



THE WAIKATO TRAMPER

Official Bulletin of

WAIKATO TRAMPING CLUB (INC)

PO Box 685, Hamilton 3240 • www.wtc.org.nz

September 2022



The view we don't want Photo by Allan Wickens

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Free to members

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

BULLETIN No 841

September 2022

General Committee

(Contact details listed below)

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Stephen Phillips Allan Wickens Lois Rowell Ashley Hoskin Mike Barker	
Mike Nightingale	07 8562394

Tramping Subcommittee

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Club Captain: Les Warren	027 8644937
Membership: Lois Rowell loiserowell@gmail.com	027 2881148
Member: Selwyn June	027 4978151
Rupert Craggs	027 6811926
Web & Facebook: Rizal Razak	021 2676566
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Social convenor: Jacqui Dick	021 1375201

Ski Subcommittee

Ski email: waikatoski@gmail.com	Waikato Hut phone: 07 8923821
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Ashley Hoskin	027 4909545

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Editor & Club Librarian: Dianne June djune@xtra.co.nz	07 8433066

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

Club night, Wednesday 5th October

Remember to bring along or submit your photo competition entries by this club night. Refer to the 'Snippets' section for category details.

Discussions are underway for the guest speaker at the next club night.

Watch this space.

Social activity: What a hoot! Jacqui & Ron Dick organised a quiz night but their son Jordan had a few fingers in the pie and elevated the quiz from 'boring' to 'heaps of fun'. Lots of effort went into selecting 98 or 10 questions per round on topics varying from WTC and it's history (did you know that Robin Russell is our oldest current member?) to geography, eyes, nature and even a very short music segment- like about 1 second in the first round. We were so clever that 5 of the 6 teams of 4 guessed what the piece was and the larrikins team took a few more rounds i.e. seconds before they got it. What they didn't get was a prize at the end for being at the end. Team 'Clever kiwis' were prescient (look that up) as they won the game with 79 points and were awarded a large box of chocolates to share. Jacqui was the record keeper while Ron was the inscrutable presenter and judge – he wouldn't allow any discussion to be entered into. Never mind, the 'Clever kiwis' still won. Gosh those chocolates were nice. The team was Jeanette Dobson, Kathy Dickson, a guest/future club member, and your editor. Yum, yum, yum. May thanks must go to Jacqui & Ron & Jordan for some great entertainment. Here's hoping it kicks off more a higher attendance at club nights.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2021/2022

3022	17/18 Sept	E/M	Waikaremoana	Judith Bogle
3023	25 Sept	E/M	Maungatautari maintenance	John McArthur
	28 Sept		Trip planning meeting	Les Warren
3024	Sat – 1 Oct	Easy !	Bushcraft training	Les Warren
	5 Oct		CLUB NIGHT	
3025	8/9 Oct	M	Kauaeranga - Rangihau	John Wilson
3026	15 Oct	M	Caving	Jacqui Dick & Andrew Fredrickson
3027	20-24 Oct	F	Northern Tararua Crossing	Jeanette Dodson
3028	30 Oct	M	Wairere falls & higher	John Wilson
	2 Nov		CLUB NIGHT	
3029	5/6 Nov	M/F	Marokopa beach bonfire	Rupert Craggs
3030	7-11 Nov	M/F	Kaimai traverse	Jeanette Dodson

3031	13 Nov	E	Photography – waterfall specials	Nicola Guy
	18 Nov		Film evening	Graham Haines
3032	20 Nov	E/M	Volunteer mine	Rizal Razak
3033	25-27 Nov	E/M/F	Bream Head	Les Warren
3034	3 Dec		Christmas dinner	
	7 Dec		CLUB NIGHT	
3037	17 or 18 Dec	F	Mountain Madness	John McArthur

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

E = Easy. Up to 4 hours per day, pace slower than E/M.

E/M = Easy/Medium. Up to 5-6 hours/day, pace slower than M.

M = Medium. Up to 6-7 hours/day, at standard walking pace.

M/F = Medium/Fit. Up to 7-8 hours/day, pace faster than M.

F = Fit. 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 WEDNESDAY before the trip.

Any person withdrawing after this day without good reason will be charged the full cost of the trip.

Departure Point: Trips depart from the river end of London Street. Cars can be parked, facing the road, in the car park on the right at the end of the cul de sac. If in doubt contact your trip leader.

Weekend Trips: leave on Friday nights at 7pm sharp unless otherwise stated.

Day Trips: leave Sunday mornings at 8am sharp.

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

1) Club Captain; 2) President; 3) 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 longjohns/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.

Trip Descriptions

REMEMBER: 2 clicks to confirm your booking on the website

Trip 3022 **Waikaremoana** **17/18 Sept**

This is a weekend trip, where we will stay at the cabins at Waikaremoana Camping ground. The idea is to do day walks, which could include going to the Ngamoko - Kaitawa Track (5 hours), this goes through to the trig and would need transport from the other end, Aniwaniwa Valley Track (6 Hours), Ruapani Circuit (6 hours) or even walking up to the Bluff if it is a nice day. There are other options as well, with many short walks to waterfalls and lakes. If people want to spend longer there to do more walks let me know. The idea would be to go on Friday night and come back Sunday. It is a 4-hour drive so I would like to leave as early as possible on the Friday.

Leader: Judith Bogle **Ph:** 027 3810283 **Grade:** E/M

Transport: Senior member \$45-75 Senior non-member: \$50-80

Accommodation: tbc

Trip 3023 **Maungatautari maintenance** **25 Sept**

This will be a rather relaxed tramp into the northern entrance to Maungatautari with secateurs and loppers in hand. I am told that the main tramping track to the peak has had some work done on it, but could do with some clean-back trimming. Likewise, there are other monitoring lines that we can walk through and trim the vegetation overgrowth.

My "plan" will be to do the tramping track to the peak first, trimming as we go, and if we then have time we can do a monitoring line on the mountain or in the Northern Enclosure. Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari are always looking for volunteers and this may be a good way to take a look at one task that you could volunteer for. The bird life should be good with spring in the air.

Bring normal Sunday tramping gear, food and water etc, and secateurs, loppers and / or small hand saw. Bring your camera too for possible Tieke, Hihi and other little taonga.

Leader: John McArthur **Ph:** 021 2889641 **Grade:** E/M

Transport: Senior member \$21-35 Senior non-member: \$26-40

Trip 3024 **Bushcraft training** **1 Oct**

Note this event will take place on a **SATURDAY**. A draft programme has been prepared.

We are seeking interested people to cover various topics but some do not have a name against them. Do you have experience / interest on any topics that you are happy to share with the participants? This is an opportunity for keen people to pass on their experience and knowledge. The programme is based on the New Zealand Mountain Safety Council Bush craft Manual. Some of the topics will be interactive and more detail is available than is listed here. There will a lunch break during which time you can look at the displays at the centre too.

Venue: Kauaeranga Valley DoC Visitor Centre. Time: 9AM – 4.30pm approx.

Topics to be covered are:

Going outdoors; Environmental Care; Trip Planning; Managing risk; Clothing*; Equipment*; Food*; Shelter*; Weather; Tramping skills; Navigation; Hazards; Above the bushline*; Emergency procedures; River safety*.

The topics marked with an ‘*’ require presenters.

If interested, please contact Les as soon as possible:

Leader: Les Warren

Ph: 027 8644937

Grade: n/a

Transport: Senior member \$21-35

Senior non-member: \$26-40

Trip 3025

Kauaeranga Valley to Rangihau

8/9 Oct

It is a while since the club has done this trip. Starting on Saturday morning, we'll drive to the end of the Kauaeranga and tramp up Webb Creek and on to Pinnacles Hut, where we'll check out the nearby Dancing Camp Dam and take a side trip up The Pinnacles. Backtracking a little, we'll take the track down into the upper Kauaeranga River, where we'll camp. Those interested in kauri logging history can walk a short distance down the river to the remains of the Main Dam, a huge affair that had two gates. On Sunday we'll cross the river and climb out of the valley on the Rangihau Track and follow that all the way down to the Rangihau River, and out to Rangihau Road. About 5 hours tramping each day. We will need a driver to take the van around to Coroglen to meet us.

Leader: John Wilson

Ph: 0211682082

Grade: M

Transport: Senior member \$45-75

Senior non-member: \$50-80

Trip 3026

Caving

15 Oct

Two members from the Tomo Society will take us into Gardners Gut Cave and the Cleft of the Orcs (abseiling in). There is a possibility of side trips along the way being added, depending on the groups' capability. 4-6 hours underground. There won't be any actual swimming but some waist deep pools so we will be getting wet! Helmets and lights as well as abseiling gear will be provided.

This trip is limited to 10 participants due to ratio of non-cavers to cavers.

Leader: Jacqui Dick

Ph: 021 1375201

Grade: M/F

Andrew Frederickson

Transport: Senior member \$21-35

Senior non-member: \$26-40

Trip 3027

Tararua Northern Crossing

20-24 Oct

The Northern Crossing links the Ōhau and Waingawa catchments. Depending on weather conditions it can take between three to five days to complete. Due to storm damage, some tracks and huts are not available and we will need to camp.

Thursday 20th October late afternoon depart Hamilton, overnight in Palmerston North.

Day 1 Friday 21st. Drive to Levin. We will take the Waiopahu track to Te Matawai Hut - 9 to 10 hours.

Day 2 Saturday 22nd. The track continues to Pukematawhai, then via an unmarked route to Arete, Lancaster, the Waiohine Pinnacles and the traverse of Tarn Ridge.

Trip 3033

Bream Head

25-27 Nov

This trip is being organised by the ‘Tramper of the Year’

For those interested in a trip to an area the club does not often visit.

Please contact the leader before October 1st as he needs to know rough numbers for booking accommodation and, also, what is your preferred accommodation. The plan is to leave Hamilton early Friday morning and arrive at our accommodation in Whangarei around lunch-time. In the afternoon we will do a short walk.

Saturday – The main trip will do the Te Whara Track (5-6hrs) for those interested. There will also be several shorter easy tracks for others to do. Saturday night – group dinner.

Sunday – Either do a morning walk around Whangarei before heading home or I am looking at doing something on the way home. More details to come.

Leader: Les Warren

Email: warrenlb2017@outlook.com

Transport & Accommodation costs tba.

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**South Island Schedule**

Some of the trip leaders have submitted brief outlines of their planned trips and these will appear in the October bulletin. By then, there should be trip numbers allocated to them. If you want to know more now, please contact the trip leaders. So far we have:

|                               |                         |               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Stewart Island circuit        | 12-23 December          | Judith Bogle  |
| West Branch of Matukituki R   | 27-31 December          | Allan Wickens |
| Travers-Sabine & Moss passes  | 28 December- 4 January  | Judith Bogle  |
| East Branch of Matukituki R   | 2-3 January             | Allan Wickens |
| Earnslaw Burn                 | 4-6 January             | Allan Wickens |
| Exploring the Lewis Pass area | 19-25 February (approx) | Les Warren    |

There will be more trips to be advertised next month

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Editorial

Your presidential blog this month mentions bird life and the chance to do a ruru survey in your neck of the woods over the first week of October. There are no detailed notes as yet but what a fun thing to get involved with. Contact the organiser Jeanette Brooker: *birdsnzwaikato@gmail.com*. For more information. To all those who help in Pureora, may I extend a great big thank-you for your efforts. 10 more kōkako were translocated from an area near ‘our’ valley onto Mt. Pirongia in July which meant that our predator control in Pureora is working just fine. And to those who helped introduce the new cohort of University students to our valley in August, many many thanks. Selwyn and I really appreciated the help and we’ll now have a great pool of volunteers ready for baiting next year.

As I write I note that it is Conservation Week. I am often disappointed that we don't plan something special to do at this particular time – but then again, we're busy putting in the effort throughout the year so I guess I shouldn't be too greedy with your time. The DoC website makes a few great suggestions: donate time or money to a conservation activity, grow a native plant, pick up rubbish, participate in a citizen science initiative like the ruru survey or checkout the wild sourdough link <https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/resources/3151-wild-sourdough>, or the giant earthworm survey, the myrtle rust searcher, or even teach computers to recognise fish species from videos. Never a dull moment.

And to end the week, some of you will have been on Selwyn's botany trip to Te Kauri Park. Perhaps you'll have made a resolution to learn the name of, and how to identify, at least 1 new plant each time you go tramping for the next year. Have fun while you're learning, searching, and don't forget to list your finds on the iNaturalist website. I was lucky enough to make the first notation of a not very common fungus in Pureora some time ago. Very satisfying. Dianne June

Presidential Blog

This month a number of items have come to the forefront regarding our native birds and organisation. I'd like to mention the great group (organised by Dianne and Selwyn June) we have within the club that have been persistent and hard working in regards to protecting the bird life in Pureora, and now when you go there you can hear and see the result of their hard work. I note there is interest in bird life within the club and that is what we get excited about when we are out in the bush. Of recent I was contacted by the NZ Ornithological Society about doing RURU/MOREPORK CITIZEN SCIENCE SURVEY 2022 at the beginning of October. For those who are interested in our bird life this would be a good opportunity to investigate and see what is on our back doorstep. As for me I have a family of 3 moreporks that live just outside my back door, literally in the nashi tree. Also, there is the Manaaki Kaimai Mamaku Trust who have conducted Kiwi surveys since 1996 and are doing work to protect an important resource in our area. South Island trips are being organised at the moment, so keep a look out. They will be run from December through to March. I am sure there is something that will take your fancy.

Quote for this month; "You're off to great places, today is your day. Your mountain is waiting, so get on your way."
Judith Bogle

from the Ski Club...

Winter rates: For non-ski club members that will mean \$60 pp/night. Ski club members pay \$35. It doesn't take too many trips before you cover the additional membership costs.

That everyone wants to live on top of the mountain, but all the happiness and growth occurs while you're climbing it.

Mid-week Walks & Tramps

We are continuing with the current format, having a walk or tramp on the 2nd Tuesday and 4th Wednesday of the month. The activities have proven to be as varied as the group is and the communication via the Mid-week W & T s Group page on WhatsApp is working well.

If you would like to be part of this communication, please download WhatsApp on your phone & text your request to Isla on 021 209 6539.

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## **Trip Reports**

**Trip No 3016**

**Tuahu Track/Sapphire Springs**

**6/7Aug**

Dear Lois

On behalf of Maureen, Max, Jim, John and myself, I would like to thank you very much for organising and leading our trip. With all the recent rain and doubt about the state of the track, you used good judgement changing to plan B. Travelling to Sapphire Springs in two vehicles worked well and we enjoyed having morning tea before heading off on our tramp.

It was a pleasant 1 hour 45 minute walk up a very good track, with only minor stream crossings, to the North-South track. It was satisfying to walk through bush with kauri, matai, miro, rimu, kamahi, puriri and nikau and to see views both over to the Waikato and to the Bay of Plenty. The weather you arranged for Saturday was ideal and our sunny lunch spot well chosen.

Retracing our steps to the start of the track, with a short detour to see one of the few remaining giant kauri in the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park (12.8 m to the first limb, diameter at 15m = 2.7m), was really worthwhile. Talking to people returning from the track to Sentinel Rock was useful and helped to plan Sunday's activities. The motel units which you booked for us were well appointed and convenient - and when the rain finally arrived, we were pleased not to have been in tents! Three of the group took advantage of the hot tubs and pools at the camp while the others enjoyed the hot showers. Our comfortable environment allowed for shared pre-dinner drinks and nibbles, followed by quickly prepared meals and an opportunity to watch the Silver Ferns playing Jamaica at the Commonwealth Games. What a shame you weren't able to arrange a better outcome. In leaderly fashion you consulted us about a plan for the next day and we all slept contentedly, apart from having a noisy mattress in one unit and something sounding like a hippo in the other.

Unfortunately, you didn't arrange the weather too well for Sunday, but it could have been a lot worse and it still allowed us to follow the Sentinel Rock track to the lookout as planned. Despite it being a lookout, you hadn't arranged for the cloud to clear for views – maybe next time. Having morning tea under the tree canopy before heading down the track was a good move and this sustained us while we returned to the cars and drove to Waihi for lunch.

You must have been pleased that we all behaved well and that there were very few challenges for you to manage. Jim's attempt to jettison his walking pole in a stream was a worry, as was John's attempt at skiing down a muddy slope. Lois, we all thoroughly enjoyed the trip and appreciated the research and organisation which you put into it. We look forward to experiencing more of your skills and company in the future.

Jean xx

**Trip Number 3017**

**Pylon Peak – Waiorongomai Loop**

**14 Aug**



After a particularly foggy section of travel between Hamilton and Morrinsville, everything cleared to a nice fine day. Our small group started at the Old Battery at Waiorongomai, climbing 660 metres up the Pylon Peak Track. Old mining relics and pieces of the pylon were found at times. On this section we encountered a group who were coming down as part of a day trip. About here we saw the first of two rats for the

day. At Pylon Peak we stopped for lunch at the junction with the North-South Track, with exceptionally clear views all round and to a snowy Mount Ruapehu in the distance. It was so clear we could see people walking below the transmitter tower. (Allan at least!) Several other groups were doing extended tramps. Further along the ridge towards Mount Te Aroha, and near Pukekohatu Peak (799 m) we had a close-up experience with a lovely dark brown possum headed down the Te Aroha link track and after a 7-hour day we were back at our car.

Those fortunate enough to have this “bluebird day tramp” were : Rizal R (leader), Maree L (from the Cambridge TC), Catherine R and Ying X as well as Allan Wickens (scribe)

**Trip 3018**

**Taupo cycling & tramping**

**20/21 Aug**



The cycling troupe

photo by Selwyn June

**Saturday:** This trip attracted a group of seven cyclists/trampers. Our first stop was at Doug Papps’ home in Taupo, an ex-member of the WTC. The plan was to leave the trailer and bikes at Dougs’ place while we completed the walking component of the trip. We enjoyed a very pleasant morning tea talking about past tramping adventures. The weather forecast for Saturday was more suited to walking than cycling, so we proceeded to the Opepe Scenic and Historic Reserve on the Napier-Taupo Highway. The first stop on the northern loop track was a cemetery and the scene of a surprise attack. On 7 June 1869, the advance party of Te Kooti’s force surprised a detachment of 14 members of the Bay of Plenty Cavalry who were camping at the site. Nine of the British soldiers now rest in the cemetery. The track took us through mature podocarp forest, unusual in this region as so much

was destroyed by the Taupo eruption of 186AD, and later by fires and the woodman's axe. The size of these majestic giants like rimu, matai and totara was impressive. Light rain meant we enjoyed lunch in the cars. We then set off on the southern loop track which took us through regenerating forest to a pit saw. The pit had been set up with a huge log as it would have been in 1869. Totara was cut by sawyers for use as poles on the Napier-Taupo telegraph line. Other relics from the now vanished settlement of Opepe included totara post and rail fencing, a bullock watering site and a water well. After checking in at our backpacker's accommodation, the next walk was a reconnaissance trip along Tuwharetoa Street, looking for a nice restaurant for a meal out. There was plenty to choose from as we huddled under umbrellas surveying the menus. Braised lamb shanks seemed to feature as a topic of conversation and we settled on an Indian and Nepalese cuisine. A table was booked and the group enjoyed pre-dinner nibbles, or a hot swim at the AC Baths, in preparation for a night out.

Dinner was a very sociable affair. A variety of dishes were selected and duly admired. The fun started when our plates were cleared away and one person ordered a coffee. A couple of others did the same. They were told it would be a couple of hours away. In spite of repeated requests as to when the coffee would be coming, we eventually worked that we weren't going to get any!

**Sunday morning:** After a somewhat disturbed sleep due to a band playing across the road from our Backpackers, our team of 7 met up for breakfast at the kitchen facilities having hot drinks & food & even more pleased to be sitting outside with some blue sky showing. We packed up & made our way back to Dougs place to pick up the bike trailer & we drove to the start of our ride at the Aratiatia Dam, due to the large amount of rain NZ has experienced recently the Dam was open & the amount of water passing through was incredible. There were 5 cyclists with Dianne & Selwyn driving around back to Spa Road to pick us up once finished. The track was an easy ride at the beginning then we started to climb onto a hill top, it then gradually descends and continues along the river through lovely bush cover, we at times had to get off our bikes due to large puddles of mud. We stopped under the SH1 bridge to admire the beautiful colour of the water & the noise from the trucks passing above us was very loud. We made it Huka Falls which was in full force & then kept biking up & down hills with many twists & turns & some parts had sand which made our bike tyres lose traction & had to walk. We got a great view of the famous Huka Lodge then made our way through pine forests & out back to the Spa Road car park where Dianne Selwyn were waiting. It took us 2 hours to complete with a distance of approx 12kms & we were very lucky with the weather which held out with no rain, it was a very enjoyable ride & certainly tested my fitness level ! Bike crew: John & Jean Wilson, David C, Jim & scribe Nette

**Sunday afternoon:**

Rain drenched everything as we lunched in the cars at Kinloch, but then blue skies miraculously appeared. Selwyn shuttled Jim and John to Whangamata Road, where

Jim whisked ahead on his e-bike and John followed less vigorously, knowing from recent experience what happens when he comes off his bike. Despite a few little sideways slips of the wheels, he stayed in the saddle. His legs started to mutiny on the uphill, causing him to dismount and walk. The climb out of beautiful Kawakawa Bay, seemingly gentle, provoked several mutinies. No trouble to Jim though! Despite this it was a great ride and much enjoyed.

While Selwyn shuttled Jim and John to the start of their ride, the rest of the group made excellent use of their time walking from Kinloch along the very pleasant walkway towards Kawakawa Bay. Lovely views down into Whangamata Bay were a feature as was the interesting surrounding bush and abundant bird life. On reaching the halfway point, about 1hr along the track, the group had a rest-stop while waiting for Selwyn to catch up. The decision was then made to retrace steps, expecting to be overtaken by the cyclists along the way. This duly happened and everyone happily and safely made their way back to where the vehicles awaited. Coffee at the Topsy Trout or ice-creams from the store at Kinloch boosted energy for the drive home after a great weekend. Thanks Dianne & Selwyn. Scribe John W

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### *From the committee table:*

**New members/Resignations:** Nil

**Membership:** We have 189 tramping members this month.

**From the club captain:** This is an early notice for our Club Trip Planning Meeting for trips between January and June 2023. Date: Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September 22  
Venue / Time: TBA. It is time again to start looking at whether you are keen to Lead club trips between January and June 23. Please, do as much preparation research as much as you can to the meeting. If you have some idea's and cannot attend the meeting, I am happy to slot in your trip at a preferred date that suits you. If you know of any other members that would be keen to lead a trip, we would be happy to provide as much help as needed.

I will send out another reminder closer to the meeting date.

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### *Snippets from here and there...*

- The 1080 drop planned by DoC Pureora has been completed. Further work is being carried out in the Mapara area.
- **Work on satellite station near Taupo to improve PLB responses.** Upgrades to New Zealand's search and rescue satellite Earth Station are under way. The Station is a vital link between New Zealand's Rescue Coordination Centre and the global search and rescue satellite network. It provides the initial processing of signals from distress beacons. More satellites will be linked into. This will improve the accuracy locating emergency beacons and also create faster and steadier links to and from search and rescue satellites. The Rescue Coordination Centre responds to about 1200 search and rescue incidents each year

from PLBs – personal locator beacons, EPIRBs (from boats & ships), and ELTs (from aircraft).  
Source: Stuff 2/9/22

➤ Concern as trust prepares to close **access to public conservation estate** near Desert Rd. A Trust that administers private land blocks between the Desert Rd and Kaimanawa Forest Park has put up gates across two roads used for decades by the public to access the park. One of them is Waipakihi Road which we frequently use to exit from the Waipakihi valley. The other is the Rangipo Intake Road. The land blocks on either side of the roads – Rangipo North 6C and Rangipo North 7C – are two of 85 blocks in the central North Island administered by the Lake Rotoaira Forest Trust on behalf of more than 12,000 Māori owners. The Trust has put in the gates, but is not saying why, or when they will be closed. Privately, trustees have told stakeholders they are concerned about the way visitors are treating the area, taking four-wheel-drive vehicles up the Waipakihi Riverbed and dumping rubbish. They’ve also said they want to protect assets for a new commercial venture with Taupō firm Helisika, which will involve flying people to a specially-built landing pad off Waipakihi Rd for mountain biking trips. DoC, through its Central Plateau District manager Dave Lumley says in a statement, that use of the “soon to be closed access points” was always at the goodwill of the owners, “with an expectation that people would show ... respect for the land and the privilege of crossing it”. However, DoC understood there had been “multiple causes of annoyance and frustration” for the landowners arising from a “general disregard” for the land. “One example of concern for the owners and DoC is 4WD activity within the Waipakihi River Valley.”

Lumley says DoC has been contacted by frustrated members of the public asking for the department to intervene. But while DoC has a duty to facilitate public recreation on conservation land, “the department is not obliged to seek access across private property”. “In this case, the landowners have indicated that they intend to remove the privilege to cross their property and the general public must now use a less familiar, and potentially less convenient, but legally-secure access point.” [*that's an understatement*]. Lumley says there will still be access to the southern part of the forest park along the NZ Army boundary, as well as Tree Trunk Gorge and Kaimanawa Rds to the north. The Outdoor Access Commission /Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa confirmed the roads originated from the creation of the Tongariro power scheme in the 1960's and were held as Crown land (see their website report of 12/8/22). They were never dedicated as legal roads, although the Crown allowed public access over them. The Commission says they understand the Waipakihi access way land is going through a process to transfer the Crown land back to the former or adjacent landowners.

FMC executive member Megan Dimozantos says the organisation is in talks with the Trust about access. “We have a good relationship and it’s our preference to work alongside them for a solution,” she says. “People are disappointed to see it’s closing, but they understand the reasons behind it and I think everyone’s pretty

hopeful that we should be able to find an amicable solution. It's a small few ruining it for the majority – rubbish dumping, people driving way up the riverbed in their four wheel drives, which is incredibly disrespectful and obviously not good for the environment.”  
Source: Stuff 14/8/22

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The WTC Annual photo competition.



Our Annual competition closes this year on October 5th. Entries must be supplied by the closing date in digital form. Our categories are in alignment with those of FMC

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. Above bushline with no human element | 2. or with a human element |
| 2. Below bushline with no human element | 4. or with a human element |
| 5. Historic | 6. Native flora and fauna |
| 7. Long exposure | |

We also have the 2 WTC categories of:

8. Club Character - features a humorous subject which has a club context.
9. International. Caters for photos which are otherwise ineligible for the FMC photo competition.

Our photos will be judged by Nicola Guy and John Wilson and results presented at the November Club Night.

Entries to be emailed or given on a USB stick to Jacqui Dick,

email: jacquimd@me.com, **ph** 021 1375201

FMC has an annual theme to the competition, which encourages photography that documents topical places which we are fighting for, current campaigns we're battling and values under immediate threat. The theme in no way restricts entries, it merely offers a little reward for entries consistent with the theme! And this years' theme is yet to be defined but may be 'Wilderness areas' or 'Wild rivers'.

Rules:

A. Definition of a "human element". The definition of a "human element" is flexible but the general intention is: Where the photo contains anything other than as a very minor feature: people, a hut, a track sign/marker, bridge, ice axe and anything else that has been introduced by humans into the environment then we would define that as having "a Human element". But if a photo has what could be called a Human Element but that element is very small, inconsequential and not a feature in the photo then you could count it as "No Human Element".

B. Entries for the FMC aligned categories must be taken after 1 Jan 2021. Any photos taken prior to this date will automatically be entered into the historic category.

C. Definition of "historic": The intention for the historic category is for entrants to go back through club and individual archives to select "old photos" rather than "photos of old things". As an example, a recent photo of a hut built in the 1950's is not a 'historic' photo. However, a photo of the same hut taken in the 1960's certainly is a 'historic' photo. Photos for the historic category must be taken before 1 Jan 2021

D. All photos apart from the International Category must be taken within New Zealand, which is defined as within our Exclusive Economic Zone. This includes the following islands; North, South, Stewart, Chatham, Kermadec, Sub-Antarctic.

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.....*from the DoC website....*

➤ Hooker Valley Track reopened. The Hooker Valley Track in Aoraki.Mount Cook National Park reopened on September 1<sup>st</sup> after a geotechnical assessment found the second swing bridge was stable. The track had closed on August 24 after heavy rain eroded the Hooker River banks at the bridge, through a combination of high river levels and water seeping out of the top of the bank. DoC engineers say the geotechnical assessment cleared the bridge to open with increased monitoring. Visitors can expect that there will be times when the track's closed, but we're pleased to be able to say it's open in good weather. The bridge was initially damaged during a significant storm in March 2019. DoC has had a monitoring system in place since then, including physical checks and using a remote camera. During high winds or heavy rain, the track has been closing at the first swing bridge, where a gate is in place. DoC has lowered the threshold for closing the track when heavy rain is forecast. We will also be increasing our monitoring of the banks. Sally Jones (Mt. Cook DoC Ops manager) says the Hooker Valley Track webpage will be updated when any closures are in place and suggests people planning to use the track should check there before heading out. The Aoraki Visitor Centre will also have up-to-date information. When the Hooker Valley Track is closed, there is no alternative track into the valley, and it is not considered safe to cross the river. The first kilometre of track to the gate will remain open.

➤ **Paparoa Track access road damaged.** The Paparoa Track came through last week's rainstorms relatively unscathed but the access road on the Blackball side is damaged/ A big slip has taken away a large section of the Croesus road which leads to Smoke-ho carpark where track users start out. DoC Greymouth Acting Operations Manager Darrell Haworth says the Greymouth District Council which maintains the road, has advised that it isn't safe for vehicles. "The good news is that, for now, the council is allowing track visitors to walk or bike the road past the slip site to access the Paparoa Track. This adds about 5 km to the trip, largely uphill. There's no parking at the gate at the start of the road so anyone

heading for the track will need to either organise a drop-off/pick up or be prepared to travel another 1.5k m from the public carpark in Blackball to the gate. If the council thinks visitor risk is compromised at any stage, they will completely close the road.” Darrell Haworth says the council is working on a plan to fix the road. The DoC website will be updated when there is news about timing of the work or any change to current access. Once work on the fix starts the road will close fully as it will involve digging up the current surface.

A DoC crew checked the Paparoa Track itself recently and found no major storm damage. For more information check the Paparoa Track page on the DOC website or contact the Paparoa National Park Visitor Centre on +64 3 731 1895.

➤ Spoonbills cause a stir



Those spotting native royal spoonbills at Waihi wetlands in the South of Lake Taupō should have their puns, and cameras, at the ready.

Naturally uncommon, the self-introduced native royal spoonbill or kōtuku ngutupapa are a difficult bird to mistake. DoC Operations Manager Dave Lumley says the large white wading birds with a cutlery-inspired bill can frequently be seen from State Highway 41 near Waihi Road. We’re quite often seeing them in

the mornings – later in the day they seem to move further into the wetland.” Spoonbills sweep their beaks side-to-side, seeking prey such as fish, insects, and frogs. The famous bill isn’t a simple ladle though, it has built-in vibration detectors to find prey in darkness or muddy waters. “They’re obviously stirring up some food in there, as they’ve stuck around for so long. It’s a good reminder to slow down on this stretch of road, as we have had a number of wetland birds hit by cars, including endangered matuku hurepo/Australasian bittern. Oh, and drive safely around birdwatchers, too!”

➤ Substantial response to **West Coast stewardship** land proposals. More than 6,600 people and organisations have made submissions on how they would like to see stewardship land reclassified on the West Coast of the South Island. By the closing deadline 23/8, DoC had received 660 individual and 5,980 pro forma submissions on proposals to reclassify 504 parcels of stewardship land on the West Coast. Stewardship land is the term given to land allocated to DoC when it was formed in 1987, which was deemed to have conservation value, but had not been given a specific land classification. DoC Operations Director Karl Beckert says the large number of submissions speaks to the commitment people have to the future of the region. "Working together with Ngāi Tahu on this process has been a privilege, and testament to a strong partnership approach. We are very grateful to all the individual West Coasters, environmental organisations, farmers, West Coast Councils, commercial interest groups and others who submitted. The West Coast is the first region where stewardship land is reclassified in this way, and the feedback received will help guide the process in other parts of the country," says Karl Beckert. DoC will hold hearings from 12 to 19 September on the West Coast and online. Submitters who indicated they wanted to be heard by the panels will be emailed to confirm a date and time for them to appear. The information received through the submissions and the hearing will be used to inform the National and Mana Whenua Panels' final recommendations and DOC's advice to the Minister of Conservation, who will make a final decision on the land classifications.

➤ Sections of the **Abel Tasman Coast Track and Queen Charlotte Track** remain open but others are temporarily closed after recent heavy rain caused multiple slips and other damage. Most of the Queen Charlotte Track in the Marlborough Sounds is open but caution is advised for walkers, and biking is not recommended. Coastal areas of Abel Tasman National Park can be accessed by boat. The tracks are among a number of DoC tracks and campsites in Nelson/Tasman and Marlborough regions impacted by the severe weather. Access roads to some campsites, huts and conservation areas are closed due to landslides and other damage.

In **Abel Tasman National Park**, all beaches and campsites that can be accessed by boat and kayak are open and the four coast track huts are open for use if able to be accessed. There is limited road access due to slips to northern areas of the park, including the Wainui entrance, Awaroa, and Tōtaranui Campground. Tōtaranui campground is open and can be accessed by boat.

DoC Northern South Island Operations Director Roy Grose says DoC staff are still checking tracks in the region and the full extent of damage is not yet known. "We're advising people to check our website for the latest information on the status of tracks, campsites and access to conservation areas in the top of the South Island before heading into the outdoors. This will be subject to change as we assess damage and carry out repairs. DoC staff are contacting people with Abel Tasman

Coast Track hut and campsite bookings to offer refunds or to change their bookings to another available date.

On the **Heaphy** Track, there is currently no access to Heaphy Hut from Kohaihai on the western side due to a slip at Crayfish Point. The section between Heaphy Hut and James MacKay Hut was already closed “We’re also asking people to report any damage they encounter on tracks, such as landslides and fallen trees, particularly in more remote backcountry areas which our rangers get to less often.” Check the DoC visitor centres and website for more information.

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..... *from the FMC website*

➤ Kaimanawa State Forest Park access. FMC has been working alongside the Outdoor Access Commission (OAC) and other recreational stakeholders to understand the background and legal status of Waipakihi Road and Rangipo Intake Road. OAC have published a detailed review of the situation on the FMC website. With the information currently available, FMC maintains that our most appropriate option is to continue to work alongside the landowners to reach an amicable solution. We are also looking at what other access options may exist, either temporarily or in the long term.

Work on this issue is ongoing; we will endeavour to keep our members up to date



A visitor during lockdown to Jacqui & Rin's garden

photo by Jacqui Dick



Rakiura scenery

Approach to Oturere Hut

photo by Pater Ayson

photo by Les Warren





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