





Girrakool to Staples Lookout via Kariong Brook Falls

(Darkinjung & Guringai Country)

 5 h to 5 h 30 min

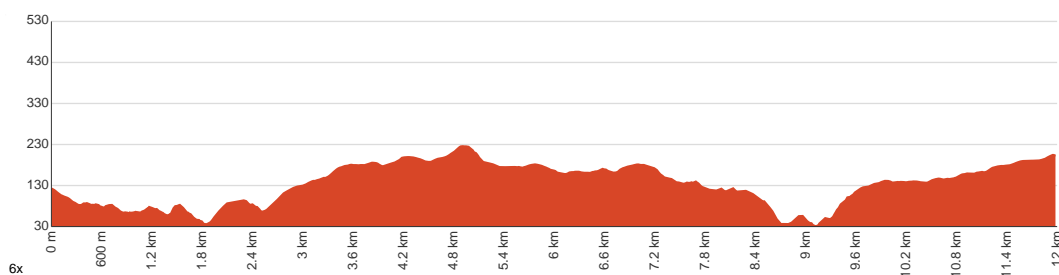
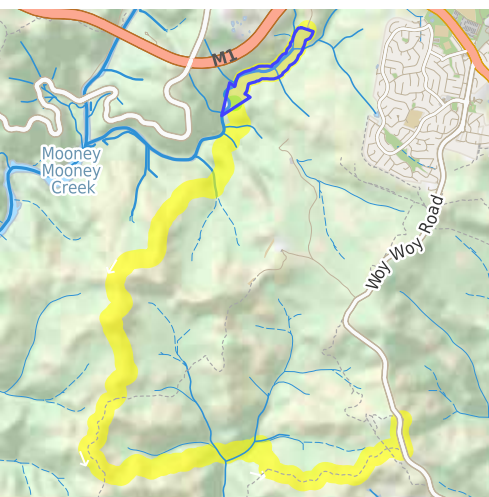

12 km
One way


↑ 585 m
↓ 506 m


Hard track



This walk starts from the Girrakool picnic area and winds down alongside Piles creek, before climbing up through the Brisbane Waters National Park to Scopas peak, and then on to the lovely Kariong brook falls. The walk finishes at the Staples Lookout. This walk mostly follows a section of the Great North Walk. Depending what time you start, either Scopas Peak or Kariong Brook can make great lunch and rest stops. Let us begin by acknowledging the Darkinjung & Guringai people, Traditional Custodians of the land on which we travel today, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.



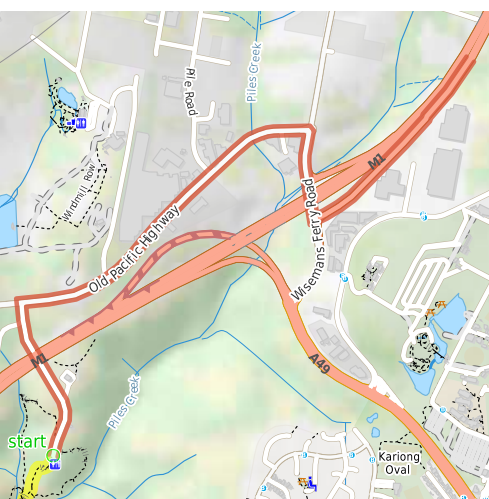
Class 4 of 6

Rough track, where fallen trees and other obstacles are likely

Quality of track	Rough track, where fallen trees and other obstacles are likely (4/6)
Gradient	Very steep (4/6)
Signage	Minimal directional signs (4/6)
Infrastructure	Limited facilities, not all cliffs are fenced (3/6)
Experience Required	Some bushwalking experience recommended (3/6)
Weather	Storms may impact on navigation and safety (3/6)

Getting to the start: From Pacific Motorway, M1

- Turn on to Wisemans Ferry Road Offramp then drive for 630 m
- Continue onto Wisemans Ferry Road Offramp and drive for another 55 m
- Turn right onto Wisemans Ferry Road, B83 and drive for another 390 m
- At roundabout, take exit 1 onto Old Pacific Highway, B83 and drive for another 1.6 km
- Turn left onto Quarry Road and drive for another 75 m
- Keep left onto Girrakool Road and drive for another 660 m



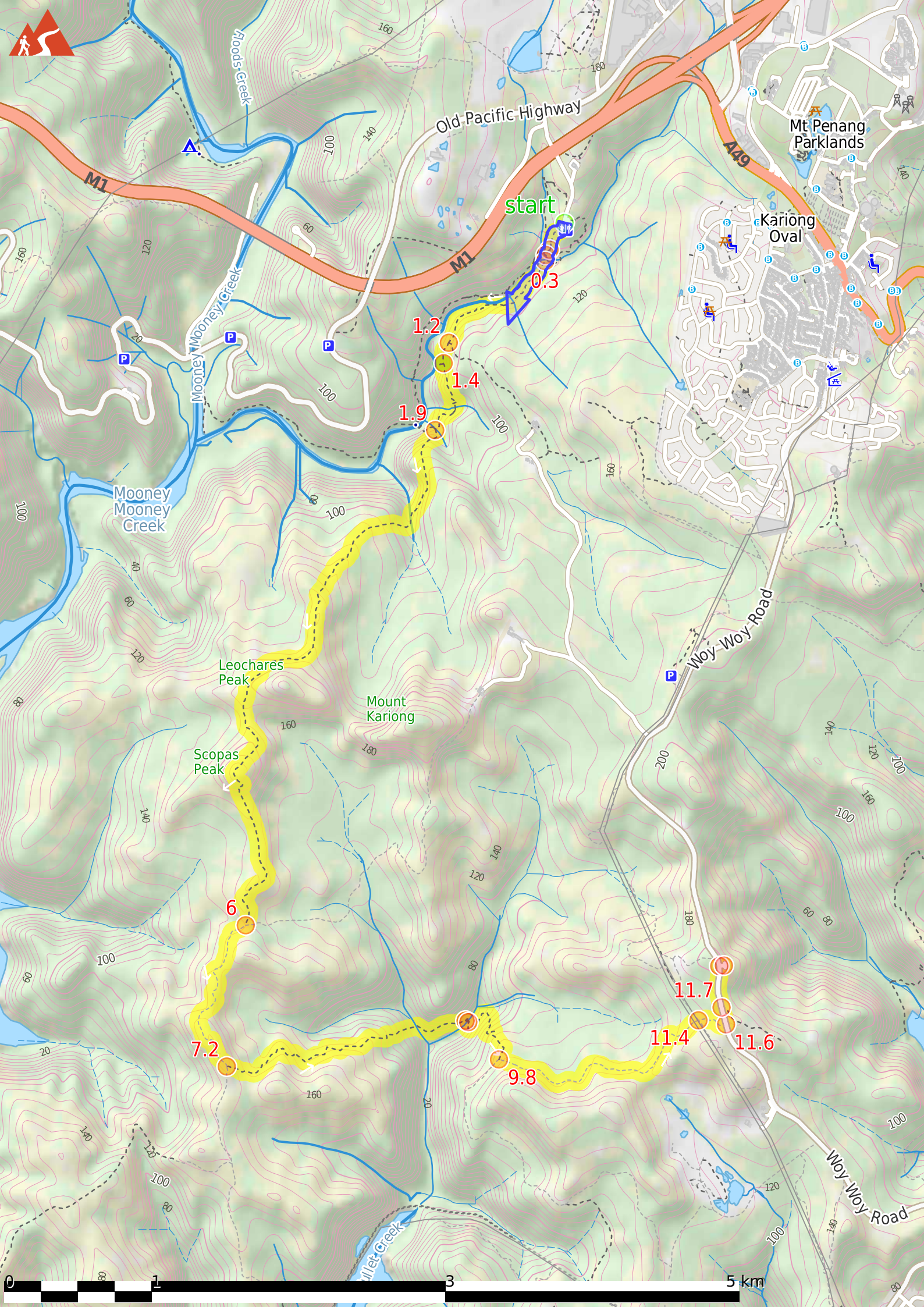
Before you start any journey ensure you;

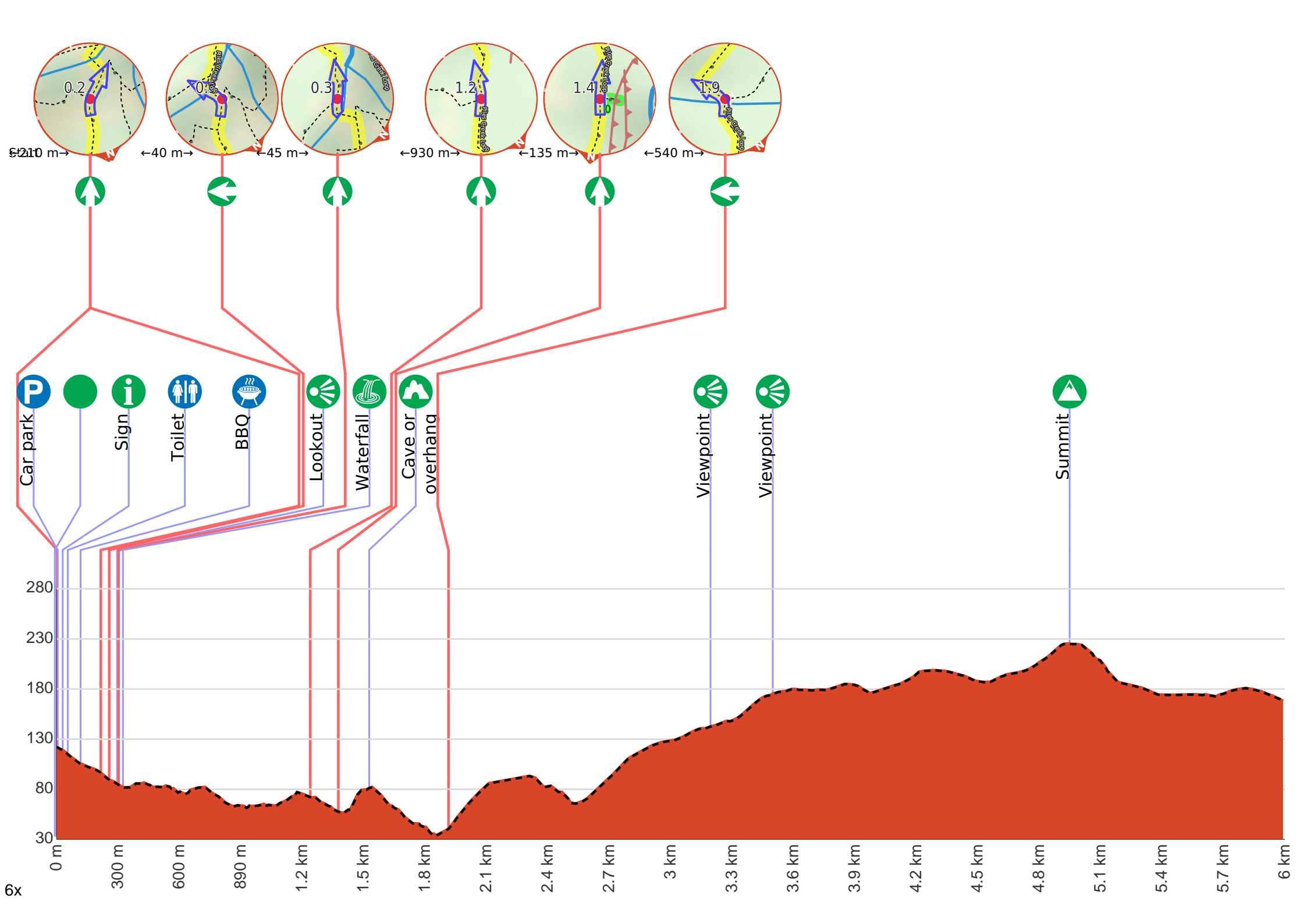
- Tell someone you trust where you are going and what to do if you are late returning
- Have adequate equipment, supplies, skills & knowledge to undertake this journey safely
- Consider weather forecasts, park/track closures & fire dangers
- Can respond to emergencies & call for help at any point
- Are healthy and fit enough for this journey

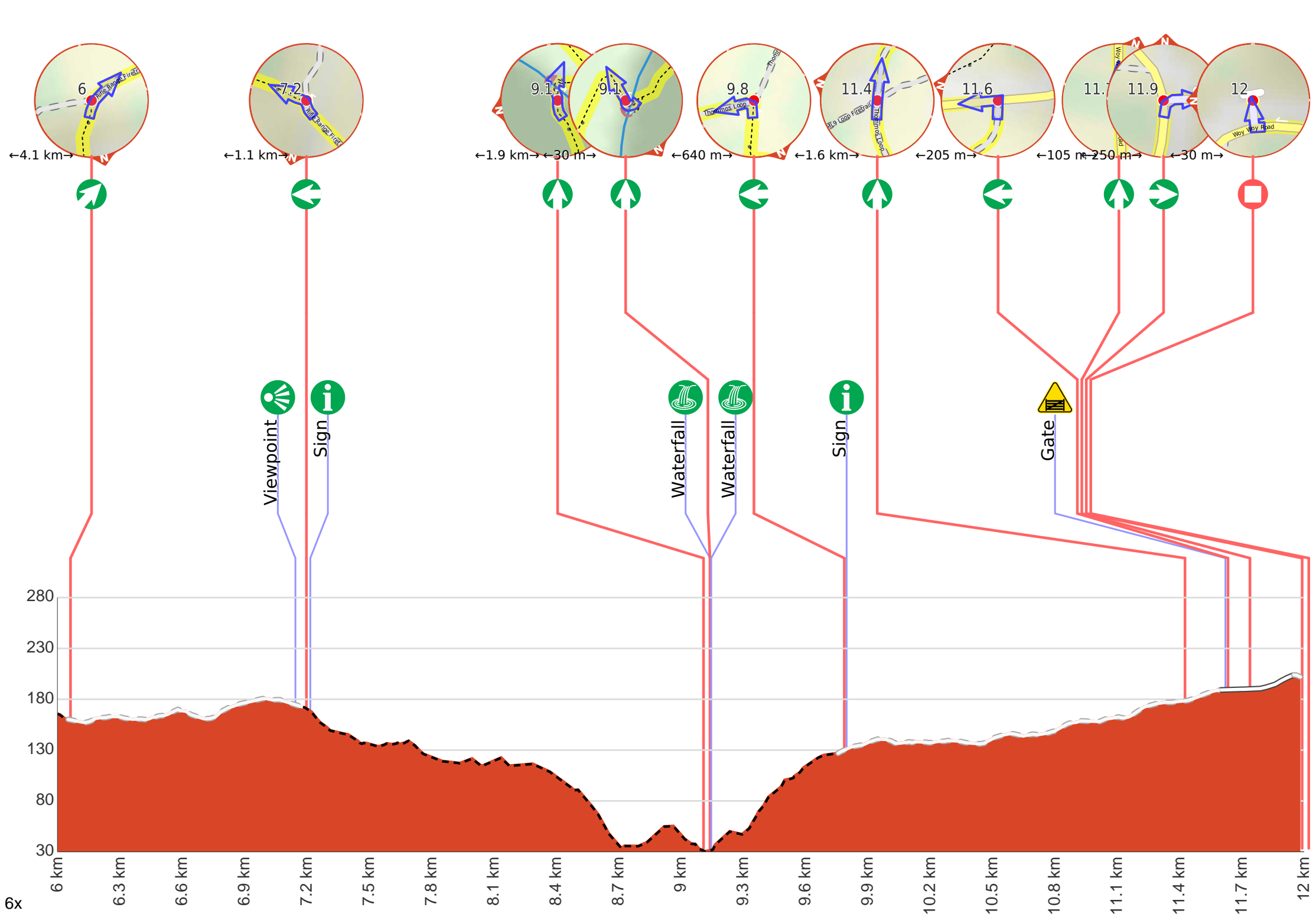
If not, change plans and stay safe. It is okay to delay and ask people for help.

Share
[Bushwalk.com](https://bushwalk.com.au/16YFIM)
[/16YFIM](https://bushwalk.com.au/16YFIM)



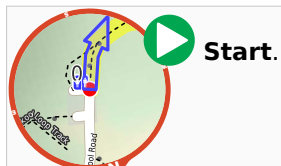






Getting started: From the lower side of the car park, this walk follows the 'To The Great North Walk' sign down the path to the lower picnic area. The walk passes the toilet block (on the left) and comes to another picnic area. The path passes through this picnic area to turn right following the 'Piles Creek Loop Track' sign down the steps. The footpath then leads to an intersection with the Broula Lookout track (on the left) and a 'car park' sign pointing back up the hill.

From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Girrakool Loop' sign down along the stone path. The path soon heads down some steps and comes to a fenced and signposted 'Illoura Lookout'.



P Find the car park at the start.

G Girrakool Picnic Area (about 45 m back from the start).



Girrakool picnic area is a wonderful family destination, just 5 minutes' drive from Kariong. The picnic area provides all the necessary facilities for a full day's activities, including barbecues, tables, shelters, water and toilets. National Park fees apply. The main picnic area is on the eastern side of the car park, and smaller, older picnic area is at the north-eastern corner of the car park. The southern Girrakool picnic area is located near the toilets. The picnic area is dedicated to John 'Jack' Higgs, the first superintendent of Brisbane Water National Park, and Mrs Vera Murdoch, who provided the funds. 'Girrakool' is an Aboriginal word meaning 'place of still waters'.

i There is a sign (about 7 m back from the start).

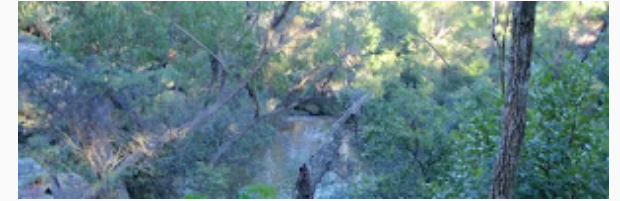
♂ ♀ After another 25 m pass the toilet (10 m on your left).

BBQ After another 60 m pass the BBQ (25 m on your left).

0.2 After another 100 m **continue straight**, to head along Girrakool Loop Track.

0.3 After another 40 m (at the intersection of Girrakool Loop Track & Piles Creek Loop) **turn left**, to head along Piles Creek Loop.

👁 After another 40 m find the "Illoura Lookout" (on your right).



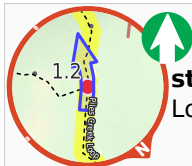
Illoura Lookout, Brisbane Water National Park, can be found a short walk south-west of the Girrakool picnic area, following the Great North Walk sign. This lookout provides a filtered view up and down the Leask and Piles Creek junction. There is a view of a waterfall from Piles Creek. Illoura is an Aboriginal word referring to a pleasant or peaceful place.

0.3 After another 7 m **continue straight**, to head along Piles Creek Loop.

🌊 After another 20 m find the "Piles Creek Waterfall" (on your right).

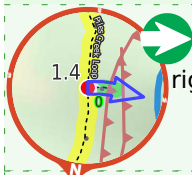


The large waterfall on Piles Creek is south of Girrakool Picnic Area in Brisbane Water National Park. At the Piles Creek Loop track crossing at the top of the falls, there is a large rock platform. The cliff edge is unfenced and would be dangerous to approach for the view. The water falls down the large drop, into a big pool below. The 'Bundilla Lookout' on the other side of the valley provides the only square view onto the falls, but even this only witnesses the top half.

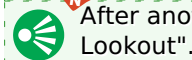


After another 910 m **continue straight**, to head along Piles Creek Loop.

Start of an optional side trip: An optional side trip to Piles Ck Lookout.



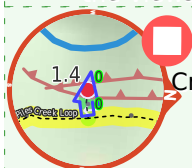
To start this optional side trip turn right here. **Start.**



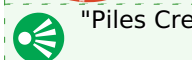
After another 25 m come to "Piles Creek Lookout".



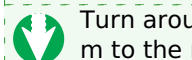
Piles Creek lookout (not formally named), Brisbane Water National Park, sits high on the ridge, east of Piles Creek and north of Rat Gully. This lookout provides views over the Piles Creek valley and can be enjoyed from behind a fence. The valley is surprisingly steep at this point and the views downstream are quite extensive.



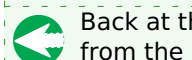
Continue another 0 m to find Piles Creek Lookout at the end.



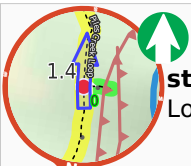
"Piles Creek Lookout".



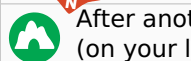
Turn around and retrace your steps back the 25 m to the main route.



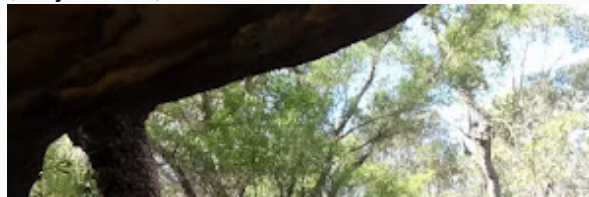
Back at the main route turn left and follow on from the 1.4 km waypoint.



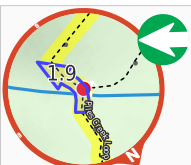
After another 135 m **continue straight**, to head along Piles Creek Loop.



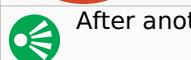
After another 150 m find the "Monolith Cave" (on your left).



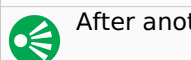
Monolith Cave is an informally named cave and interesting rock formation high on the ridge east of Piles Creek and North of Rat Gully in the Brisbane Water National Park. The cave is a fairly large sandstone overhang on the edge of the track. The cave provides shelter for walkers and is a great spot to rest and enjoy the area. This rock and the more Monolithic rock about 60m to the south are interesting to explore, and provide great views of the surrounding area. Take great care if exploring the rocks.



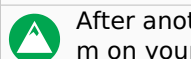
After another 390 m **turn left**.



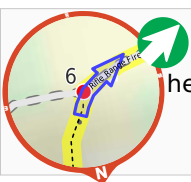
After another 1.3 km come to the viewpoint.



After another 305 m come to the viewpoint.



After another 1.4 km pass the "Scopas Peak" (25 m on your left).



After another 1.1 km **veer right**, to head along Rifle Range Firetrail.



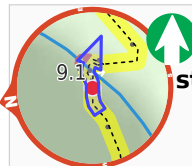
After another 1.1 km come to the viewpoint.



After another 55 m **turn left**.



After another 20 m pass the sign (on your right).



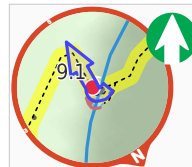
After another 1.9 km **continue straight**.



After another 5 m **veer left**.



After another 25 m pass the "Kariang Brook Falls" (15 m on your left).



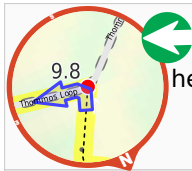
Continue straight.



After another 6 m find the "Kariang Brook Falls" (on your right).



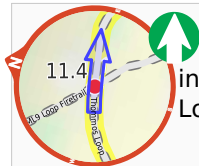
This tranquil spot of the Great North Walk is home to some lovely falls and a water hole. The eastern side of the creek has a tall sandstone cave and wall. After rain these falls can become very spectacular, other times is a cool place to rest. A great spot to stop for a snack.



After another 640 m **turn left**, to head along Thommos Loop.



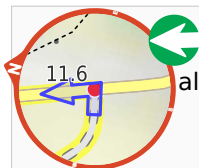
After another 10 m pass the "The Great North Walk" (on your right).



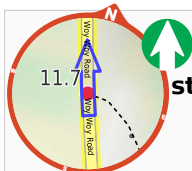
After another 1.6 km (at the intersection of Thommos Loop & ML9 Loop Firetrail) **continue straight**.



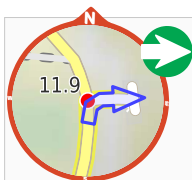
After another 195 m head through/around the gate.



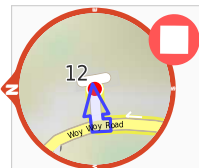
After another 10 m **turn left**, to head along Woy Woy Road.



After another 105 m **continue straight**, to head along Woy Woy Road.



After another 250 m **turn right**.



After another 30 m come to the end.



A car park.



About 15 m past the end is "Staples Lookout".



Staples Lookout beside Woy Woy Road, is a fenced lookout providing good views east across the Central Coast, the Brisbane Water and out to the ocean. There is a large car park and picnic tables, with plenty of natural shade. The lookout was named as a tribute to Charles J Staples, a pioneer of route that Woy Woy Rd now follows. The lookout was constructed in 1955 by the Rotary Club of Woy Woy. An inscription at the lookout quotes 'and I shall meditate on your wondrous works' from Psalm 119:27.



About 15 m past the end is a park.



About 25 m past the end is a picnic table.



About 30 m past the end is "Staples Lookout".