

Manawatu River Fishery

Upper Reaches



Wellington Region

The Manawatu River is a river of change over its 170km. It is very small where it emerges from the eastern Ruahine Range west of Norsewood, with virtually all its headwaters readily available to the angler as it passes through farmed rolling hill country. The river quickly becomes medium sized and then comparatively large after the Tiraumea and Mangatainoka Rivers join it at Ngawapurua at SH2, before it disappears through the Manawatu Gorge to meet the sea at Foxton. This pamphlet describes angler access to the river between Norsewood and Woodville. A separate pamphlet provides access information for the river downstream of the Manawatu Gorge.

There are healthy populations of brown and rainbow trout throughout. The majority of angling effort in the upper section of the river takes place between Dannevirke and the top of the gorge. Because of the length of fishable water, and the reasonably even spread of angler access points to the river, it is unusual to encounter others except perhaps during the Christmas/New Year period.

ATTENTION ANGLERS

Sections of riverbed covered by this pamphlet may be in private ownership, which means anglers do not necessarily have a right of access. Some landowners may have agreed to anglers having access along the riverbed without having to obtain permission first.

Please respect the privilege of access. Once you are on the river, stay within the riverbed and do not wander on to adjacent farmland without the express permission of the landowner. If you require clarification around where you are legally entitled to go, please visit the Walking Access Commission website - www.wams.org.nz - and use the public access layers.

Conditions Of Access:

- NO dogs. NO camping. NO fires. NO vehicles on the riverbed.
- Leave gates as you find them.

Please Note:

The Wellington Fish & Game Council has endeavoured to show where legal public access exists to and along this river. Because of a variety of factors beyond our control this is a guideline only. The onus of avoiding trespassing on private land rests with the angler and where doubt arises landowner permission should be sought. If any difficulty occurs through the use of this information please contact Wellington Fish and Game.

General Fishing Information

All methods are suitable over most of the river. Use lighter gear as the river gets lower and warmer. The evening rise, although variable, provides great fishing. The upper most reaches of the Manawatu River (access points 1, 2 & 3) are very small (about 2m wide) and hold very few adult trout. In the vicinity of Ormondville and Makotuku (access points 4, 5, 6 and 8) the river is 6-12m wide, confined between stable high banks. Willow growth is prolific in places, especially at access points 4 and 5, and this makes bank walking and casting very challenging. It is most suited to anglers who prefer sight fishing for cruising trout.

The river becomes increasingly open as it gains size and downstream of the Tamaki River confluence there are large gravel beaches with some scrubby and willow-lined margins. This makes river travel and casting comparatively easy. The river can be crossed mostly at will although stones can be very slippery. Downstream of the Ngawapurua Bridge the river is substantially larger and river crossings need to be chosen with care. The river remains open, with large gravel beaches and the banks fringed with willows.

Please Note: The True Left and True Right sides of a river are on your left and right respectively as you face downstream.

1 Ellison Road

Turn off SH2 onto Jens Andersen Rd, then right onto Ellison Rd. Park at bridge NC02.

2

📍 SH2 Road Bridge

Access is at the SH2 bridge which is 2.7km north of Norswood. Please exercise great care if parking anywhere near the bridge as often vehicle traffic on SH2 is heavy. Do not obscure travelling drivers' vision of the road or bridge - park well off the road.

3

📍 Kopua Road

Heading north out of Norsewood, turn right off SH2 onto Kopua Road. Drive for around 5km until you reach the bridge across the Manawatu after a big loop in the road. Going upstream much of the access is in the riverbed which is confined between high banks or banks liberally covered in blackberry. Although the crossings are not deep, anglers must be prepared to wade.

4

📍 Ormondville-Te Uri Road

From the town of Ormondville, head southeast on Ormondville - Te Uri Road until you reach the junction with Bolton Road and a bridge crossing the Manawatu. Bankside travel is difficult with willow, black-berry and other plant growth. It is very challenging fishing but wading is generally alright in low flows.

5

📍 Donghi Road

From SH2 turn onto Matamau Ormondville Road, just north of the township of Matamau. Continue for 7.7km then turn hard right to cross the railway line, then veer right again onto Donghi Road. Access is from the bridge where Donghi Rd crosses the river. Park away from gates. It is difficult fishing because of the tree and scrub growth. Remember there is no legal public access downstream of the bridge - to fish here you must contact the landowners.

6

📍 Rakaiatai Road

Follow directions for access point 5, however, approximately 5.2km after leaving SH2, turn right onto Rakaiatahi Road. Drive until you reach the bridge. Park on the open ground on the left side before crossing the bridge. Park out of the way of any truck wanting access to the loading race - there is plenty of room. Upstream there is legal public access along the true right bank only.

7

Maunga Road

From SH2 in Dannevirke turn onto Miller Street, then left onto Tipapakuku Road. Continue for about 5.5km until you reach the intersection at Raumati. Turn left onto Maunga Road and after around 6km you will reach the Manawatu River. Access is at the bridge. Do not block gateways. As there is no legal public access immediately upstream or downstream of the bridge Fish & Game has organised access with the landowners adjoining the river. Please comply with the conditions of our negotiated access detailed at the start of this access guide, as the continuing goodwill of the landowners depends on it.

8

Aerodrome Road

Access is off the end of Aerodrome Road which is about 1km south of Dannevirke. Go past the last house (on right), across the cattle stop, and follow the track, which will take you to within about 30m of the river. There is only legal public access downstream of this point on the true right, but it extends for 6.7km to the confluence with the Tamaki River.

9

Oringi Road

Turn off SH2 onto Oringi Road, about 8.8km south of Dannevirke. Drive for about 3.2km, and look for the Fish & Game 'Angler Access' sign. Please park at the parking area near the gate. Do not drive through the gate and up the track. As there is no legal public access either upstream or downstream of this point Fish & Game has organised access with the landowners adjoining the river. This negotiated access covers both sides of the river (except about 800m on the true right downstream of the Tamaki) between Kumeroa and the confluence of the Tamaki River. Please comply with the conditions of our negotiated access detailed at the start of this access guide, as the continuing goodwill of the landowners depends on it.

10

Beatson's Corner

Around 3.3km north of Woodville turn onto Hopelands Road. After 5km turn left onto Jackson Road and after another 5.8km look for the Fish & Game 'Angler Access' sign and park on the wide grass verge. Walk through the double pipe and wire gate, 250m down the

track to the river. Fish & Game has organised this access with the landowners adjoining the river. Please comply with the conditions of our negotiated access detailed at the start of this access guide, as the continuing goodwill of the landowners depends on it.

11

📍 **Kumeroa Village, Kumeroa Domain and Potter Road**

Kumeroa Village: Turn left into Township Road, then left again at the Little Road 'T' intersection. Follow the Little Road extension, through the gate, down to the river.

Kumeroa Domain: At Kumeroa Village, turn left into Domain Road. At the Little Road intersection, leave the sealed road and go straight ahead through the gate and follow the fenced-off lane for 700m (after dropping down the river terrace, follow the fence on your right) to the river. Please close the gates. The gate may be locked during lambing or other stock-sensitive times.

Potter Road: Continuing up Little Road, turn left into Potter Road, go to end of the seal, and continue along private gravel road and ask for permission and direction to the river at any of the houses.

12

📍 **The Honey House**

Cross the river at the Hopelands Bridge, turn left up Kumeroa Road, and after travelling 2.3km, turn left off Kumeroa Road, through the second set of double pipe and netting gates onto the riverbed. Please close the gates.

13

📍 **Jacksons Road Metal pit**

From Hopelands Road, travel about 1.7km up Jacksons Road to where the river comes closest to the road. Park beside the road and walk through gates to the river.

14

📍 **Hopelands Bridge**

This is not an access to the river point, rather a landmark to other access points.

15

📍 **Oak Tree**

From Hopelands Road, travel down Bluff Road about 2.5km (or, if travelling upstream on Bluff Road, it is 5.6km from SH2) and park off the road near the Oak Tree (signposted). Please do not drive through the gate, or obstruct it, and be careful parking here

if the ground is wet and/or muddy. Walk to the river. Please shut the gate.

16

📍 **Bluff Road Bluff**

From SH2, travel up Bluff Road about 2.6km. Where the road comes close to the river there is a dip and a sharp turn to the left. Do not take the sharp turn left, instead go straight ahead down a steep gravel track and through the gate to the river. Once on the river berm there is ample room for parking. Please do not wander onto adjoining paddocks. Sometimes this access point is blocked or obstructed, with a sign declaring 'No Access'. Ignore this. There is legal public access to the river. Alternatively, stay on Bluff Road, go around the sharp left corner for another 150m, where the next gate on the right can be seen. Park at the gate, taking care not to block it, and walk to the river. Please close the gates.

17

📍 **Haukopua Scenic Reserve**

From either Kohinui Road or Thompson Road turn into Oete Road and from the end of the seal go 1.8km, passing the Haukopua Scenic Reserve sign, and turn right into a metal pit extraction area and the river bed.

18

📍 **Ngawapurua Bridge SH2.**

The Ngawaparua Bridge on SH2 crosses the Manawatu River some 5km north of the Tui Brewery at Mangatainoka. On the northern side of the bridge, turn into Bluff Road and park before crossing the railway line. Access to the river from here but be sure to stay remain well clear of the railway line when walking to the river.

19

📍 **Troup Road**

Access to the river off Troup Road requires the permission of the landowner. Troup Road runs off both SH2 (about 2km north of Ngawapurua Bridge) and SH3 (just on the Manawatu Gorge side of Woodville). Access to the river is through Mr and Mrs Ball's property located on the river side of Troup Road at the right angle bend. Please phone Mr and Mrs Ball (06 376 5252) and follow their instructions.

20

Ormond Road

Drive down the Ormond Road extension from its intersection with Troup Road for 1.3km. At the 1.3km mark the road is partially boarded with a metal gate (signposted). Please park here but do not block the gateway. Proceed on foot along the track, through a narrow band of willows, and across the paddock to the river. The walking distance to the river is about 500m. Access along the true right bank has been organised. Please comply with the conditions of our negotiated access, as the continuing goodwill of the landowners depends on it.

21

Recreation Reserve

Turn off SH3 across the Ballance Bridge onto Gorge Road and park next to playground (about 100m from the bridge). Walk into the playground to a fence along the top of the river terrace, then through the bush in an upstream direction following a distinct but unmarked track for about 100m until you see a white arrow directing you down the terrace. The drop down the terrace is steep and a bit tricky to negotiate and it requires a great deal of care if the ground is wet. Head out of the bush in an upstream direction to the river's edge.

22

Woodville Ferry Reserve SH3

Turn off SH3 into the Woodville Ferry Reserve, which is between the two bridges over the river at the eastern end of the Manawatu Gorge. Please shut the gate. The reserve is very big and offers plenty of parking and scope for family activities. Please be aware that this access can be closed for vehicle access during lambing.

Access information online: www.fishandgame.nz/access.org/wellington

Access online
by scanning
the QR Code



Fish&Game
NEW ZEALAND



Wellington Region

PO Box 1325 Palmerston North
Telephone: 06 359 0409 www.fishandgame.org.nz