

Huts, campsites and fees

Fees are charged per person per night in Department of Conservation huts. All huts require Backcountry Hut Tickets per night, purchased in advance from a DOC office. Alternatively a Backcountry Hut Pass (valid for 6 or 12 months) may be also used. For current hut ticket and Backcountry Hut Pass prices visit www.doc.govt.nz.

Each hut has heating, mattresses and a pit toilet. Portable stoves for cooking must be carried as there are no cooking facilities supplied in any of the huts. Users are expected to leave the huts clean and tidy.

| HUT | BUNKS | TICKET |
|-------------------|-------|---------------------|
| Port Craig School | 20 | Serviced hut ticket |
| Wairaurahiri | 13 | Standard hut ticket |
| Waitutu | 12 | Standard hut ticket |
| Teal Bay | 10 | Standard hut ticket |
| Poteriteri | 6 | Standard hut ticket |
| Slaughterburn | 6 | Basic hut, free |
| Westies | 5 | Basic hut, free |

| CAMPSITE | FEES |
|--------------|------|
| Thicket Burn | Free |

Other accommodation

Private huts

Private huts require bookings in advance at the Tuatapere Hump Ridge Track office.

- Okaka Lodge (Hump Ridge Track) – sleeps 42
- Port Craig Lodge (Hump Ridge Track) – sleeps 42
- Percy Burn Hut (South Coast Track) – sleeps 16
- Waitutu Lodge (South Coast Track) – sleeps 22

Port Craig Lodge (left) and Port Craig School Hut. Photo: Sarah Murray

Safety information

Your safety is your responsibility. Weather and track conditions can change rapidly in this area, with strong winds, hail, snow and heavy rain possible at any time of the year, causing well formed tracks to turn to deep mud and un-bridged river crossings to become dangerous. Wait if the river is too high. Beware of the tides before heading in the coastal area.

Plan your trip properly. All trampers need to carry a sleeping bag, gas and cooker, sufficient food, wet weather gear and warm clothing. Leave your intentions with a trusted contact. Information on the Outdoor Intentions system can be found at www.adventuresmart.co.nz and the Outdoor Safety code on www.mountainsafety.org.nz

It is recommended that you carry a Personal Locator Beacon and/or a Mountain Radio or Satellite Messenger. Topographical maps are also necessary for navigation – the NZTopo50 series maps covering the area are: CF06 Lake Poteriteri, CF07 Mary Island, CG06 Long Point and CG07 Sand Hill Point. These are available for purchase at DOC offices and most tramping equipment suppliers.

A log book for boat users of the Wairaurahiri River is situated at the Teal Bay Hut. This log book is to ensure boat operators are aware of other boats on the river. Please fill out the intentions log before and after using the river.

Further information

- Department of Conservation Murihiku/Invercargill Office
Don Street, Invercargill. Ph 03 211 2400
www.doc.govt.nz
- Te Rua-o-te-moko/Fiordland National Park Visitor Centre
Lake Front Drive, Te Anau. Ph 03 249 7924
www.doc.govt.nz
- Tuatapere Information Centre and Tuatapere Hump Ridge Track Office. Ph 03 226 6739 or 0800 486 774
www.humpridgetrack.co.nz

Further reading

Moirs Guide South, 7th edition, edited by Robin McNeil
Viaducts Against the Sky - The Story of Port Craig, by Warren Bird
Fiordland Explored, by John Hall-Jones

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Southern Fiordland tracks



South Coast Track

Lake Hauroko tracks and walks

Hump Ridge Track



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Tramping in Southern Fiordland

Explore the dramatic beauty and history of the remote Waitutu and southern Fiordland areas where both recreational and highly experienced trampers will find tracks that inspire and challenge.

Natural environment

Southern Fiordland offers dramatic coastal and mountain views. The area has one of the largest tracts of lowland podocarp forest in the country, with tussocks, shrubs, and fragile alpine herbs found above the treeline. It is home to the endangered long-tail bat, as well as 25 species of native birds, including kākā, mohua, and parakeets. Sea lions, seals, whales, penguins and dolphins are often seen along the coastline.

Cultural history and historic heritage

Waitutu was used by early Māori as an area rich in abundant food supply. Much later, in 1896, the coastal track was formed by government workers to provide access to gold mining settlements at Preservation Inlet.

Port Craig was the site of the largest and most modern sawmill in New Zealand during the 1920s. Milling ceased in the early 1930s but today many relics remain, including the Port Craig School, now a Department of Conservation hut. A 20-minute self-guided walk is located just beyond the school.

Four large wooden viaducts were built during the 1920s to enable locomotives to haul logs over ravines to the Port Craig mill. The South Coast Track now crosses some of these viaducts, thanks to the extensive restoration work of the Port Craig Viaducts Trust. Information panels about the viaducts are located on site.

Lake Hauroko is of special significance to Ngāi Tahu Māori, who consider it tapu (sacred), as it is associated with their tupuna (ancestors) urupā (burial grounds).

Te Wāhipounamu – South West New Zealand
World Heritage Area



Access

Lake Hauroko

From Clifden, drive approximately 36 km along the Lillburn Valley Road to Lake Hauroko – 20 km of this road is unsealed.

South Coast and Hump Ridge Tracks

From Tuatapere, drive approximately 28 km via Papatotara Road, following signs to Bluecliffs Beach and the Rarakau car park – 7 km of this road are unsealed.

Approved commercial operators are able to provide access to this region by helicopter, float plane and jet-boat. Contact a DOC office or the Tuatapere Information Centre for more information about transport or guiding providers.

Activities

Tramping

The first day of the South Coast Track to Port Craig and the Hump Ridge Track are recommended for those new to tramping.

Other tracks in the area are more suited to experienced trampers and require higher levels of fitness, self-reliance and bush-craft skills.

Camping

While camping is generally permitted on conservation land, please be aware that on the Hump Ridge Track it is not allowed at all.

Thicket Burn campsite, with basic facilities, is at the entrance to Fiordland National Park on the way to Lake Hauroko.

Hunting

Red deer and wild pigs are found in this area. For more information on hunting and to obtain the required permit, see www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/things-to-do/hunting/

Fishing

The primary game fish are brown and rainbow trout – a fishing licence is required for this area. Please note that some areas will need a Clean Gear Certificate if there is no didymo in the rivers or lakes. Contact a Fish and Game or DOC office for information about getting a certificate.

Boating

Motorised boat and kayaking opportunities are available on Lake Hauroko and the Wairaurahiri River.

Te Waewae Bay, with the Hump Ridge in the background.
Photo: Wayne Baxter

Community involvement

Many local groups help provide special conservation experiences unique to this area. Tuatapere Hump Ridge Charitable Trust, Waitutu Incorporation, Heritage NZ, W-Jet, the Western Southland Deer Stalkers Association, YMCA and other volunteer groups and individuals carry out restoration and pest control work.

- Plan ahead and prepare
- Travel and camp on durable ground
- Dispose of waste properly
- Leave what you find
- Minimise the effects of fire
- Respect wildlife and farm animals
- Be considerate of others



South Coast Track

The South Coast Track takes 4 days to walk from Rarakau car park to Big River. Track conditions can be muddy, with unbridged streams and rivers.

Rarakau car park to Port Craig School Hut

7 hours, 20 km

From the Rarakau car park, the track follows an old road over several suspension bridges and past beachside batches. Passing the Hump Ridge Okaka Lodge turnoff, the track skirts several beaches and headlands before arriving at the magnificent Blowholes Beach. Hector's dolphins are often seen all along this coastline.

From here the track climbs over another headland to Breakneck Creek, after which it re-enters the forest before arriving at the historic Port Craig School Hut and Port Craig Lodge.

Port Craig School Hut to Wairaurahiri Hut

6 hours, 16 km

The track follows an old logging tramline for 15 km through regenerating native forest. The Sandhill and Percy Burn viaducts are reached after a 2-hour walk from Port Craig, with the Tuatapere Port Craig Viaducts Trust hut sited at Percy Burn.

The track continues and crosses both the Edwin Burn and Francis Burn viaducts. At the end of the tramline the track enters mature bush and descends through three river terraces to a clearing on the banks of the Wairaurahiri River, and the Wairaurahiri Hut.

The privately owned Waitutu Lodge is located on the opposite side of the river, approximately 600 metres off the track towards the coast.

Wairaurahiri Hut to Waitutu Hut

6 hours, 13 km

This track winds through private Māori land and bush-clad coastal terraces until meeting the Waitutu River, where a suspension bridge gives access to the Waitutu Hut.

Waitutu Hut to Big River

5+hrs, 12 km

From the Waitutu Hut, this route is recommended for experienced trampers only. Westies Hut is located in a sea cave at Prices Harbour, signposted from the track about 2 kilometres east of Big River.

Lake Hauroko tracks and walks

Lake Hauroko is New Zealand's deepest lake, (462 m) with its lakebed reaching well below sea level. To Māori, Hauroko means 'the sougling of the wind', as the wind can create huge waves on the lake in a matter of minutes, funnelled by the steep surrounding hills.

Lake Hauroko Track

40 min return, 1.1 km

From the car park at Lake Hauroko, an easy loop walk skirts a swampy area close to the lake. Note how the trees change from mainly matai, tōtara and rimu in the wetter areas, to mountain beech in the drier areas.

Lake Hauroko Lookout Track

4 hr return, 2.9 km

The track near the jetty follows along the lake edge, before climbing steeply to the lookout. On a clear day there are stunning views of Lake Hauroko, Foveaux Strait to the south, the Takitimu Mountains to the east, and the Princess and Kaherekoau mountains in the northwest. This track is steep and rough, but well worth the effort.

Big Tōtara Walk

30 min return

The Big Tōtara Walk, on the Lillburn Monowai Road in Dean Forest, is signposted from the Lillburn Valley Road. Travel for approximately 12 kilometres to the car park at the Big Tōtara Walk. A pleasant short walk winds through forest to some of Southland's largest tōtara trees. This small pocket of forest has never been logged and visitors can see these giants of the forest, some of which are over 1000 years old.

Waikoau River swing bridge. *Photo: Katerina Zavazalova*



Lake Hauroko to South Coast Track

This track is wet underfoot and recommended for experienced trampers only.

Lake Hauroko to Teal Bay Hut

9 hrs, 18 kms

Following the eastern shore of Lake Hauroko to the south, the rather difficult track enters a bush-clad headland. From Second Bay a climb to a 7-kilometre long ridge leads to a steeply descending spur and the Teal Bay Hut.

No water is available between the lake shoreline at Second Bay and the Teal Bay Hut.

Teal Bay to South Coast Track

10 hrs, 17 km

This difficult track leaves the Teal Bay Hut, following the shore of Lake Hauroko to a junction with the route to Lake Poteriteri.

From Lake Hauroko, the track climbs steadily through mature beach forest before opening out onto subalpine tops marked with orange snow poles. This section can be very wet underfoot and difficult to follow. A large orange marker shows the entrance back into the forest, where the track descends towards the coast and joins with an old logging road.

This road passes through privately owned Māori land, with public access available courtesy of the owners. After approximately 5 km the track reaches the South Coast Track at Track Burn.

Teal Bay to Lake Poteriteri Hut

10 hrs, 14.5 km

This challenging route continues along the shore of the lake to a three-wire swing bridge across the Wairaurahiri River. It then continues downstream on the true right of the river, before reaching the Rata Burn three-wire swing bridge. The next 11 kilometres of this track to Lake Poteriteri Hut is un-bridged and care should be taken as the streams can rise rapidly after rain.

From here, trampers may choose to travel unmarked terrain to Slaughterburn and Waitutu huts (See *Moir's Guide South* - 7th edition).

Hump Ridge Track

The Tuatapere community-operated Hump Ridge Track, with its high quality lodges and stunning views, is a 3-day loop track, taking trampers up to the subalpine zone of the Hump Ridge. Booking is essential and seasonal restrictions apply.

Developed and managed by the Tuatapere Hump Ridge Track Charitable Trust, it is the only walking track in southern Fiordland that offers such comfortable facilities to independent trampers. Trampers also have the option to have themselves or their packs flown to the lodges by helicopter and enjoy a hot shower and comfortable bed.

Contact the Tuatapere Hump Ridge Track office or visit their website at www.humpridgetrack.co.nz for full accommodation details and track description.

Track description

Day 1

Rarakau car park to Okaka Lodge – 9 hours, 19 km

Day 2

Okaka Lodge to Port Craig Lodge – 9 hours, 19 km

Day 3

Port Craig Lodge to Rarakau car park – 7 hours, 20 km

View of Te Waewae Bay from Hump Ridge. Photo: Dawn Patterson



Map not for navigation purposes

Track descriptions, hut and campsite facilities



Walking track – gentle walking from a few minutes to a day, suitable for people with low to moderate fitness and abilities.



Easy tramping – well formed track, suitable for comfortable day or multi-day tramping/hiking.



Tramping track – challenging day or multi-day tramping. Moderate to high level backcountry skills and experience required.



Route – challenging multi-day tramping. Navigation and survival skills and a high level of backcountry experience required.



Serviced hut – mattresses, water supply, pit toilets, hand washing facilities, fire with fuel provided. No cooking facilities. Charges apply.



Standard hut – mattresses, wood fire provided, water supply, pit toilets. No cooking facilities. Charges apply.



Basic hut/bivouac – very basic shelter with limited facilities and services. Free.



Basic campsite – very limited facilities so you need to be fully self-sufficient. Basic toilets and water supply. No charge.



Private hut – bookings required, charges apply.

