



Four-wheel driving in conservation areas



NORTH ISLAND

Introduction

New Zealand has some great places for four-wheel driving. Whether you use your vehicle to get to your favourite camping or fishing spot or just to view the scenery and enjoy, there are many different places in Department of Conservation (DOC) managed areas to choose from.

Enjoy but take care. If not driven carefully it's easy to damage fragile landscapes. It's essential that everyone using four-wheel drives, trail bikes, beach buggies and other types of vehicle knows how to drive with care for the environment and other recreationists. This list identifies places to go. Detailed information about driving with care is available in the brochure 'Four-wheel driving in conservation areas'.

Plan and prepare for the outdoors

Safety

Safety is your responsibility. Make sure you always have warm and waterproof clothing and are prepared for all weather and conditions. Take plenty of water, food, fuel, break-down tools, spare parts and emergency communication equipment on trips. Carry maps and a compass or GPS and know how to use them. In remote areas travel with another vehicle, 4WD club or go with a licensed tour operator.

Weather

Changes in weather can have major effects on a road; rain can turn a road into a bog, a slope into a slide and create impassable streams very quickly. Get a weather report before you set out. For MetService call 0900 999 + your area code or go to www.metService.co.nz

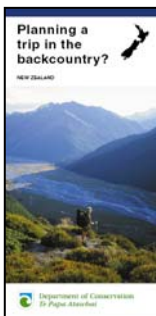
Facilities and services change

Roads may be closed by natural hazards or maintenance work and huts are replaced or removed. Always check the latest information at the nearest DOC visitor centre. A list of DOC visitor centres is available from www.doc.govt.nz.

Motorised vehicle care code

- Avoid driving in sensitive areas including alpine landscapes, swamps, waterways, sand dunes, river beds and the inter-tidal zone and above the high water mark on beaches.
- Stay on roads and avoid widening them
- Abide by the laws and regulations covering all vehicles and drivers
- Take all your rubbish with you
- Let wildlife be wild. Look but don't disturb and keep your distance
- Leave gates as you find them. Obtain permission for access if required.
- Always thoroughly clean your vehicle before and after trips to minimise spreading weeds and diseases
- Respect the right of others for quiet enjoyment. Avoid noisy driving. Give way to walkers, cyclists, horse riders and others.
- Be prepared for the unexpected. Drive at a speed which will allow you to stop if a hazard arises
- If winching is necessary, use another vehicle. If you must use a tree, use webbing or padding to protect it.
- Cross waterways with care and at designated crossings
- Join a 4WD club or go with a licensed tour operator and learn more about minimal impact practice

Learn more about minimal impact practice by joining a 4WD club or going with a licensed tour operator.



Pick up a copy of *Planning a trip in the backcountry?* from any DOC visitor centre



Enjoy the bush and getting to interesting places. Photo: Malcolm Langley, DOC

Where can I drive?

Brief details about 4WD roads are provided here. It's important to remember that you will be sharing the road with mountain bikers, trail bikers, walkers and in some places 2WD vehicles. Most of these roads are described in detail in other publications. Note that the Department of Conservation takes no responsibility for the accuracy of information in these publications. Always check local conditions before you set out and take an appropriate map.

Reference 1. *4WD North Island 102 Off Road Adventures Volume One* (2002)

Reference 2. *4WD North Island, 93 New Off Road Adventures Volume Two* (2000)

Road conditions

Road conditions vary. Some may have overgrown sections, rough and uneven surfaces and be periodically affected by flooding, slips or other natural events. Check conditions at the nearest visitor centre before you go

LOCATION	KM	ROAD	ACCESS
NORTHLAND			
KAITAIA			
North Cape Rd	20.4	4WD	Taumataroa Flat Rd to Serpentine Quarry, North Cape
Ahipara Gumfields	4.5	4WD	Ahipara Gumfields and Reserve Rd, south of Kaitaia, off SH 1
Lake Ohia Rd No. 1. and No. 2.	3.4	4WD. May be rough/ overgrown	Off SH 10 east of Awanui

Further information: Russell Visitor Centre Ph 09 4039005, email: russellvc@doc.govt.nz



AUCKLAND

There are no 4WD roads in DOC managed areas around Auckland, however there are plenty of opportunities for four-wheel driving in other places such as Woodhill forest. Further information: references 1. and 2.

WAIKATO

HAURAKI AREA

Whangamata / Maratoto Loop 4WD Roads	4.3	4WD. Experienced drivers only	South of Thames, off SH 26 to Maratoto
--------------------------------------	-----	-------------------------------	--

Important Notice: From 1 Aug 2006 this road is closed to 4WD and motorcycles until further notice for maintenance. Begin from the gate at the end of Wires Rd and follow the route of the old Whangamata Rd up to the Wires Plateau. The gate at the start of the road may be locked due to bad weather or poor road conditions. Contact the local 4WD operator for information Ph 09 5242132.

The loop road crosses the Tairua River twice and although it is negotiable both ways, a clockwise direction is recommended. All users **must** contact Kauaeranga Visitor Centre to register intentions and obtain the latest road information Ph 07 867 9080, email kauaerangavc@doc.govt.nz



Wires Rd	13.4	4WD, MTB	Maratoto Valley
----------	------	----------	-----------------

All users must contact Kauaeranga Visitor Centre to register their trip intentions and obtain information about conditions Ph 07 867 9080, email kauaerangavc@doc.govt.nz

Kauaeranga Trail	9.7	4WD May be rough and overgrown	South of Thames, Coromandel Forest Park
------------------	-----	--------------------------------	---

A scenic drive through native bush. There are plenty of places to camp and picnic. Further information: reference 2. p 122

MANIAPOTO AREA

Piropiro 4WD Roads	27.8	4WD and 2WD	
--------------------	------	-------------	--

Endeans Rd 4WD, Okauaka Rd West 4WD, Totara Stream Rd 4WD, Piropiro Rd 2WD, Maramataha Rd 2WD, Ketemaringi Rd 2WD, Okauaka Rd East 2WD, Panhandle Rd 2WD. Drive through felled exotic forest. There are picnic spots and camping at PiroPiro Flats campsite. Please stay on maintained roads. Further information: reference 1. p 134

Ngaroma Recreation 4WD Forest Rd	10	4WD	Pureora Forest Park
----------------------------------	----	-----	---------------------

Four wheel drive road through harvested exotic forest

Okahukura Rd	5.3	4WD and MTB Overgrown section	Okahukura Scenic Reserve, north of Okahukura
--------------	-----	-------------------------------	--

Good scenery and bird life. Further information: reference 2. p 135



A 4WD group getting involved in track maintenance. Photo: DOC

LOCATION	KM	ROAD	ACCESS
BAY OF PLENTY			
RANGITAIKI AREA			
87 / 88 Loop 4WD Roads	9.3	4WD. Some rough and overgrown parts	Whirinaki Forest Park
Hydro Access Rd	5.4	4WD and MTB	Mangawiri Access to Te Papa Access Rd Junction, Whirinaki Forest Park
Kokomoka Rd	4.6	4WD	Whirinaki Forest Park
Lower section only. The route provides access to Kokomoka forest and Waipunga River.			
Kopuatoto Rd	3.9	4WD and MTB	Whirinaki Forest Park
Okahu Valley Rd	10	2WD	East of Te Whaiti, Whirinaki Forest Park
Picnic spots and native bush. Further information: reference 1. p 128			
Mangawiri Access 4WD Rd	2.1	4WD. Rough and overgrown parts	Whirinaki Forest Park



View of the 42nd Traverse from a quad bike. Photo: DOC

A 4WD road to Whirinaki Forest Park.

Further information: for all Whirinaki Forest roads Rangitaiki Visitor Centre Ph 07 366 108, email Rangitaikivc@doc.govt.nz



EAST COAST / HAWKE'S BAY

HAWKE'S BAY

No Mans Rd	15.1	4WD	East of Hastings off SH 50
Access along the summit of the Ruahine Range. Spectacular views. Please stay on the road as the landscape is very fragile. A permit and key are required, contact the Onga Onga Field Centre Ph 06 856 6808, email Further information: reference 1. p. 182			
Mangatutu Hot Springs	8.1	2WD, gravel and narrow sections	Kaweka Forest Park east of Napier. Drive past Puketitiri and follow signs to Balls Clearing. Turn left to Makahu Rd

A drive through native forest to the start of a short walk to hot springs and a basic campsite. There is good fishing in the Makahu River.

TONGARIRO / TAUPO

RUAPEHU AREA

42nd Traverse	35.4	4WD and plenty of MTB, horse riders, trail and quad bikers.	Off SH 47 south of Turangi. Slab Rd to Dominion Rd
---------------	------	---	--

The 42 Traverse is open to 4wd vehicles between 1 December and 30 April. The area is a kiwi sanctuary and also a multiple use site. Drive very carefully and slowly so that you can stop easily. Please stay on the road and contact Whakapapa Visitor Centre for the latest information before you go. Ph 07 892 3729, email whakapapavc@doc.govt.nz Further information: reference 1. p 136



Ohakune Lakes	1.9	2WD gravel	South of Ohakune to Ohakune Lakes Reserve
There are good scenic picnic spots beside the lake. Further information: reference 1. p 145			
Mangatepopo Rd	6.3	2WD gravel	East off SH 47 near Whakapapa
This road offer good views of Mt Ngauruhoe. Please stay on the road. Further information: reference 1. p 130			

TURANGI / TAUPO AREA

Tukino Rd – SH1 to Tukino Ski Field	5.6	4WD	Follow signs on SH 1 to Tukino Ski field, north of Waiouru, or south of Turangi
-------------------------------------	-----	-----	---

Great views of Mt Ruapehu. Travel with other drivers as terrain can be difficult particularly in winter. Please stay on the road. An access key is required for the Tukino Skifield. Contact Turangi Reception (07) 386 8607 email ttcinfo@doc.govt.nz Further information: reference 1. p 143



WHANGANUI

PALMERSTON NORTH AREA

Takapari Rd	14.8	4WD. Steep grade at the beginning. Best driven when dry	Ruahine Forest Park boundary to the summit of the southern Ruahine Range
LOCATION	KM	ROAD	ACCESS

This is an attractive drive to the open tops of the Ruahine Ranges, offering views of the South Island, Tararua Ranges, Mount Taranaki and Mount Ruapehu when it's clear. Sub-alpine vegetation and soils are easily damaged by vehicles so please keep to the road. Look out other users and check road status before you go as winter snow or damage after heavy rain often closes this road. Further information: DOC Palmerston North Area Office Ph 06 350 9700, email wanganuiconservancy@doc.govt.nz or reference 1. p 176



WELLINGTON

KAPITI AREA

Waiotauru Rd - Akatarawa Rd to Renata car park	8.4	4WD and MTB. Do not drive past 8.4 km as the road has dangerous drop-offs.	Tararua Forest Park. East of Waikanae
--	-----	--	---------------------------------------

A scenic drive down Akatarawa Rd (2WD) to Waiotauru Rd to a saddle. There are good views of Kapiti Coast. Further information: reference 1. p 200

WAIRARAPA AREA

Washpool Rd – Aorangi Crossing Rd to end of 4WD section Te Kopi to Mangatoetoe Roads	4.8	4WD and MTB	Ruakokoputuna, Aorangi Forest Park, south of Martinborough
--	-----	-------------	--

There are locked gates at the road ends. Foot and mountain bike access is available at all times, but 4WD access is managed by Akatarawa Recreation Access Committee (ARAC). Accommodation is available at Waikuku Lodge.

Further information: Wairarapa Area Office Ph 06 377 0700, email wairapaa@doc.govt.nz and reference 1. p 207

Te Kopi to Waiokuku Tack 4WD Rd	24.6	4WD and MTB	Ruakokoputuna, Aorangi Forest Park, south of Martinborough
---------------------------------	------	-------------	--

There is a locked gate at Te Kopi. 4WD access is managed by Akatarawa Recreation Access Committee (ARAC).

Further information: Wairarapa Area Office, Ph 06 377 0700, email wairapaa@doc.govt.nz and reference 1. p 207



Enjoying a trip on the 42nd Traverse. Photo: DOC

Wash it off – Check. Clean. Dry.

CHECK. CLEAN. DRY.



When you drive between waterways you could be transferring aquatic pests and diseases from one waterway to another. To limit their spread, ensure that you check, clean, dry when driving between waterways.

Check: Remove all obvious clumps of debris from your vehicle

Clean: Clean all parts of your vehicle that has been in the water for at least one minute in either, hot (60°C) water, a two percent solution of household bleach or a five percent solution of salt, nappy cleaner, antiseptic hand cleaner or dishwashing detergent. A two percent solution is 200 ml, a five percent solution is 500 ml (two large cups), with water added to make 10 litres.

Dry: If cleaning is not practical, allow your vehicle to dry for 48 hours before crossing another waterway.

For further information about aquatic pests and how to check, clean, dry visit www.biosecurity.govt.nz



Didymo forms massive carpets that reduce water clarity.



Please avoid driving on beaches which are home to wading and migratory birds, some of them critically endangered such as the New Zealand dotterel. Photo: Dave Wills



Further information



DOC visitor centres nationwide sell maps, brochures and have a wealth of information about other recreation opportunities and conservation activities. Most are open every day from 9 am to 5 pm.

The DOC website: www.doc.govt.nz has a wealth of information about recreation and conservation.

Licensed tour operators can take you to great places in conservation areas and distil their local knowledge. Learn about responsible four wheel driving so that you are well briefed when you go it alone. Information about tour operators is available from DOC and other visitor centres nationwide.



The **New Zealand Four Wheel Drive Association (NZFWDA)** is the national four wheel drive body in New Zealand. It represents members, their clubs and 4WD supporters. Their purpose is to further and improve 4WD activities in NZ.

More information: www.nzfwda.org.nz

DOC HOTline
0800 362 468
Report any safety hazards or conservation emergencies
For fire and search and rescue call 111



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai