

Waipakihi Hut via Waipakihi River, Kaimanawa Forest Park

WILD FILE

Access From the Kaimanawa Road south of Turangi

Grade Moderate

Time Car park to Waipakihi River, 5-6hr; Waipakihi River to Waipakihi Hut, 4-6hr; Waipakihi Hut via Umukarikari Range and Urchin, 6-8hr

Distance 35.3km

Accommodation Camping in the lower Waipakihi; Waipakihi Hut, 12 bunks

Map BH3

Description

It's worth taking three days to immerse yourself in the beauty of the Waipakihi. If you're looking for an alternative to the busy Tongariro National Park and want to get away from it all, it's highly recommended.

The trip between the road end and Waipakihi Hut can be completed in a long day. Set out with a 600m climb up Mt Urchin – a good honest grind on a well graded track. With the clear weather, the view of the Tongariro National Park mountains from the summit are spectacular.

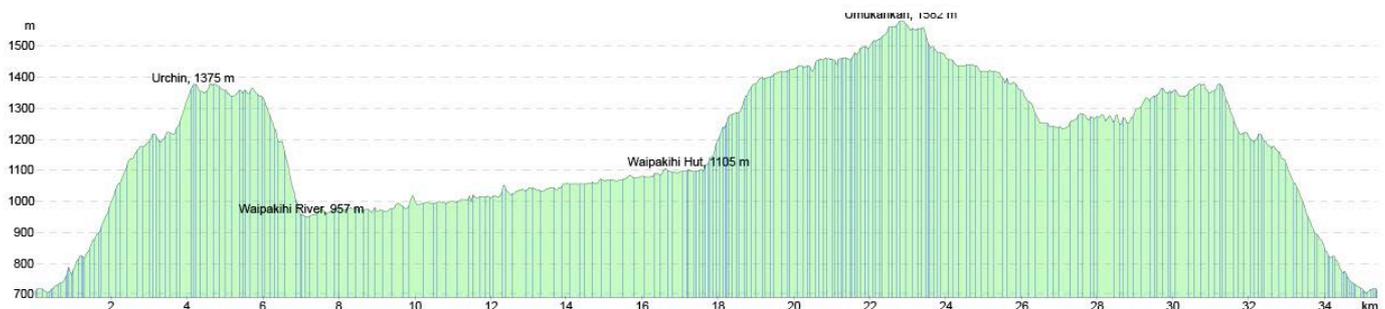
Beyond Urchin, begin the knee-quivering descent into the Waipakihi and camp beside the river.

Trudge up-valley, where the banks of the upper Waipakihi River are surrounded by beech forest broken up by tussock-filled clearings, until you reach the hut.

With 12 bunks, Waipakihi is not your usual Forest Service design. It has a large middle section and two separate bunk rooms on either side, likely added some time after the completion of the original. It's cosy enough with an enclosed fire. There's even running water.

Join the Umukarikari Track, following red marker poles for 13km to the road end. This can be grueling in winter.

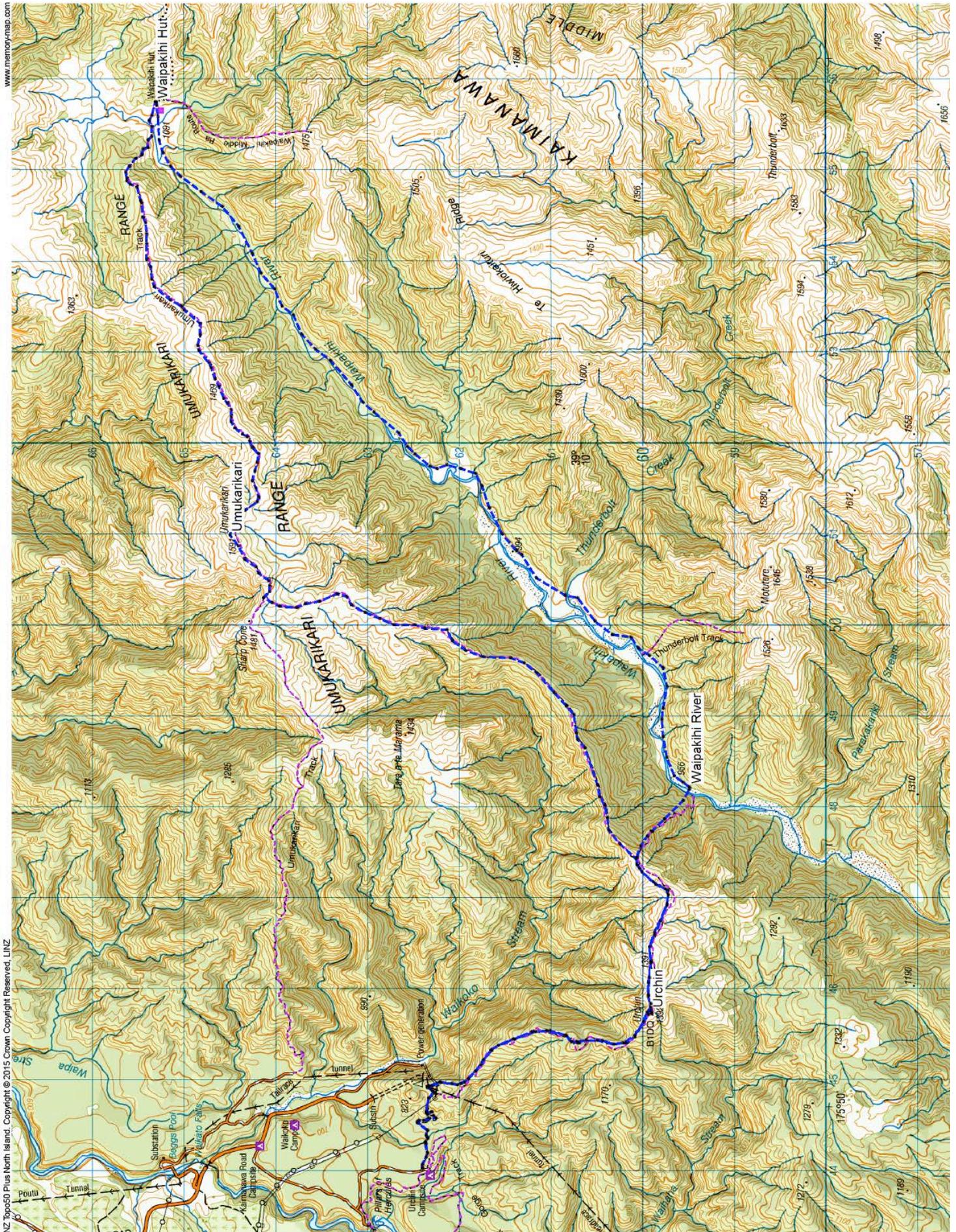
Elevation Profile



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Disclaimer: While every effort has been made to map this route correctly, Wilderness Magazine does not take responsibility for any errors in the route. Users should use discretion when planning their routes and gather as much information as possible before departing.

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