

TONGARIRO RIVER WALKWAY

260 Series Map: Tongariro T19

Topo50 Maps: BH35-Turangi

How to get to START: Exit Taupo on SH1 down the lake to Turangi:

- On crossing the bridge over the Tongariro River immediately pull into the carpark on the right hand side of the road
- There is normally a caravan parked there selling coffee – a treat when the walk is over

Rough description: A very easy, pleasant walk southwards on the true right bank of the Tongariro River to cross to the true left bank on one of a couple of bridges to return to the bridge in Turangi. Views that are not normally seen are available and the 14km or so offer a fair workout without being onerous. Allow 3 to 4 hours for the round trip without hurrying.

Detail: Turn left out of the car park (01378masl) and walk back over the bridge whilst having a look at the river, bluffs and, usually, several fly fishers dotted around below.

The walkway is clearly signed on the eastern side at the north end of the bridge (02385masl) and starts off uphill on a semi-sealed gravel track to get up and over the small hill with the edge of the hill being the bluffs on the river edge. There has been a great deal of clearing and planting of native species all along this track – views are good all around. Within around 40min there is a seat (03388masl) at a gravel dump close to the now unused cableway over the river.

Bluffs on the south side of the bridge



Minutes further on the eastern end of the Major Jones swing bridge is reached (04389masl) which can be used by those wanting a shorter walk. After about one hour (05406masl) an impressive stand of Firs is passed through – it was thought they were Douglas Fir. To avoid confusion the next two points are noted in that an old track goes off then re-joins again within a hundred metres or so (06401 & 07406masl).

There is a very good view point from the bluffs over the river reached in around 1:30minutes (08430masl) and this makes a good point for a refreshment break. A hundred metres beyond here there is a Y-junction (09429masl) where bikes go left and walkers can and bikes cannot go right – there is a flight of very steep steps to descend. This descent ends up at the Red Hut Pool Bridge which is crossed (10421masl) then a car park on the edge of SH1 is accessed via some steps.

Eastern end of Major Jones bridge



After wandering roughly parallel to SH1 in a northerly direction for half an hour the walkway skirts the National Trout Centre (11413masl) – the first indication of the centre is the manicured nature of the sealed track heading off to the right downhill – but do not follow this as the walkway route is signposted going north on the edge of the car park. At around 10km the track is obviously older comprising hard packed earth with sharp turn (12411masl) to the right signed Loop Track & Kutai Street carpark.

Either of these tracks can be followed, the Loop is the shorter one. The first choice should be to head downhill for a few hundred metres to meet a T-junction (13393masl) and turn to the left to soon meet another junction – again going left to soon meet up with the Loop Track which comes in from the left (14391masl). Most of the track is now obviously older and not surfaced, all old fishermen's tracks, and at around three hours or so the western end of the Major Jones Bridge (15390masl) is passed.

Major Jones Bridge



Just after this there is a good view of the old cableway over the river then the route wanders along passing many rather attractive houses and gardens, grassy access areas to the walkway until after three to four hours a glimpse can be caught of the Tongariro River Bridge at Turangi and the end of a very pleasant walk. The whole outing is about 14km long with next to no hill-work – only 176meters ascent during the whole outing.

NZ Grid GPS: Geodetic Datum 1949

NZTM GPS: NZTM on WGS84

Access



Tongariro River to the north



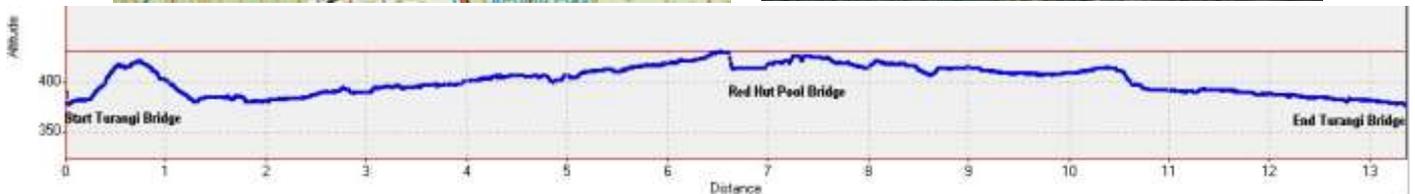
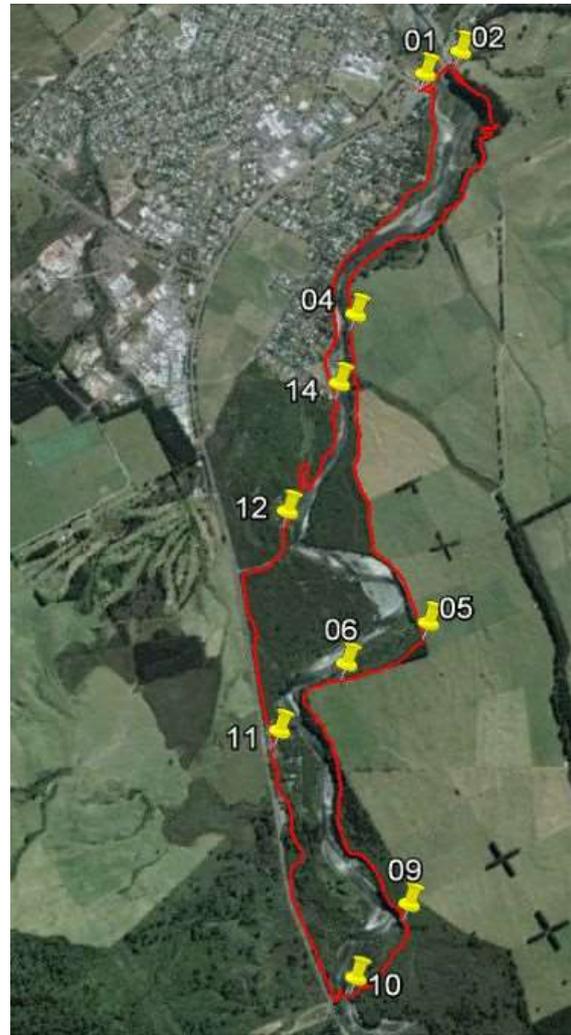
Above the Red Hut Pool bridge



Old Cableway



Map and Google Image with GPS data



Waypoints - NZ Grid

| Na... | Easting | Northing | Alt(m) | Description |
|-------|---------|----------|--------|--|
| 01 | 2754152 | 6242733 | 378 | Coffee stop car park Turangi |
| 02 | 2754346 | 6242850 | 385 | 265metres (3:40sec); Start of trail then uphill on sealed gravel bike track |
| 03 | 2753761 | 6241503 | 388 | 2.5km (41min); Seat plus gravel dump near old cableway river crossing |
| 04 | 2753747 | 6241406 | 389 | 2.6km (48min); Eastern end of Major Jones bridge |
| 05 | 2754093 | 6239696 | 406 | 4.4km (1:11min); Impressive stand of fir trees - Douglas Fir? |
| 06 | 2753654 | 6239487 | 401 | 4.9km (1:17min); Y-fork with older track off left |
| 07 | 2753573 | 6239473 | 406 | 5km (1:18min); Old track rejoins from the left |
| 08 | 2753882 | 6238266 | 430 | 6.5km (1:37min); Good view point on bluffs above bend in the river |
| 09 | 2753952 | 6238173 | 429 | 6.6km (1:56min); Y-fork with bikes off left whilst walkers go straight then down steep steps |
| 10 | 2753664 | 6237786 | 421 | 7.2km (2:07min); Red Hut Pool bridge then up steps to carpark at edge of SH1 |
| 11 | 2753292 | 6239134 | 413 | 8.8km (2:35min); Walking parallel to SH1 in to Trout Centre, follow signs at edge of carpark |
| 12 | 2753364 | 6240329 | 411 | 10.2km (2:56min); On older track, sharp bend to right signed Loop Track & Kutai St carpark, downhill |
| 13 | 2753508 | 6240539 | 393 | 10.7km (3:04min); T-junction at bottom of descent left to another T and left again |
| 14 | 2753652 | 6241026 | 391 | 11.3km (3:12min); Loop walk rejoins track from the left (The Loop is shorter) |
| 15 | 2753675 | 6241400 | 390 | 11.7 (3:16min); Western end of Major Jones bridge on wide, beaten earth track |

NZTM

| Easting | Northing |
|---------|----------|
| 1844059 | 5680905 |
| 1844253 | 5681023 |
| 1843669 | 5679675 |
| 1843656 | 5679578 |
| 1844003 | 5677867 |
| 1843564 | 5677658 |
| 1843482 | 5677644 |
| 1843793 | 5676436 |
| 1843863 | 5676343 |
| 1843575 | 5675956 |
| 1843202 | 5677304 |
| 1843273 | 5678500 |
| 1843417 | 5678710 |
| 1843560 | 5679198 |
| 1843583 | 5679572 |

Notes:

- GPS Garmin GPSmap 60CSx
- masl = metres above sea level

From : 25-Sep-13 08:56:39
To : 25-Sep-13 12:35:08

Time taken : 3:38:28
Total Distance : 13.377 Km
GPS Distance : 14km
Minimum Speed : 0.021 KPH
Maximum Speed : 6.565 KPH
Average Speed : 3.674 KPH

Minimum Altitude : 377 Meters
Maximum Altitude : 431 Meters
Total ascent : 176metres