



# THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

**WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)**

PO Box 685, Hamilton 3240 • [www.wtc.org.nz](http://www.wtc.org.nz)

March 2025



Approaching the Mataketake tops Photo by Les Warren

# WAIKATO HUT

Your lodge on Mt Ruapehu  
Tongariro National Park



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Earina  
autumnalis by  
Lynley Mourits

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WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB  
P. O. Box 685, Hamilton 3240 • [www.wtc.org.nz](http://www.wtc.org.nz)

Free to members

Member of: Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand Inc  
Ruapehu Mountain Clubs Association

BULLETIN No 871

March 2025

### General Committee

<b>President:</b>	Rupert Craggs	027 6811926
<b>Past President:</b>	Judith Bogle	027 3810283
<b>Secretary:</b>	Dorothy Cawdron	027 7424222
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Guy Domett	027 2483008
<b>Members:</b>	John McArthur (VP Tramp) Stephen Phillips (VP Ski) Allan Wickens Selwyn June Les Warren	

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### Tramping Subcommittee

**Tramping email:** [waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com](mailto:waikatotrampingclub@gmail.com)

|                         |                                                                                  |             |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Chairperson:</b>     | John McArthur <a href="mailto:mcarthur@outlook.co.nz">mcarthur@outlook.co.nz</a> | 021 2889641 |
| <b>Club Captain:</b>    | Les Warren                                                                       | 027 8644937 |
| <b>Membership:</b>      | Jocelyn Widmer                                                                   | 027 8664795 |
| <b>Member:</b>          | Selwyn June                                                                      | 027 4978151 |
| <b>Transport:</b>       | Allan Wickens                                                                    | 027 9509546 |
| <b>Social convenor:</b> | David Totman                                                                     | 021 868720  |

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### Ski Subcommittee

**Ski email:** [waikatoski@gmail.com](mailto:waikatoski@gmail.com)

<b>Chairperson:</b>		
<b>Ski VP:</b>	Stephen Phillips	021 1031436
<b>Bookings:</b>	Ashley Hoskin	027 4909545
<b>Finance officer:</b>	Michael Barker	021 2463500
<b>Members:</b>	Ashley Hoskin	027 4909545

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|                                     |                                                                    |             |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Facebook:</b>                    | Jacqui Dick                                                        | 021 1375201 |
| <b>Bulletin:</b>                    | Lesley Kuggeleijn                                                  | 027 4942414 |
| <b>Editor &amp; Club Librarian:</b> | Dianne June <a href="mailto:djune@xtra.co.nz">djune@xtra.co.nz</a> | 07 8433066  |

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**Waikato Tramping Club account:** 03 1555 0091625 02 (include the trip no.)

## Club Night: Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2025

Jocelyn walked the El Camino trail in Spain recently and is keen to tell us all about it. If you've done the walk, come along and relive your experience. If you've not walked it, come and be inspired to get moving.

We meet at St. Peter's Cathedral in Victoria St.

Door opens at 7.00pm and the meeting starts at 7.30pm.

## ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2025

	15/16 Mar		Waikato Hut work party	Mary Reed, Stephen Phillips
3174	16 Mar	E/M	Waitawheta Hut	Julia Lile/Judith Bogle
3175	22/23 Mar	M	Waikawau track clearing	Cathy Dickson
3176	30 Mar	E/M	Wairere Falls	Madeleine Fiddes
	1-14 April		Waikato Hut work party	Mary Reed, Stephen Phillips
3177	4-6 Apr	E-F	Music on the mountain	David MacDonald/ Allan Wickens
3178	13 Apr		free	tba
3179	18-21 Apr	M/F	Whirinaki	tba
3180	25-27 Apr		Whanganui	Judith Bogle
3181	4 May		Mt. William & Vivien falls	John Wilson
	18-20 May	M	Rangitoto & Motutapu Is	Les Warren
3188	20-22 Jun	n/a	Matariki & 75 yrs	Allan Wickens
3191	12-13 Jul	M/F	Snowcraft I	Allan Wickens/ Mike Peck

Don't let a lack of equipment deter you from coming on a trip. Talk to the trip leader - who may be able to assist with lending or sharing gear.

### TIME and FITNESS GUIDELINES

<b>E = Easy.</b>	Up to 4 hours per day, pace slower than E/M.
<b>E/M = Easy/Medium.</b>	Up to 5-6 hours/day, pace slower than M.
<b>M = Medium.</b>	Up to 6-7 hours/day, at standard walking pace.
<b>M/F = Medium/Fit.</b>	Up to 7-8 hours/day, pace faster than M.
<b>F = Fit.</b>	Over 8 hours/day, pace faster than M/F.

Note that factors such as party size, fitness, weather, terrain and leadership will influence actual times, so the above are estimates only.

**Bookings and Cancellations:** no later than the **TUESDAY** before the trip. Any person withdrawing after this day without good reason will be charged the full cost of the trip.

**Departure Point:** **Weekend** trips depart from the Gate 1 at Waikato University. Park closer to other vehicles as this area is security monitored. Leave on Friday nights at 7pm sharp unless otherwise stated. **Day** trips depart from London St at the river end- park on the roadside. Leave Sunday mornings at 8am sharp.

If someone is concerned because a trip is **late back**, contact:

1) Club Captain; 2) President; 3) a committee member.

#### **Minimum equipment required:**

**Day Trips:** A thermal layer (polypropylene, polyester etc or wool), an insulating layer of fleece (polartec etc) or wool and a water & wind-proof parka outer shell. Shorts or long-johns/over-trousers in cool or wet weather. Torch and sunscreen. Boots or strong shoes. Lunch, snacks and water bottle. First aid kit.

**Weekend Trips:** The above, plus pack with plastic liner bag, sleeping bag, tent, sleeping mat, cooker, billy, plate or bowl, spoon, food, spare dry clothes for evening, towel, toilet gear, light camp shoes. A water purifier can be useful. Plus, in extreme weather or country: additional warm top, over-trousers or woollen/ fleece trousers, warm outdoor mittens or gloves, over-mitts, warm hat or balaclava, sunglasses. Ice axe and crampons for snow.

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## **Trip Descriptions**

### **Waikato Hut work parties**

**15/16 Mar, 1-14 Apr**

These trips are described in the ski report at the end of all the tramping descriptions.

### **Trip 3174**

### **Waitawheta hut**

**16 Mar**

An easy walk along the old Waitawheta bush tramway in Kaimai Mamaku Forest Park to a well-appointed hut. The track follows the relatively flat, Waitawheta Tramway. After about an hour and a half the track crosses a large suspension bridge to the site of a replica logging bogie (a tram cart that carried the massive kauri logs). There are information signs to show when, why and how the tramway was built. We continue south along the tramline through the spectacular Waitawheta Gorge. The main track requires one river crossing but there is a bypass track that requires just a few small side stream crossings. The track then leaves the river and goes through an old campsite before reaching the toilet bowl waterfall, Waitawheta Hut, and the site of the old logging mill. Waitawheta Hut has two bunkrooms, a separate dining/lounge area, and a generous deck outside. 3 - 4 hrs walking, 7.5 km (one way).

**Leaders:** Julia Lile

**Ph:** 027 478 9989

**Grade:** E/M

Judith Bogle

**Ph:** 027 381 0283

**Emails:** Julia [gjlile@xtra.co.nz](mailto:gjlile@xtra.co.nz)

Judith [judith.bogle@outlook.com](mailto:judith.bogle@outlook.com)

**Transport:** Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

**Trip 3175**                      **Waikawau track clearing**                      **22/23 Mar**

This is a track clearing/camping trip. We will plan to leave Friday at 1pm, drive to Waikawau, Waitomo, and set up camp along the Waikawau River track. Saturday we will do some track clearing on the Waikawau track. There will be time to explore Waikawau beach and tunnel at low tide, either on Saturday or Sunday.

The tunnel was made by 3 men with picks and shovels in 1911 to allow the movement of cattle along the beach to and from Nukuhakari Station. You walk through this 50-60 m tunnel to access the beautiful beach.

**Leaders:** Cathy Dickson                      **Ph:** 021 353561                      **Grade:** M

**Email:** dicksoncatherine@xtra.co.nz

**Transport:** Senior member \$20-25                      Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

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**Trip 3176**                      **Wairere Falls**                      **30 Mar**

This is where the club went on its very first trip back in May 1950. It's on the western side of the Kaimais overlooking Matamata. The track follows a stream and then there is a steep climb to the top of the escarpment with views of the falls from beneath and peering over them from a platform at the top. It's a short walk further on to the junction of the North-South Track. If there is time we may go a little further along the track to find the hidden waterfall also.

I am planning to continue to Aongatete - a picturesque part of the trip. this track also leads to a swimming hole near Aongatete.

Since 2005, volunteers have worked to restore the health of the forest and have witnessed increased numbers of rifleman in the area. With the support of DoC, they have also reintroduced endangered species such as king fern and dactylanthus to the area.

**Leader:** Madeleine Fiddes                      **Ph:** 021 2273560                      **Grade:** E/M

**Email:** madeleine@actrix.co.nz

**Transport:** Senior member \$20-25                      Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

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**Trip 3177**                      **Music Festival at Waikato Hut**                      **4-6 Apr**

Following on from our successful inaugural *WTC Mountain Film Festival* last November, we've decided to have another big event at our Lodge on Mount Ruapehu. This time, its music, with some nice walking to round out the weekend. Although the main event will happen on Saturday night (5<sup>th</sup>), our guest musician Jon Sanders, will be present Friday night (4<sup>th</sup>) for a short session for those who are able to attend. On Saturday, there will be some easy walking and after dinner, Jon will perform, along with his guest singer Sarah Marlowe Spence. The following day (6<sup>th</sup>), weather permitting, there will be some more easy walks. The event will conclude after the lodge is cleaned up in the usual manner, and the latest departures from Whakapapa will be about 3.00 pm.

## AUCTION

As we had a financially rewarding and fun auction at the Film Festival, we've decided to have another one, so be prepared to bid. (*Ed comment: or offer auction lots too*)



**MUSIC ON THE MOUNTAIN**  
a fund raising concert with  
world music artist Jon Sanders

"deeply meditative, impishly playful,  
jazz tinged soundscapes" Irish Times

With special guest singer  
Sarah Marlowe Spence

Celtic, west african,  
arabic inspired folk

ACCOMODATION AND FOOD FOR THE WEEKEND INCLUDED  
AT WAIKATO SKI CLUB HUT  
WHAKAPAPA VILLAGE •SATURDAY APRIL 5TH 5-10PM  
BOOKINGS/PAYMENT AT [WWW.WTC.ORG.NZ](http://WWW.WTC.ORG.NZ)  
OR CONTACT ALAN 0279509546 OR DAVID 0274908560

## OUR GUEST MUSICIANS

Jon Sanders. (From his website). *"The quantum leaping music of Jon Sanders has circumnavigated the globe many times over the past 30 years, entertaining thousands of listeners along the way. His compositions for drop D guitar, bouzouki and ukelele have been covered by bands and used in film, television and radio and he has performed in an impressive number of bands in the modern acoustic scene – see Bio page Jon Sanders Music.*

Sarah Marlowe Spence. (From her website in summary). *"I help people uncover their true potential with a variety of healing and music modalities"*. Sarah is multi-

talented and of most relevance to this event are her music performances. She is also a qualified yoga teacher and can offer classes during the weekend if desired.

#### *THE WALKS*

Two WTC members well-versed in what Whakapapa has to offer, will lead hut-based trips and will pick out their favourite walks that are sure to please everyone. The walks will be easy-medium at most.

#### *ACCOMMODATION*

Primarily, the WTC Hut and nearby (closer to the Top of The Bruce) Rotorua Ski and Tramp. Both Huts hold 32 people. The WTC Hut is about a 15–20-minute walk up and down a rudimentary track that has some large scoria boulders. Once you have booked, a check list will be sent to registrants asking which hut they would prefer to stay at. There is a SAFETY aspect involved, as those staying in the Rotorua hut will have to make their own way up and down between huts (for some several times over the weekend also in darkness at some point). In particular, after the music event late Saturday night. We have to check people in and out in the event of bad weather for example. More about that later once you register. We'd love to see family groups at this event. The WTC hut is fully serviced with comfortable bunks (double and single), reading lamp, curtain on each bunk. Good showers. Sorry, no Wi-fi. You do not need to bring any cooking gear as we have it all. For those walking, a check list will be given once you register.

#### *FOOD*

For those who will be staying both nights or just the one, the meals on offer will be two breakfasts (Saturday and Sunday) and one dinner (Saturday). As people will be arriving at different times, for those who want breakfast it is \$10.00 per time and dinner will cost \$20.00. We will not be providing lunches so bring your own. No dinner Friday night as well. More about meals on registration and we cater for your dietary needs.

#### *TRANSPORT*

Vans will be provided leaving at different times ex Hamilton depending on what registrants want to do. The cost is below (estimate depending on loading). Otherwise feel free to take your own car and meet up at Whakapapa.

#### *REGISTRATION*

Everyone attending this event MUST register at our WTC online site. Note that it is Trip Number 3177. Even if you are just coming for the music on Saturday night, you must also register (again it is a safety issue as we don't want people getting lost on leaving our Hut). When registering we need to know contact details about next-of-kin as we are in a high alpine environment. You must also register as an individual so we can keep track of actual numbers attending (eg – no "Sarah Smith and friend"). This helps differentiate between WTC members and non-members.

#### *THE MUSIC COST*

\$40 per head for adults, \$15 per head those under 17. Please note – although this event is family friendly, we recommend it should only be for kids over 5 years, due



to the location of our Hut, closed quarter- accommodation etc.

We recommend you register early as this event will be open to the wider public realm. If you want to stay in Waikato Hut, then this is a priority consideration.

**Leader/Event Co-Ordinator:** Allan Wickens **Ph:**027 950 9546 but prefer email  
: David MacDonald **Ph:** 027 4908560

**Email:** *allanwickens@hotmail.com* to keep track of participants)

**Grade:** Easy walking but there may be something a bit more strenuous on offer if decided.

**Transport:** Van (Member \$60-70; Non-member \$70-80) and private vehicles

If you want to stay in the WTC Lodge, then this is a priority consideration.

**Cost:** Food: breakfast is \$10.00 per time and Saturday dinner will cost \$20.00.

WTC Accommodation: \$25 per night for adults (17 +) and \$15 for those younger

RTC Accommodation: \$35/night for all ages. Wifi available here.

Music: \$40 per head for adults, \$15 per head those under 17.

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**Trip 3178** **where shall we go?** **13 Apr**

This date is currently free and is open to anyone who would like to lead a trip to a place of their own choosing. Please contact the club captain if you are keen to go somewhere special to you.

**Leader:** Les Warren **Ph:** 027 8644937 **Grade:** ??

**Email:** *warrenlb2017@outlook.com*

**Transport:** Senior member \$20-25 Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

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**Trip 3179** **Whirinaki** **18-22 Apr**

This will be the Te Pua-a-Tane Circuit. It is a 5-day/4night trip so you might need to take an extra days' leave. On Friday morning we will travel down and start at the river Road carpark, stopping at Central hut after 5hours walking along 16kms.

Day 2: Central hut to Upper te Hoe Hut 8-9 hours/17.7km

Day 3: Upper te Hoe to Mangahika hut 8.5hours/15km

Day 4: Mangahika hut to Morangi hut 6.5 hours/17.5km

Day 5: Morangi Hut back to river road 4.5hours/ 13km.

We will then be homward bound via the ice cream shop in Murupara

The Whirinaki forest is home to some of the oldest and largest native tree in the north island. I can promise you will get wet feet as there are many river crossings but only one that is ankle deep (hopefully). Many a time I've been into the area I have seen blue ducks (whio), heard kiwi, heard roaring stags. It is truly a wonderful forest to tramp in. Huts are small and it will be a busy time of year so numbers will be limited and please bring a tent.

For more information check out the website *www.doc.govt.nz/whirinaki*

We are seeking a new leader for this trip. Are you able to help? Please contact the club captain with your offer.

**Leader:** Les Warren **Ph:** 027 8644937 **Grade:** M/F

**Email:** *warrenlb2017@outlook.com* **Cost:** tba

**Trip 3180****Whanganui****25-27 Apr**

Mangapurua and Kaiwhakauka tracks.

The track starts from Whakahoro and ends at the Bridge to Nowhere. This takes 3 days and is 40km long. We will leave early on Anzac day and come back on Sunday. Should be 1x 2.5hr day and 2x 5hr days. You will need to bring a tent as there are no huts. We will staying at the Mosley campsite and the Bettjeman or Hellswell campsite depending on how quick we are. The plan is to get the boat from the Bridge to Nowhere back to Whakahoro, but this is dependent on drivers so the tramp may end up going the reverse way. I am still waiting to hear back from the Blue Duck Station. If we get some time we may have a visit to the café there.

This is a cycle track so should be a good track. We will going to the Mangapurua Trig to hopefully get some views of Taranaki and Tongariro National Park. We will be going through farmland and past some old homesteads, plus there are other historical objects and places of interest. There is slippery creek, Papa bluffs, swing bridges Hellswell waterfall and more.

**Leader:** Judith Bogle**Ph:** 027 381 0283**Grade:** M/F**Email:** *judith.bogle@outlook.com***Cost:** tba**Trip 3181****Mt. William & Vivien falls****4 May**

Tba

**Leader:** John Wilson**Ph:** 021 266 8600**Grade:** E/M**Email:** *jnjlwnz@gmail.com***Transport:** Senior member \$20-25

Senior non-member: Senior rate +\$10

**Trip 3188****Matariki & WTC 75 yrs on****20-22 Jun**

Over this long weekend, we will have three different celebrations combined, to make for an interesting and active 3 days.

Matariki, Friday 20 June this year, is a significant day of celebration in Maori culture, as Matariki is the Pleiades star cluster which rises in late June or early July. The rising marks the beginning of the new year in the Maori lunar calendar. Hopefully, this night will be clear so we can observe the seven stars in this cluster. We will have a special Matariki dinner on this day.

Waikato Tramping Club is 75 years old!

Yet another milestone has been achieved in our Club history. In 2021 we (belatedly due to Covid) had our 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary a year later than planned. We did manage to have a rewarding get together at Pirongia Lodge, but many could not attend at that time. The 75<sup>th</sup> will be less involved but we will have walks based at our Ruapehu accommodation this time. Those unable to attend the 2021 event now have to opportunity to come and tramp or stroll with both old-time members and those new to the Club. (As an aside, for those unable to attend this event, we will hold a special Club Night at our usual meeting place in Hamilton on Wednesday

the 4<sup>th</sup> of June. We'll have old photos, memorabilia etc for those interested in catching up with past Club events and people).

Our Hut/Lodge had its major additions 50 years ago!

This is another important milestone. There are just a few members with us today, who helped with the major refit and gave our hut/lodge, the shape and size it is today. Thanks to the dedicated members we have a wonderful amenity that we can all share and of course there have been other significant upgrades up to now.

The programme:

There will be 3 nights of accommodation at our Lodge (Thursday-Friday-Saturday). On each of the 3 days, we plan to do several walks of different levels. If it snows, we may even have a chance to get to the crater using snowcraft skills. Otherwise, you can have a leisurely weekend based at the lodge. On Sunday, we leave earlier than normal and travel to Taumarunui where we will have lunch at a café and enjoy a talk from a local Maori woman well versed in the significance of Matariki to her people.

**Co-ordinator:** Allan Wickens    **Ph:** 027 950 9546    **Grade:** Sloth to fit

**Email:** *allanwickens@hotmail.com* (preferred contact)

**Accommodation:** \$25 members and \$30 non-members.

**Transport:** Vans will be available (approx. \$60-member, \$70 non-member), otherwise private cars

**Food:** 2 dinners plus 3 breakfasts. Details later and you may have to bring your own lunch/walking food (tba). Gear list and more info in follow-up group emails after registration

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### **Trip 3191**

### **Snowcraft Course One (basic)**

**12-13 Jul**

Once again, we will be holding a number of snowcraft-related events in 2025. First up, is one of the most popular trips we run each year and that is Snowcraft One/Basic. Aimed at introducing you to the alpine environment, you will learn valuable skills to safely enjoy that experience.

The group will meet up at Whakapapa on Friday night and the basics of snowcraft will be taught the following day and Sunday. Trainees will be taught how to use crampons and ice axe, self-arrest, how to walk on icy slopes, navigation tips, basic avalanche awareness plus what to wear etc. This instruction will be done in areas close to the Club Hut, but we will spend most of the day out weather permitting. A full assessment will be done by the instructors of those learning the skills that are taught. If anyone is having difficulty, extra training will be given the next day where necessary. If the weather is too bad on Saturday, we will do instruction in our cosy lounge as far as practical. On Saturday evening, there will be a sumptuous meal in our large dining room.

Sunday's instruction depends on how much we managed to cover on Saturday. If all went well, we have a chance to try out our new-found skills by climbing to the crater or as far as the Alpine Club Hut, the highest inhabited building on the

maunga. We plan on being out for most of the day, returning to our Hut by about 2pm at the latest to clean up and get back to Hamilton at a reasonable time. Given good weather, by the end of the weekend you will understand the principles behind the rather complex concept of “Snowcraft”. It takes a lot of practice and genuine understanding of what is real and perceived danger when entering the snow and ice heights of Ruapehu. Our leaders have been doing this sort of thing for years and yet they never fail to be fascinated by the world of snow and ice. On satisfying our instructors that you have completed this Course with competence, you may attend our follow-up Snowcraft Two which will be held over the weekend of 9-10 August. The third event is our Winter Tramp (date to be determined). The departure time will be early Friday evening 11 July. Most will go in vans from our weekend departure point at Waikato University Gate One carpark. We can pick up others enroute (main highway only via Te Awamutu and Te Kuiti please) and will be based in our large and comfortable Hut Friday and Saturday nights. All meals will be provided.

A full list of gear will be provided on registration (get in early as you may miss out). Crampons and Ice axes can be hired from the Club or Bivouac. Mike, who is the Manager of Bivouac in Hamilton, is the Principal Instructor and he can answer any queries you may have pre-course.

Please Note: To participate in this Course, you must be a member of the Waikato Tramping Club. Application details are on the Club website. Spaces for this course are limited, and a deposit is required to confirm your booking. You must also attend a Gear Evening prior to the Course. Held at Bivouac on a date to be determined this gives you a good chance to sort out your gear needs, especially footwear. Light-weight boots/shoes are a problem when it comes to wearing crampons for example.

**Leaders:** Allan Wickens Co-Ordinator and Instructor **Ph:** 027 9509546  
Mike Peck: Principal Instructor **Ph:** 021 369 256

**Email:** *allanwickens@hotmail.com* or *mikeypeck@yahoo.com*

**Cost:** TBA. Includes transport, food and Hut fees plus gear hire where applicable. (Note: our course cost per trainee represents excellent value when compared to identical courses both commercial and through other Clubs).

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### **Mid-week Walks & Tramps**

We have a walk or tramp on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month. The activities have proven to be as varied as the group is and the communication is via the Mid-week W & Ts Group page on WhatsApp. If you would like to be part of this communication, please download WhatsApp on your phone and text your request to Marion on 021 442 452.

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### **Kayakers Unite**

Who is interested in kayak trips? Perhaps a bit similar to the ‘Tramping on Bikes’ trips. Some for a single day trip, some with overnight camping.

Some where you might hire a kayak when we get there, many where we will each need to have one and bring it.

If you are interested and would like to join in, please email me your permission [theresa.oleary.eme@gmail.com](mailto:theresa.oleary.eme@gmail.com) to add you and your mobile phone number into a WhatsApp 'WTC on water' group and that will get us off to a beginning. And do send suggestions for trips, and how you personally might help get this group off to a great start.

Theresa O'Leary

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### *Editorial*

At our last club night we were well-entertained with Etienne's presentation about we older trampers getting out in the field. And what a field we get into. Amazing. The south island trips are providing many opportunities to do something with the club or gather a group of like-minded trampers and go on a 'private' trip. Of course, I'm always happy when your trip includes participation in a conservation activity such as the baiting in North Pureora (Okahukura) or Mt. Pirongia. One aspect of Etienne's presentation not focussed upon was what are the benefits perceived by the trampers themselves in going tramping at their age. Are you maintaining your fitness, going for the companionship, just wanting to be a tourist in a particular outdoor place, have an altruistic motive, or getting your 'kicks' from the bush? No matter the reason, every option contributes to the latest buzz status – wellbeing. And well-adjusted beings are great people to know aren't they? Next activity to be part of is the 'Music on the mountain' weekend at Waikato Hut next month. If you missed the hi-jinks of the Film festival last November this will be a chance to experience the same atmosphere. Allan & Co are making lots of good ideas come together for the weekend. Please do join in.

Dianne

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### *Presidential blog*

Hello Trampers! In these days of increasing AI infiltration, I wondered what it could make of our club. In answer to " Summarize the Waikato Tramping Club in 5 bullet points" This is what I got:

- ❖ Adventure Enthusiasts: The Waikato Tramping Club brings together individuals passionate about exploring New Zealand's breathtaking landscapes through organized tramps and outdoor activities.
- ❖ Community Focused: The club fosters a strong sense of community among its members, providing opportunities for social interactions, shared experiences, and lifelong friendships.
- ❖ Safety and Education: Committed to safety, the club offers training sessions, workshops, and resources to ensure members are well-prepared for their tramping adventures.
- ❖ Diverse Activities: Beyond tramping, the club organizes a range of outdoor activities, including mountain biking, kayaking, and conservation projects, catering to varied interests and skill levels.

❖ Environmental Stewardship: The club actively promotes environmental awareness and conservation, encouraging members to tread lightly and preserve New Zealand's natural beauty for future generations.

Quite a good summary don't you think!/? Enjoy your tramps with hopefully some refreshing dips in a lake, river or the sea! Rupert

## *Ski club report*

Waikato Hut is in need of maintenance to make it watertight. This could be at weekends or during the week, with accommodation available at the Hut, and with volunteer helpers available. The Ski committee would like to know of any tradespeople within the tramping membership who could assist them with their tasks. Or it could be someone outside the club you may know of. Please let the President know of any leads at: *Rupert.Craggs@niwa.co.nz*

We are also working with the club captain to use the lodge as a base for tramping excursions. Booking system is setup for summer rate only. The password is available from David Macdonald, ph: 0274908560, Steven Phillips ph: 021 1031436 and Ashley Hoskins ph: 027 4909545.

SUMMER BOOKINGS: Book in online at <https://b9c5011ab7bb99eb.sirvoy.me/> or go to the Waikato Ski website and click on winter bookings. You will need to use the code - SUMMER RATES to access bookings/members rates.

Please note during the summer this will not be getting checked every day, so you may not get your booking confirmed right away. If it is last minute, and you know how to get to lodge, that is fine, just make sure there is space and book and pay via the online booking system above. If there is no one else there you will need to open and close the lodge down. There are stepwise instructions for this in the foyer. Hut fees for summer (nightly rates) and continue until June

- Adult - \$25                      Child (0-17 years) - \$15.

Or you can book the entire lodge for \$600 – sleeps 32 in mix of double and single bunks (+2 extra in custodians room) Need any more info or have questions – contact *Waikatoski@gmail.com*

WORKING PARTIES Working parties for the Waikato Hut are as follows, come and help keep the Hut looking great. Soffits need replacing, windows re-installed with better flashings, barge boards replaced, plus other minor jobs.

March 15/16<sup>th</sup> – General maintenance and spring cleaning

Another working party to finish the general maintenance and cleaning and tidying, this might include painting and other maintenance

To book contact Stephen Phillips on *innovative.p@hotmail.com* or 0211031436. There will be a longer session between 1-14<sup>th</sup> April for any bigger jobs that need doing.

Accommodation is complimentary whilst you are on a working party, and food from Sat breakfast to Sunday lunch is provided. You can also get a free night in the hut for later on in the year to use. Transport private vehicles, carpooling. We have other smaller working parties which may require those with appropriate skills, so would love to hear from you if you can help in this area, This could be at weekends or during the week (depending on available of helpers) , with accommodation available at the Hut, and with volunteer helpers available.

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## **Trip Reports**

### **Trip 3159**

### **Mataketake**

**22-26 Dec**

After travelling for 2-days from home to Haast and a day trip to Wanaka to pickup Judith and Jim, we were ready to explore a new area. We stayed at the Wilderness Backpackers which was very comfortable accommodation.

Saturday arrived and today's walk was only a short 1hr 30 walk to Blowfly Hut. A nice easy walk before tomorrow's big day.

Sunday arrived with our destination was the Matatetake Hut which sat on the top of the Range. Fingers were crossed that once we reached the Tops, we would have great views around us. Today would end up being 8hrs.

There are two ways to reach the Tops, one via the Mica Mine track and the other via the Maori Saddle track. After reading about a major slip and some difficulty to cross the slip in the DoC website, my plan was to walk to the Matatetake Hut both ways via the Mica Mine track. We left Blowfly Hut at 0750 and it was a gradual climb to the track junction with Mica Mine track. Took us just over 2hrs. Then, the time arrived for the grind up to the Tops. Once we were out of the bush-line, there was a short open climb to reach the Tops thru high vegetation. Unfortunately, upon reaching the Tops, low cloud and drizzle started to come in and so, gone was our expectation of great views. The poled track along the Tops was of good walking but, we had to take our time and ensure we sighted poles in front of us.

There was one lady already at the Hut when we arrived at 1550. In talking with her, she said she had no problems with a slip by taking the Paringa Cattle track and Maori Saddle track up to the Hut. More people arrived after us and, the Hut was full by early evening.

Monday was a planned rest day with the idea of exploring parts of the Tops. However, the weather was not playing ball so, most of the resting was in and around the Hut and talking with new people arriving at the Hut. After gathering information from the new arrivals on the track condition via the Paringa Cattle track and, the weather forecast for the next few days we, decided to walk out via the Maori Saddle track and the Paringa Cattle track as Wednesday was going to be quite wet.

Tuesday arrived and as decided yesterday, we opted to walk out and drive to Fox Glacier, as it was our planned destination after this trip.

Having decided to walk out, we left the Hut around 0820 as we expected we would have a long day on the track. As it turned out it was just short of a 9hr day. However, we had about 4 tricky side-streams to cross. It was a long 2hrs descending Maori Saddle track to Maori Saddle Hut.

After a short break at the Hut, we set off along the Paringa Cattle track to the Carpark. The track was mainly flat but, had several small challenges with side-stream crossings. The first crossing was OK. The second one was a little tricky but, the third one was a bit more challenging as there was a big wash out to negotiate. Judith found a suitable stream crossing about 100m upstream to easily cross. A good 15min to cross the slip which, probably was the one DOC had an alert for. We arrived safely at the Carpark at 1710 and headed to Fox Glacier. We managed to find a Room for the three of us at the Ivory Towers which was already booked for the next four nights.

### Post-Trip Rest and Recovery

I had arranged for several days in Fox Glacier to rest and explore the area before our next trip, the Copland Track. After yesterday's long day my legs were very stiff and they took several days to come right. My left knee did take several more days to come right, tho. I booked the three of us for a Christmas Buffet Dinner at the Scenic Hotel in Franz Josef. While in Fox / Franz area, we visited Lake Matheson and Gillespie's Beach and walked the tracks to view the Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers.

### **Trip 3160**

### **Copland Track**

**29 - 31 Dec**

The second of my three trips was the Copland Track. My pre-trip plan was to walk into the Welcome Flat Hut, do a day trip further up the valley to Douglas Rock Hut and, then walk back out. A nice 3-day trip.



En route to Architect Creek Hut

photo by Les Warren



Sunday was a short 30min drive from Fox Glacier to the Copland Track carpark. From here there is a river crossing but the flow was very low so, we had no problems. On the first 4hrs to Architect Creek Hut, the track was well graded. Had a few light showers.

After a quick lunch at Architect Creek Hut to escape the mossies, the final 3hrs was over more rocky and boulder terrain. There is a section along the high line of the River. The weather began to rain more consistently and we did not stop too much to take photos.



We arrived at the Hut fairly wet thru.

Not too many people at the hut when we arrived, but many more arrived throughout the afternoon and early evening.

The hut is nice and spacious and bunks comfortable. The Hut is very popular for its hot pools which many used. After learning more about the track condition to the Douglas Rock Hut, we decided to give the day trip there a miss and use the opportunity to dry our gear and take photos. Met and talked to many interesting people at the Hut.

Monday was a day for relaxing, wondering around the Hut and taking photos of the surrounding area. Unfortunately, the low cloud did not lift much from the high mountain ranges around us.



Welcome Flat hut

photo by Les Warren

Tuesday arrived and we were aware that the weather today would be fine. Knowing the track for our return to the carpark was helpful and we managed to take more photos on the way out. Still another 8hr day (walking).

From the carpark, we had a long drive to Wanaka for a few days and nights recovery before the final trip. We were very fortunate to be able to stay at my nephew's place in Wanaka and have some nice home comforts.

The group was still Judith, Jim and myself.



The team

Jim, Les, & Judith

### **Trip 3162**

### **Hopkins Valley**

**3-7 Jan**

On Wednesday 01 January, we picked up Julia from Queenstown Airport, who was going to join us other three on the Hopkins Valley trip.

Friday arrived at Ram Hill Carpark after a 2hrs 45 drive. This Carpark is as far a non-4WD can safely go.

We started walking at 1030 and arrived at Elcho Hut at 2015 – a 9hr 45 day. The first several km's is along a good 4WD track. After about 2km past Monument Hut, we took the flood route thru the bush but this proved slow going as the track once across the bridge was very over-grown. Elcho Hut is a nice 12-bunker in a good setting.

Saturday, we woke to a lovely fine day. We left the Hut at 0830. Our proposed destination was Dodger Hut but, after the first 2kms, we had a major problem – some serious bush-bashing. From Elcho Hut to Cullers Hut, no more than 1km in a direct line with (probably) a safe side stream crossing, we took an energy sapping 4hrs 45!



View up the Hopkins river valley

photo by Les Warren

With some tricky stream crossings yesterday, we thought we would opt for an easier walk along the bush track. After a decent break at Cullers Hut, we continued on our journey to Dodger Hut. However, once close to a swing bridge over the Hopkins River to the Hut, we saw it was impossible to walk to the bridge due to changes of the stream where the track went.

After a break and a discussion, we decided to head back to Cullers Hut for the night. On arrival at the Hut we found there was three mountain bikers at the Hut so, three of us camped.

Sunday – As we were still on schedule, Judith wanted to see if she could get to Dodger Hut by finding a good River crossing. Jim (with a minor leg injury) and I decided to stay at Culler Hut while Judith and Julia went to Dodger Hut.

Monday – Today's plan was to walk to Red Hut. Left Cullers Hut at 0835 and arrived at Red Hut 1235. A nice 4hrs walk on the Riverbed with several stream crossings including the Hopkins River. We had to choose any crossings of the as it

was quite cloudy from the glacier up-stream and quite fast flowing. It is to be noted that the whole valley had many side stream and main river changes due to previous weather conditions than what the Topo maps showed.

As today was a lovely warm fine day, we used the afternoon to dry out our gear and relax. Red Hut was probably the best hut we stayed at on this trip. There were two separate Rooms for sleeping in.

Tuesday – arrived and today was our last day on this trip. We left the Hut at 0800 and finally arrived quite worn out at the Carpark at 1300 – a hot 5hr day.



Tents at Cullers' Hut

photo by Les Warren



Approaching Red Hut

photo by Les Warren

We initially walked downstream to find a suitable place to cross the Hopkins River to no avail, so we returned back up the river before finding something suitable about opposite the Red Hut. As the day was hot, it was quite refreshing crossing the streams. We quickly got changed and drove to Omarama for a well-earned rest and food before heading to Queenstown for the night.

### **Trip 3167**

### **Ivory Lake Hut**

**2-7 Feb**

Ivory Lake Hut is a remote Hut that requires not only a commitment to at least two physically strenuous days of trekking to reach it, but also a huge element of luck that the weather allows you to make the journey. For trip leader Mike, this was his third attempt to get there, but the first one not cut short by weather! The Hut books on the journey tell the tale of many who had to turn back and made for interesting (and amusing) reading each evening when we settled in for the night.

The journey to Ivory Lake involved heading up the Waitaha Access Route, up to Moonbeam Hut (10hrs) on the first night and Top Waitaha Hut (12.5 hrs) on the second, before a nice short day into Ivory Lake on the third day. In total we travelled 34.6km, ascending 2463m and descending 1200m in those three days, most of which can be accounted for with the numerous steep, bush bashing excursions up the side of the river bank to avoid boulders and bluffs. To give an indication of the terrain we were heading along....we stopped for lunch on day two



All photos by Annika Wing

indication of the terrain we were heading along....we stopped for lunch on day two at a point that was 3km from the Hut. We could see the point we wanted to get to at the top of the hill, however, it took us 6.5hrs to finally reach Top Waitaha Hut! On the journey to Ivory Lake we tested the theory that cats always land on their feet (this Kat, it seems, lands on her back when she decides to throw herself down fern-lined cliffs) and Mike pitted his wits against a toilet roll thieving Weka, coming out on top.

The highlight for all of us was surely the day we walked into Ivory Lake. Not only was it the shortest day of walking by far (3hrs 45mins) but it was also reasonably easy going, involved passing a stunning waterfall and ended with us arriving at one

of the most perfect locations for a Hut with half a day to spare to actually enjoy being there. What you expected to see was a hut surrounded by grey rock and a lake, which was accurate. What was a surprise was just how many beautiful flowers were growing up there, lining the little streams coming off the snow melt. It lived up to all our expectations and more!



The route out from Ivory Lake would present the most technical challenge of the trip. We were heading out via Point 2084 and Mt Beaumont, then continuing down the ridge to Tope Tuke Hut, before heading across to Dickie Spur and Mikonui Hut.



We needed good visibility on Day 4 so Mike couldn't contain his excitement at 5.30am when he proclaimed that the skies were clear and we were going to have a great day. And that we did! It was a challenging scramble at times, with drop offs on either side and rock that crumbled in your hands, but slowly and surely we made it up ridge after ridge, leaving the beautiful lake behind us and setting our sights on Mt Beaumont, where we met three brothers who had camped on the tops and were

heading out the same way as us. We teamed up for the rest of the day and most of the next, and as the clag set in, picked our way down to Tope Tuke Hut where there was a sense of relief that we had made it through what could have been the most difficult day of the trip unscathed.

From here the plan was to go to Dickie Spur Hut and then walk out on the 6<sup>th</sup> day, but we arrived at the junction for Dickie Spur at lunch time so decided to push on to Mikonui Hut. The advantage of that was having a 1-hour last day.



The disadvantage that none of us anticipated was the sleepless night that followed as we became unwilling blood donors for the local insect population whilst being way too warm to stay in our sleeping bags. Not the best end to what was an epic trip, but with another 29.7km, 1956m ascent, 3192m descent and the most incredible views of the blooming Rata trees under our belts on the way out from Ivory Lake, it was certainly a trip to remember for all the right reasons.

Participants: Mike P, Kat R, Annika W, and Lauren & Craig, non-club members.

### **Trip 3168**

### **Exploring Hawkes Bay**

**6/7 Feb**

On a fine Waitangi Day, 5 Club members ventured to Napier to explore some walks. We took our time travelling to Napier which included a lunch stop in Taupo on the way thru. Arriving in Napier, we located our motel and after a break, we headed into Town for a look around and dinner.

In looking at the weather forecast for the next few days, Friday looked the better day for a visit to Te Mata Peak. So, we booked a morning tour to the Gull Colony at Cape Kidnappers and, did a loop walk at Te Mata Peak in the afternoon.

Friday - The 3hr tour to the Gannet Colony was definitely well worth the \$96. After lunch, we stretched our legs and walked a 3hr circuit around Te Mata Peak. The weather was a pleasant overcast day. The track was well graded. After returning to our Motel, a quick shower and change, we ventured into town for dinner.

Saturday – After breakfast, we drove about 2hrs to Bell Rock. It was a nice walk from the carpark (forget the time) to Bell Rock. I had been here a few years

previously and we had another good day for the views. Bell Rock is a very popular walk and today was no exception judging by the number of people we saw. After this walk, we drove to Waipatiki Beach, where I had also visited previously. Here, there is a coastal track north of the Beach but, unfortunately, it was very overgrown and we only went so far. After this, we drove back to our motel for a shower and change before heading out for dinner.

Sunday – Time to head back home. After breakfast, we headed home via the Heritage Trail along Puketitiri Road and stopped at a few heritage places. On the trip were: Les (Leader and Scribe), Judith, Ross, Kevin and Julie.

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### *From the committee table:*

**New Members:** Zoe Qu, Susan Duncan, Dot Larsen.

**Resignations:** Callum McDougal, Sharon Roil, Issac Newbery Rose Kemp-Lloyd, Annette Whittle, Ramesh Subramonian.

**Membership:** The club has 188 tramping members.

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### *Snippets*

➤ **The Cone becomes Pūāwhē.** The New Zealand Geographic Board (Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa ) recently decided to change the unofficial recorded place name The Cone to an original Māori name Pūāwhē, which at 953m is the second highest peak on Pirongia Mountain. The proposer advised that Pūāwhē is a traditional name on Pirongia Mountain as recorded in the lament Kāore te rangi nei, a story of love and conflict between Māori and patupaiarehe (spirit people) and was used to refer to the mountain as a whole. The Cone is the only major peak on Pirongia Mountain not to have an original Māori name.

The Cone has been in long term use on plans and maps for 120 years. However, there is evidence in a waiata published in 1894 and Ngāti Maniapoto oral history that Pūāwhē is an original Māori name on the maunga. The proposer provided evidence of support on behalf of Pūrekireki Marae, and Shane Te Ruki on behalf of Te Kōpua Marae, home of Ngāti Unu and Ngāti Kahu.

The maunga attracts high recreational use and The Cone may be an important reference for emergency response. However, altering the name is unlikely to cause identification issues when communicating with emergency services as they rely on digital technology to locate an emergency. The Cone would also be recorded as an alias in emergency services' databases.

Source: New Zealand Geographic Board website, decision announced 18/12/24

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### *....from DoC.....*

➤ Crucial new work on the **Kakariki karaka/orange fronted parakeet** population is being established on Pukenui/Anchor island following the release of 34 of the critically endangered manu there. The birds were bred at the Isaac Conservation & Wildlife Trust and Orana Wildlife Park before being flown to



Invercargill where they were met by iwi representatives and accompanied on a helicopter journey to the island. Kakariki are our smallest parrots but they have a great deal of mana. Kākāriki karaka are extremely vulnerable to introduced predators, so finding safe places for them to live and breed in the wild is vitally important for the species' survival. The predator-free beech and rimu forest on Pukenui/Anchor Island should be a great site for kākāriki karaka to flourish.

➤ Future blooms bright for rare nationally endangered **Gardners'tree daisy** germinated at Tongariro Prison Nursery. The seedlings are the product of a growing partnership between DoC and the Department of Corrections. Commonly known as Gardner's tree daisy, *Olearia gardneri* is found in the southern half of the North Island. The small tree is dependent on conservation efforts as its seeds fail to germinate in dense introduced grasses. DoC Biodiversity Ranger Lois Allison-Cooper says *Olearia gardneri* is unique to New Zealand. "It's one of our few native deciduous trees, so it looks dead in winter then revives in the warmer weather with small leaves and white flowers." "We collected seed from a known population in Paengaroa Scenic Reserve near Taihape – it seems to like shrubby forest edges and semi-permanent pools of water." "Prisoners working in the nursery are trained to level 2 horticulture, which provides them with skills and qualifications that prepare them for employment upon release. Lois says the seedlings will remain at the nursery until large enough to survive in the wild, where they'll grow to be up to 3 metres tall. The seedlings will give the wild population a real boost, we're fortunate to have this relationship with Corrections." *Olearia gardneri* is threatened by habitat loss, animal browsing, introduced weeds, and a lack of seedling recruitment.

➤ New Zealand is partnering with global conservation charities to raise \$137 million to **rewild some of Aotearoa's largest islands** so they become safe havens for native wildlife found nowhere else in the world. DoC and partners are joining the international Island-Ocean Connection Challenge (IOCC) to boost conservation efforts on subantarctic Maukahuka/Auckland Island, Rakiura/Stewart Island and the Chatham Islands.

The IOCC, led by international conservation groups, Island Conservation and Re:wild, and UC San Diego's Scripps Institution of Oceanography, aims to restore at least 40 globally significant island-ocean ecosystems around the world by 2030. An ambitious plan to remove invasive species, protect threatened wildlife, and restore the island ecosystems so they're resilient to climate change has been agreed by DoC, Ngāi Tahu, Moriori, Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri and community partners. DoC's Director-General Penny Nelson says joining the IOCC will help New Zealand promote and amplify groundbreaking island conservation on the world stage. "For millions of years, New Zealand's native species evolved separately from the rest of the world. They're unique, they're only found here, and once they're gone from here, they're gone from everywhere. These islands are precious remnants of a prehistoric world. Protecting and restoring them will make

sure they become safe havens for iconic native species once more. We want to see the return of fields of chest-high flowering megaherbs on Maukahuka/Auckland Island, thriving colonies of diverse seabirds like tāiko and albatross on the Chatham Islands and Rakiura becoming a refuge for kākāpō. Partnering with the IOCC connects us with international donors who want to restore nature. We're thrilled that just last month a generous New Zealander donated \$100,000 to the Auckland Island project, adding to the \$11.5 million already raised through philanthropy across the three projects." Penny Becker, CEO of Island Conservation, says, "We are beyond excited to welcome these three important New Zealand restoration projects into our global portfolio of island-ocean ecosystems. "Our success in restoring the small offshore islands surrounding Rakiura has laid the pathway for the mahi that needs to be done on Rakiura and Maukahuka," Dean Whaanga says. New Zealand is world renowned for island conservation work with over 110 successful island pest eradications achieved so far and an ambitious nationwide Predator Free 2050 goal. However, the 3 latest island projects will be ground-breaking in their scale and complexity.

Each island is 4-15 times larger than the biggest New Zealand island (Campbell Island) previously cleared of pests. Their remoteness from the mainland, difficult terrain, wild weather and multiple animal pest species presents unique challenges. Human settlements are also present on Rakiura and the Chatham Islands, marking a first for New Zealand predator free projects of this scale. The local communities play a crucial part in the restoration of these islands.

Plans for removing introduced predators from the three islands have been underway for many years and are well advanced. Investment in these projects will unlock new methods and grow the toolbox for eradicating harmful introduced predators both in Aotearoa and around the world.

The government has invested \$54 million in the three island conservation projects, which are estimated to cost a total of \$202 million. With \$11.5 million donated so far, this leaves \$137 million still to be raised.

.....  
*from FMC.....*

➤ FMC's Submission on **Modernising Conservation Land Management**.

FMC has summited feedback on the proposed framework, emphasizing the core values and principles that should guide conservation land management. FMC broadly supports a simplified planning framework but highlights key areas of concern: **Public consultation must remain central;**

**Fairer concession processes;**

**Clarity is needed;**

**No land swaps or disposals;**

**Commitment to Treaty principles.**

For more information on these highlights, go to the FMC website and check out the News/events section.



A break at Monument Hut Photo by Les Warren



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