

Entranced By Wilderness

HIKE PLANNER

*The Serpentine High Lakes
Traverse*

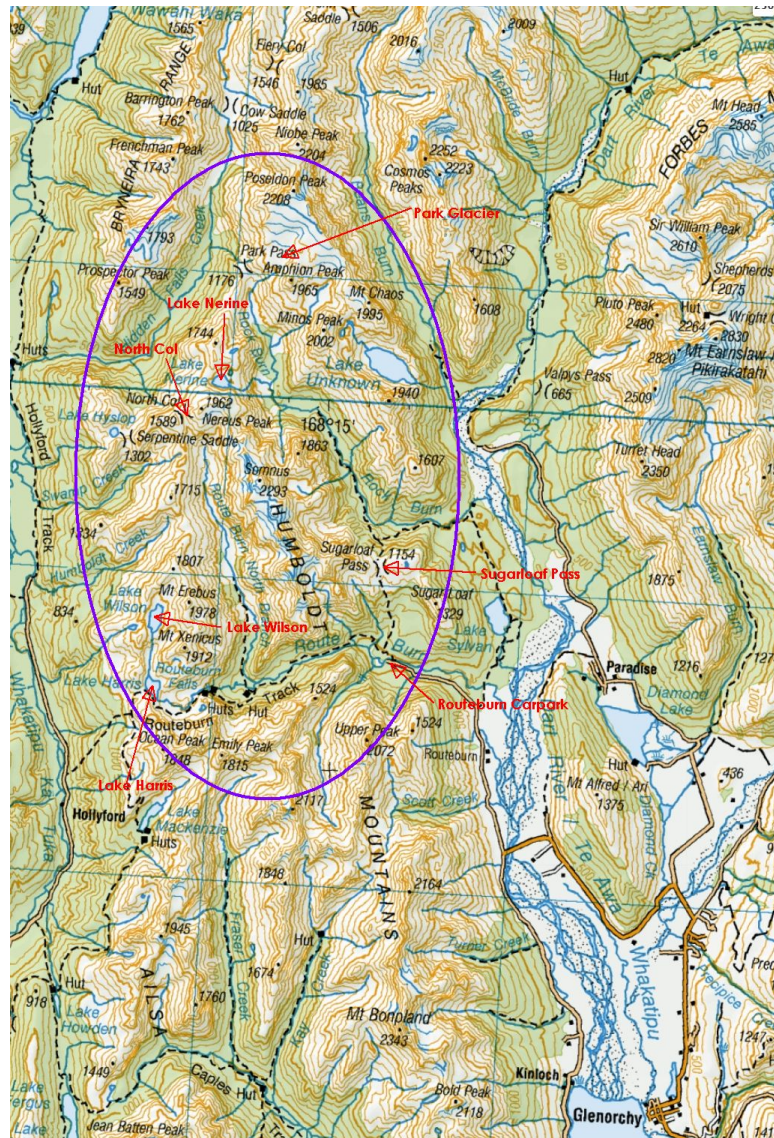
New Zealand: Multi-day
Hike

(Print this document for core information regarding the hike!)

The Serpentine High Lakes Traverse

Introduction

- ★ **Location:** The Serpentine High Lakes Traverse is located in the very south-western section of Mt Aspiring National Park. It uses sections of both the Routeburn track, and the Five Passes route (Rockburn track) with a long alpine ridge traverse in-between.
- ★ **Type of hike:** This is an **advanced** to **expert** level multi-day hike, only to be done by those with off-trail hiking experience on somewhat technical terrain with steep slopes.
- ★ **When to hike:** Mid-summer to Mid-Autumn
- ★ **Distance:** 50km
- ★ **Time Required:** 5-6 days
- ★ **Highest Elevation:** 1750m
- ★ **Lowest Elevation:** 450m



Map 1: Overview of the area

Route Planning

➤ Rough Itinerary:

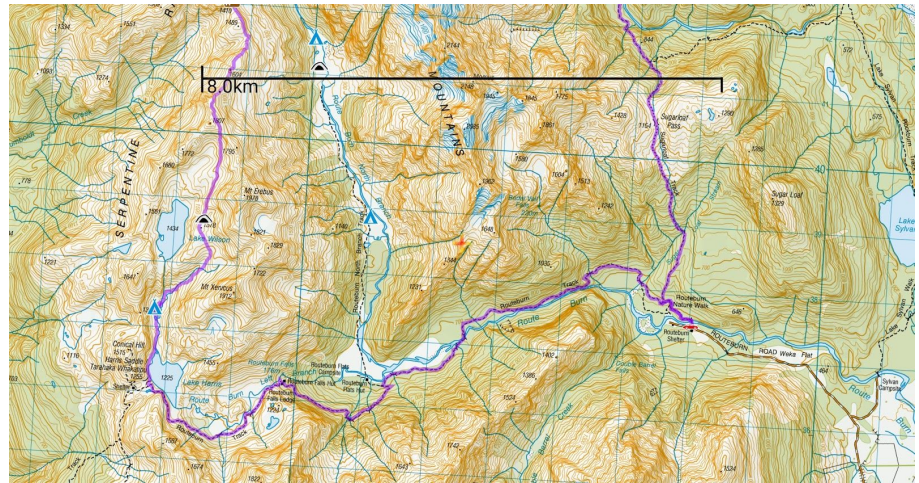
- Day 1: Routeburn Shelter carpark to Valley of the Trolls (behind Lake Harris) ~ 4-6 hours
- Day 2: Valley of the Trolls to either: a) area surrounding Peak 1489 (short day) ~ 5-6 hours, or b) North Col (long day) ~ 7-9 hours
- Day 3: a) Peak 1489 ~ 5-6 hours or b) North Col ~ 3-4 hours to Lake Nerine
- Day 4: Lake Nerine to Park Pass or Rockburn Valley (upper or mid valley) ~ 3-4 hours (add 2-3 hours for Park Glacier side-trip)
- Day 5: Rockburn Valley to Routeburn Shelter carpark (via Sugarloaf Pass) ~ 5-9 hours (depends on location in valley)
- Day 6 (*optional*): Spend an extra day in the Rockburn Valley or split Day 2 into smaller sections and camp at both suggestions

➤ Camping: Aside from Routeburn Flats hut or Routeburn Falls hut on the Great Walk, there are no accommodation options, and you MUST bring a tent.

- On the Routeburn track section, you can tent camp 500m off-trail without bookings. This can **ONLY** be done in the Routeburn North Branch valley, or the Valley of the Trolls. Otherwise, book a campsite or hut online first.
- On the ridge (Day 2) there is very limited camping options. There are several marked and unmarked tarns to possibly set up around, but be prepared for uneven ground. Consider this option only if weather is ideal, otherwise, make for North Col where it's less exposed.
- North Col has two ok sheltered areas with rock walls built, but uneven ground mostly.
- Lake Nerine offers lots of good camping options surrounding both lakes.
- Park Pass has some average camping spots near the tarn, though better options at the rock bivvy just a bit further down in valley (near elevation contour 1020m).
- Rockburn Valley has camping spots in several areas. The best being the upper valley bivvy or the small clearing at around elevation contour 700m.

Maps of Route

(Click an image to open a larger map)



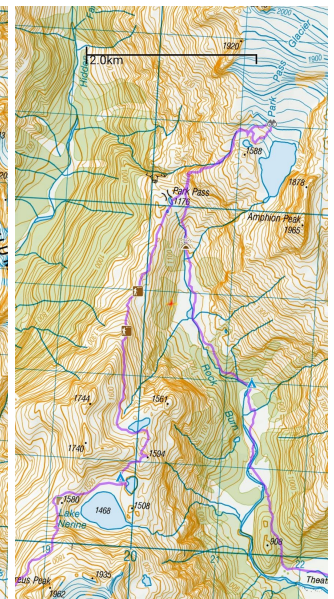
Map 1: Lower Section



Map 2: Upper Section



Map 3: Zoomed 1



Map 4: Zoomed 2

[DOWNLOADABLE .GPX FILE OF MY ROUTE](#)

(For use in topo map apps - click the download button in the upper right to download file)

Trip Planning

- **Weather:** Make sure you have read the weather forecast prior to leaving, and plan for any bad weather in advance, or consider a different time. This route is not very forgiving in bad weather.
- **Skill Level:** If you are a new or intermediate level hiker, make sure you travel with an experienced hiker who is familiar with route finding. *If in doubt, choose an easier route!*
- **Personal Locator Beacon:** Do NOT attempt this hike without a PLB at all costs. There is a high level of remoteness to this hike on the alpine section.
- **Navigation:** Take both downloaded topo maps on your device using an app (e.g. Backcountry Navigator), along with paper

	<p>printed maps (Use the print tool on topomap.co.nz) and a compass.</p>
<p>Logistical Considerations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Transportation: Car or shuttle required to Routeburn Shelter carpark. This is a loop track, so you depart and arrive at the same location - makes life easy! ➤ Bookings: Unless you wish to stay in a hut on the Routeburn track, or wish for a shuttle from Queenstown, no bookings are required.
<p>Gear Considerations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The alpine sections of this hike reach 1750m - well above the snow line that will last right through summer. Ensure you take an ice axe and crampons/microspikes for traction control on potential slopes! A warm sleeping bag and several layers are a must also. ➤ Water is available easily throughout the hike, and no more than 2L capacity should be required. The most limiting water sections are on the ridges, where you may be dependent on lake/tarn water.