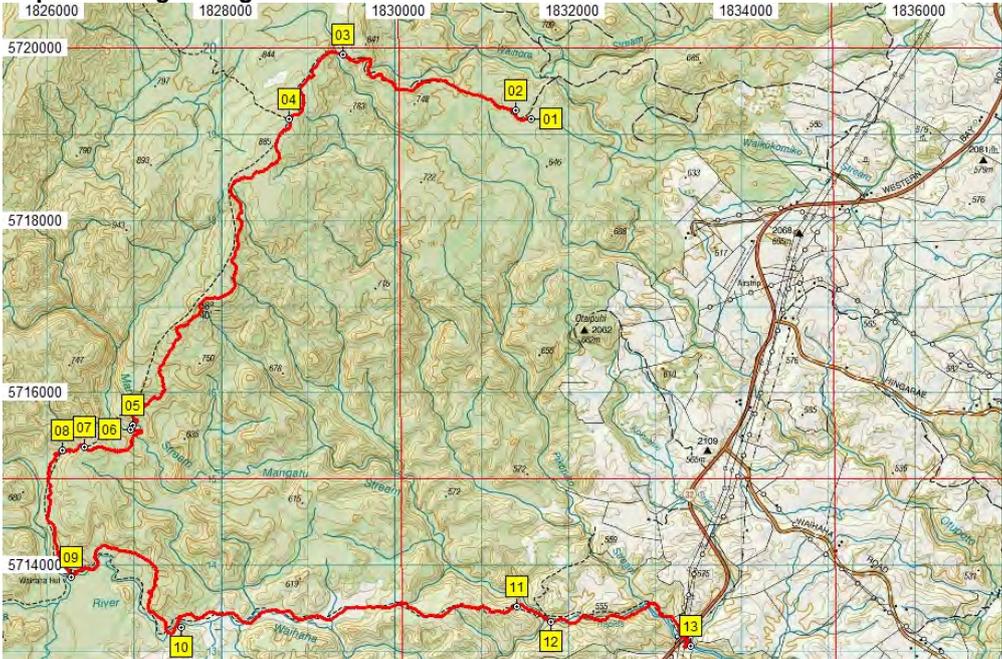
Slippery clays



Waihaha hut



Map and Google Image with GPS data



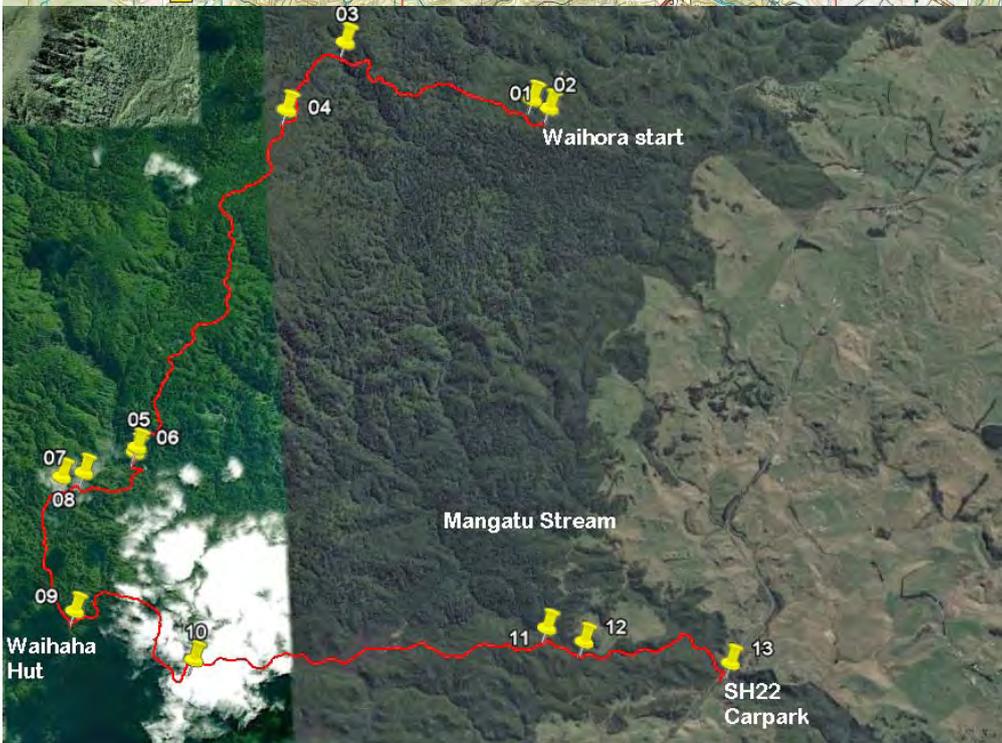
Look “no hands – on clays



Waihora Weraro Junction



Tree Hugger in action

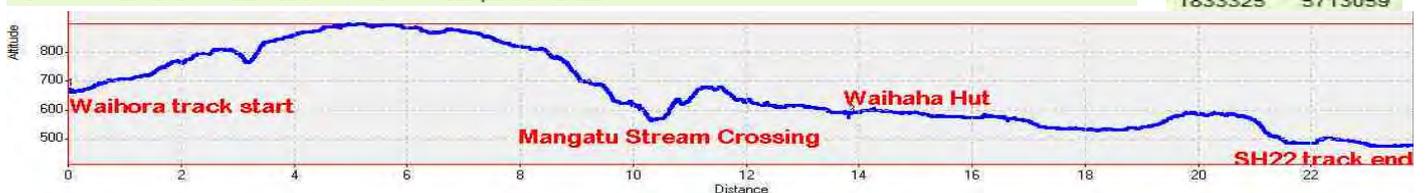


Waypoints – NZ Grid

Name	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
01	2741654	6281002	666	Waihora carpark
02	2741479	6281100	681	Overgrown, motorable track joining from the left. Woodpigeons galore
03	2739490	6281750	767	1:15min; Pikopiko Stream crossing after steep, tricky descent. Then up again
04	2738869	6281008	881	2 hours; Junction with Weraroa Track for lunch
05	2737040	6277454	584	4:30min; Very steep, very tricky descent towards Mangatu Stream
06	2737015	6277401	560	Mangatu Stream crossing
07	2736476	6277196	678	On ridge after stiff grunt up - many birds including Kaka
08	2736226	6277158	629	Distinct large fallen tree, go under then sharp left uphill
09	2736312	6275686	577	Waihaha Hut
10	2737578	6275108	556	View point above gorge where river goes underground
11	2741449	6275338	559	View rock just off the track at end of ridge
12	2741849	6275169	486	Swing bridge over Mangatu Stream 30 min from end of track
13	2743451	6274880	478	Car park on SH22

NZTM Waypoints

Easting	Northing
1831520	5719181
1831345	5719280
1829354	5719928
1828735	5719185
1826908	5715627
1826883	5715574
1826344	5715369
1826094	5715330
1826182	5713858
1827448	5713281
1831321	5713515
1831722	5713347
1833325	5713059



Notes:

- **GPS** Garmin GPSMap 60CSx
- **WP** = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit
- **masl** = metres above sea level