

Mountain biking Pureora Forest Park

Pureora Forest Park (78,000 hectares) straddles the Hauhungaroa and Rangitoto Ranges between Lake Taupo and Te Kuiti. It contains many kilometres of roads and tracks suitable for mountain biking. Although the Park is well known for its tracts of beautiful unlogged podocarp forest, the past native forest logging industry has left a vast network of metalled roads, former haul spurs and old tramlines over many parts of the Park.

Mountain bikers are welcome to explore all the formed roads and tracks within Pureora Forest Park, wherever old cut earth or 'bladed' lines are found. A range of easy and technical rides are ready to be discovered. Some tracks are circular while others return by the same route.

This brochure describes some of the general areas where these tracks are found and focuses on three mountain bike tracks currently available within Pureora Forest Park: the Select Loop Road, the Okahukura Loop Mountain Bike Track and the Waione Tram Mountain Bike Track.

The Park has a wide range of users, from trampers and ornithologists to logging trucks and hunters, so please take care.

Currently mountain biking is out of bounds on all recreational walking tracks including the Waihaha Track and the Totara Walk.

Please note that all mountain bike track descriptions and profiles are provided in a clockwise direction.

Access and accommodation

Pureora Forest Park lies between Te Kuiti, Taumarunui and Lake Taupo, and is easily accessed by a number of roads. Cabin accommodation can be booked at the Pureora Field Centre, while Department of Conservation campgrounds are located at Ngaherenga (Pureora Village), Kakaho (off Western Bay Road) and at Piropiro Flats.

There is no retail shop or petrol station at Pureora Village. The nearest facilities are at Benneydale, 15 minutes west along SH30.

Waione Tram Mountain Bike Track

 • **Grade 3 • Intermediate • 25km • Approx. 6 hr**

This track follows quad tracks and an old tram line in the Maramataha Valley in the southwestern part of Pureora Forest Park. Allow a full day to complete it. While not especially technical, it is a long and remote Grade 3 track.

History

The Piropiro Flats area was a small village in the 1930s, including a school and sawmill. The tramlines in the loop part of the ride were a separate line in the 1920s, running timber down the valley towards Ongarue. There was a rail spiral further down this line.

The track starts at the Piropiro Flats campground, located east of Waimiha off the Waimiha-Mangapehi Road. Just north of Waimiha, take the Ongarue Stream Road, then Kokomiko Road into the Park.


From Piropiro Flats, drive or ride south on the metalled road, turning right from Totara Stream Road (1) and

onto the final carpark (2). The track heads up a steep clay quad track known as the 'Panhandle', before descending more gently towards the Maramataha Valley. The route winds downstream a short distance before dropping quickly back down to the Maramataha River (3) (impassable in high water).

A steep ascent on the south bank leads up onto easier undulating country for the bulk of the ride. Continuing on through the forest on an old haul line, the track emerges on an old tramline (4) with a flatter surface lined by toetoe grass (just before the junction a short side track leads to a derelict hut). The main loop starts at the junction.

The loop part of the track traverses native forest, open clearings and cabbage tree/shrub clearings. At the southern end of the loop a quad track (5) heads further south into the Park; while at the northern end two tracks head off (one (6) leads down the old tramline to a hut a few minutes away; while the other (7) ends at private farmland).

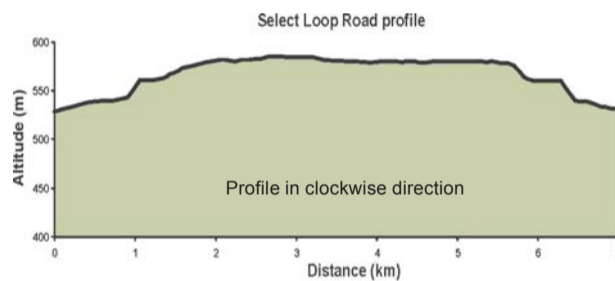
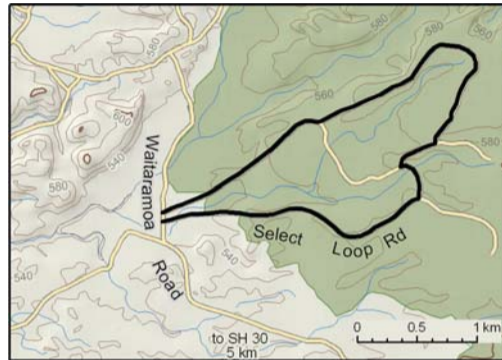
Select Loop Road

 • **Grade 1 • Easy • 7km • Approx. 1 hr**

Select Loop Road is located in Pureora North Block approximately 5km along Waitaramoa Road. Waitaramoa Road comes off SH30 (the Te Kuiti - Mangakino Highway) almost opposite the Pureora Field Centre. There are two junctions for Select Loop Road with the northern junction more obvious as it sits at the corner of a large wetland.

The Select Loop Road is a gentle ride through beautiful forest on formed 2WD metalled roads. Grades are easy and the ride is suitable for all levels of experience.

Select Loop is an area that was used for a trial of 'selective logging' in the 1970s. The forest is still essentially intact and bird life is abundant. This is an especially good place to see North Island kaka and North Island kokako. There are good views of the Waipa Mires at one point.



Okahukura Loop

 • **Grade 2 • Beginner • 14km • Approx. 3 hr**

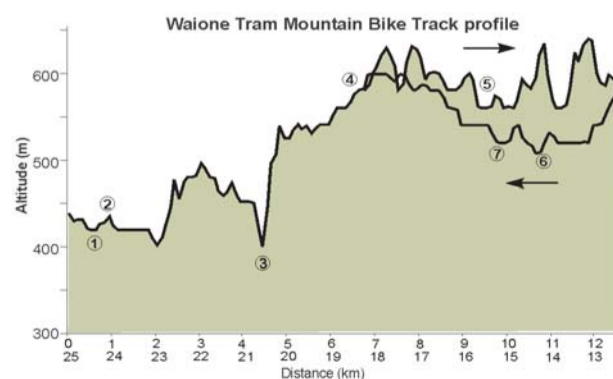
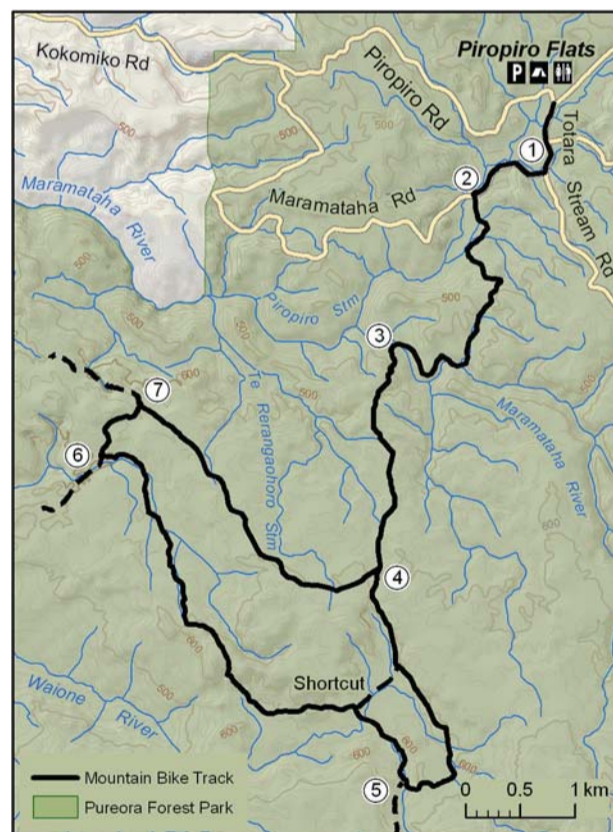
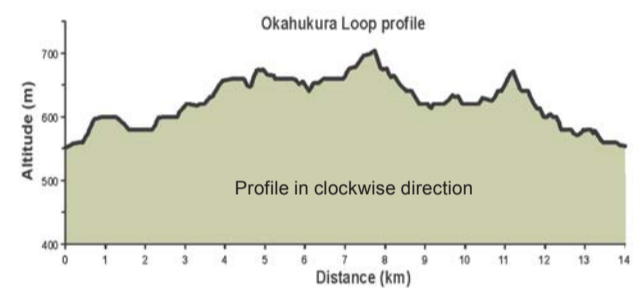
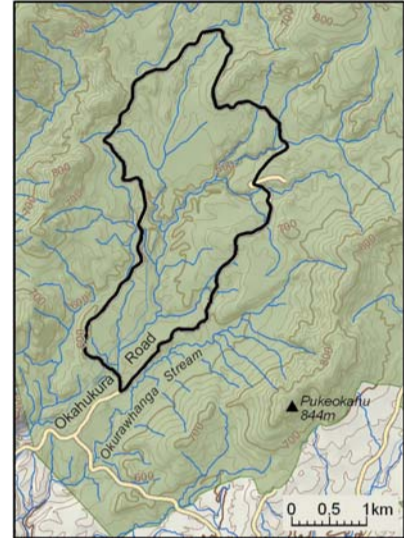
This marked mountain biking loop is also located off Waitaramoa Road (see Select Loop Road section for directions).

Okahukura Loop is longer than Select Loop Road and for more skilled riders but is not particularly technical. It was once a road and has now been restored for mountain biking. This track is also open to quad bikers and part of the track is open to 4WDs.

To reach Okahukura Loop, drive 3km further north on Waitaramoa Road from Select Loop Road and turn left onto Okahukura Road. A few kilometres along there is a carparking area next to the

Okahukura Stream. There are some side tracks but most are short.

There is one unbridged stream along the route, so care should be taken during flooding.



Mountain biking Pureora

PUREORA FOREST PARK



Cover: Mountain biker, Pureora Forest Park

Photo: Dave Smith

Published by Department of Conservation, Waikato Conservancy
Crown copyright - December 2006. Printed on recycled paper



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Pureora mountain biking areas

The numbers in brackets refer to the map.

Tunawaea (Owawenga Road) (1)

Formed roads and quad tracks are found in this valley southeast of Otorohanga.

Ngaroma Road (2)

A long metalled road leads through bush in the heart of northern Pureora, with several rough side tracks such as Bashford's Track (3). The road emerges at a cleared harvest area (4) with numerous rough recent forestry tracks in the cleared area.

Okahukura Loop Mountain Bike Track (5) and Select Loop Road (6)

Two mountain bike loop tracks in northern Pureora, detailed elsewhere in this brochure.

Fletcher's Road (7)

An unmarked turnoff 1.8km along Ranginui Road, this rough metalled road leads across a ford and through open shrubland on the edge of the Waipapa podocarp forest.

Pureora Village (8)

There is a network of short roads all around the Village area, Nursery Road and Plains Road.

Titirapunga – Arataki (9)

Link Road connects Pureora Village to Western Bay Road. Numerous tracks come off Link Road. Titirapunga Road is a long metalled road leading through to the Arataki swingbridge and ford.

Waihora Lagoon Road (10)

There are many old dead end roads around the Waihora Stream area that can be explored. Mountain biking is prohibited on the Waihora Lagoon walk.

Mangakahu Valley (11)

A good rideable track heads up this valley. Ride south to the main junction a couple of kilometres into the bush and a quad track heads south towards the Taringamotu Valley. Tracks also head north near the old Nuffields Hut/mill site.

Piropiro Flats

Piropiro Flats is a great base for the weekend. Shelters, toilets and lots of camping space are available. Numerous old tracks and roads are waiting to be explored, including the old Okauaka Road (12) and Maramataha Road (13). Piropiro Flats is also the point to access the Waione Tram Mountain Bike Track (14) via the Panhandle track across the Maramataha River.

Look after yourself and the Park





- There is no cellphone coverage over most of Pureora Forest Park.
- The Maramataha and Waione Rivers are not bridged and are not passable in flood.
- Take helmet, water, sunscreen, food, first aid kit, compass and the relevant topographical maps (NZMS 260 series S16, S17, S18, T16, T17, T18). A GPS is very useful.
- Be prepared for changing weather conditions.
- Other users will include hunters, some on quads. Hunting is most popular mid-March through April.
- Tell someone where you are going and your expected time of arrival home.
- Avoid bringing seed from weeds like gorse or pampas into the Park.
- Park boundaries are often not marked and some tracks lead onto private forestry land where access permission is required.

Follow the Mountain Bike Code

- Ride only where permitted and obtain permission where required.
- Stay on the designated tracks – avoid shortcuts.
- Be friendly, respect other track users, signal your approach and pass with care.
- Give way to up hill track users.
- Ride in control at all times.
- Avoid skidding which contributes to track damage, particularly when wet and muddy.
- Leave gates as you find them.
- Minimise the spread of weeds and diseases by cleaning your bike before each trip.



Grading system

Grade	Difficulty	Grade description
1	Easy 	Fairly flat, wide, smooth track or gravel road. Easy riding for families and beginner mountain bikers.
2	Beginner 	Gentle climbs with easily avoidable obstacles such as rocks and potholes. Some cycling experience required.
3	Intermediate 	Challenging riding with steep slopes and/or difficult obstacles. Some sections may be narrow track with poor tyre grip. These tracks require moderate riding experience and fitness.
4	Advanced 	A mixture of long steep climbs, loose track surfaces, difficult and/or dangerous corners and difficult obstacles to avoid. Some walking and bike carrying sections.

Further information

Maniapoto Area Office
78 Taupiri St, PO Box 38, Te Kuiti, 3941
Phone: +64 7 878 1050
Email: maniapotoao@doc.govt.nz

Pureora Field Centre
Pureora Forest Park, RD7, Te Kuiti, 3987
Phone: +64 7 878 1080
Email: pureorafc@doc.govt.nz

Website: www.doc.govt.nz

See other DOC publications on mountain biking:

- Mountain biking in conservation areas, North Island (2006)
- Mountain biking in conservation areas, South Island (2006)



Protect plants and animals
Remove rubbish
Bury toilet waste
Keep streams and lakes clean
Take care with fires
Camp carefully
Keep to the track
Consider others
Respect cultural heritage
Enjoy your visit and *Toitu te whenua* (Leave the land undisturbed)

DOC HOTline
0800 362 468
Report any safety hazards or conservation emergencies
For fire and search and rescue call 111