



PAKURATAHI FOREST/ KAITOKE HILL TRACK

Casual horse riding

About the area

The development of the SH2 underpass at the top of Kaitoke Hill has connected two significant track networks available to horse riders.

Because there are several locked gates along the tracks and to parking areas you need to pre-arrange a horse-riding consent and keys with Greater Wellington's Upper Hutt office.

Tunnel Gully Recreation Area sits at the foot of Mt Climie (830m) in the Pakuratahi Forest north of Upper Hutt. Named for its link with the historic Rimutaka Railway between Wellington and the Wairarapa, it features the 221m long Mangaroa Tunnel. Closed to trains in 1955, the tunnel now provides a recreation link between Tunnel Gully and Maymorn.

Please dismount and lead your horse through the Mangaroa Tunnel and the Kaitoke Hill underpass.

No horse riding is permitted on Tane's Track or the Mt Climie access road.

The historic railway followed what now forms Station Drive, a metalled track joining the link to Kaitoke Regional Park. It also leads to a more challenging access track to the Rimutaka Rail Trail via Goat Rock (579m). Please note you will be returning the same way if you ride up this track. There is a float parking and turning area available off Kaitoke Loop behind locked gates.

The Rimutaka Rail Trail offers access to the Pakuratahi River and several picnic spots. Horses are not permitted in the Pakuratahi Tunnel. There is no horse riding access to the Rimutaka Rail Trail via the main entrance.

Kaitoke Regional Park's Te Marua entrance is dominated by the Stuart Macaskill water storage lakes. There are good views and hill riding opportunities available on tracks through the pine plantation.



Trail riding in the Pakuratahi Forest. Photo: Wellington Area Trail Riding Club

Ecology

Much of the horse riding tracks pass through pine plantation and regenerating native bush. Tunnel Gully itself features mature podocarp/ tawa forest, with hard and black beech found at higher altitudes. The two picnic areas are shaded by stands of eucalyptus trees.

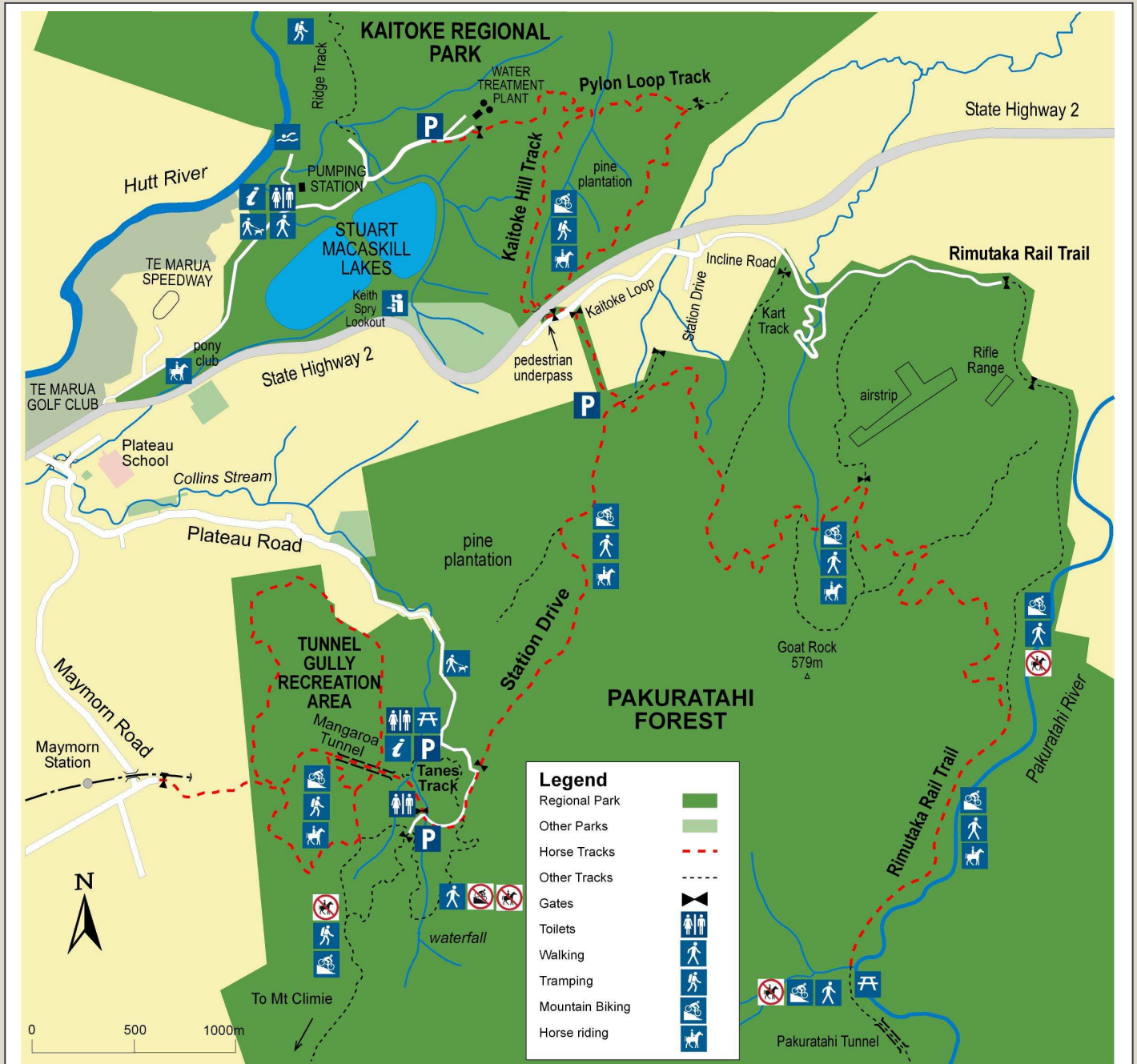
The variety in vegetation offers a habitat for many insects and birds. The bellbird, fantail, tui, kereru and even the occasional North Island kaka are attracted to the rich food source.

Safety in the forest

Weather conditions can change quickly and much of the area does not have cellphone coverage so please

- Check the weather forecast
- Wear strong lace up footwear and carry warm and waterproof clothing and enough food and water for your trip.
- Carry sun protection and a first aid kit
- Take a torch for the tunnel.
- Plan your route and let someone know of your intentions

- Be aware that tracks are shared with pedestrians and mountain bikers. Show consideration to other users.



* Please walk your horse on the grass areas to avoid damaging the turf - no galloping.

Events

Please contact the ranger prior to any events to discuss parking areas and track usage. If you want to use both areas, contact the Upper Hutt office in the first instance.

- Pakuratahi Forest (including Tunnel Gully Recreation Area) – contact ranger Dean Hearfield
- Kaitoke Regional Park – contact ranger Steve Edwards

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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