

Walks in Waioeka and Urutawa

EASTERN BAY OF PLENTY



NEW ZEALAND



ENVIRONMENTAL CARE CODE

- 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)

Please remember to check with DOC staff before commencing your trip to ensure that information contained in this brochure has not changed.



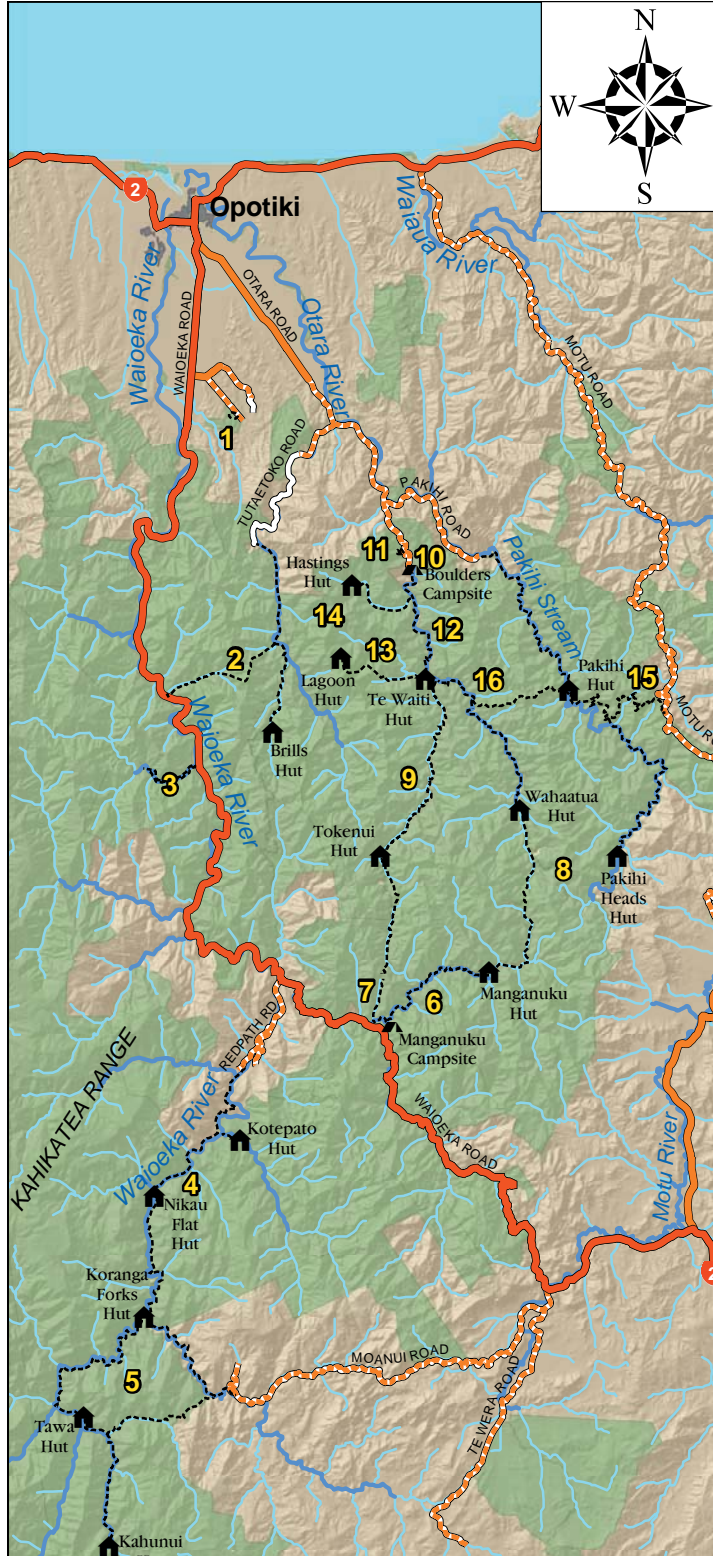
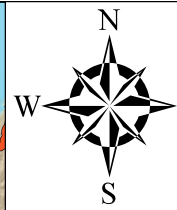
Tauranga Track
L Loughlin



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

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Introduction

Located south of Opotiki, the Waioeka and Urutawa areas are easily accessed from SH 2, which links Opotiki to Matawai. From here, a wide range of bush tracks, walks, historic sites and hunting and fishing spots are available.

The Waioeka and Urutawa areas contain scenic tracts of forest that can be appreciated from the highway. The lowland forest is largely rimu and tawa with pockets of coastal nikau palms. Beech is the predominant forest type above 800 metres on the Huiarau and Kahikatea Ranges and there are several rare plant species present in the lower forests.

A network of huts and tracks in the Waioeka and Urutawa areas provides a variety of walks for people of a range of fitness levels. Longer walks provide opportunities for overnight stays while others are more suited to a family day trip.

History

The Waioeka area (and particularly the gorge) provides access between the western and eastern coasts. Consequently the area has a long history from early Maori settlement, through the New Zealand wars, to early farming. Changes in settlement patterns and land use over time can be seen in the old Motu coach road, the Pakihi stock route and the Manganuku Bridge.

The people of Whakatohea who claim mana whenua (customary rights) to lands within the region trace their ancestry from the intermarriage of the Toi people and the descendants of the waka Mataatua. Evidence suggests that settlement by tangata whenua occurred along the major river systems. There are a number of recorded pa, pit and terrace sites in the area, particularly in the Waioeka gorge and conservation area.

Attempts to farm the land surrounding the Waioeka Gorge have been made since the late 1890s. The historic Tauranga Bridge in the Waioeka Gorge is a vivid reminder of this. It is associated with post World War I rehabilitation programmes for returned soldiers, where returned servicemen were given undeveloped parcels of land. Attempts to farm these lands were met with limited success. Falling meat and wool prices and severe erosion following land clearance resulted in

abandonment of many of these areas. However there are still pockets of farmed land through the Waioeka Gorge.

The Waiotahi, Waioeka and Otara catchments were targeted for intensive soil and water protection in the late 1960s and were protected through scenic reserve and state forest gazettal. Today approximately 75% of the region is protected in reserves, largely in the west and south.

Natural features

The Waioeka and Urutawa areas are characterised by steep terrain containing scenic tracts of lowland forest and alluvial flood plains formed around rivers. Only 10% of the region is below 400 metres and Moanui is the highest point at 1066 metres above sea level. Vegetation ranges from podocarp and broadleaved forest (including rimu, rata and tawa) to beech forest with pockets of coastal nikau palms. Several threatened plant species are present, including carmine rata, king fern and the native forget-me-not *Myosotis pottsiana*.



Te Waiti Stream






M Lee

This region contains a wide variety of unusual or threatened birds such as kaka, North Island brown kiwi and weka, blue duck (whio) and New Zealand falcons (karearea). Other special fauna include the threatened Hochstetter's frog, native fish and bats.

The ease of visitor access and the proximity of developed lands next to many reserved areas may explain why rats, cats, ferrets and other mustelids are very common animal pests found in the region. They, and other pests like possums have a major impact on the ecology of the forest and its bird life. Goats, pigs or deer are also found in almost half the reserves in the region. The department encourages hunting of these animals and permits are available free from any DOC office in the East Coast Hawke's Bay.

Track information

Tracks are graded into the following classifications

-  Walking Track - well formed track, up to a full day return suitable for low to moderate fitness.
-  Tramping Track - unformed, marked multiday track, moderate to high backcountry experience needed.
-  Route - unformed, occasionally marked, high backcountry experience, navigation and river crossing skills needed.
-  Mountain bike intermediate difficulty. Some steep slopes and obstacles. Moderate riding experience and fitness is required.
-  Mountain bike advanced difficulty. Long steep climbs, loose track surfaces and dangerous drop-offs.

Tracks in this area are predominantly tramping tracks. These require skill and experience and are suitable for people with average to high fitness levels. They are marked with orange plastic triangles and sometimes old white slats.

Sturdy footwear and warm, rainproof clothing is always advisable for walks of more than 1½ hours. For longer day trips take lunch and a drink. Leave an indication of your tramping intentions with a friend or family member and make sure that you let them know when you come out of the bush.

Tramps in the Waioeka/Urutawa area will be safer with copies of the relevant NZMS 260 Topomap 1:50,000 series maps. Additional advice on tracks and huts is available from the Opotiki Area Office, details on page 17.

True river directions

True directions are the banks of a river as seen facing downstream: true left is the left bank facing in this direction, true right the right bank.

Huts and camping



Pakihi Hut

G Shaw

A fee is payable for overnight use of park huts—this contributes to the cost of hut maintenance and servicing. Fees should be paid in advance—overnight tickets or annual passes are available from all DOC offices. Some huts in this brochure are primarily for DOC management purposes and not maintained to back

country hut standards. These huts may at times be used by DOC contractors carrying out animal control work. Phone the DOC Opotiki area office well before your trip for information regarding availability of huts.

Designated campsites are available at some roadsides and road ends, containing minimal facilities such as toilets, picnic tables and fireplaces. Fees may be applicable, please enquire at a DOC office. No rubbish receptacles are provided, so please remove your rubbish as you leave the area.

Informal camping is permitted throughout the area. Ensure you leave no trace of your visit, with minimal disturbance to vegetation and water courses and be considerate to other visitors.

Hunting and fishing

The Waioeka Gorge Scenic Reserve and Waioeka and Urutawa Conservation Areas are popular with both pig and deer hunters. All hunters must have a permit which can be obtained at no cost from local DOC offices.

The high water clarity of the Waioeka River provides good opportunities for trout fishing, both rainbow and brown. Check New Zealand Fish and Game regulations for more information.



Koronga River

J Goodman

Dogs in conservation areas

Because of the threat to native ground-dwelling birds only registered, avian aversion certified hunting dogs, guide dogs and dogs used for special services (including conservation management activities) are permitted in the Waioeka and Urutawa areas. All other dogs are banned.

Walks from the Waioeka Gorge

Marawaiwai Walk

30 minutes



This walking track is located 10km south of Opotiki Area Office on Harrison Road. Harrison Road can be accessed from Warringtons Road, 5km south of Opotiki on the east side of SH 2. This track is situated in the Marawaiwai Scenic Reserve which is signposted from Harrison Road.

There is a grassy picnic spot with tables at the start of the walk as well as a car park. The track itself is an easy walk suitable for the whole family and follows a stream through kahikatea forest. This is one of the few remnants of this forest type in the Opotiki area and supports diverse bird life. Some native plant species are named along the track.

Mangapumarumaruru Route

3–4 hours



This track is located 23 km from Opotiki Area Office on SH 2. It is signposted from the State Highway and is well-marked and defined although sections of the walk are reasonably strenuous and best suited to experienced and well-equipped trampers.

The track starts just north of the Mangapumarumaruru Bridge on an old bulldozer trail. It follows the Mangapumarumaruru Stream along river flats, crossing the stream at frequent intervals. After about 40 minutes a sign marks the beginning of the ridge track to Tutaetoko. This section of the walk is more strenuous and may not be suitable for all visitors. It is initially steep and then levels out, climbing more gently to a high point after about 1 hour. The walk then drops down a ridge to the Tutaetoko Stream.

Tauranga Bridge and Loop Track

1.5–3 hours return



The Tauranga track is located 26 km south-east of Opotiki in the Waioeka Gorge. The bridge is signposted from State Highway 2, with parking and picnicking facilities available at the start of the walk. The track starts adjacent to the road and within 5 minutes reaches the historic Tauranga Bridge, spanning the Waioeka River. This is a harp suspension bridge, one of only two in New Zealand, and has recently been conserved to make it safe for crossing.

Once across the bridge the Tauranga Loop track begins and can be walked in either direction. Travelling clockwise, turn left and walk through regenerating farmland on the southern side of the Tauranga Stream for approximately 1 hour. The track then crosses over the stream to the northern bank and doubles back along the bush edge to the Waioeka River. There is a second stream crossing at the mouth of the Tauranga Stream to get back to the Tauranga Bridge.

Mountain biking is permitted on this track.



Tauranga Bridge

G Shaw

Moanui, Nikau, Wairata Track

8–10 hours



This track cuts through dense bush and traces the headwaters of the Waioeka and its tributaries which afford excellent opportunities for trout fishing. The track can be walked in either direction but starting from the Moanui Valley Road instead of Wairata is recommended as it means travelling downstream. As much of the track is via the river bed, you must check the local river conditions before setting out.

Moanui Valley Road is situated 87 km from Opotiki and joins SH2, heading towards Gisborne, at the Motu River Bridge (67 km). Turn into Wairata Road and travel for 2 km before turning right and crossing a bridge onto Redpath Road.

Moanui Valley Road End to Koranga Forks Hut

2 hours



From Moanui Valley Road, take the track to Koranga Forks Hut (6 bunks), alongside the Koranga River. The hut is sited where the Koranga River and Kahunui Stream meet to form the headwaters of the Waioeka River.

Koranga Forks Hut to Nikau Flat Hut

3–4 hours



From Koranga Forks Hut, continue north along the bed of the Waioeka River until you reach Nikau Flat Hut (6 bunks).

Nikau Flat Hut to Kotepato Hut

2–3 hours



From Nikau Flat Hut, continue north along the Waioeka River. About 1 ½ hours north of the hut there is a track to the east that takes you on a 1 km detour up Te Pato Stream to Kotepato Hut (6 beds). Please note that this hut receives minimal maintenance.

Kotepato Hut to Wairata Road End

1–2 hours



From Kotepato Hut return to the Waioeka River and head downstream. The track turns into a 4WD road and reaches Redpath Road after 4 km.

Moanui, Tawa, Koranga Track

6–8 hours loop



This round trip starts at the end of the Moanui Valley Road, which can be accessed from SH2, 87 km south of Opotiki. This is a longer tramp and although the tracks are well marked, you should be fully equipped as some of the terrain is quite steep and the river level should be low if you are to complete the trip. You can walk the loop in either direction or just visit each of the two huts on separate return trips.

Moanui Valley Road to Koranga Forks Hut

2 hours



The track to the Koranga Forks Hut skirts the Koranga River. The first swing-bridge crossing the Koranga Stream takes you to Tawa Hut, continue past this bridge to reach Koranga Forks Hut. The hut is situated in the fork of the Koranga and Kahunui Streams. A swing-bridge crosses the Koranga Stream to the hut.

Koranga Forks Hut to Tawa Hut

2–3 hours



The trip between the Koranga Forks Hut and the Tawa Hut is along the Kahunui Stream bed. The route between the two huts should not be attempted in bad weather when high river conditions may become dangerous.



J Goodman
Kahunui Stream

Tawa Hut to Moanui Valley Road

4–5 hours



The track starts at the southern end of the hut clearing and continues up the Kahunui Stream for 10 minutes, when you reach the Makakoere–Kahunui Stream fork. From here, continue up the Kahunui and into the Kahuiti Stream. There is a well formed benched track most of the way up to the farm land. A steep descent down through the farmland takes you back to the Koranga River and Moanui swingbridge.

Manganuku tracks and campsite

The Manganuku Campsite is located 47 km from Opotiki, adjacent to SH2 and the Manganuku Bridge. This is a popular spot in summer, as it is situated on the banks of the Manganuku and Opato Streams. At the back of the campsite is the historic Manganuku Bridge. It is one of the few remaining 'Howe Truss' hardwood bridges in New Zealand and was originally part of the Waioeka Gorge Road.



Manganuku Campsite

G Shaw

Two tracks are located near the camping area and both start on the true right of the Manganuku Stream. There is a very good waterfall at the junction of the Manganuku and Little Manganuku Streams that can be seen from both tracks.

Little Manganuku Track

2 ½ hours return



The Little Manganuku Track is the top track starting from the north side of the truss bridge. The track climbs a gully to a saddle, providing good views out over the forest and the Little Manganuku Stream. Return to the bridge via the same track.

Manganuku, Wahaatua, Pakihi Heads Track

Campsite to Manganuku Hut

3-4 hours



From the northern side of the truss bridge, take the bottom track which leads into the Manganuku Stream. Follow the benched track on the true right of the stream. The track forks before reaching the Little Manganuku Stream. The right fork will lead you down to the Manganuku Stream. There are two deep stream crossings in high flow. Follow the river bed route to the Manganuku Hut (6 beds).

Alternatively take the left fork which crosses Little Manganuku Stream before descending to the Manganuku Stream. Follow the river bed route to the Manganuku Hut.

Manganuku Hut to Wahaatua Hut

4-6 hours



From Manganuku Hut continue upstream for 1km to reach a set of forks. Take the true left fork and continue upstream. At the next set of forks, take the true right fork and head up the next stream on the true right. Keep heading north upstream for about 3km where the going becomes flatter and easier. Look for the track on the true left to head up and into the head of the Wahaatua Stream. Walk down the stream for 4km to reach Wahaatua Hut (6 beds) on the true left.

Wahaatua Hut to Pakihi Heads Hut

2-3 hours



Follow the marked track on the opposite side of the stream up and over the ridge to Pakihi Heads Hut

(3 beds). To head out to Motu, walk down the creek (in low flow) or up through the farmland (this route crosses private land, please phone the landowner first to confirm access. Contact the Opotiki Area Office for details.)

Tokenui to Te Waiti Route

6-8 hours



Tokenui Hut

3-4 hours



From the north side of the truss bridge, take the top track which leads to the little Manganuku Stream. Walk upstream for approximately 1 hour keeping a lookout for the track on your true right side. The track climbs up and over a low saddle, descending steeply to the Tokenui Stream. Walk downstream for 15 minutes to reach the hut, situated on the true left hand side on the edge of a small clearing. The hut (4 beds) is an old flyable hut, built from plywood and was used in the 1970's for goat culling.

Tokenui Hut to Te Waiti Hut

3-4 hours



The route to Te Waiti Hut is rough and can be gorgy. A benched track starts 6km from Tokenui Hut on the true right. Follow the horse track up to Te Waiti Hut (8 beds) situated 10 minutes down Te Waiti Stream.



Te Waiti Hut

L Loughlin

Recreation in Te Waiti Valley

Te Waiti Valley is a favourite spot for picnickers, campers, trampers and swimmers and is located 14 km from Opotiki from Otara Road. Te Waiti Valley Road joins the Otara Road at Te Waiti Bridge. It is a narrow, winding gravel road that follows the river valley through high, forested river terraces.

Boulders Campsite

Boulders Campsite is a peaceful, riverside campsite 2 km past the Otara/Te Waiti Valley Road turn off. The site has good swimming holes, a BBQ and a pit toilet. There is a low ford to cross just after the turnoff and the road is narrow but cars can reach the carpark. The track down to the campsite itself is steep and rough so drive with care and if unsure, park up on the road instead.



Boulders Campsite

L Loughlin

Te Waiti Hut Walk

2 hours (one way)



This track affords views of Te Waiti Stream and lowland forest and is suitable for a family day trip. To reach Te Waiti Hut (8 bunks) follow the benched track up Te Waiti stream from the Hastings Pole Bridge on Te Waiti Valley Road. There is a stream crossing 15 minutes below the hut which is situated in a grassy clearing.

Te Waiti to Lagoon Route

2-4 hours



Hastings pole bridge
L Loughlin

Head up the side stream opposite Te Waiti Hut for 5km to where the stream forks. The route is rough and there are some deep holes in the stream. The marked track starts on the true right at the fork. Follow this up for 15-20 minutes to Lagoon Hut (2 beds).

Hastings Hut Route

2-3 hours



From the car-park near the end of the road, walk up the road for 400m and take the track on the right at the Bushaven gate. Follow the benched track upstream to the Hastings Pole bridge. On the true right of this bridge head up the sidestream off the main track. Hastings Hut (2 beds) can be seen from the stream on a small terrace on the true left.

Te Waiti Nature Trail

1-2 hours



This loop track leaves the Te Waiti Valley Road about 1.5km from the Otara Road turn off. The walk passes through nikau/tawa forest and is an ideal walk for families from the Boulders campsite.

Walks from Pakihi Valley

The Pakihi valley is located 22km from Opotiki on the Pakihi Road in the Urutawa Conservation area.

Pakihi Hut to Motu Road Route

5 ½ hours one way



This route follows the now disused Motu–Opotiki stock and is graded and well benched. Follow the Urutawa signs and proceed to an old swing bridge. The track to Pakihi Hut (6 bunks) is located just before this bridge and travels along ridge tops above the Pakihi Stream (2 ½–3 hours). From Pakihi Hut the track requires a shallow river crossing then continues on to Motu Road, climbing through dense bush with excellent views of the Pakihi valley and surrounding hills (3 hours). The trip is suitable for family groups.

Mountain biking is permitted on this track (69km round trip, 20km of which is single track).



Pakihi Stream

G Shaw

Pakihi/Te Waiti loop Route

3–5 hours



This track starts on the Pakihi Track. Follow the track to Pakihi Hut. From the hut, continue up Pakihi Stream for 3 crossings until you reach the marked track on the true left of the stream. There is an initial steep climb up to the ridge top and then the track meanders along the ridges before descending down to meet the Wahaatua Track at Stag Flat. Continue down the track to meet Te Waiti Track and hut, then exit onto Te Waiti Valley Road.

Further information

DOC Offices

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Maps

The topographical maps that cover the region are NZMS 260:

Sheet W16 (Waimana)

Sheet W17 (Urewera)

Sheet X16 (Motu)

Sheet X17 (Matawai)

Terrainmaps covering the area are also available.

Safety

You can get the latest information about facilities, local conditions and weather, hut passes and tickets and conservation from DOC Visitor Centres.

If you think there is a safety hazard or conservation emergency in a conservation area, call the DOC Hotline.

DOC HOTline 0800 362 468

**Report any safety hazards or
conservation emergencies**

For fire and search and rescue call 111



Tawa

DOC images