



South Waikato, home of the

# WAIKATO RIVER TRAILS

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## Generator bigger & better

Entries are now open for the second Generator Multi Sport event, which promises to be bigger and better than last year.

Another event has been added to the mix, a secondary school trophy is being introduced, and a shuttle service is being offered for competitors.

The new event, called UNO, will involve a 4.5km run/walk for individuals. This brings the total number of event offerings to four, with UNO joining the Generator Full, the Generator Tri, and the Generator Duo.

Waikato River Trails' general manager Glyn Wooller says this epic event truly offers "a distance to accommodate all levels of fitness, adventure and enthusiasm".

This year's event will be held on, and around, the Waikato River Trails on April 9. A total of 220 competed in the inaugural event and at least 350 are expected this year. To enter, visit [www.wrt-thegenerator.com](http://www.wrt-thegenerator.com)

Glyn says a shuttle service will be included this year for competitors to book. This way they can leave their car parked at the finish line if they wish.

"We also have a student team trophy this year, encouraging secondary schools to enter the Generator Full. This idea has already met with a show of interest," Glyn says.

Another change will see the kayak leg operating from Little Waipa Reserve, rather than Jones Landing, which is beneficial for various reasons, Glyn says, including safety.

Glyn urges people looking for the ultimate challenge to enter The Generator Full. The Generator Full is for an individual, or teams of two to four. It comprises a 6km

kayak, a 6.5km trail run, a 33km road bike, a 12km mountain bike and a 4.5km solo or team run.

The Generator Tri is for individuals or teams of two or three. It involves a 6.5km trail run, 33km road bike, 12km mountain bike and a 4.5km solo or team run.

The Generator Duo is for an individual or team of two. It comprises a 33km road bike, 12km mountain bike, 4.5km solo or team run.

The Generator Full, and Generator Tri will start at Little Waipa Reserve, with the other two events beginning at the Arapuni Village Green.

Event partners bringing The Generator to Waikato River Trails are Mighty River Power, South Waikato District Council, Sport Waikato, and the Waikato River Trails' Trust. The Waikato River Trails' Trust also thanks the event sponsors and supporting sponsors.



# New faces get behind Trails development

The newest board members of the Waikato River Trails' trust are united in their belief that the trails are a huge asset for South Waikato.

Ros Brown and Kevan Stewart are those newest members, and they join Stuart Edmeades (chairperson), Gordon Blake, George Harrison, Dick Johnson, Dalton Poppe and Kate Bellis on the board.

Ros and Kevan are full of praise for previous trustees who have overseen the development of the trails into the "tremendous asset" of today.

It is now time, Ros says, for improvement and maintenance on the current trails, and for endeavouring to have the relatively short remaining cycle aspects of the trail off road, so as to ensure user safety.

"Additionally, the links to other cycle trails to the north, south, east and west

## Kevan's tip for cyclists

Consider having a bell on your bike. I ring my bell when approaching bends on windy parts of the trail as fast-moving bikes, or pedestrians with headphones, can be heading your way.

are essential so that the South Waikato becomes a definite part of, and link within, the New Zealand Cycle Trails' network," she says.

Kevan may be a new trustee but he is a keen cyclist and long-time trail user.

"As soon as construction started, I was there," he says.

Kevan, and a cycling buddy, are out on the trails once or twice a week, year round. The 23 kilometre return trip from Arapuni to Pokaiwhenua Reserve is their regular cycling route.

Kevan, who used to be a road cyclist, says cycling the trails at night with a headlight is far safer than being on the roads at night.

"You know if there is a light coming your way it will be another cyclist," he says.

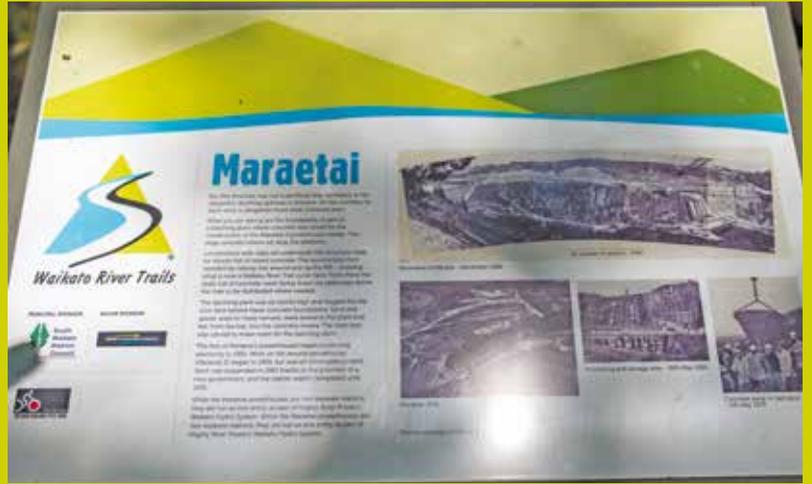
Other than offering pure enjoyment, he says cycling the river trails is a good way to maintain a bit of fitness without placing stress on the body. These days he finds it hard to imagine the South Waikato without the Waikato River Trails – it is his playground.

# New signs add to Trails experience

Cycling or Walking the Waikato River Trails is becoming more interesting and educational by the minute. Opportunities to learn about the flora and fauna and the history of the area have increased thanks to the addition of six more interpretative signs.

There are now more than 20 interpretive signs providing added value to the trail users. The signs are informational-style and tell the story about some of the native plants along the trail, including manuka, totara, cabbage tree and flax. These species have always been along the river, and the Waikato River Trails team has added more than 40,000 additional plants (including the aforementioned native plants).

Other signs celebrating local history include the story of: the Horahora Power Station that was flooded in the 1940s, and the disguising of the Arapuni Power Station. The latest signs include stories about some remnant structures next to the trail that were



used during the Maraetai Dams construction; and a colourful story about Pohaturua at the south of the trail.

The signs are a great way to showcase the wonders of the trails, from an historical, cultural, and riparian improvement point of view.

## Upgrade good news for cyclists

Good news for cyclists – the Jones Landing to Arapuni Dam section of the Waikato River Trails is now suitable for general cycling.

This section of the trail, which was opened in 2004 as a walking trail, was deemed suitable for advanced cyclists only. But, thanks to some recent trail work, this scenic section is more accessible and safer for cyclists.

Waikato River Trails' general manager Glyn Wooller says funding assistance from NZ Cycle Trail and the Sargood Bequest Trust enabled the project to go

ahead. Some of the tougher gradients have been reduced, some steep steps removed, and a bridge erected.

"Steps are good for walking, but not for cycling, hence the specific change to the trail, achieved by removing the need for manoeuvring bikes up and down steps. It is still not an easy trail, however. It sits at a grade three now, rather than a grade five," Glyn explains. He says the Jones Landing to Arapuni Dam trail alteration is part of a bigger plan, which is to make the trails more consistent and enjoyable for more people.



LEFT: Michael Ewen from Sargood Bequest Trust and Glyn Wooller, General Manager of Waikato River Trails, inspect the new bridge.

# Maintenance team drives with impact



The Waikato River Trails' maintenance crew has spruced up its wheels. Actually, the maintenance team has a hard-to-miss new ute, featuring sign writing, captivating images, and the Waikato River Trails' logo.

The new vehicle was made possible thanks to funding from the Lion Foundation and ongoing support from the trails' principal sponsor the South Waikato District Council and major sponsor Mighty River Power.

## Variety of accommodation available to Trail users

The South Waikato District Council supports freedom camping in many of its picturesque reserves.

This is great news for Waikato River Trail users as the trails meander through, or near, many of those reserves.

Waikato River Trails' general manager Glyn Wooller says those planning to tackle lengthy sections of the trail may want to work an over-nighter into their plans. Freedom camping is permitted at Little Waipa, Whakamaru, Dunhams Point and Jones' Landing reserves.

Dossing down trail-side does not have to involve a tent, however. There is a wide range of accommodation available to suit all budgets and tastes along the Trails, and surrounding areas, in hotels, motels, lodges, B&B establishments and backpackers. These range in price from \$28-\$155 per person.

By booking accommodation services through the Waikato River Trails, you are contributing to the ongoing maintenance and improvements along the Trails. Contact our friendly Waikato River Trails team for further information.

Waikato River Trails also has significant support from:

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