

HALFWAY HUT OPUREKE

260 Series Map: Whirinaki, V18

Topo50 Maps: BH38 Te Haroto

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.
- Parking space a few metres more on Waipunga Road, approximately 1 hour

NB: Following the 2016 winter snows the track into the hut became virtually impassable

Rough Description: This tramp, though with not too many kilometres, would be classified at the upper end of the moderate scale as it takes about 6 hours with fair rough-country walking skills required to get through unharmed. The target is a Hunters' Bivvy just off the Opureke Track, which at one time would appear to have been well formed and used with many triangular orange track markers still to be found. However the going is tough as the terrain is strongly sloping and encroaching vegetation makes finding the footfall positions tricky.

Detail: The track starts some 5km up Waipunga Road and it is quite easy to find the parking space (**WP01709masl**), start looking when on the loop passing the washed-out bridge (**WP00700masl**). The track (**WP02708masl**) heads SE from the road and heads uphill and swings round to head NE and would be useable by a 4WD vehicle. About 700m up this grunty track a clearing (**WP03773masl**) is reached with the Opureke track heading off NE on the immediate left (**WP04775masl**). This is a true back-country track, narrow with heavy vegetation in good native forest with many large trees. It will be noticed that there are orange DoC track markers as the track heads up then down to soon cross a small stream – easy.

There is not a lot to describe as the track wends its way slowly to the NE through the dense forest and quite rapidly gains altitude and at this point the track can be described s fairly good. A double trunked Totara is found on the RHS after about 50 minutes as the track heads SE. Slopes seem to get a bit more regular and steeper then a sidle starts on a saddle (**WP061005masl**) below Opureke and continues to the NE for over a kilometre where, on looking carefully, a small turn off left leads to an open area (**WP07971masl**) which is perfect for morning tea. The exit from the clearing is in the top left hand corner and swings in a loop to the right and quite steeply downhill to intersect the track (**WP08971masl**). If the clearing cannot be located just stay on the main track and find another spot for a refreshment break.

The route now heads E to ESE with a few way-pointed distinctive turns to avoid the high points; one of the turns is sharply to the N to then loop round to head SE and ascend to the high point of the day (**WP111057masl**). The SE heading is held for about 1.5km to another clear turn (**WP121004masl**) to get round a spur followed by yet another clear bend (**WP13980masl**) from SE to NE. In all this recently covered section the vegetation is very thick and encroaches on to the track making going quite tricky at times and, if one can look down, there are very steep slopes suggesting falling off the track would not be a good idea.



If a large severely gullied line or washout is reached do not cross it as the turn for Halfway Hut has just been passed. Turn back and head steeply uphill (**WP14936masl**) following some pink ribbons – this can hardly be recognised as a track and is almost a scramble at times. Five or six minutes up here there is a clearing (**WP15973masl**), which may be big enough to act as a helipad, then there is a way through the spindly bush that swings to the right to look directly on to the roof of the target bivvy (**WP16968masl**). The track then leads round left to arrive at the door.



The bivvy is very simple with plastic sheeting for a roof, a door good enough to close properly and keep the elements out, a fireplace (which does work), a bench for kitchen-work and a couple of bunk spaces – but you might want to bring your own mattress! The walk out was some 40 minutes quicker than the way in but the time spent having morning tea would have accounted for most of this. A grunty walk, great forest, few birds but a lot of interesting fungi.



NZ Grid GPS: Geodetic Datum 1949

NZTM GPS: NZTM on WGS84

Location and Tramp route



Distance from Taupo Police Station

GPS Data for start to WP22

From : 29-Apr-15 08:26:51

To : 29-Apr-15 14:55:12

Moving Time: 4:20min

Time taken : 6:28:20

Total Distance : 10.818 Km

GPS Distance 12.41km

Minimum Speed : 0.010 KPH

Maximum Speed : 12.178 KPH

Average Speed : 1.671 KPH

Minimum Altitude : 699 Meters

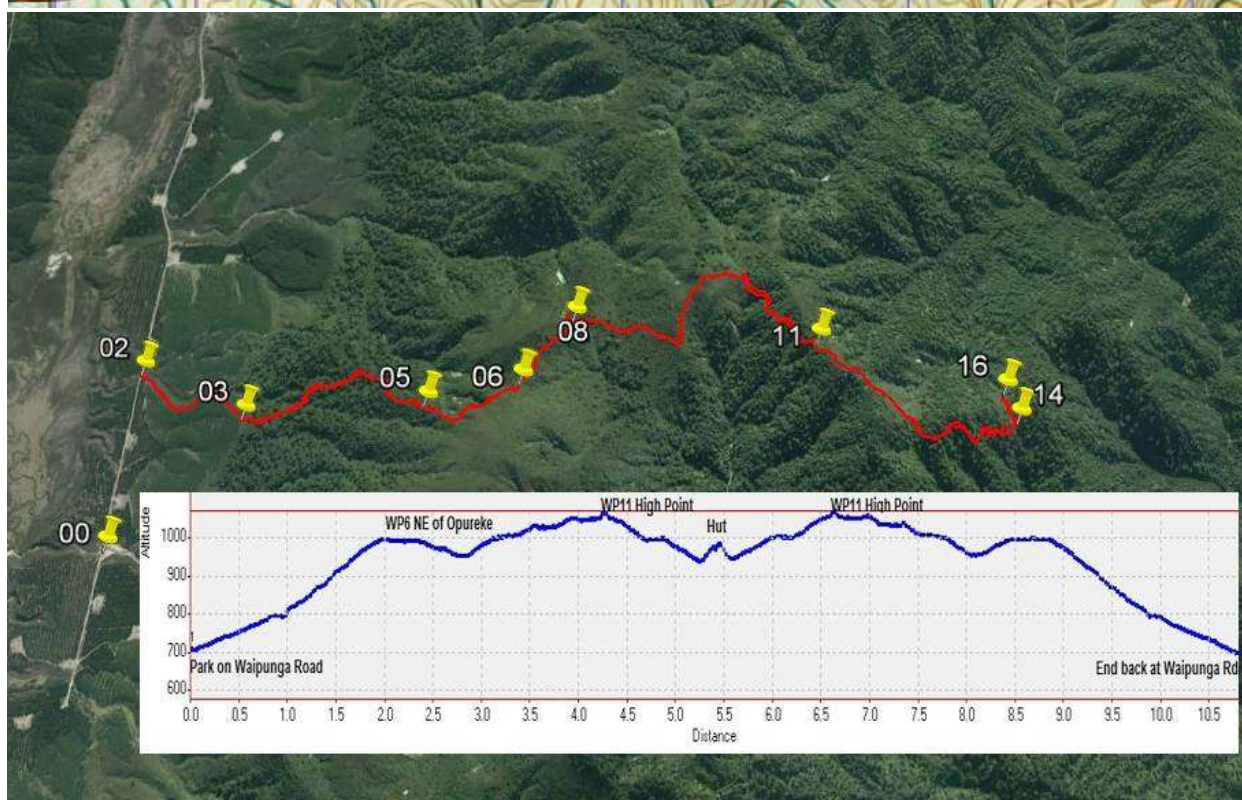
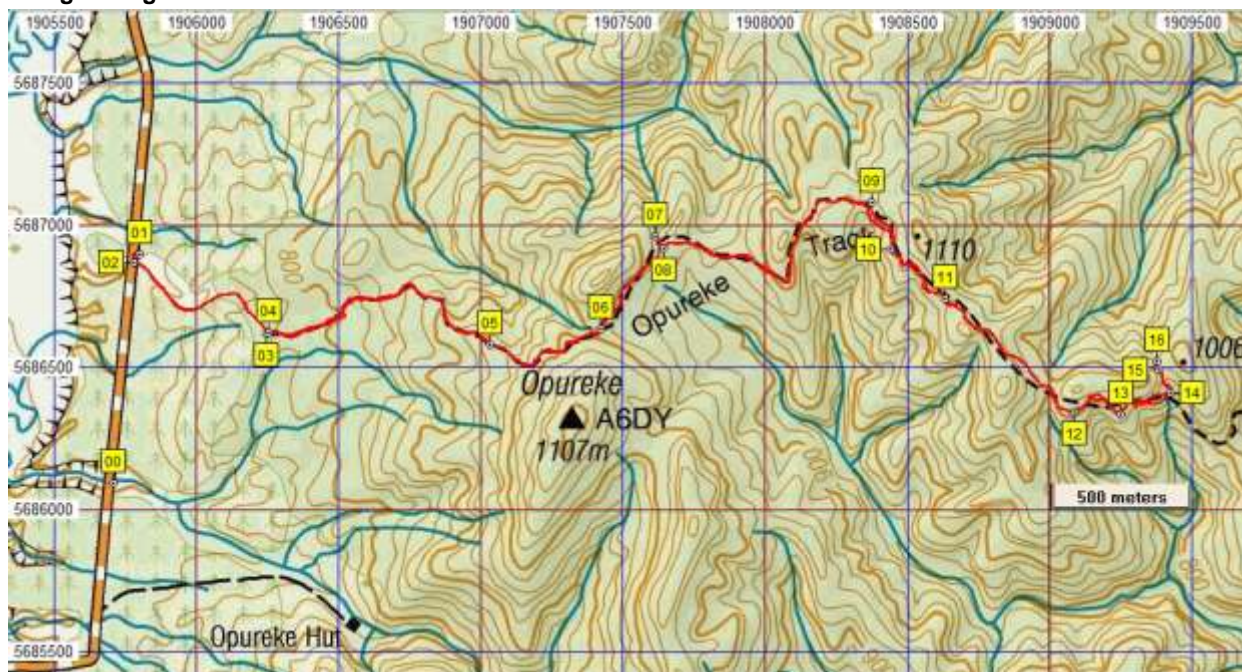
Maximum Altitude : 1070 Meters

Total Ascent: 770metres

Thick bush



Map & Google Image with GPS data



Waypoints – NZTM

Name	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
00	1905707	5686093	700	At by-pass round washed out bridge, about 775m from parking area and track start
01	1905799	5686899	709	Parking space metres beyond 4WD track leading to Opureke Track
02	1905778	5686868	708	Junction to 4WD track on Waipunga Road, heading SE
03	1906245	5686619	773	705m (0:15min); Clearing on 4WD track
04	1906255	5686624	775	705m (0:16min); Start of narrow, overgrown Opureke Track on N side of clearing. Orange track markers
05	1907032	5686581	940	1.66km (0:50min); Double trunked Totara on RHS of fairly good track
06	1907423	5686634	1005	2.15km (1:08min); Saddle below Opureke, start of sidle, track vague but pink ribbons
07	1907612	5686960	971	2.58km (1:28min); Open area off track with exit in top left hand corner looping back to track
08	1907640	5686921	971	2.63km (1:47min); Rejoin track after steep downhill from clearing
09	1908374	5687078	1042	3.64km (2:17min); Sharp south turn, track heavily overgrown but orange markers
10	1908444	5686914	1055	3.84km (2:22min); Distinctive corner on track as track turns back to east
11	1908633	5686742	1057	4.15km (2:34min); More or less at high point of track
12	1909086	5686344	1004	4.81km (2:59min); Distinctive corner as track traverses from SE to ENE around a spur
13	1909251	5686335	980	5.03km (3:07min); Another distinctive corner on track with track swinging from SE to NE
14	1909427	5686409	936	5.28km (3:14min); Left off the track and steeply up hill on pink ribbons
15	1909383	5686490	973	5.37km (3:20min); Clearing (Helipad?) above Halfway Hut
16	1909377	5686521	968	5.42km (3:52min); Halfway Hut Biv, very basic but shelter

Notes:

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

Flat map distance 10.8km
GPS Distance 12.4km
Total ascent 770 metres