

WAIKAREMOANA: SANDY BAY HUT via MANUOHA TRACK

260 Series Map: W18 Waikaremoana

Topo50 Maps: BG39 Ruatahuna & BG40 Waikaremoana

Topo250 Map: Sheet 10

NZ Grid GPS: Geodetic Datum 1949

NZTM Gaps: NZTM on WGS84

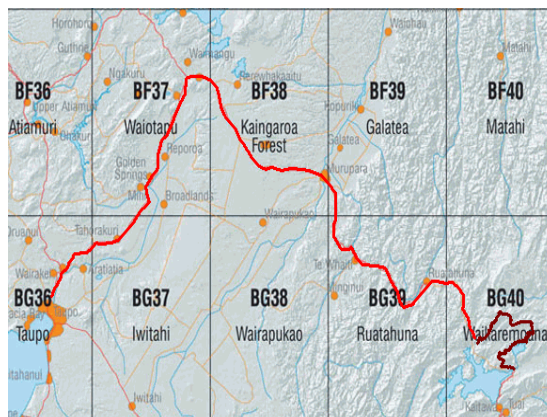
To get to START: Exit Taupo heading for Rotorua on SH5 then right on SH38 just after Rainbow Mountain.

- Pass through Murapara in about 1hr 20mins
- Toilet stop at Rangitaiki Visitors Centre three km further on
- Pass Minginui turn off soon after this, continue on gravel SH38
- Coffee stop at Ruatahuna Shop
- Look for start of Manuoha Track (**WP01**) on the LHS less than 1km before the Great Walk start at Hopuruahine at about 3 hours drive.

Total drive time from Taupo approximately 3 hours. This is possibly slightly longer than previously since the shortcut via Goudies Road has been closed to the public since early 2010 so it is now necessary to pick up SH38 near Rainbow Mountain on SH5.

Rough description: This is a pretty tough tramp falling in the fit or moderate plus category mainly due to the steepness of the first day getting up to Manuoha Hut (**WP09**) which takes a minimum of 5 hours to cover the 7km. Day 2 is more of a stroll through enchanted forest though the 13km still requires a full 7 hours to reach Sandy Bay Hut (**WP19**) on Lake Waikareiti. The walk out from here back to the road near the Holiday Park at Waikaremoana can be long or short but the route via the Ruapani Track requires about 6 hours and passes seven wetlands or lagoons..

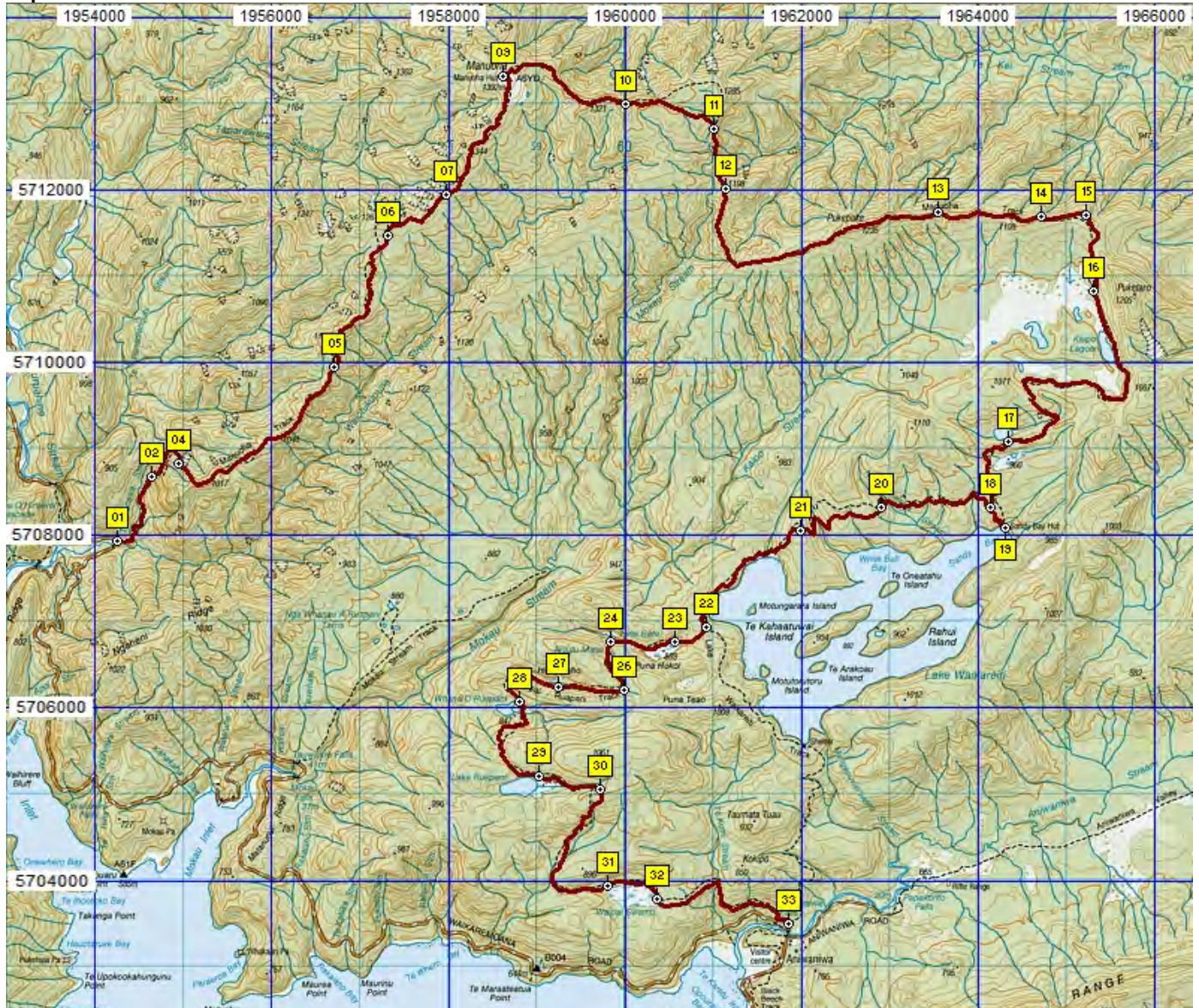
Access and tramp location



The red track is road whilst the brown track is the tramping line.



Map with GPS data



Waypoints – NZ Grid

Name	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
01	2864277	6269646	670	Start of Manuoha Track - viciously steep uphill start
02	2864655	6270396	801	1 hour; many hard sections and less than 1km covered in the first hour
03	2864806	6270532	882	1:30min; descend to cross stream line - not too steep
04	2864965	6270533	970	1:45min; get on to ridge after fairly hard grunt up side slopes from road
05	2866725	6271659	1059	3 hours; break having covered 3.6km (GPS data)
06	2867330	6273187	1230	4 hours; break after long, moderate uphill. Covered 6.2km (GPS Data)
07	2868001	6273649	1265	4:25min; huge views available if clear from above massive slip area
08	2868709	6274979	1388	5 hours; Manuoha Trig about one minute from Hut
09	2868637	6275026	1373	5:05min; Manuoha Hut basically 5 hours and not the DOC signed 7 hours
10	2870026	6274691	1320	Day 2 at 45min; point where three ridges seem to converge, heading eastwards in valley head
11	2871033	6274413	1200	1:15min; swing round to other ridge heading basically south
12	2871153	6273709	1184	1:50min; back heading S more than SSE and in normal forest, less moss etc
13	2873551	6273434	1146	3:15min; lunch at noon in forest with fern ground cover
14	2874726	6273393	1102	4:10min; turn to SE above bluff
15	2875239	6273415	1050	4:25min; significant turn to head basically south
16	2875327	6272536	1001	4:45min; down at small campsite on edge of dried up lake bed
17	2874348	6270783	975	6:20min; unsigned track junction - go left
18	2874148	6270023	943	6:50min; track junction with Sandy Bay Hut signed off left
19	2874314	6269788	895	7 hours; Sandy Bay Hut on shore of Lake Waikareiti (Water with small ripple)
20	2872908	6270024	966	Day 3 at 45 mins; slope eases after long steady uphill section
21	2871997	6269754	965	1:10mins; slope eases after yet another grunt. Soon descend to lake edge then several up and overs
22	2870934	6268638	916	1:50min; junction with Ruapani Track going off right. Many trees with large buttresses
23	2870572	6268475	886	2:10min; on edge of open grassy area "Puna Hoko" (Spring of water)
24	2869854	6268472	904	2:28mins; notice for "Hine Rere" (Address to a girl) tarn on RHS then steeply upwards
25	2869821	6268345	927	2:34min; "Ngutu Manu" (Beak of a bird) tarn on LHS
26	2870010	6267922	928	2:44min; marshy area with tarn off to the left
27	2869258	6267952	890	3 hours; "Hine Waho" (A girl out of the sea) tarn on RHS
28	2868820	6267787	860	3:30min; Rolling area with some Rimu and "Whano O Ruapani" (Lead to Ruapani) at slope bottom on RHS
29	2869040	6266912	929	3:50min; Lake Ruapani (Two Bereaved) notice on RHS of track
30	2869729	6266760	980	4:05min; 2 hours on this track, lunch at top of long downslope
31	2869811	6265650	768	5:10min; meet swamp on RHS
32	2870383	6265501	771	5:20min; Waipai Swamp (Good water) notice then 15 minutes to cross small bridge
33	2871862	6265207	629	5:50min; Aniwanuiwa (Rainbow) car park at end of track and start of tourist track to Lake Waikareiti

NZTM

Easting	Northing
1954252	5707938
1954630	5708689
1954781	5708825
1954940	5708826
1956701	5709955
1957306	5711485
1957977	5711949
1958685	5713281
1958613	5713328
1960004	5712994
1961012	5712717
1961133	5712012
1963534	5711738
1964710	5711699
1965224	5711722
1965313	5710841
1964335	5709085
1964135	5708324
1964302	5708088
1962894	5708324
1961982	5708053
1960919	5706934
1960556	5706770
1959837	5706767
1959804	5706640
1959994	5706216
1959241	5706246
1958802	5706080
1959024	5705204
1959713	5705053
1959796	5703941
1960369	5703793
1961850	5703500

Detail: Day 1 The first thing that one notices on getting to the start (**WP01**) of the Manuoha track is the DoC track notice stating 7 hours to the hut. The first hour on the badly overgrown, viciously steep track emphasises that this is no picnic since less than one kilometre was covered in the hour. Within 1:30min there is a respite when a small stream (**WP3882masl**) line is crossed but the slopes are quite normal at this point. Fifteen minutes later the grinding slopes do ease as the ridge is attained (**WP4970masl**) and the route heads SE for a short distance before swinging back round to the NE. The track is fairly good back-country standard and well-marked but a wary eye must be kept open to ensure the markers are seen. To emphasise the grade of this tramp it took three hours to cover almost 4km in reaching **WP51059 masl**. Just before this point a DOC work party was met as they tramped out and spirits rose dramatically when they advised that they had taken only 2 hours to come down from the Manuoha Hut.

Lush forest and steep slopes



Manuoha Trig



Within 4 hours an estimated 6.2km had been covered after a long, moderate uphill section (**WP61230masl**) and half an hour later huge views would be visible on a clear day from above a massive landslip (**WP71265masl**). The vegetation started to change to high altitude type around here and soon the crest was reached at the Manuoha Trig (**WP81388masl**) which is within minutes of the hut (**WP91373masl**). The hut is small but could sleep up to 10 on the two shelves, good bench space, outside roof-water supply and a log burner. All the forest in this area has to be classified as "enchanted" with warped, twisted trees very heavily coated in moss and lichen.

Manuoha hut sign



On arrival at the hut a warm welcome was offered by the rest of the DoC working party who were quite regularly based here with the main activity of monitoring an endangered species of snail – they even had their own small hut (the snail hut) which was brought in by chopper. They should have left that day but weather conditions precluded this, hence half the party walked out. The helicopter did get in next day to pick up the rest of the party and the gear – not the hut!

Day 2: The DoC track sign states 7 hours for the approximate 13km to get to Sandy Bay Hut and without rushing it does take this long, but there are no really grinding slopes and all the walk is in pretty magical, mossy forest on moderate track but again keep the eyes open for track markers. The route heads ESE for about 2km on a very narrow ridge in places and passes through a valley head where a few ridges seem to converge then it swings to the south (**WP111200masl**). As altitude is lost the forest reverts to more normal appearance as the moss cover diminishes then the route swings round to ENE after about 2 hours. Again the ridge walked on is pretty narrow and after 3 hours the undergrowth contains a lot of fern (**WP131146masl**). There is a noticeable turn to the SE close to a bluff in about 4 hours (**WP141102masl**) and 15 min later a significant turn to the south (**WP151050masl**) as altitude is rapidly lost. The next noticeable feature is on the level at a small campsite on the edge of a dried up lake bed (**WP161001masl**).

Enchanted forest



Sandy Bay Hut



According to the map you should now be looking out for a track junction leading to the Sandy Bay Hut. However, be careful as there is a small unsigned, unmapped junction (**WP17975masl**) where the route goes left. Thirty minutes after this the sign-posted junction for the hut is reached (**WP18943masl**) and the hut is within 10 min on the left branch. Sandy Bay Hut (**WP19895masl**) on the shore of Lake Waikareiti is modern with 2 bunk rooms with 9 beds each, large communal area with benches, table and interior sink and water supply – only poor feature is a gas heater instead of a log burner.

View from Sandy Bay Hut



Ruapani track junction



Day 3: DoC states 6 hours to get out via the Ruapani Track and this proved to be a very good estimate – time and distance could be saved by exiting via the tourist track that passes the "shelter" on the southern tip of Lake Waikareiti. The first part of the route is back up the track used to get there the night before and left at the junction (**WP18**) then study of the map will show that there are several stream lines to cross – none of the crossings present as difficult but, be warned, there are a few long grunts upslope after some of them. There are also sections of easy walking, close to the lake shore at one point.

One of the many lagoons



It takes about 2 hours to reach the junction with the Ruapani Track (**WP22916masl**) where it states that 4 hours are required to exit via this route. This track passes several swamps or lagoons and all of them are named and several are noted in the waypoints list for reference purposes. Lake Ruapani (**WP29929masl**) is passed after almost 4 hours walking, low level walking is noticed after 5 hours when the Waipai Swamp is met (**WP31768masl**) and skirted for about ten minutes. The next feature is a small footbridge (**WP32771masl**) from where the track does improve slightly and it takes another thirty minutes to reach the end of the track at a car park on the edge of the road close to Aniwanuiwa which is about 2km from the Waikaremoana campsite.

Notes:

- **GPS** Garmin GPSMap60 CSx on WGS84 and NZTM
- **WP** = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit
- **masl** = metres above sea level
- *Maori name transliteration by Club Member Pat Hotter*

Minimum Altitude : 598 Meters
 Maximum Altitude : 1393 Meters
 Total Distance : 40.954 Km
 Total ascent : 2084 metres