



Whanganui River - via Whanganui River



Difficulties

Medium , Hard

Length

119.2 km

Journey Time

4 to 6 days

Region

[Manawatu/Whanganui](#)

Sub-Regions

[Whanganui](#) , [Ruapehu](#)

Part of Collections

[Te Araroa - New Zealand's Trail](#) , [Te Araroa highlights](#) , [Te Araroa - North Island](#)

The Whanganui River winds its way from the mountains to the Tasman Sea through countless hills and valleys. Lowland forest surrounds the river in its middle and lower reaches, forming the heart of Whanganui National Park. Although a river journey, the Whanganui is part of New Zealand's "Great Walks" network.

River transport is the only way from Mangapurua Landing to Pipiriki.

The options are to either canoe down the river from Whakahoro to Pipiriki or Whanganui, or walk from Whakahoro to Mangapurua to get picked up there by pre-arranged jet boat and taken to Pipiriki or Whanganui. Discuss with canoe/kayak hire operators. Contact suggestions at the end of this notes section.

- Note: Do not canoe the river when water levels are rising or it's in flood. If you capsize you may not be able to get back in or swim to the river's edge; Vehicles on road, stick to the left and single file if biking on the road.

Recommended that you discuss the details of your journey - launch point, itinerary and exit point - with your chosen kayak/canoe hire operator. They will have valuable advice about where to stay and how far to attempt each day based on your own abilities.

Canoe hire companies are listed at the end of this section. For companies based in Taumarunui and Ohwango it is possible to make arrangements for the Whanganui River while passing through these towns. ~~Some operators may allow you to leave a box of food with them to deliver to Mangapurua Landing along with your canoe.~~

Sections of the Whanganui River may be closed to river traffic on specific dates in January. Read the Alerts and Trail Status page on the Te Araroa website or in apps for details.

Mangapurua to Pipiriki (canoe) - 32km

Pipiriki to Whanganui landing (canoe) - 82.5km

Canoe trips finish at the Whanganui Top 10 Holiday Park at km 1,392.7. Whanganui City Bridge is a further 8 km

Pipiriki to Whanganui landing bypass (walking) - 68km

Whanganui City Bridge is a further 8 km

From Pipiriki to Whanganui city, there are 3 options:

1. Walk the Whanganui River Road (62 km of tar sealed country road to SH4 then a further 14km to Whanganui; 3-4 days walking *)
2. Bike the Whanganui River Road (62 km of tar sealed country road to SH4 then a further 14km to Whanganui; 1-2 days cycling *)
3. Continue by the river, however you will need to confirm an exit point with your kayak/canoe provider as there are fewer landings on this southern part of the river. (They can also advise you on accommodation options as these may need to be pre-booked).

* Those taking option 1 or 2. From the end of Whanganui River Road turn right to follow SH4 south and enter Upokongaro which is approximately 3 km from the turnoff. The Upokongaro Cycle and Walking Bridge is now open, and all walkers and cyclists should use this route instead of continuing along SH4. Follow the green cycle markings on the left hand side of the road, which will take you left, down and under the SH4 bridge across the Upokongaro Stream to the cycle bridge across the Whanganui river. Older maps may not show these bridges correctly

The route to Whanganui thereafter is off road along the western (true right) bank through Papaiti. It will follow its own trail under the trees and away from the road. There is a designated and marked crossing. Care should be taken crossing, as this is a road frequently used by logging trucks. Upon entering the city boundary, you will soon come across the Top 10 Holiday Park, which is approximately 8km from the city centre. This is the usual landing point for kayak and canoe paddlers

Whanganui landing to Whanganui City Bridge - 8km

From the Top 10 Holiday Park continue down the right bank of the river on Somme Parade. The older Te Araroa maps suggested crossing to the left bank on the Dublin Street Bridge, but this is no longer recommended. Continue on Somme Parade to pass the i-SITE, and along Taupo Quay to the intersection with Victoria Avenue and the City Bridge. From this point there is a Woolworths supermarket 200m ahead or walk up Victoria Avenue for Pak'n Save and other supermarkets, cafés and fast food.

Te Araroa continues across the City Bridge and the Durie Hill Elevator to the tower at the top, or take the 355 steps

Distances between huts/campsites/exit points are as follows (with indicative times, though will vary person-to-person):

- Mangapurua to Tieke Kāinga - 10.5km, 2 hours
- Tieke Kāinga to Ngāporo campsite - 12.5km, 2.5 hours
- Ngāporo to Pipiriki - 9km, 1.5 hours
- Pipiriki to Jerusalem - 10.5km, 2 hours
- Jerusalem to Matahiwi Landing - 11km, 2 hours (no hut, camping or exit at Matahiwi Landing)
- Matahiwi Landing to Koriniti Pā - 7km, 1.5 hours (no hut, camping or exit at Koriniti Pā)
- Koriniti Pā to Pungarehu Marae - 26.5km, 5 hours (no hut, camping or exit at Pungarehu Marae)
- Pungarehu Marae to Upokongaro - 24km, 5 hours
- Upokongaro to Whanganui Top 10 Holiday Park - 3.5km, 45 minutes
- Whanganui Top 10 Holiday Park to City Bridge - 7km, 1.25 hours

Conditions

Potential hazard

- Don't canoe the river when water levels are rising or it's in flood. If you capsize you may not be able to get back in or swim to the edge of the river; Vehicles on road, stick to the left and single file if biking on the road.
- Vehicles on road or track - stick to the left and single file if biking on roads.
- From Pipiriki it is a narrow winding road with poor visibility. Wear a bright or fluorescent top
- Use your pack cover if it's more visible than your pack
- Tides, waves and rivers - safer at low tide. Be aware of tides if staying on the river all the way to Whanganui
- River crossings - Never cross flooded rivers and don't canoe the river when water levels are rising or it's in flood. If you capsize you may not be able to get back in nor swim to the river's edge.
- Track exposed to sun, wind or cold
- Fires only in designated fireplaces.

No dogs allowed

[Whanganui River \(John Coull Hut\) weather - NIWA](#) [🔗](#)

[NIWA 3-day forecast](#) [🔗](#)

How to get here

Northern Start: Mangapura Landing, Whanganui River

Southern End: City Bridge, Whanganui

Transport

Canoe and kayak hire

- [Taumarunui Canoe Hire and Jet Boat Journeys](#) - P: 0800 CANOE4U or P: [027 226 6348](tel:0272266348) - E: tmncanoehire@gmail.com Free camping on site in Taumarunui, free pickup in town with your groceries for the river. We will help you make all your bookings for the river all the way to Whanganui, and we will give you a thorough safety briefing before you leave Taumarunui with coffee and hot bread. Rest days here are very welcome, along with a walker container with bunks, a hot bush shower, BBQ area (Laundry coming soon). Fridge and food storage are available, and we will bring your food along with your canoes and more barrels to Whakahoro. Splash out, we can store your fridge food.
- [Adrift Outdoors](#) - P: 07 892 2751 - E: stewart@adriftnz.co.nz
- [Blazing Paddles](#) - P: 0800 BLAZING (0800 252 946), 021 996 954 (Glenn) - E: glenn@blazingpaddles.co.nz
- [Canoe Safaris](#) - P: 06 385 9237 - E: info@canoesafaris.co.nz
- [Whanganui River Canoes](#) - P: 0800 408 888 - E: info@whanganuirivercanoes.co.nz
- [Yeti Tours](#) - P: 0800 322 388 - E: yeti.tours@extra.co.nz
- [Bridge to Nowhere](#) - P: 0800 480 308 - E: info@bridgetonowhere.co.nz (Jetboat transfer also available)
- [Ōwhango Adventures](#) - P: 0800 2 CANOE/027 678 6461 - E: info@owhangoadventures.co.nz - W: www.canoewhanganuiriver.com - Free night accommodation at Owhango Adventures Base included with canoe bookings. Canoe hire for Te Araroa Whanganui River Journey is \$250 Per Person for bookings of 2 x - 4 x people. \$210 Per Person for bookings of 5 x people or more. If you would like to buy extra groceries for your journey we can collect from Taumarunui and store in our industrial chiller and food storage until your arrival for free of charge. We can also store and transport Mountain bikes and Equipment and drop them off for you at the end of your Whanganui River journey free of charge with bookings. Thorough safety briefings included with all relevant equipment and safety gear required. We will meet you at Whakahoro on the morning of your journey departure with all your canoes/barrels and equipment, then meet you at Whanganui Top10 Holiday Park with all your gear and equipment at the end of your journey. Washing Machine available on site. BBQ and varied kitchen facilities available on site. Hot showers and toilets available on site. Free WIFI available on site. If you require assistance with planning your adventure on the Whanganui River please feel free to ask whether you are booked with us or not. Free camping available to all Te Araroa Trail walkers available at our Base in [Ōwhango](#).

For help with transfers, bikes and kayaks from Pipiriki to Whanganui and surrounding areas:

- [Whanganui Tours and Mail Run](#) - 4/51 Abbot Street, Gonville, Whanganui 4501 - P: 06 344 4918 or 021 130 4617 - E: whanganui.tours@gmail.com
- [Ruapehu Whanganui Trails - Mountains to Sea](#) - P: Ohakune 0800 647 483
- [Whanganui River Canoes](#) - P: 0800 40 88 88 or 06 385 4176

Note: Should kayakers wish to continue beyond Pungarehu Marae and can make arrangements with their kayak suppliers, other landings might be:

- A jetty at Upokongaro (that the paddleboat Waimarie uses); it is a little high above the river at low tide though.
- A Top 10 Campsite on the river about 3-4 km from Whanganui town.

Whanganui









- [InterCity](#) - P: 09 583 5780 - E: info@intercity.co.nz. 29 Taupo Quay - outside the Tram Shed and close to i-Site.
- [Whanganui Airport](#) - Airport Rd, Whanganui - P: 06 348 0536 - Main Airline servicing the city is Air Chathams (www.airchathams.co.nz) which flies to and from Auckland only. If you wish to travel to other NZ cities you will need to fly from Palmerston North
- [Whanganui River City Cabs](#) - 12 Hardy St, Whanganui - P: 06 345 3333 or 0800 345 3333
- [Spirit of the River Jet](#) - 1018 Para Para Rd, SH 4, RD 3, Upokongaro, Whanganui River - P: 06 342 5572 or 0800 538 8687 freephone or 027 538 8687 - E: info@spiritoftheriver.co.nz
- [Tranzit Whanganui](#) - 160 Ridgway Street, Whanganui 4500 - P: 06 345 4433 or 0508 800 800 or P: +64 6 345 7100 - W: www.horizons.govt.nz M: WAG@tranzit.co.nz
- [Whanganui Taxis](#) - Cnr Russell and London Sts, Whanganui - P: 06 343 5555 or 0800 343 5555

Accommodation






Trail Pass

-  Whakahoro Campsite - km 1,240.7 - Great Walks - Not included in The Trail Pass (Bookings required)
-  Mangapapa Campsite - river 10.8 - Great Walks - Not included in The Trail Pass (Bookings required)
-  Ohauora Campsite - river 25 - Great Walks - Not included in The Trail Pass (Bookings required)
-  Mosleys Campsite - km 1,250.1 - Included in The Trail Pass
-  Mangapurua Trig Campsite - km 1,256.7 - Included in The Trail Pass
-  Johnsons Campsite - km 1,262.7 - Included in The Trail Pass
-  Bettjeman Campsite - km 1,266.2 - Included in The Trail Pass
-  Hellowell's Campsite - km 1,270.15 - Included in The Trail Pass (no water supply at Hellowell's)
-   John Coull Hut - river 34.8 - Great Walks - Not included in The Trail Pass (Bookings required)
-  Mangawaiiti - river 47.1 - Great Walks - Not included in The Trail Pass (Bookings required)
-  Mangapurua Campsite - km 1,277.8 - Great Walks - Not included in The Trail Pass (Bookings required)
-   Tieke Mare - km 1,288 - Great Walks - Not included in The Trail Pass (Bookings required)
-  Ngaporo Campsite - km 1,300.6 - Great Walks - Not included in The Trail Pass (Bookings required)
-  ~~Downes Hut - km 1,348.6 - Included in the Trail Pass (Bookings required). Booked hut accommodation only. No camping. Downes Hut is on the west (true right) bank of the river and is not accessible from the road walk.~~
-   Downes Hut - km 1,348.6 - 20% discount on hut stay with The Trail Pass (Bookings required). Camping next to hut included in The Trail Pass (Bookings required). Downes Hut is on the west (true right) bank of the river and is not accessible from the road walk.

Amenities Between Mangapurua and Pipiriki including accommodation:

- [Bridge to Nowhere Lodge](#)  (catered and self-catering accommodation) - opposite Tieke Kāinga, on Whanganui River - P: 0800 480 308 - E: info@bridgetonowhere.co.nz
- [DOC's Tieke Kāinga Hut](#)  - Whanganui River (Great Walk hut, needs to be booked through Department of Conservation) - 20 Bunks, Cooking, Heating, Mattresses. Grid reference: Topo50 map sheet BJ32, E1771782, N5643882.
- [DOC's Ngāporo campsite](#)  - Great walk category - 18 tent sites, water, toilet, a shelter for cooking and picnic table.
- [Pururoto Campsite](#)  - 5km upstream from Pipiriki - P: 021 144 8098 - E: pururotocampsite@gmail.com - campsites, meals (pre-ordered, see brochure), other activities.
- [Whanganui River Adventures](#)  (Pipiriki Camping ground and Cabins) and Jetboat/Canoe transfers - 2522 Pipiriki Village, Pipiriki - P: 0800 862743 freephone or 06 385 3246
- [Whanganui River Canoes](#)  - P: 0800 40 88 88 or 06 385 4176 - www.whanganuirivercanoes.co.nz 
- Pipiriki - a public shelter with cold water, picnic and camping areas, toilets and parking 
- Whanganui Top 10 Camping Ground - 460 Somme Parade

Amenities between Pipiriki and the southern end of Whanganui River Road including accommodation

- [Whanganui River Adventures](#)  - (Pipiriki Camping ground and Cabins) and Jetboat/Canoe transfers - 2522 Pipiriki Village, Pipiriki - P: 0800 862 743 freephone or 06 3853246
- [Jerusalem/Hiruharama Convent / Backpackers](#)  - Whanganui River Rd, Jerusalem - P: 06 342 8190 [Old Convent, Jerusalem](#) Please contact beforehand by phone, email or post to: Jerusalem R.D.6, Whanganui River Road, Whanganui 4576. Please note there is no camping available near the convent
- [Matahiwi Gallery Cafe and Accommodation](#)  - Four cabins and designated tent sites. Cooking facility, shower, toilets. Eftpos available. Seasonal hours - Open from beginning of October to end of April. Contact P: 06 342 8112 or P: 06 342 8116.
- [The Flying Fox](#)  - Glamping and camping - accessible by road or river. Secure bike storage available. Access from the road is via aerial cableway. From river - look for sign on right bank 500m downstream from Koriniti. Camping \$25pp or Cabin \$70 for 2 people (double bed) including towels and sheets, plates etc. Bush setting. Hot showers, camp kitchen, shop, free Wi-Fi. Catering by pre-arrangement. All accommodation including campsites must be PRE-BOOKED. Ideal place for a rest day. 3081 Whanganui River Rd, RD6 - P: 06 927 6809 - E: info@theflyingfox.co.nz
- i-SITE can advise on other private accommodation options (pre-booking is advised).
- [DOC](#)  can advise on the one public campsite.

Whanganui

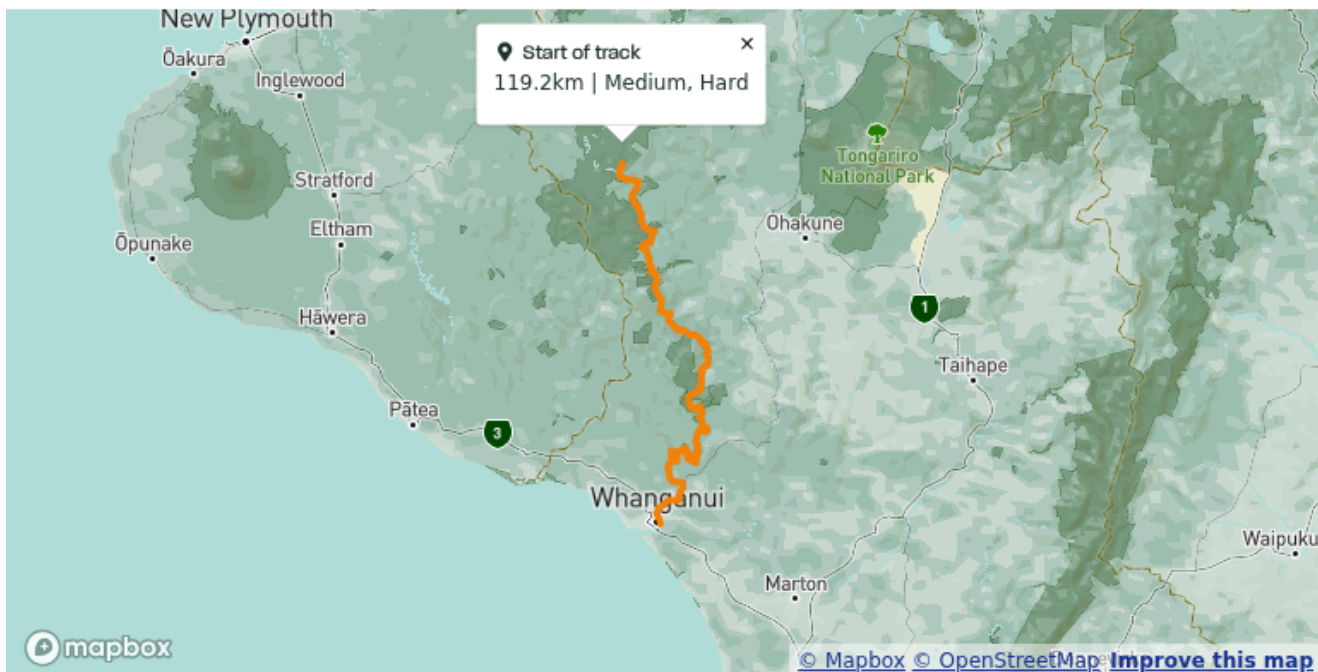
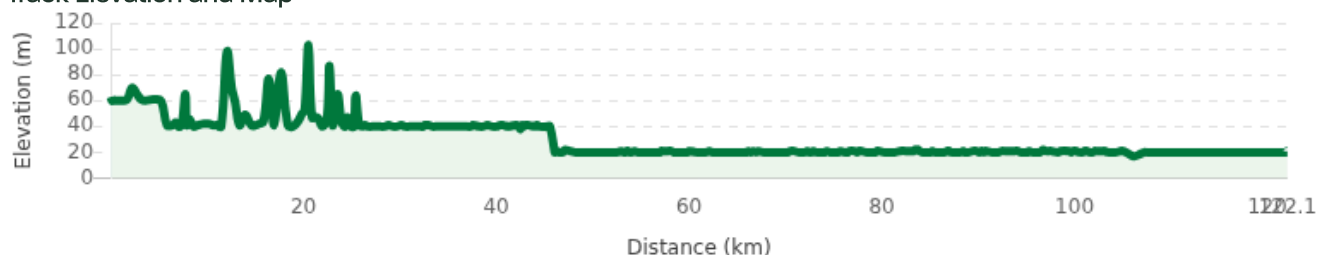
- All services are available in Whanganui. There's a full range of accommodation, including a Top 10 Campsite on the river about 7 km from the town.
- [YHA Whanganui](#) - 2 Plymouth Street, Whanganui P: 06 348 2301 E: whanganui@yha.co.nz
- [Riverwoods](#) - 234-237 Kaiwhāiki Rd, Whanganui - P: 06 342 5501 or 027 320 6966 - E: info@riverwoods.co.nz - Luxury 3 Bedroom, self-contained villa with breakfast.
- [Whanganui River TOP 10 Holiday Park](#) - 460 Somme Parade, Whanganui - P: 06 343 8402 or 0800 272 664 - Backpackers, motel and camping
- [Hikurangi Stayplace](#) - 1 Mount View Rd, Whanganui - P: 06 343 3333 or 027 499 2729 - Dorm rooms and private rooms, adjacent to the river/Kōwhai Park and can help collect/store canoes/kayaks for those coming all the way down the river.
- [College House BBH](#) - 42b Campbell St, Whanganui - P: 021 852 100 - E: info@42b.co.nz - Dorm rooms and private rooms, kitchen, laundry facilities, free wifi. Also, hire bikes for those who wish to cycle to Turakina.
- [Tāmara Riverside Lodge](#) - 24 Somme Parade, Whanganui - P: 06 347 6300 - E: info@tamaralodge.com
- [Braemar House Backpackers](#) - offer clean, budget accommodation or more luxury rooms in our B&B - (including a full-sized bath for those who need a muscle soak) Free, unlimited high-speed wi-fi. Contact Calvyn on calvyn.jonkers@gmail.com

Food And Supply

Whanganui

- [New World](#) - 374 Victoria Ave, Whanganui - P: 06 349 0990
- [Pak N Save Supermarket](#) - 167 Glasgow St - P: 06 349 1230
- Night and Day - 24 Hours - 446 Victoria Ave
- Woolworths - 100 Taupō Quay, corner of Wilson St
- Woolworths - 433 Victoria Avenue - directly opposite Pak'nSave
- [Wilson's Hunting and Outdoors](#) - Outdoor shop with food, gear, and repair options. We also accept bounce boxes at no charge and will forward gear on if arranged. Send packages to: 222 Victoria Ave, Whanganui 4500. Please have your name, TA Walker, phone and email, and estimated collection date visible on the box. Contact us at 06 348 7679
- Whanganui Hunting & Fishing NZ - 64 Carlton Avenue, Whanganui - P: 06 348 0400

Track Elevation and Map



More information

- [i-SITE Visitor Information Centre Whanganui](#), [31 Taupo Quay, Whanganui](#) - P: 0800 92 64 26 - E: info@visitwhanganui.nz - For local information and a list of suppliers
- For background information on the Whanganui Journey and to use the facilities provided by the Department of Conservation, contact www.doc.govt.nz [or](#) [download the app](#) [or](#) [visit the website](#) [or](#) [download the app](#) for detailed maps, trail alerts and other relevant information.

Before starting Te Araroa either as a through-walker of the whole country or a section walker, [please register on Te Araroa website](#). Please also [visit the website](#) [or](#) [download the app](#) for detailed maps, trail alerts and other relevant information.

This track is part of the Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa track database. Herenga ā Nuku has [maps and advice about public access to the outdoors](#).

We encourage you to continue gaining the skills and knowledge required for a safe trip. The NZ Mountain Safety Council has lots of free resources and information you can use. You can access them at www.mountainsafety.org.nz.

We recommend trying these online learning tools:

- [Trip Planning](#)
- [Tramping/field Skills](#)
- [Basic Navigation](#)
- [River Safety](#)

Additionally, check out the range of helpful videos available from the NZ Mountain Safety Council [YouTube channel](#).



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