

## WAIKATO RIVER TRAIL

**260 Series Maps:** Putaruru T15 and Tokoroa T16

**Topo50 Maps:** BE35 Putaruru & BF36 Atiamuri

### How to get to START:

#### Section 1 Arapuni to Jones Landing:

- Exit Taupo northwards on **SH1** to pass Atiamuri (30min)
- Stay on SH1 passing the turn off to SH30 (Te Kuiti)
- Pass Kinleith Mill (45min)
- In Tokoroa turn left to SH32 for Turangi [Hospital sign] (50min)
- Four mins on turn right to Old Taupo Road heading NW
- Cross roads at 1:10min go straight still on Old Taupo Road
- Join Arapuni Road at 1:45min
- Park (**WP01**) in Arapuni on RHS of road near signed start of River Trail

Total drive time from Taupo approximately 1:20 minutes.

**Rough description:** A different walk with a lot of driving and van moving involved. A short scenic stroll from Arapuni gives a view of the massive swing bridge plus the power station then along the bluffs above the Waikato River, passing Arapuni Dam then a good viewpoint before descending to the riverside again. Distance covered is just over 5km with height loss and gain of 100 metres. From here a drive of over an hour is involved to pick up the next section tramped.

#### Section 2 Snowsill Reserve to SH1 Atiamuri:

- Exit the car park at Jones landing and turn right on Lake Arapuni Road
- 8 min – go straight ignoring a left turn
- 12 min – tight u-bend in road, ignore Stringers Rd on right
- 18 min – T-junction, go right to Old Taupo Road to SH32
- 25min – Go right on SH32 to Whakamaru
- 42min – Y-fork, go left and run parallel to part of River Trail
- 50min – pass Christian Camp then Dunham Creek
- 52min – turn right on to Snowsill Reserve (**WP12**)

**Rough description:** This section of the walk is actually rather boring and inclined to be a bit of a route-march. There is some good scenery once near Atiamuri but the magnificent bluffs and river gorge views are far fewer and less spectacular. The track varies greatly and is still under development, there are no hills to ascend but there are 11km to cover whilst altitude loss gain is only 20 metres.

#### Detail: Section 1 Arapuni to Jones Landing:

Once parked (**WP01** 119masl) at the bend in the road in Arapuni go down the small sign-posted lane on the NW side of the road to the Arapuni swing bridge (**WP02** 95masl) which is huge and carries a 30 person limit. Views of the river and power station from the bridge are good. Back track off the bridge then head SSW parallel to the river and proceed virtually on the top of the bluffs with wooded slopes above the Waikato and fields of cows on the left. After about 25 minutes the track heads quite steeply down into the gorge on zig-zags (**WP03** 130masl) and views of the Arapuni Dam are offered. In just over 30 minutes the track emerges out on to the tar seal (**WP04** 112masl) which crosses the dam, to continue on the River Trail cross straight over the road and pick up the signs again but stay awake as the trail does slide off to the right as a meadow is crossed. The good track again runs along the top of the bluffs at the junction from farm land to reserve – there is a memorial plaque on a large boulder (**WP05** 133masl) to a local dignitary and beneficiary and a well situated picnic table and bench (**WP06** 112masl) is reached within one hour or so.

Some hard work is required after the picnic site as the track zig-zags upwards and there is the choice to continue the grunt all the way to the lookout (**WP07** 192masl) at the top or slide on past this invitation to go have a look at the views – the views are good and worth the effort and a clear view of Maungatautari can be seen. Once on the way down after the look-out there is a large rock / section of the bluff with a Koru carved in it (**WP08** 192masl). Soon after the carving there is a set of steps zig-zagging down into the river valley – take the right branch when you meet it – and within 1:50 minutes the tar seal is (**WP10** 122masl) reached. From this point it is only minutes to the car park / reserve (**WP11** 116masl) on the edge of the Waikato where toilets can be found.

From here it is about an hour's drive back down the Old Taupo Road and SH30 to the more southerly sections of the river walk (See above).

**NZ Grid GPS:** Geodetic Datum 1949

**NZTM GPS:** NZTM on WGS84

### Access and tracks walked

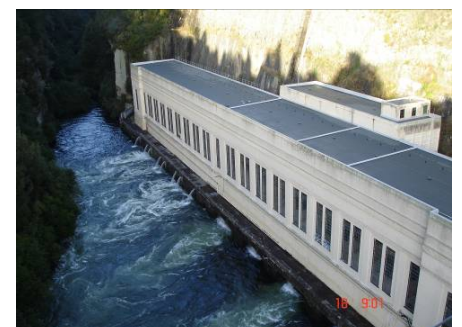


- RED line = SH1, SH32 and other roads
- Upper GREEN line = Arapuni section
- Lower GREEN line – Atiamuri section

### Arapuni swing bridge

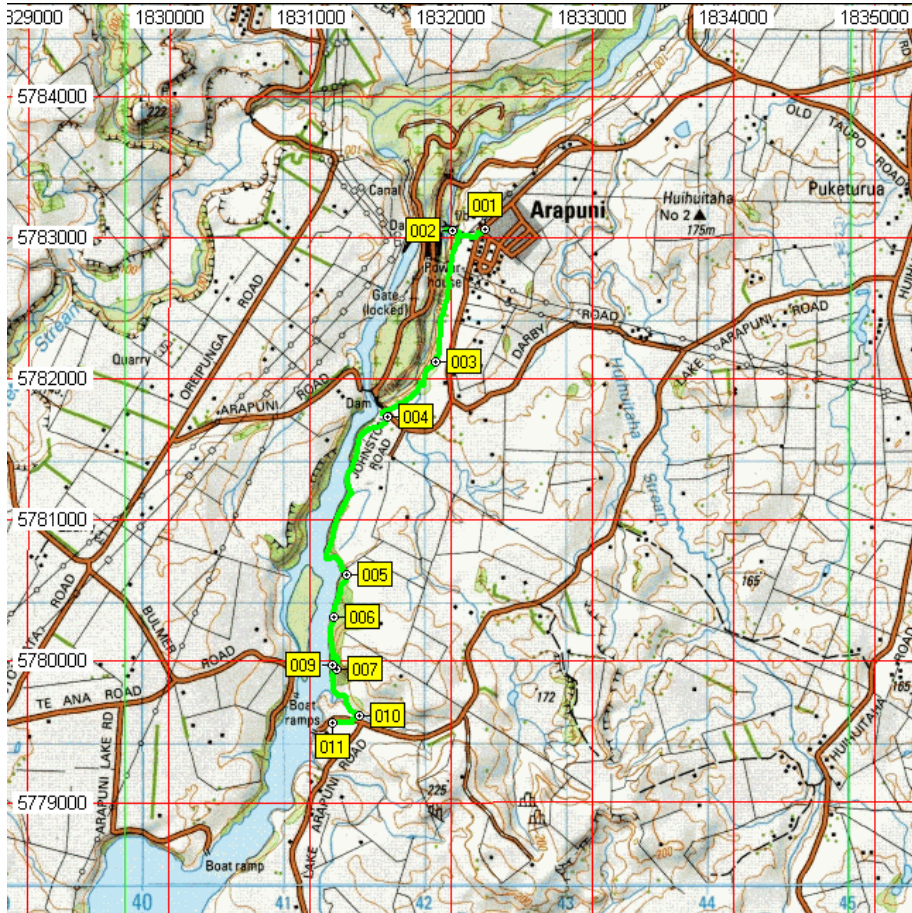


### Arapuni power station





## Map and Google Image with GPS data – Arapuni section



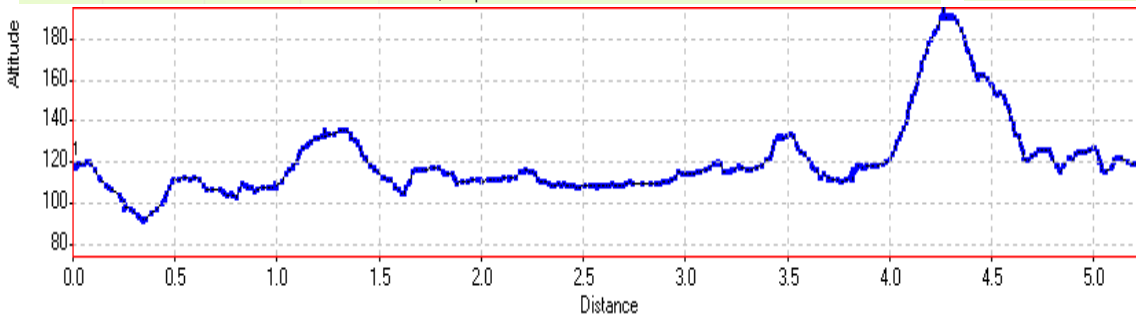
### Waypoints – NZ Grid

Name	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
001	2742422	6344654	119	Park at bend in road in Arapuni near sign-posted start of River Trail
002	2742191	6344641	95.0	8min; Middle of Arapuni Swing Bridge above power station
003	2742078	6343713	130	25min; head SW steeply down hill on zig zags then view Arapuni Dam
004	2741733	6343329	112	35min; Cross tar seal road metres south of Arapuni Dam to continue on trail
005	2741440	6342211	133	55min; Memorial to local personage with paddocks to east and bluffs to the west
006	2741351	6341906	112	1:05min; Picnic table and seats (Smoko)
007	2741369	6341543	192	1:30min; Lookout after 10 min grunt from picnic spot
008	2741372	6341539	192	1:40min; Large rock with Koru carving on LES of trail
009	2741339	6341570	155	1:45min; Y-branch on steps down zig zag, go right to exit
010	2741532	6341211	122	1:50min; Exit trail to tar seal, go right towards river
011	2741342	6341161	116	1:52min; Car park with toilets

### NZTM

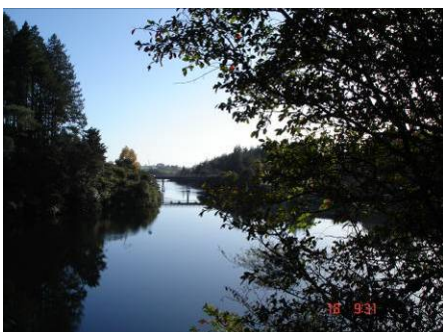
Easting	Northing
1832222	5782793
1831992	5782780
1831880	5781851
1831536	5781466
1831244	5780347
1831155	5780042
1831173	5779678
1831177	5779675
1831143	5779706
1831337	5779347
1831147	5779297

Notice in the above image the clear pattern change from the tree-lined river gorge to the adjacent fields /paddocks. There are also some noticeable changes to field layout and fence lines compared to those shown on the map.



Total Distance : 5.259 Km  
 Minimum Speed : No Time  
 Maximum Speed : No Time  
 Average Speed : No Time  
 Minimum Altitude : 91 Meters  
 Maximum Altitude : 195 Meters

### River view



### Maungatautari view



### Koru carving





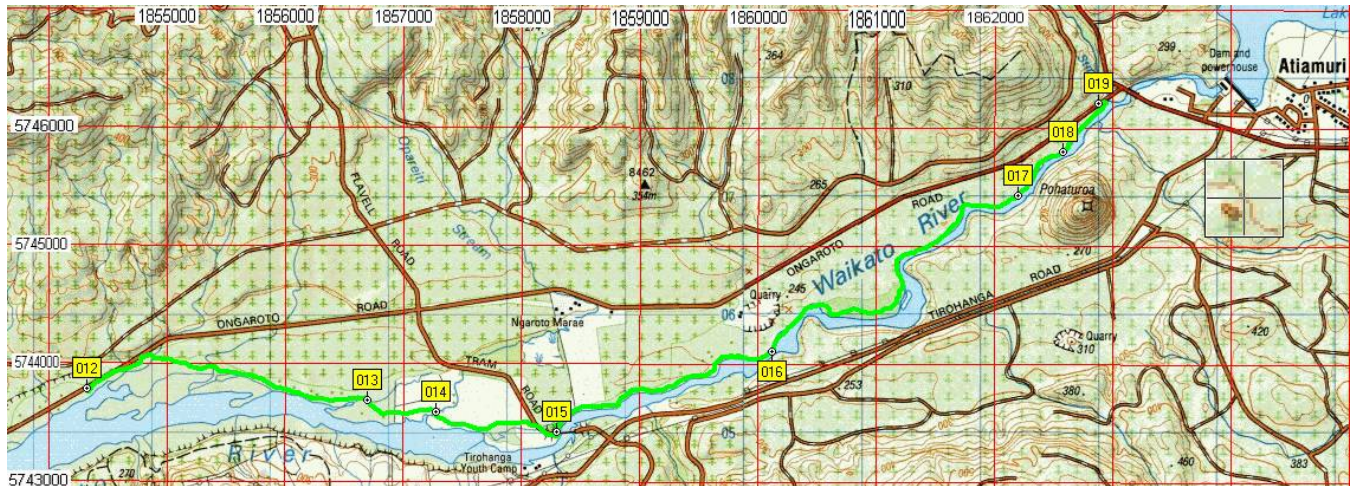
**Detail: Section 2 Snowsill Reserve to SH1 Atiamuri:**

The first few hundred metres of this section of the trail from Snowsill Reserve (**WP12** 231masl) is obviously still under development but there are plenty of direction arrows to be found when new routes are being / have been invoked. Blackberries seem to be plentiful around here so be wary and avoid close encounters. The track branches back up to the edge of the highway at one point but soon it heads off through or round the edge of farmland. Within 30 minutes a river-flat meadow is crossed and there is a small board-walk bridge (**WP13** 231masl) over the stream line in the middle with another after one hour (**WP14** 230masl). The waypoint data confirm what you see and walk over – it is virtually flat!

**Flat meadow**



**Map with GPS data**

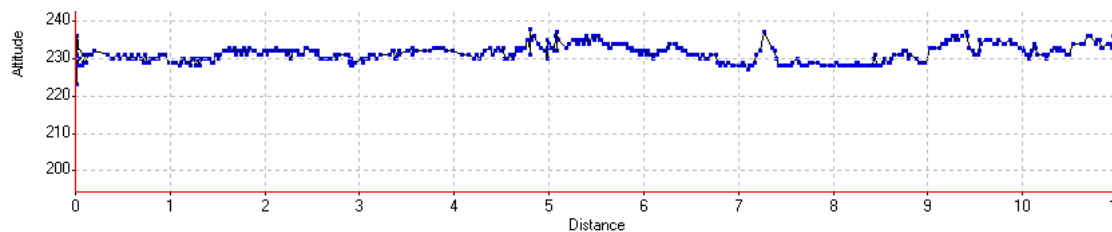


**Waypoints NZ Grid**

Name	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
012	2764449	6305368	231	Snowsill Reserve
013	2766817	6305275	231	30min; Small boardwalk bridge over stream in flat meadows
014	2767399	6305170	230	1hour; Boardwalk over stream line
015	2768420	6305003	225	1:15min; Underpass on Tram Road
016	2770240	6305683	228	1:45min; Small jetty with water pump below quarry
017	2772319	6307007	234	2:20min; Good view across river to Pohaturoa
018	2772699	6307374	232	2:40min; Cave in bluff on far bank of river
019	2773003	6307783	240	2:48min; Edge of SH30 just before SH1 and Atiamuri

**NZTM**

Easting	Northing
1854311	5743514
1856681	5743424
1857264	5743320
1858285	5743154
1860106	5743836
1862184	5745163
1862564	5745531
1862868	5745941



Total Distance : 11.029 Km  
 Minimum Speed : No Time  
 Maximum Speed : No Time  
 Average Speed : No Time  
 Minimum Altitude : 223 Meters  
 Maximum Altitude : 243 Meters

**The cave**



The trail then follows quite closely to the river edge as it skirts the edge of grazing paddocks to eventually pass under Tram Road (**WP15** 225masl) before heading NE. A small river jetty is encountered after about 1:45min – this is the water feed pick-up for the quarry upslope from the river. From this point onwards the scenery improves, or at least it becomes visible and good views of Pohaturoa, with some obvious artifacts sticking up on the top, come into view. A small cave is also seen in the bluff on the opposite bank of the river (**WP18** 232masl) ten minutes before the track emerges back out onto SH30 (**WP19** 240masl) just short of SH1 at Atiamuri.

**Pohaturoa**



**GPS Notes:**

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