

# Walking and cycling trails in the Hokitika area

From Kumara to Ross



## Nau mai, haere mai, tauti mai Welcome

The Hokitika area extends from the Taramakau River and Kumara in the north to Ross in the south, and inland to the Southern Alps/Kā Tiritiri o te Moana. It covers popular spots such as Lake Mahinapua (known locally as Lake Mahināpua), Lake Kaniere and the Hokitika Gorge, and offers a range of walking and other recreational opportunities.

The Hokitika landscape has been affected by several periods of glaciation, the most recent 14,000 years ago. Retreating glaciers left behind rich floodplains, wetlands and moraine terraces of glacial mud and gravel, and deposited fine gold particles and pounamu (New Zealand jade or greenstone) from the Southern Alps.

Forests in the area offer a range of environments, from old growth bush in the mountains to remnant lowland forest on the coastal plains. These ecosystems support birds such as pīwakawaka/fantail, tūī, korimako/bellbird and kererū/New Zealand pigeon, and less-common species such as weka, kākārīki/parakeet and kōtuku/white heron.

Human industry over the years has left its mark. Kumara, Goldsborough and Ross all reflect their gold-rush heritage, and historic logging is highlighted in the Lake Mahinapua area.

This brochure outlines walks managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC) within the Hokitika area from Kumara to Ross. Walking times range from 2 min to 7 hr. This brochure also briefly describes the West Coast Wilderness Trail (jointly managed by local councils and DOC) and identifies opportunities for camping, gold fossicking, swimming, boating, bird watching, picnicking and sites of historical interest.

There are many backcountry huts and tracks for experienced trampers and hunters. Check the DOC website for more information.



Canoe Cove

Photo: Shellee Evans

## Know before you go



Dogs and domestic animals are not permitted at Lake Kaniere, Lake Mahinapua or Hokitika Gorge scenic reserves. Permits for dogs at all other areas can be obtained at the Hokitika DOC office.



No unauthorised drones on conservation land. Note that drone use is unlikely to be authorised for the scenic reserves or near campsites. Contact the Hokitika DOC office for information on how to apply.



Mountain biking is permitted on certain trails near lakes Kaniere and Mahinapua. Look for the mountain biking icon next to track descriptions. Cyclists should take care and respect others on the track.



Gold fossicking is permitted at the Goldsborough campsite and Jones Creek near Ross, subject to certain rules. Know the rules before you pan. Search for 'gold fossicking' on the DOC website for more information.

- 1 West Coast Wilderness Trail
- 2 Londonderry Rock Walk
- 3 Goldsbrough (Shamrock) Track
- 4 Goff's Track
- 5 German Gully Pack Track
- 6 Tunnel Terrace Walk
- 7 Kaniere Water Race Walkway
- 8 Kahikatea Forest Walk
- 9 Lake Kaniere Walkway
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## Track grades

### Walking and tramping



**Easy access short walk:** Suitable for people of all abilities, wheelchairs and pushchairs. Walking shoes required.



**Short walk:** Well-formed track with easy walking for up to an hour. Suitable for most abilities and fitness levels. Walking shoes required.



**Walking track:** Easy-to-moderate walking from a few minutes to a day. Track is mostly well formed; some sections may be steep, rough or muddy. Walking shoes required.



**Tramping track:** Challenging day or multi-day tramping/hiking. May have steep grades. Suitable for fit, experienced and adequately equipped people. Tramping boots required.

### Biking



**Grade 2 (easy):** Mostly flat, smooth track with some gentle climbs and easily avoidable obstacles such as rocks and potholes.

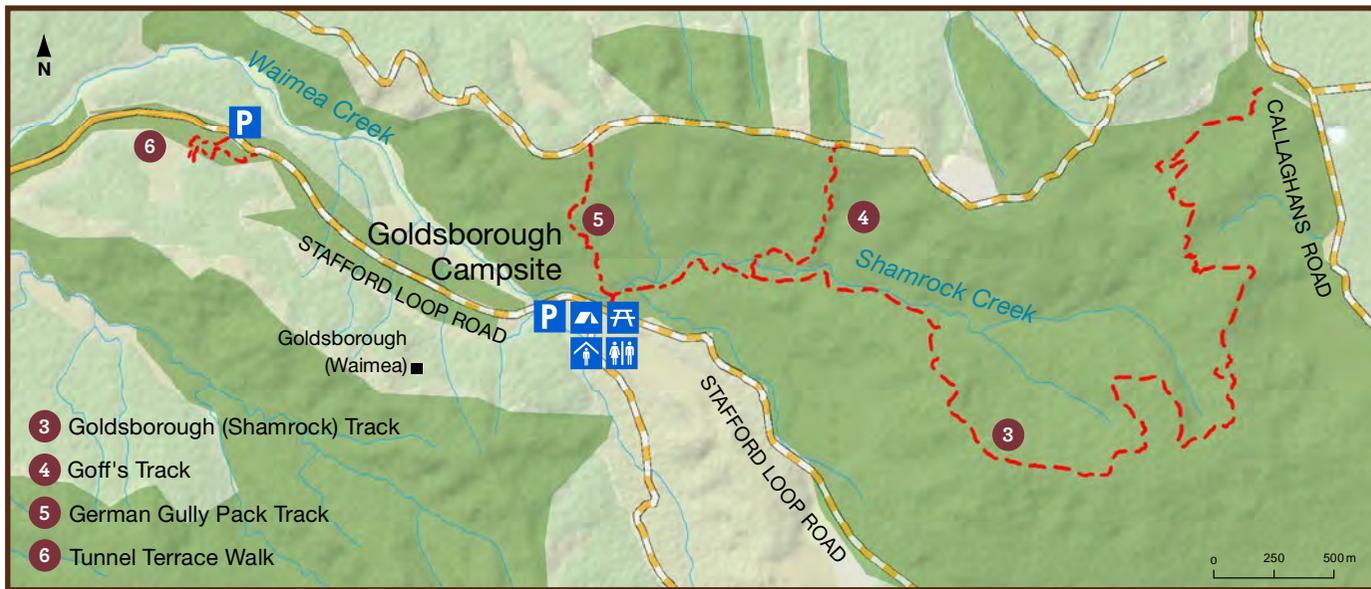


**Grade 4 (advanced):** Track may be narrow and/or have poor traction and have a mixture of long, steep climbs, and obstacles that are difficult to avoid or jump over. It is generally exposed at the track's outer edge. Some sections are easier to walk.



**Grade 5 (expert):** Technically challenging. A narrow track with giant climbs and numerous hazards, including dangerous drop-offs, sharp corners and difficult obstacles. Expect walking and some bike carrying.

- |                             |                |               |             |          |
|-----------------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------|----------|
| Public conservation land    | Walking track  | State highway | Sealed road | Campsite |
| Short walk                  | Tramping track | Metalled road | Toilets     | Car park |
| West Coast Wilderness Trail |                |               |             |          |



- |                          |                |             |          |              |
|--------------------------|----------------|-------------|----------|--------------|
| Public conservation land | Tramping track | Sealed road | Campsite | Car park     |
| Walking track            | Metalled road  | Toilets     | Shelter  | Picnic table |

## Goldsbrough (Waimea)/Kumara area

Goldsbrough, between Kumara and Hokitika, was once a thriving town of over 6,000 people – all in search of gold. The town is gone but the gold is not. Today, you can base yourself at the campsite and picnic area, explore history on the walks and even try your luck in the public gold fossicking area.

Stay on the tracks as there are old mine shafts throughout the bush.

*Access: From SH6, turn onto Stafford Loop Road about 8 km north of Hokitika. The Goldsbrough camping and picnic area is about 8 km along the road. From SH73, turn onto Stafford Loop Road at Dillmanstown. The Goldsbrough camping and picnic area is about 9 km along the road.*

### 2 Londonderry Rock Walk (see main map) 20 min, 540 m return

A short walking track passing through tailings and old gold workings to view Londonderry Rock – a surprisingly huge boulder that was too large for miners to move or break.

*Access: Turn off SH73, 1 km east of Kumara onto a metalled road running alongside a water race. Follow the signs to the car park.*

### 3 Goldsbrough (Shamrock) Track 4 hr, 8 km one way

The track can be tramped from either end but is easier from the old Callaghans township, finishing at Goldsbrough. From Callaghans, the track follows several steep ridgelines and water races, dropping down to the Shamrock Creek valley where the grade is easier for the final 1.5 km. The track passes historic features like mining tunnels, dams, sluice faces, tailings and water races.

*Access: Callaghans Road turnoff is 5.5 km towards Dillmanstown from the Goldsbrough campsite. Arrange transport for your return trip before departing.*

### 4 Goff's Track 45 min, 1.5 km one way

Signposted from the campsite, this walk branches off the longer Goldsbrough Track about 15 min from the start. It joins the Scandinavian Hill Road after a 30-min climb. Combine this walk with German Gully Pack Track for a 90-min loop walk.

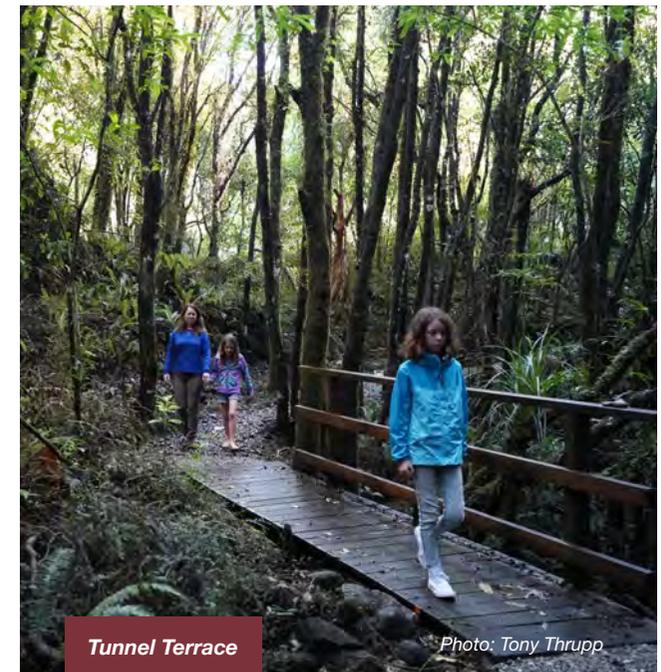
### 5 German Gully Pack Track 30 min, 900 m one way

This track, signposted from the campsite, climbs out of the valley and emerges on the Scandinavian Hill Road. It passes several old gold workings. Combine this walk with Goff's Track for a 90-min loop walk.

### 6 Tunnel Terrace Walk 20 min, 700 m loop

This a great option for kids with lots to keep them interested. Entry and exit points are via miner's tail-race tunnels. The track meanders through old gold workings. Take care as a small section of trail requires walking along the road to loop back to the car park.

*Access: Walk starts off Stafford Loop Road, about 2 km north west of the Goldsbrough campsite.*



Tunnel Terrace

Photo: Tony Thrupp

# Lake Kaniere Scenic Reserve

Lake Kaniere is one of the most beautiful lakes in New Zealand and offers the opportunity for water sports. There are also several picnic spots, a camping area and many short walks leading through bush and to waterfalls and sandy beaches.

 **Boats are on the water, so take care when swimming – there are maps on site showing waterski lanes and swimming areas.**

*Access: 19 km east of Hokitika, either along Lake Kaniere Road or via Kokatahi Road. Combine the roads for a lovely scenic driving loop. Note: Dorothy Falls Road is a gravel road along the east side of the lake.*



-   **7 Kaniere Water Race Walkway**  
Walk: 3 hr 30 min – 4 hr (with a 1 hr option),  
10 km one way
-   **Bike: easy (grade 2) to advanced (grade 4)**

The walkway follows a historic power station water race as it twists and turns along the edge of a scenic reserve. It can be walked in either direction.

 The Landing to Wards Road: This is the most popular option, an easy stretch of trail which takes about an hour one way.

 Wards Road to Kennedy Creek: This section has rough, narrow, exposed sections, making it more suitable for fit walkers.

**Mountain biking:** The section from the Landing to Wards Road is part of the West Coast Wilderness Trail, an easy (grade 2) ride. The remaining section between Wards Road and Kennedy Creek has rough, narrow, exposed sections, making it more suitable for advanced (grade 4) bikers.

*Access: Starting (or ending) opposite the Landing car park at the northern edge of Lake Kaniere, or Kennedy Creek car park off Lake Kaniere Road.*

-  **8 Kahikatea Forest Walk**  
10 min, 600 m loop

This walk follows Sunny Bight Creek from the Sunny Bight picnic area and passes through virgin kahikatea forest before returning to the picnic area via a boardwalk over a flax swamp. Information panels help you identify trees along the way.

-    **9 Lake Kaniere Walkway**  
4 hr, 10 km one way

The walkway is a 4-hr tramp along the western shores of the lake and can be walked in either direction. Highlights include lush lakeside forest, picturesque bays and numerous streams. There is a lookout point part-way up Mount Upright/ Te Taumata o Uekanuku.

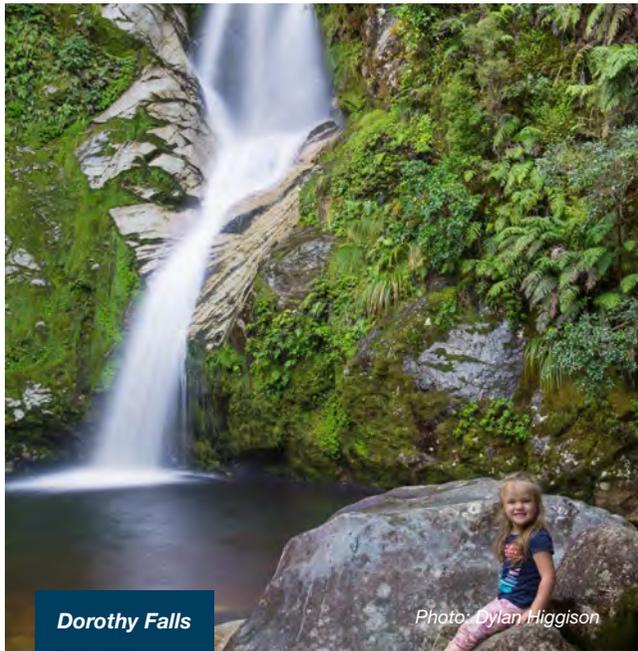
**Mountain biking:** Advanced (grade 4) riding with a short section of expert (grade 5) near the southern end. Track is technical, narrow, steep in places with large drop-offs, and has a rough surface with exposed tree roots. You will need to carry your bike in one section of stairs.

*Access: Starting (or ending) at the road end just past Sunny Bight picnic area, or the southern end of the lake on Dorothy Falls Road.*

-  **10 Canoe Cove Walk**  
15 min, 650 m one way

Canoe Cove is a small inlet on the north-eastern shore of Lake Kaniere. This walk leads through stands of rimu and kahikatea forest – spared by Cyclone Fehi in 2018 – to a sheltered sandy beach suitable for picnics and swimming. A large area of fallen trees highlights the power of nature.

*Access: Car park opposite Milltown Road/Hans Bay Road junction.*



Dorothy Falls

Photo: Dylan Higgison

### 11 Mount Tuhua Track 7 hr, 7.6 km return

This steep track gains access to the open tussock peak of Mount Tuhua (1,125 m) and offers a grand panorama of the Southern Alps, Lake Kaniere, the coastal plains out to the Tasman Sea, and Hokitika.

 This is a steep tramp to an exposed mountain top and is suitable for fit and experienced trampers only. You should take boots, adequate warm clothing, wet weather gear and plenty of food and drink. Do not attempt the track in bad or cloudy weather as it will be difficult to find track markers on the open tussock tops.

*Access: The track begins at Lake Kaniere near the southern end of Hans Bay. The signposted entrance is on the southern side of Tuhua Creek Bridge. Use Topomap J33 Kaniere.*

### 12 Dorothy Falls 2 min, 50 m return

About 3.5 km south of Hans Bay along Dorothy Falls Road, a very short walk leads to the base of Dorothy Falls – a lovely spot for a refreshing dip.

## Hokitika area



### 13 Hokitika Gorge Walk 1 hr, 2 km loop

Enjoy excellent views of the blue-green waters of the Hokitika River as it makes its way through the granite-sided Hokitika Gorge. This short, easy walk is a great option for kids.

From the car park, follow the walking track for a few minutes through podocarp/hardwood forest until you emerge at a viewing platform overlooking the gorge. This part of the track is accessible for wheelchairs.

From the viewing platform, curving boardwalks drop down to a swing bridge. Turn left at the other end of the bridge (straight ahead leads to private farmland). The track continues upstream for 200 m to another viewing platform where you can also access a small beach. Make sure you read the warning signs and close the gate.

To continue further up the gorge, return to the junction before the viewing platform and turn left. Curved boardwalks and another viewing platform give views overlooking the river before you reach a 90-m suspension bridge. Cross the bridge and follow the easy trail through bush to loop back to the car park.

#### Caution

- The granite rocks alongside the gorge are rough and can be slippery. Watch children closely.
- River warning: The Hokitika River is swift, cold, and hazardous in all conditions. Swimming here is dangerous and has been fatal.

*Access: 33 km east of Hokitika. Leave Hokitika's main road by turning inland onto Stafford Street, which becomes Kaniere Road. Stay right at a Y-junction and follow Kaniere Road until a T-junction. Turn right onto Kaniere-Kowhitirangi Road. From here the road takes many turns – look out for yellow signs pointing you along the way. Kaniere-Kowhitirangi Road turns sharp left, then sharp right. Turn left into Johnston Road, right into Nielson Road, and left into Whitcombe Valley Road.*

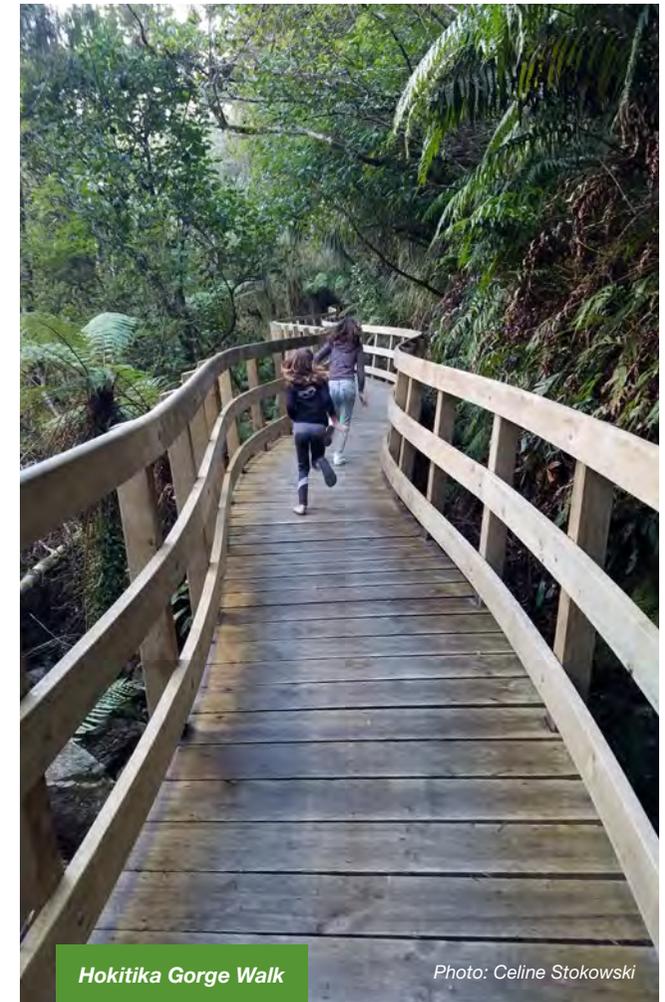
Short  
Walks



### 1 West Coast Wilderness Trail From 20 min (walk) to 3–4 days (cycle whole trail – 132 km approx.)

*Owned and maintained by the Westland District Council.  
Managed by the West Coast Wilderness Trail Trust.*

This easy (grade 2) cycle trail is one of New Zealand's leading 'Great Rides'. Ride through dense rainforest and past glacial rivers, lakes, beaches and wetlands. The trail runs between Ross and Greymouth via Hokitika and Kumara and can be ridden in either direction. For more information visit the Hokitika i-Site or [www.westcoastwildernesstrail.co.nz](http://www.westcoastwildernesstrail.co.nz)



Hokitika Gorge Walk

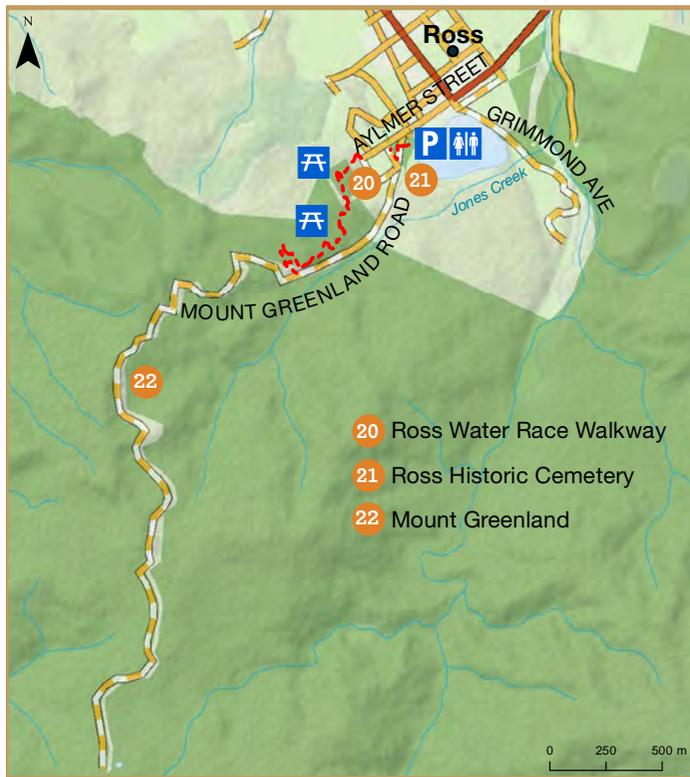
Photo: Celine Stokowski

## Historic Ross goldfields

Ross is a historic gold town, and many relics of the gold rush era are apparent throughout the goldfields area. There is a public gold-fossicking area on Jones Creek.

**Stay on tracks – there are old mine shafts throughout the bush.**

Access: Ross township is 30 km south of Hokitika on SH6. All walks below are accessed from the Ross Goldfields Information and Heritage Centre at the end of Aylmer Street, where you can check other walks and activities in the Ross area and up-to-date track conditions.



- |                          |               |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| Public conservation land | Toilets       |
| Walking track            | Car park      |
| Metalled road            | Picnic table  |
| Sealed road              | State highway |

### 20 Ross Water Race Walkway 1 hr, 1.6 km loop

This walk is great for kids – there are plenty of tunnels and other gold mining relics to keep them interested.

From the car park at the Ross Goldfields Information and Heritage Centre, the Water Race Walkway follows Mount Greenland Road for about 15 min before turning onto a signposted forest track on the right-hand side of the road.

The track climbs to an old water race, then follows this through regenerating native forest, passing old gold workings like tunnels, dam sites and a replica miners' hut. After passing through the original Ross Cemetery, the walkway exits at the top of St James Street, with a short walk back to the car park.

### 21 Ross Historic Cemetery 20 min, 600 m return

Starting from the top end of St James Street, this short walk, which is also part of the Ross Water Race Walkway, zigzags steeply uphill for a few minutes before entering the historic cemetery. Here you will find many interesting headstones that portray the harshness of life in the early mining days.

### 22 Mount Greenland 7 hr, 18 km return

This walk follows a rough and unmaintained road to the top of Mount Greenland. The road is a steady incline and mostly follows an old miners' pack track. It passes through tall rimu forest at first, then the vegetation changes as altitude is gained. On a clear day, the tussock-covered top of Mount Greenland has amazing views in every direction.

**Warning:** This is a tramp for fit and experienced trampers. You should take boots, warm clothing, a raincoat and plenty of food and water for the journey.

Beyond the summit, the road continues steeply downhill to the site of the old mining village at the back of Mount Greenland. This adds several hours to the journey and is not recommended as part of a day walk.

**Mountain biking and four-wheel driving:** Mount Greenland is a challenging road. The track is very boggy in places and some sections can be extremely slippery when wet. For advanced riders and drivers only.

## Lake Mahinapua Reserves/Mananui

Lake Mahinapua is a scenic lake that was once a coastal lagoon, but with the buildup of coastal dune systems it became a shallow inland lake. It is a tranquil place for walking or biking with the family, bird watching and water activities. Mananui accesses the beach near Lake Mahinapua.

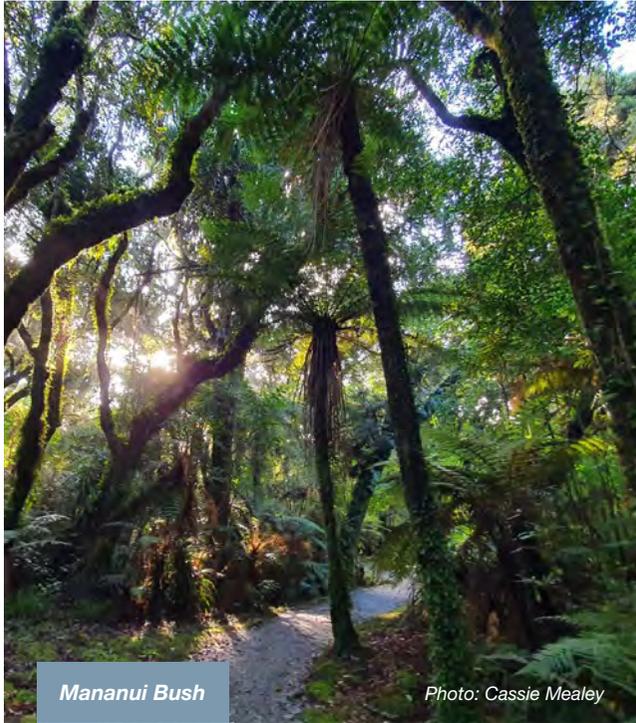
There is a picnic and camping area on the western side of the lake, with short walks that lead through bush and to the water's edge. Trails to the north of the lake lead to Mahinapua Creek/Tūwharewhare, the surrounding wetlands and the eastern side of the lake. These trails form part of the West Coast Wilderness Trail, a Grade 2 cycle trail.

**Warning:** Watch out for boats when swimming in the lake.

Access: The recreation and campsite area on the western side of the lake is 10 km south of Hokitika on SH6. Turn left onto Shanghai Road opposite the Mahinapua Hotel. Continue for about 300 m along this gravel road, which opens out to the camping and recreation area. Directions to other parts of the lake and Mananui are in the trail descriptions.



- |                             |               |              |
|-----------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Public conservation land    | State highway | Shelter      |
| Short walk                  | Metalled road | Campsite     |
| Walking track               | Sealed road   | Car park     |
| West Coast Wilderness Trail | Toilets       | Picnic table |



Mananui Bush

Photo: Cassie Mealey

 **14 Mananui Bush**  
30 min, 1.2 km return

This walk, 9 km south of Hokitika on the seaside of SH6 (it is well signposted), offers one of the best beach views of the Southern Alps' highest peaks. Heading to the sea, this walk passes through a coastal forest remnant and comes out through flax behind the first dune. Return via the same track.

  **15 Mananui Tramline (Mahinapua Walkway)**  
2 hr, 6 km one way

The walkway features historic relics as it follows an old logging tramway. It crosses a range of landscapes like board-walked wetland, regenerating forest and mature native forest. The walkway can be done in either direction.

**Mountain biking:** Most of the walkway is part of the West Coast Wilderness Trail, an easy (grade 2) cycle trail. A short connector section at the start (or end) of the Mananui Tramline to the car park on SH6 is also an easy cycle. Take care on the boardwalk.

*Access:* Access to the western end of the Mananui Tramline (Mahinapua Walkway) is from a car park approximately 8 km south of Hokitika off SH6. Access to the trail's eastern end is from a car park 14 km south east of Hokitika. Via Kanierie, cross the Kanierie Bridge over the Hokitika River and turn left onto Woodstock-Rimu road. The car park is approximately 9 km down the road.

 **16 Picnic Point**  
1 hr, 2.5 km return

Close to the eastern end of the Mananui Tramline, there is a trail that detours to Picnic Point (15 min, 650 m one way), a small pebbly beach on the edge of Lake Mahinapua. From the Woodstock-Rimu Road car park, the Picnic Point return trip is a popular short bush walk, passing through spectacular mature forest and an interesting section of the tramline. Return via the same track.

*Access:* The return walk to Picnic Point is from the signposted car park for the Mananui Tramline (Mahinapua Walkway) on Woodstock-Rimu Road.

 **17 Jum Michel Track**  
20 min, 1 km one way

This easy walk can be accessed just north of the car park at the camping area. It passes through the lush native bush and emerges at the start of the access road, opposite the Mahinapua Hotel. Information panels help identify trees and shrubs you see along the way. Both ends of the track are signposted.

 **18 Bellbird Walk**  
10 min, 450 m loop

This walk starts at the southern end of the camping area. It circles an old gold-dredge pond, passing through native bush.

 **19 Swimmers Beach**  
15 min, 900 m one way

This track leads to a secluded beach. It starts at the northern end of the main lake car park and takes you down through native bush to the lake shore.



Mahinapua Walkway

Photo: Jase Blair

## Your safety is your responsibility

These walks are recommended for day visitors. Choose a walk that matches your groups' experience. Weather and track conditions can change rapidly on the West Coast. Visit the DOC website, Punakaiki Visitor Centre or Hokitika i-SITE for current weather and track conditions.

Times given here are a guide only. For walks longer than a few minutes, wear sturdy footwear, pack a small first aid kit and take some food and drink. Take insect repellent to ward off sandflies.

Follow the **land safety code** – five simple rules to help you stay safe.

- Choose the right trip for you
- Understand the weather
- Pack warm clothes and extra food
- Share your plans and take ways to get help
- Take care of yourself and each other

## Further information

### Paparoa National Park Visitor Centre

#### Department of Conservation

4294 Coast Road, Punakaiki

RD1, Runanga 7873

**PHONE:** +64 3 731 1895

**EMAIL:** paparoavc@doc.govt.nz

### Hokitika i-SITE Visitor Information Centre

36 Weld Street, Hokitika

**PHONE:** +64 3 755 6166

**EMAIL:** enquiries@hokitikainfo.co.nz

[www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)

## Care for Aotearoa



### Protect nature

Keep your distance and don't feed wildlife. Follow any rules restricting dogs, fires, drones or vehicles.



### Be prepared

Stay safe in the outdoors by planning and preparing for your trip.



### Keep NZ clean

Take all rubbish with you and use toilets where provided.



### Show respect

Respect others, respect culture.



Department of Conservation  
Te Papa Atawhai



Goff's Track. Photo: Celine Stokowski

Cover: Hokitika Gorge. Photo: Brook Sabin

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