

## The Coppermine story ...

The Coppermine Trail traverses Nelson's Mineral Belt, a geologically significant ultramafic zone, formed 280 million years ago. It is distinct for its barren, rocky landscape and unique plant species such as the Dun Mountain Forget-Me-Not.

After copper deposits were discovered in the Maitai River in the 1850s, the Dun Mountain Copper Mining Company Ltd was formed to mine it. Nelson's copper proved uneconomic, and the pioneers' focus shifted to the chromite found in the same area. But they needed cost effective transport.

The Dun Mountain Railway was opened in 1862 to transport the chromite to the Port. It was built in less than a year by about 200 men using picks, shovels and wheelbarrows, and was New Zealand's first railway.

Quantity and quality of the chromite was variable, and soon uneconomic. The last shipment left Nelson in 1866 and the Dun Mountain section of the railway was subsequently dismantled.

Dun Mountain's name derives from 'Dunite', a silicate rich in magnesium and iron that weathers to a rusty reddish dun colour.

The Dun Mountain Trail was opened as a New Zealand Great Ride in 2011, and recently renamed Coppermine Trail to reflect its roots.



COPPERMINE TRAIL

Dun Mountain. Nelson Provincial Museum, Tyree Studio Collection: 99839



www.heartofbiking.org.nz

# Coppermine Trail

Official Map



## The Coppermine Trail on the Dun Mountain

- 40 km loop
- Grade 3-4
- Ride time 4-6 hours | Walk time 11 - 12 hours
- Take food, water, jacket, warm layer, first aid, spare tube

The historic Coppermine Trail is a back country mountain biking adventure, just minutes from Nelson's city centre.

Ride through mature beech forest up into the unique geological Mineral Belt with spectacular alpine views in all directions.

A steady climb towards Dun Mountain, on New Zealand's first railway line, brings you to the high point of Coppermine Saddle.

Enjoy an exhilarating ride down to the Maitai Dam, one of New Zealand's longest mountain bike downhill. Look out for walkers who also enjoy the trail.

The full loop is best suited to fit, experienced riders with full-suspension mountain bikes. For those less confident, simply U-turn at Coppermine Saddle or Third House and enjoy a return-ride the way you came up.



### Brook Street to Third House

11 km | Ride 1-2 hours | Walk 3 hours

Grade 3: Intermediate

The Brook Street entrance is 3 km from Nelson's i-SITE. Codgers Hub is a little further up off Tantargee Road, with a carpark, toilets and a bike-wash hose.

The start of the ride passes through the Codgers trails area. It emerges onto Tantargee Road for 300 m up hill, then veers right and on up the historic Dun Mountain Railway line.

Enjoy views over Nelson from Bullock Spur before heading into mature native forest, climbing gently but steadily to Third House at 660 m. You can hear tui and bellbird, and the ever-present weka.



### Third House to Coppermine Saddle

6.3 km | Ride 0.5-1 hour | Walk 1.5 hours

Grade 3: Intermediate

From Third House, climb through delightful native beech forest and remnants of mining activity from days long gone. Emerge into the stunted scrub cover of the Mineral Belt, with spectacular views opening out around Windy Point. Just a couple more kilometres before reaching the trail's highpoint, Coppermine Saddle at 878 m with 360-degree panoramic views.

### Maitai Dam to Brook Street

13 km | Ride 1-1.5 hours | Walk 3.5 hours

Grade 3: Intermediate

The final leg initially follows Nelson's water pipeline, a charming bush-lined bench above the river, joining the quiet Maitai Valley Road at Smiths Ford.

Simply follow the road back to Nelson.

Or access the Maitai Valley shared path using the pipeline bridge 2.5 km downstream from Smiths Ford, just before the Maitai Valley Motor Camp. Next is the Maitai Hub with car park, toilets and washdown facilities.

You can ride off road as far as Jicellis Bridge. A short distance on road brings you back to Nile Street, and towards the CBD. Turn left onto Tasman Street to head back to the trail start.



# COPPERMINE TRAIL

## LEGEND

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- The map displays the Coppermine Trail area with the following features:
- Coppermine Trail**: Indicated by a yellow line at the top.
  - Public Road**: Indicated by an orange line.
  - Other Tracks**: Indicated by green lines.
  - Codgers Trails Area**: Indicated by blue diagonal lines.
  - Brook**: Indicated by a red line.
  - Waimama Sanctuary**: Indicated by green diagonal lines.
  - Ngati Koata land**: Indicated by black diagonal lines.
  - Information**: Represented by a green 'i' icon.
  - Historic Site**: Represented by a blue icon of two people.
  - Shelter**: Represented by a blue icon of a tent.
  - Toilets**: Represented by a blue icon of a toilet.
  - Viewpoint**: Represented by a blue icon of a person looking through binoculars.
  - Water**: Represented by a blue icon of a water drop.
  - Parking**: Represented by a blue 'P' icon.
  - Bike Wash**: Represented by a blue icon of a car being washed.
  - Little/No Cell Coverage**: Indicated by a red exclamation mark icon.

The Coppermine Trail takes you into an alpine environment that can rapidly become cold and windy. There is little cell phone coverage, so consider taking a locator beacon. Make sure you are well equipped. A full suspension mountain bike is recommended.

spare tube and pump.

The trail is shared by bikers and walkers. Stay in control of your bike at all times and be respectful of others using the trail. Please keep to the trail. No animals, firearms or fires are allowed.

Ngāi koata land in the Codgers area is managed by Tasman Pine Forests Limited and is a commercially run forest with many operational hazards. For your safety, regardless of activity, REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR ENTRY (free and is not required for Nelson Mountain Bike Club members). Go to [tasmanpine.co.nz/forest-access](http://tasmanpine.co.nz/forest-access)

[www.heartofbiking.org.nz](http://www.heartofbiking.org.nz)

## DISTANCE KEY

*Times do not include rest stops*

**Brook Street to Third House 11.5 km**

Ride 1-2 hours | Walk 3 hours | Grade 3: Intermediate

### Third House to Coppermine Saddle 6.3 km

Ride 0.5 – 1 hour | Walk 1.5 hours | Grade 3: Intermediate

**Coppermine Saddle to Maitai Dam 9.6 km**

Ride 0.5 – 1 hour | Walk 2.5 hours | Grade 4: Advanced

**Maitai Dam to Brook Street 13 km**

Ride 1-1.5 hours | Walk 3.5 hours | Grade 3: Intermediate



**Nelson City Council**  
te kaunihera o whakatū