

# *Waipapa Trail*

*August 14, 2022*

*Waipapa Dam to  
Mangarewa Suspension Bridge*



From: *Ngā Haerenga New Zealand Cycle Trails 2022 Website* (<http://www.nzcycletrail.com/assets/Maps/Waikato-River-Trails-Oct-2020/Waikato-River-Trails-Arapuni-Section-map-Oct-2020.pdf>)

*Distance: 10 km one-way (total 20 km)*

*Difficulty: Grade 3*

*Being part of the Waikato River Trails (~100km), the Waipapa Dam to Mangarewa Suspension Bridge Section has become a permanent dead-ended track with the unwise irresponsible deed of foolish minority. Still lucky enough, the section can be done as an extension of the overall Trails. The trail is catered for both walkers and bikers. It winds alongside the Waikato River through regenerating native bush (for a shorter part, along radiata pine forest).*









*Generation after generation, it grows.  
What on Earth can be...*

*A sparkling sunshine in an early  
morning freezing time, what a  
contrast!*

*We are really freezing, trying to put  
on more, more clothing, gloves,  
scarfs...even masks still on. We are  
wrapped up...*

*Through the open gap among the trees,  
right where we park, there's the  
Waikato River, quite clear, sparkly  
running water in a winter day.*

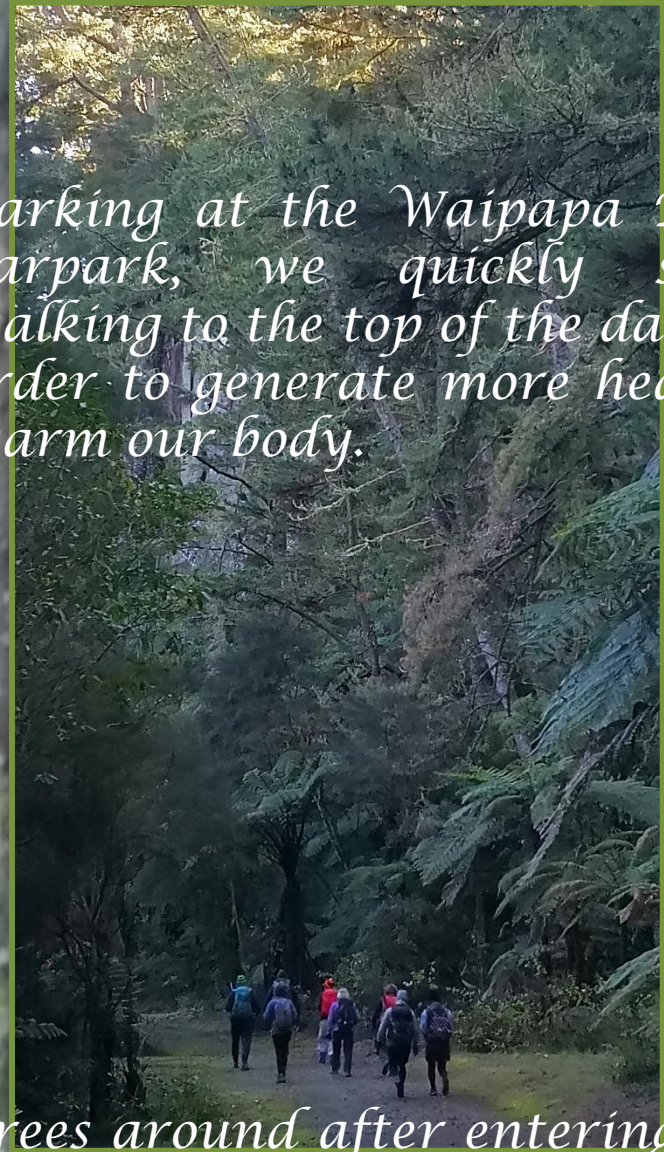
*It's August now, beginning of the other  
half of the year, a sign of a longer  
daylight...Oh, Spring is coming...sounds  
nice...We got -1°C when we drove to  
here, Rose claimed.*





*It's warmer along the track with trees around after entering the trail gate.*

*Parking at the Waipapa Dam Carpark, we quickly start walking to the top of the dam in order to generate more heat to warm our body.*







*Going straight ahead, there comes the fork. Which way to go? Losing one's way is awful in the bush...probably, not a matter for us - the Leader is with us.*

*The other group is coming. Will they know the way? How could we make them know, how to tell them?*

*Oh, he is making an arrow, a twig arrow on the mossy ground. He is the leader, Tony.*













*Running river, roaring sound...How much water we have?!*

*At the dam, the Tail-Race (water outlet of a typical New Zealand Hydro-Electric Generation Dam) surges with whitish foam...so huge and deep...although Waipapa Dam is the smallest power station in the Waikato River Power Generation Scheme.*

*Brought with energetic pull, how great is gravity, the gravitational pull, an inheritance, not so, only for Earth.*

*The Mighty Waikato, as people refer, is just in front of us. Flowing water as in traditional Maori (wai = water, kato = the pull of the river current in the sea), it gives life to nature.*

*Generation after generation, it keeps on moving. Having a direction, having a momentum. With the vibrant move, we can see how lovely life can be around us.*

*Reflecting life on Earth, whether it is down in the river or up in the sky. We can see in so lovely day. Awesome view, at the end of the winter days, having a generation and re-generation, how about a rejuvenation!*

*...Churning down from the little stream and makes up to a boundless transformation.*

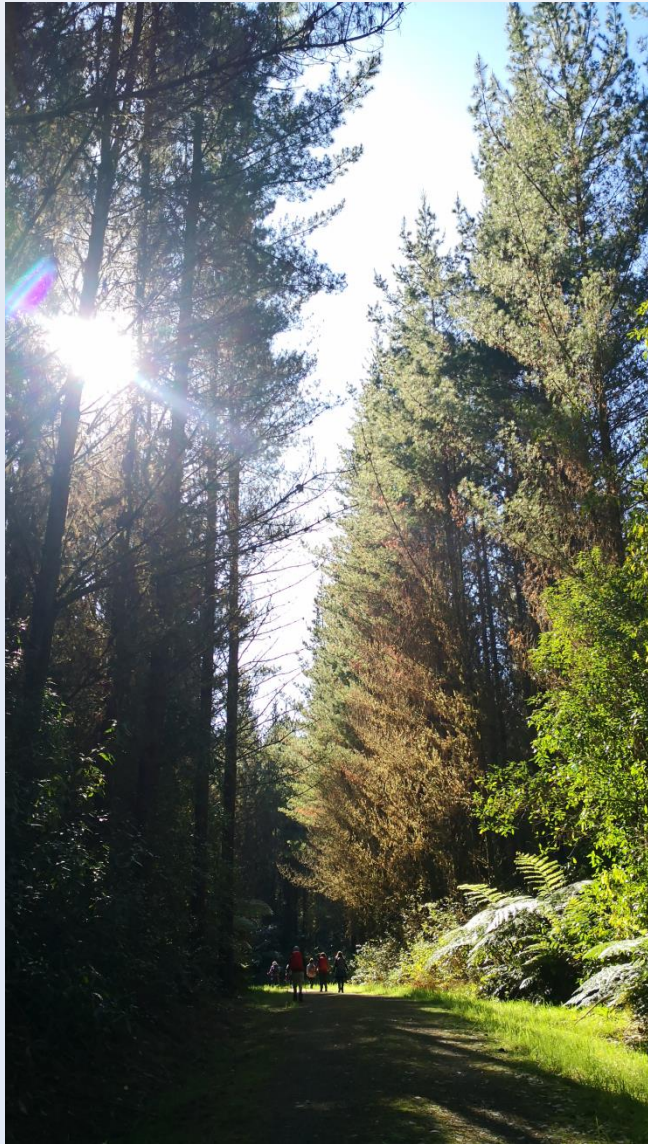




*A mat of delight, a mat of life, flora...what a generation?*

*Whitish marks, branching veins, all left with sort...network-maze.  
Never ends, never decay, but it's decaying...Eye-catching, day  
after day, year after year, it comes again. The season flows..  
On the brown mat with the white leaves...plant life is generating.*





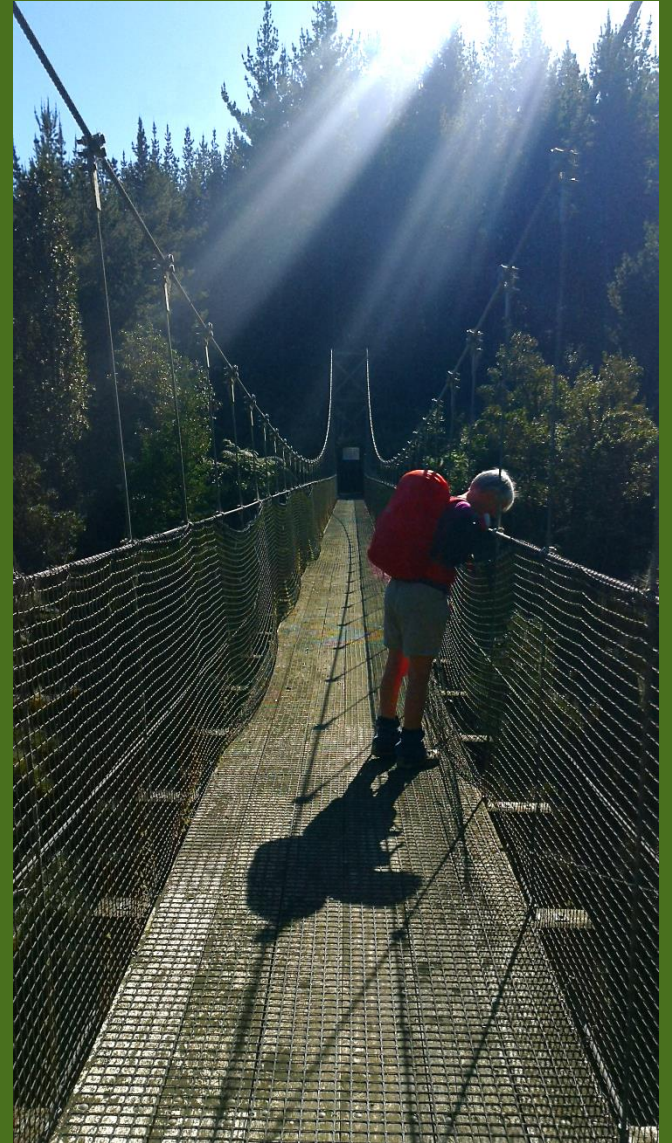
*Sun is shining, we walk  
through the bush, yes, by  
the river.*

*With all the tallness  
around, we are still  
great, great to move  
around.*

*Much evergreen, plants  
are so tall. From an  
intuitive sense, the  
season seems not moving  
at all. Still feeling a bit  
cold.*

*Have to keep on moving,  
all line up on the  
side... With trace of  
fallen leaves and twigs,  
there we move along.*







What's down there, a great canyon, a rift...but a steep river valley...much down-cutting over time.

Now it's 42m above the stream. Much water now, probably higher above in Spring...and Summer when having lesser rain?

Not swinging much but still a little bit terrible, so deep down, Betty can't bear to look down...much vegetation coverage, only can see a small stretch of the stream down below.

Water is moving fast with whitish drift. Up there is the hanging cliff, also vegetated but with *pinus radiata*, with an exposed vertical wall.

In a short distant towards the direction of the water junction, we can see River Waikato, just like a big lake, ohoo...nice-looking, attractive. Good weather, good water.

Plants around, in a temperate forest, it's relaxing up in the sky. Although not as high, still on a suspension bridge, Mangarewa Suspension Bridge.





*Waikato River Trails*

PRINCIPAL SPONSOR



MAJOR SPONSOR



THE NEW ZEALAND CYCLE TRAIL

## Mangarewa Suspension Bridge

THE BRIDGE YOU'RE ABOUT TO CROSS

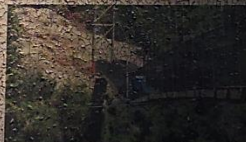
80m long  
42m above  
the water  
Tested with  
a 50,000L  
or 5 tonne  
bladder.

Built in 2010 by  
Ice Construction

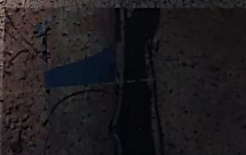
Capacity 20 people max.

noun  
plural noun  
**SUSPENSION BRIDGES**

1. a bridge in which the weight of the deck is supported by vertical cables suspended from further cables that run between towers and are anchored in abutments at each end



ABOVE: 5 TONNE LOAD TESTING



ABOVE: CABLES DIDN'T MOVE DURING 5 TONNE LOAD TESTING







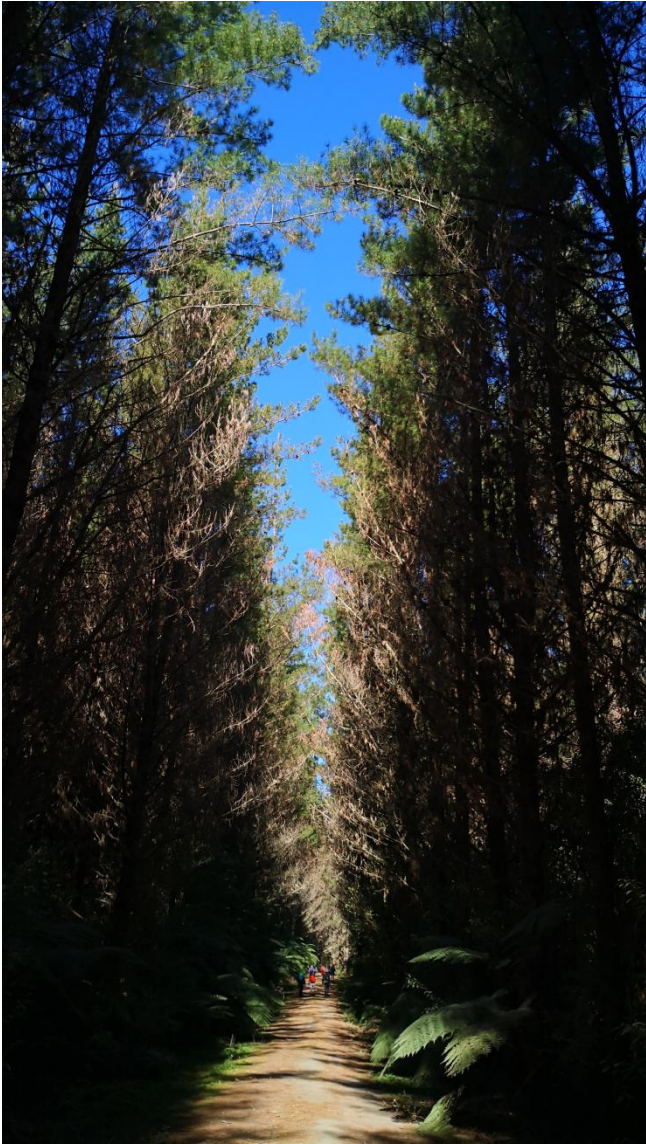
*All come to an end, it's not possible to go through – private property.*

*How disappointing – Was part of the Waikato River Trails. Serious vandalism of minority on private property over time has led to high stress for the farmer concerned. Such ignorance and disrespect has resulted in denied access (Arapuni side) to respectful and socially aware majority, so to us too.*

*It's quite annoying not able to go through, look around? Hei, having on a bridge to nowhere, what on Earth is doing! Not able to think of...not generating any resolution. Who to blame, oh...ooo...What on Earth!*

*Hovering on the hub of uneasiness, what to do on this 80m long Mangarewa Suspension Bridge? One-way traffic and turn back!!*





*Having lunch by the Mangarewa Suspension Bridge, we are please to have a break after a 10km-walk.*

*Plenty of time, plenty to wander (another 10km back)...*

*Much of the track got hair-pin part, zigs and zags on the way up and down the hill...to and back the river edge...*

*Considerable generation and regeneration has taken place. Trees are building up gradually.*

*Overhead sun fallen upon us...*

*We head forward that extends right from earth, spotless blue sky to an inordinate intensity.*

*Wander to and fro from the main access road...Once hitting Tumaí steps, we know that the exit is not far away.*

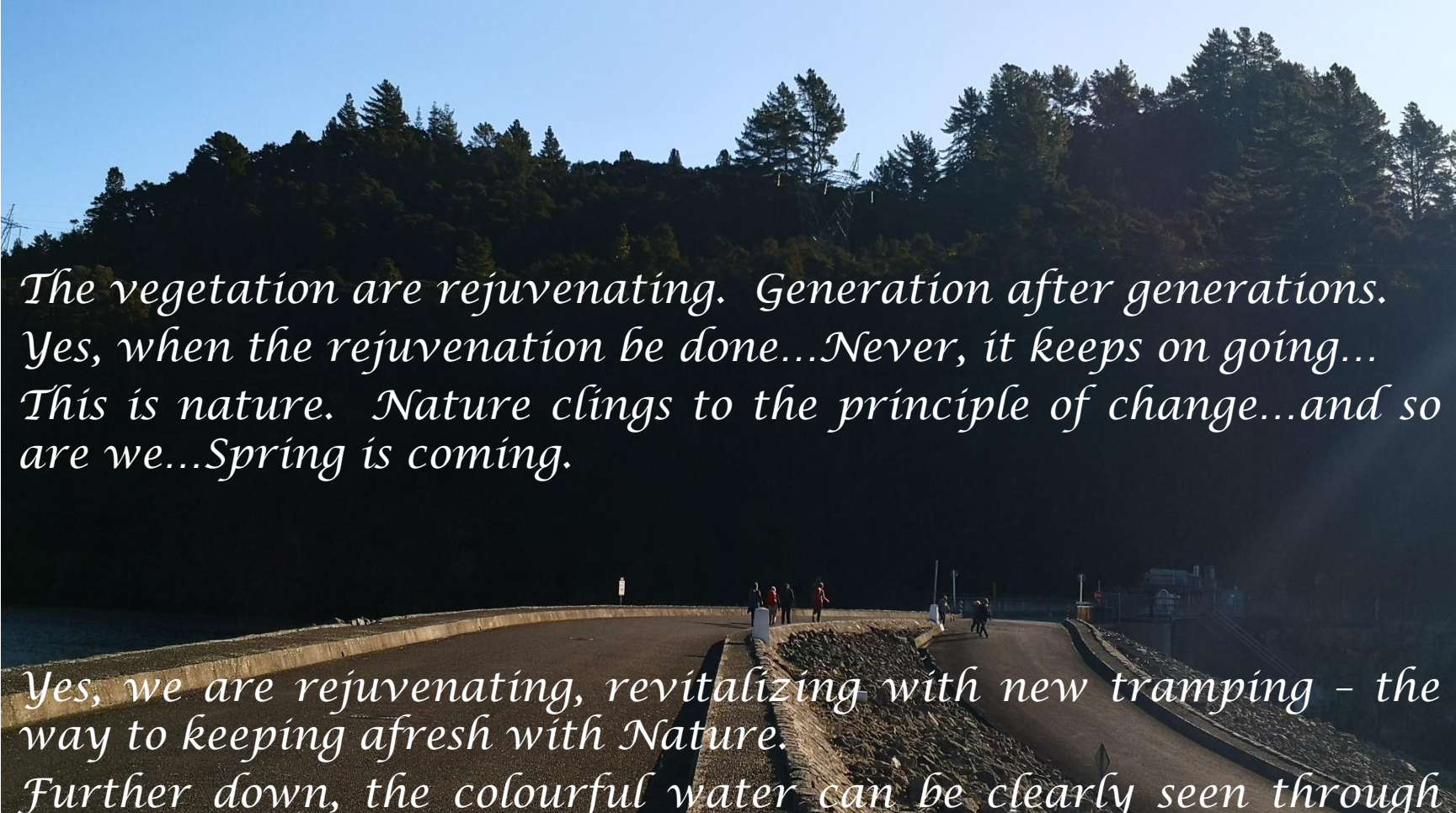










A photograph of a dam with a forested hill in the background and people walking on the dam structure.

*The vegetation are rejuvenating. Generation after generations.  
Yes, when the rejuvenation be done...Never, it keeps on going...  
This is nature. Nature clings to the principle of change...and so  
are we...Spring is coming.*

*Yes, we are rejuvenating, revitalizing with new tramping - the  
way to keeping afresh with Nature.  
Further down, the colourful water can be clearly seen through  
the bush. It reflects what's so-called the Waikato River Basin  
water can be.*

*On completing the walk, Tony leads us to step on the Waipapa  
Dam again and return to the carpark.*