

## Mountain biking

Mountain biking is permitted year-round on the Haast to Paringa Cattle Track (excluding the routes up to the Mataketake Range and hut). From the northern road end to Blowfly Hut is suitable for intermediate to advanced riders, with some bike carrying. The section between Blowfly and Coppermine Creek huts via Maori Saddle is suitable for expert riders only and will likely require quite a lot of carrying. Slips and windfalls will make the section more difficult. From Coppermine Creek out to the southern road end should be suitable for intermediate riders in good conditions.

## Hunting

Moderate numbers of red deer can be found in the area. As well as the formed routes, the bush-clad ridges and spurs offer good travel and access to tussock tops. Rivers and creeks, however, can be deeply cut, with steep sides and slips. This area is part of the Haast Roar ballot. All hunters must have valid hunting permits.

## Dogs

This is a great place to go for a walk with your dog. Be sure to get a permit first – these are available from Awarua/Haast or the Westland Tai Poutini National Park Visitor Centres, free of charge.

### Hut fees

Please purchase hut tickets before using the huts.

Hut	Bunks	Category
Blowfly Hut	8	Standard
Maori Saddle Hut	10	Standard
Coppermine Creek Hut	8	Standard

## The history of the Haast to Paringa Cattle Track

Travel in southern South Westland was difficult in the 1860s. The main route south was a walk along the beach, with its steep bluffs and headlands. Eventually a road (now the Haast to Paringa Cattle Track) was completed in 1883 and was the main communication and transport route to and from Haast until the advent of air travel in the 1930s. The current highway was opened in 1965. Read about the history of the area as you visit each hut.

The Haast to Paringa Cattle Track is one of the few 19th century main ‘roads’ left in New Zealand that retains a large number of intact historic track features, such as stone cut-outs, and a remarkably complete associated historic landscape, including roadmen’s huts and campsites, telegraph poles and bridge sites.

Be sure to read all about the fascinating history of the area as you visit each hut along the track.

## Further information

Westland Tai Poutini National Park Visitor Centre  
69 Cron Street, Franz Josef Glacier  
Open 7 days (except Christmas Day)

**PHONE:** 03 752 0360  
**EMAIL:** [westlandnpvc@doc.govt.nz](mailto:westlandnpvc@doc.govt.nz)

Awarua / Haast Visitor Centre  
Haast Junction, Corner SH6 and Jackson Bay Road, Haast  
Open 7 days (except Christmas Day)

**PHONE:** 03 750 0809  
**EMAIL:** [haastvc@doc.govt.nz](mailto:haastvc@doc.govt.nz)  
[www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)

**DOC HOTLINE**  
**0800 362 468**

Report any safety hazards or conservation emergencies  
For Fire and Search and Rescue Call 111

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 Protect nature

 Be prepared

 Keep NZ clean

 Show respect



# Haast to Paringa Cattle Track

Haast, Paringa and Moeraki rivers area



## Introduction

The Haast to Paringa Cattle Track offers trampers challenging opportunities within the rugged backcountry environment of South Westland as it roughly follows the line of the Alpine Fault. Over the past 12 million years, geological movements along the fault have caused the uplift of the Mataketake Range that acts as the backdrop for this track. This uplift has caused some fascinating landforms, such as waterfalls descending onto the track at Waterfall Creek and a particularly large landslide at Robinson Creek.

The northern end of the track passes through an attractive mix of rimu, beech and other native hardwood species. On the slopes of the Mataketake Range near Maori Saddle, pure stands of silver beech/tawai can be found, while at the southern end of the range, the track descends into podocarp forest.

The track is well formed, so there are no markers along its wide length, although streams and slips are marked.



Times given are guides only and will vary depending on your fitness and the weather conditions. Tramping in this area is demanding, and you should allow plenty of time to reach your destination.

## General information



**Duration:** 2 days +

**Grade:** Tramping track

**Experience:** Suitable for people who are well equipped and experienced in backcountry travel.

**Best seasons:** Summer and autumn, though there can also be good weather windows in winter.

**Maps:** NZTopo50: BY12 Haast; BY13 Lake Paringa

**Hazards:** Flooding in rivers/streams; windfall; rock fall and slips; steep terrain

**Safety:** Check the latest conditions at the Department of Conservation Awarua/Haast Visitor Centre or Westland Tai Poutini National Park Visitor Centre before heading into this area – conditions can change rapidly.

Safety is your responsibility – tell someone your plans, it may save your life. Visit [www.adventuresmart.org.nz](http://www.adventuresmart.org.nz) to log your trip intentions, along with the details about your trusted contact person. Note your intentions in the hut books, carry a personal locator beacon and let your contact person know when you have returned safely.

*Note: 'True left' and 'true right' describe the left and right sides of the valley or river respectively when you are facing downstream.*

## Getting there

The northern end of the track is signposted approximately 40 km north of Haast and 78 km south of Fox Glacier along SH6 at the Windbag Saddle. There is a small parking area on the side of the road. Lock any vehicle you intend to leave at the road end and don't leave valuables in it.

The southern end is signposted just south of the Waita River bridge. Drive a short distance down the gravel track to the small car park. Please close the gate at the highway after you go through.

The track can be walked in either direction, but this route guide is written north to south.

## Track description



This track crosses numerous small streams that can rise quickly during rainfall. Wait until water levels have dropped to a safe level before proceeding.

### SH6 to Blowfly Hut

1 hr 30 min, 4 km

The initial section of the track to Blowfly Hut detours from the original route to avoid a lowland swampy area around Windbag Creek. It soon picks up the original line. The flat well-benched track then follows the Moeraki River to a junction about 1 hour's walk away. Blowfly Hut lies a further 15 minutes' walk from this junction, across the swing bridge and just past the track to Maori Saddle and the Mataketake Tops.



### Blowfly Hut to Maori Saddle Hut

4 hr 30 min

The track to Māori Saddle winds its way steadily uphill through mixed beech, rimu and kāmahi forest, typical of southern Westland. Sections of the track are quite rough, and in heavy rain, access becomes more difficult due to the numerous stream crossings. Crossings are marked, but the rocks are very slippery, so take care. Diversions where slips have destroyed the original track are well marked and should not be difficult to follow. There are some very large specimens of beech trees along this section, and some relics of the historic telegraph line that ran beside the track.

Two routes head up to the Mataketake Tops from this section of track – the Mica Mine Tops Route, about 1 hr 30 min – 2 hr from Blowfly Hut, and the Maori Saddle Route, 2 min before Maori Saddle Hut. If you are planning to attempt these routes, please see the *Mataketake Tops Route* guide.



### Maori Saddle Hut to Coppermine Creek Hut

9 hr

The track from Maori Saddle to Coppermine Creek crosses 12 streams. Most of these are easily forded in dry weather but can cause difficulty during and shortly after rain. There are further diversions off the original track line, most notably at Slippery Face, where the original track formation has slipped to the valley floor. Care is required to pick up the track on the far side of these slips.

Eventually the track turns to the north and follows a fence line towards the large river flat clearing, where you will find the eight-bunk Coppermine Creek Hut. You will pass two privately owned huts that are in disrepair on your way to the hut, which lies on the true right of Coppermine Creek, furthest from the bushline.



### Coppermine Creek Hut to SH6

2 hr

Follow the marked 4WD track down to the Waita River. From here, there are two options to the road end.

The marked high-water track stays on the true left of the river down to the Maori River bridge. Cross the bridge and stay on the marked track for the short walk through to the car park.

In low river flow, there is the option to continue along the 4WD track down the Waita River, crossing the river four times on the way out to the car park.