

Broken Hill Recreation Reserve.

This is a great opportunity to try something new as you travel to Whitianga or the beaches South of it. If you are at Tairua or Pauanui you can ride to it. The reserve is in the Coromandel Forest Park. You can enter it from two sides, but the best way is to enter from SH 25 on Puketui Rd which is on left hand side of Kopu –Hikuai road at about the 15 km mark from Kopu.

To really enjoy this ride you need to plan ahead so that bikes and gear are easily accessible in the vehicle, and you have a driver who can take the vehicle on and meet you later. Say a loving spouse or a non-rider: There are such people you know. Stop at the junction to Puketui Rd and get on your bikes here. You can drive down the road for about 4 km to a small car park and turn around. It is however a narrow country lane with gravel surface, but good for riding on.

It is downhill and then there is a concrete ford. Can have rushing water after heavy rain, but then it can be dry too. Further on is another concrete ford that always runs water over it. Riding down the road is easy. Smooth, and quiet. Wild life is every where, pukekos, rabbits, sheep, calves, spur wing plovers, pheasants and so on. The road follows the western side of Tairua River and is most picturesque. At the road end, a grassy track leads into the bush, over soggy grass and a stream bottom. Turn right and follow the old mining trail down beside the river to other car park. Suggest you turn left firstly where there are two tracks,[Water Race and Third Branch] both of which take you to Collins Drive which is a tunnel 500 metres long. Here you need a torch and warm clothing. I have not ridden this tunnel but I am told it is easily walked. Near the tunnel entrance is a platform that marks where the aerial cableway was, to carry the ore to the stamper down the valley. Suggest you retrace your ride back to the junction near the entry point and follow the river down.

The road end car park at the Hikuai end is about 1.4 km ride, and shortly before this you pass on the left the Government Battery, and a waterfall up the track behind. From this car park [there are toilets here] ride down the road and over the bridge. A track off to the right and right again, takes you up the eastern side of the river to the Golden Hills Battery. Or turn left and pass Broken Hills Battery before re-joining the road. It is a narrow unsealed road for most of its length, but follows down the valley and the river. You pass farms and a vineyard on the way.

You reach the old township of Hikuai on Morrison Rd. It used to be the main SH before the new bridge went in. Turn right towards the Pauanui where hopefully your car is waiting; if you have used your mobile phone to tell the coffee drinkers at Pauanui you are waiting or go left past the school and to the SH again and hopefully your carriage/wheels.

Here is great ride without having to drive to the location. You were just passing through. Total length of ride is about 11 km. But if you explore it can take time. Children can ride this trail and will enjoy the water sections. But respect other trail users and the track surface too.

Mobile phones operate in area. Google “Broken Hills- Coromandel for DoC map”

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