

WHAKAIPO BAY to KINLOCH (W2K Track)

Topo50 Maps: BG36-Taupo

GPS: NZTM on WGS84

How to get to START:

- Exit Taupo heading North on SH1 over Control Gates bridge
- On crossing the bridge go left to Norman Smith Street
- At the end of Norman Smith go left to Acacia Bay Road
- In Acacia Bay go right to Mapara Road at the top of the hill
- Pass Kaipō Road on the left and Tukarangi Road on the right
- At 12km from Taupo go left to access road for Whakaipo Bay
- (Note that this can be a bit of a last minute turn as the sign is NOT clearly visible from Mapara Road)
- Follow the dirt road more or less towards the lake
- At the bottom of the hill go right at the Y-fork
- Follow the road along to the obvious car park (just over 1km)
- There is a stile over the fence opposite the car park (**WP01**)
- There are very clear notice boards just over the stile

The drive, as described above, takes about 15-20 minutes and distances are from the Police Station on the Domain.



Road access is the blue line, the tramp route is the red line

Rough description: A fairly easy tramp of 4 to 5 hours covering 14 kilometres by going straight through on the W2K track to Kinloch – the “Headland Track” adds another 10km and is only for the fit with 6 hours being required. The track is not flat but there are no slopes steep enough to be described as “grunts” to the normal trumper. However, be warned, **THIS IS A BIKE TRACK** so be aware all the time and alert enough to get out of the way as there are many virtually blind corners, summits and bends and bikes travel at over 30km per hour in places – I know as I have done it and I am not a fast biker. A good way to tackle this tramp is to split the party with transport at either end. In Kinloch there is a car park (**WP25**) directly behind the Fire Station just past the Marina.

It will be noted on the map that only the Headland Track variation is marked, if only doing the W2K do not turn left to the SE at the DoC toilet (**WP09**) but pass the toilet then head NW to N on the main track..

Detail: As can be seen in the profile below the total distance walked is over 20km in a total time of roughly 6 hours but this includes about 45 minutes for refreshment stops plus a few more minutes to check out the viewpoint spurs (**WPs10 & 17**) on the Headland Track. The track is undulating to hilly with an altitude range between 362 and 626 metres with an overall ascent / descent of about 600metres. There are no stream lines to cross and dry feet are guaranteed but there are a few very steep edges on the track and care must be taken not to fall off – and falling off is possible if one has to side-step rapidly to avoid a fast bike. From the car park (**WP01**^{363masl}) cross the road and get over the very large stile, it is large as bikers have to get their mountain bikes over, where there are then some information boards. From here the track goes up through a meadow – with lambs in season – at the top of which there is a left turn over a cattle-stop bike bridge (**WP02**^{390masl}) into some open woodland – see if you spot the aluminium cooking pot hanging in the trees above your head? From here the track veers to the right and starts to ascend just past some gum trees. There are not too many features to note on the track and there is a lack of distance markers.

Open woodland



At around 18 minutes there is a bit of an open area (**WP03**^{452m}) with views towards the SW then a seat with lake views is reached (**WP04**^{475m}) whilst at a bend (**WP05**^{507m}) some stones allow short people to get views. There is a little spur off left to a large convenient seat on the stump of a large felled tree (**WP06**^{539m}) but vegetation starting to mask this. The whole track is in various types and stages of forest, the surface is good and the scenario keeps changing as the track bends and weaves all over the place.

Tree stump seat



There is another open area with views to the south reached in about 1:15min (**WP07**^{527m}) just before the track goes steeply downhill on some zig zags then the “half-way to Kinloch” marker pops up (**WP08**^{534m}). At two hours the junction (**WP09**^{543masl}) with the Headland Track is reached where there is a DoC toilet. If you go left you will add 2- 3 hours to the outing so if only wanting 14km take the right branch and in minutes there is another junction where the Headland Track re-joins (**WP18**^{549m}). If the Headland Track is followed there is a Y-fork (**WP10**^{535masl}) after 5mins with the left going to the Kinloch Lookout and does not add too much distance or time. The Headland Track continues to wind about with a fair amount of ascending without offering too many views and the bush is fairly dense under the trees. There are some views after two and a half hours (**WP11**^{499m}) and again at three hours (**WP12**^{560m}) at the top of an uphill winding section. After seemingly walking in circles the headland itself is reached where there are spectacular views and a huge seat (**WP13**^{640m}) inscribed with the names of the track builders – Pete seems to figure heavily in this. The ascending is more or less over for the day and now downhill rules and progress is easier. There is a sharp change of direction (**WP14**^{626m}), more views (**WP15**^{546m}) when Kinloch can be seen and a spur track leads to even better views from **WP16**. After this there is a bit of ascending to do to get back up to re-join the main W2K track (**WP18**^{549m}).

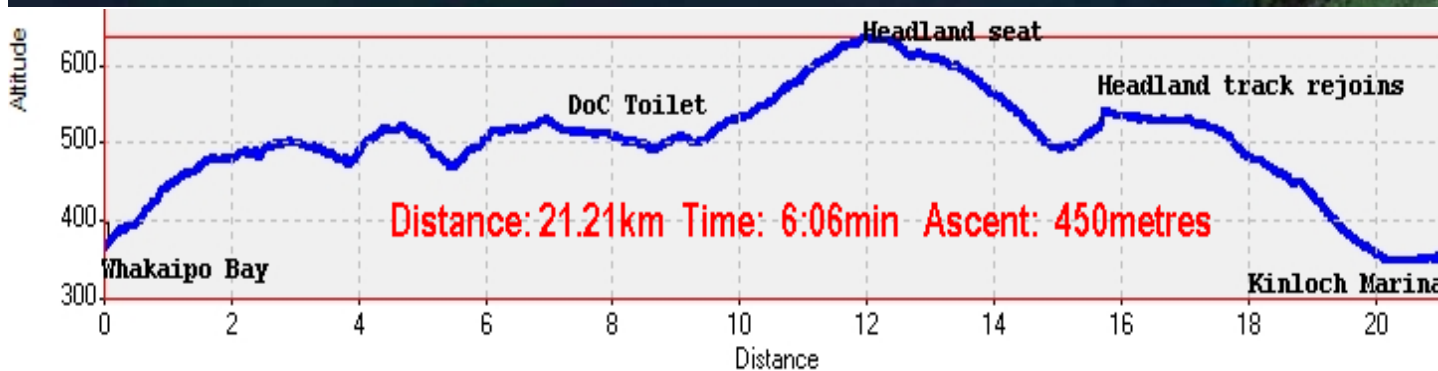
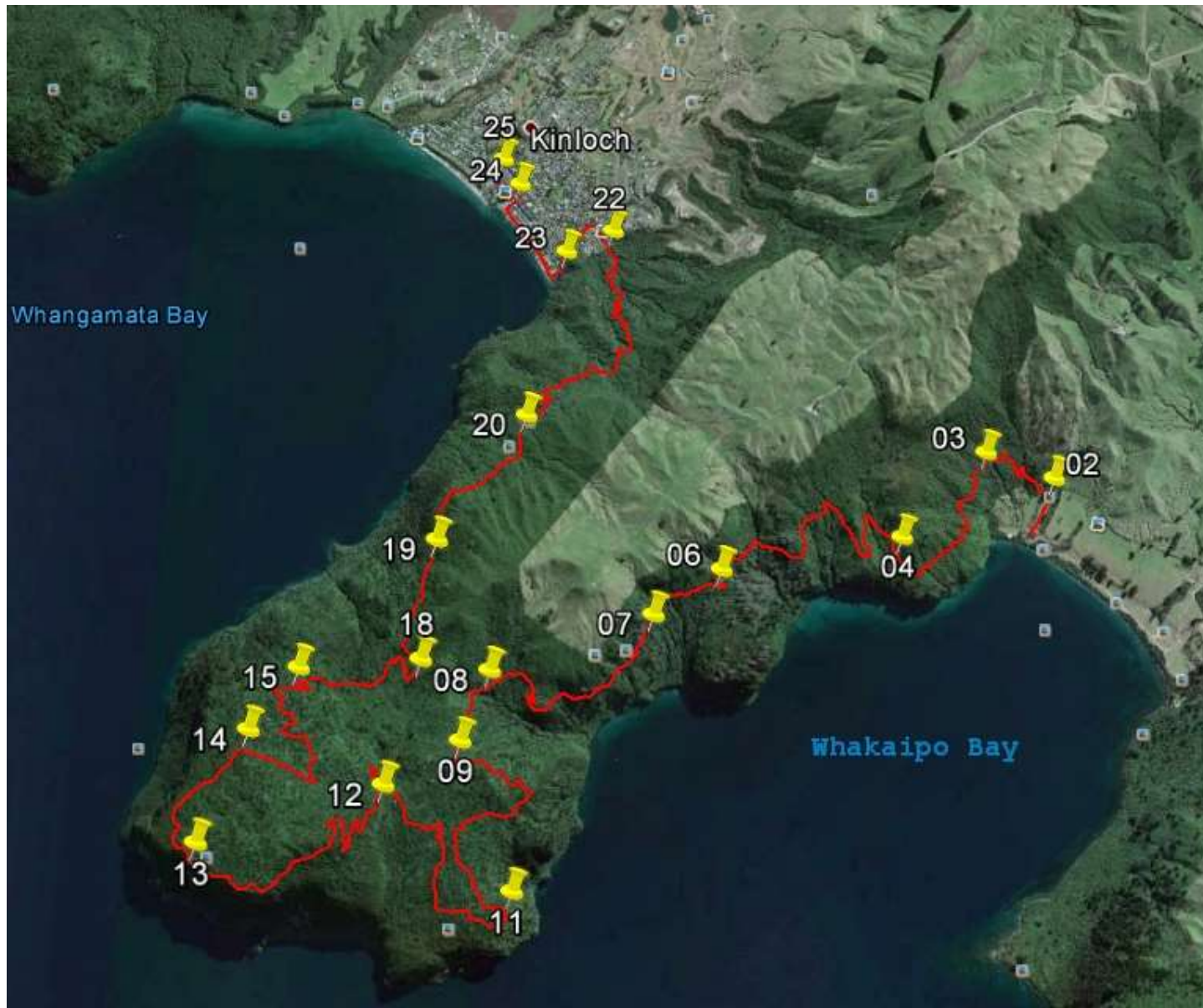


N...	Easting	Northing	Alt(m)	Description
01	1857221	5714314	363	Car park at Whakaipo Bay, 15 - 20 minutes drive from Taupo
02	1857359	5714554	390	4min (250m); up through meadow to go left over cattle-stop bike bridge
03	1856969	5714706	452	18min (1.06km); open with views over Lake Taupo
04	1856472	5714214	475	35min (2.11km); seat with lake views
05	1856310	5714210	507	42min (2.72km); viewpoint with pile of stones for hobbits to see over trees
06	1855450	5714058	538	1:06min (4.39km); short spur on left to large tree stump - good seat
07	1855067	5713814	527	1:15min (5km); open area with view point then soon steeply downhill on zig-zags
08	1854165	5713528	534	1:37min (6.45km); half way to Kinloch marker board
09	1854014	5713145	543	2:01min (6.94km); Headland Track junction off left just before DoC toilet
10	1854170	5713138	535	2:04min (7.10km); Y-junction with left downhill for view over lakes
11	1854284	5712328	499	2:25min (8.61km); open area with views after long winding easy grades in mixed BL forest
12	1853600	5712920	560	2:54min (10.51km); viewpoints near top of winding uphill section, some conifers appearing
13	1852634	5712640	640	3:35min (12.33km); main viewpoint with wide wooden seat with names (track-builders?)
14	1852678	5713238	626	3:48min (13.21km); sharp bend NE to SE
15	1853103	5713579	546	4:06min (14.53km); Open with view of Kinloch over the lake after passing tall Kanuka
16	1853222	5713624	522	4:11min (14.85km); Y-fork with lookout signposted to north
17	1853201	5713940	514	Kinloch Lookout at end of spur track
18	1853785	5713600	549	4:26min (15.76); T-junction to rejoin main W2K Track and sign downhill for Kinloch
19	1853847	5714277	543	4:58min (16.45); track sign Champagne Point where tracks met on construction
20	1854336	5714992	533	5:14min (17:52km); 4km to go where old coniferous forest removed
21	1854887	5715857	423	5:39min (19.29km); log seat on RHS then along a spur
22	1854799	5716155	389	5:45min (19.73km); bike speed-barriers on track then grassed gully to meet Boojum Dell
23	1854520	5716040	367	5:53min (20.33km); boardwalk at end of the gully leading to the lakeshore
24	1854233	5716482	369	6:02min (20.96km); on hump-backed bridge over Kinloch Marina
25	1854129	5716648	366	6:06min (21.21km); car park behind Kinloch Fire Station

NB: Two to Three hours can be cut off this by NOT doing the Headland Track

Back on the main track it is only 6km to Kinloch and it is all downhill passing through some beautiful forest from which some stray, giant conifers are well on the way to being removed. There are a few signs on the track, mostly without any description or

explanation, and one of those is soon passed (**WP19**^{543m}) – this one used to be called “Champaign Point” and marks where the track builders from either end met-up during construction. One area where the conifer culling is in hand is passed through (**WP20**^{533m}) then an old log seat (**WP21**^{423m}) on the right is passed before reaching the bike speed-control-barriers (**WP22**^{389masl}) before the track emerges into the grassy gully that meets Boojum Dell. Continuing down the gully reaches boardwalk (**WP23**^{367masl}) that leads to the lake edge. At the north end of the lakeside domain the track goes right to pass over a small, neat, very steep hump-backed bridge (**WP24**^{369masl}) within Kinloch Marina before arriving at the Fire Station (**WP25**^{366masl}).



Notes:

- **GPS** GPSmap 62sc
- **WP** – waypoint as taken by GPS
- **masl** –metres above sea level as recorded by GPS

September 2015