



Piles Creek Loop

(Darkinjung & Guringai Country)

 2 h to 4 h

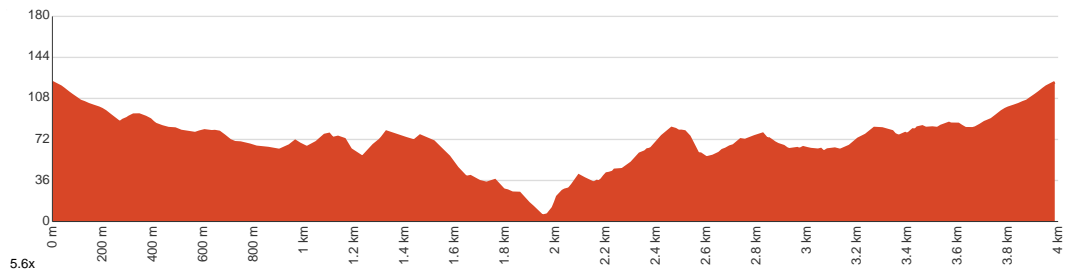

4 km
Circuit


↑ 246 m
↓ 246 m


Moderate track



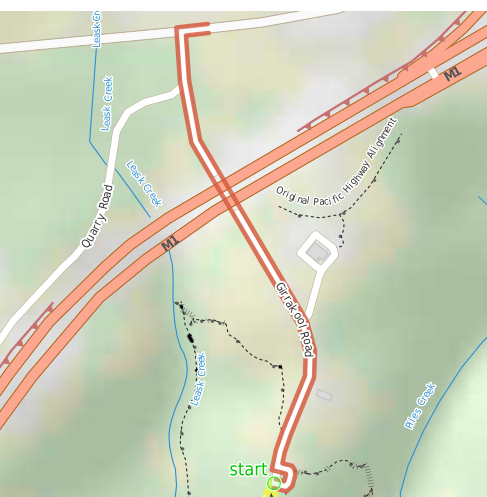
Starting from the Girrakool picnic area, this walk takes you on a round trip through part of the stunning Brisbane Water National Park. The walk explores both sides of Piles Creek, rewarding you with its waterfall and lookouts. Girrakool picnic area also has barbeques and toilets. Let us begin by acknowledging 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 3 of 6 Formed track, with some branches and other obstacles	
Quality of track	Formed track, with some branches and other obstacles (3/6)
Gradient	Short steep hills (3/6)
Signage	Directional signs along the way (3/6)
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 Old Pacific Highway, B83

- Turn on to Quarry Road then drive for 75 m
- Keep left onto Girrakool Road and drive for another 630 m
- Turn left and drive for another 65 m



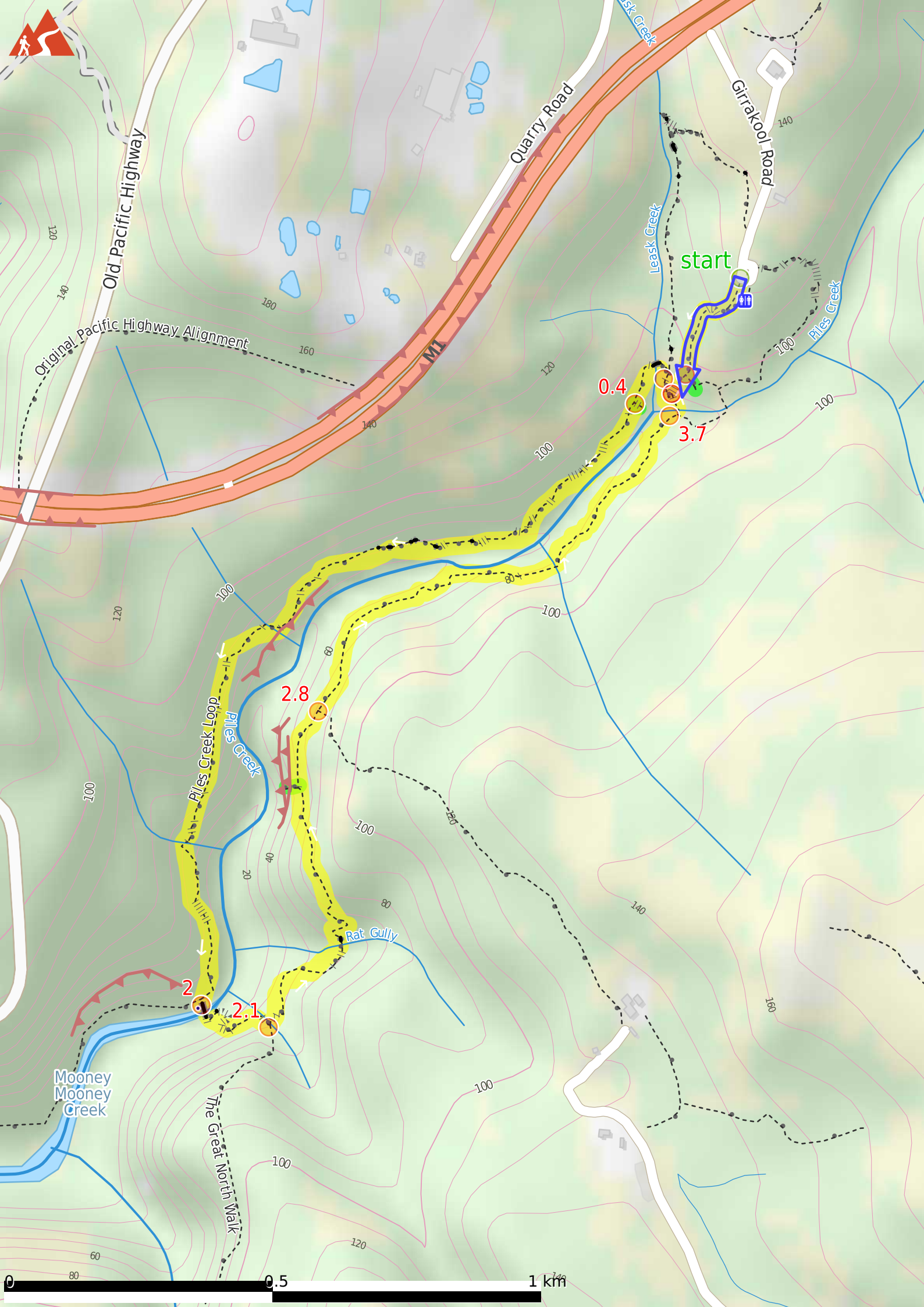
Before you start any journey ensure you;

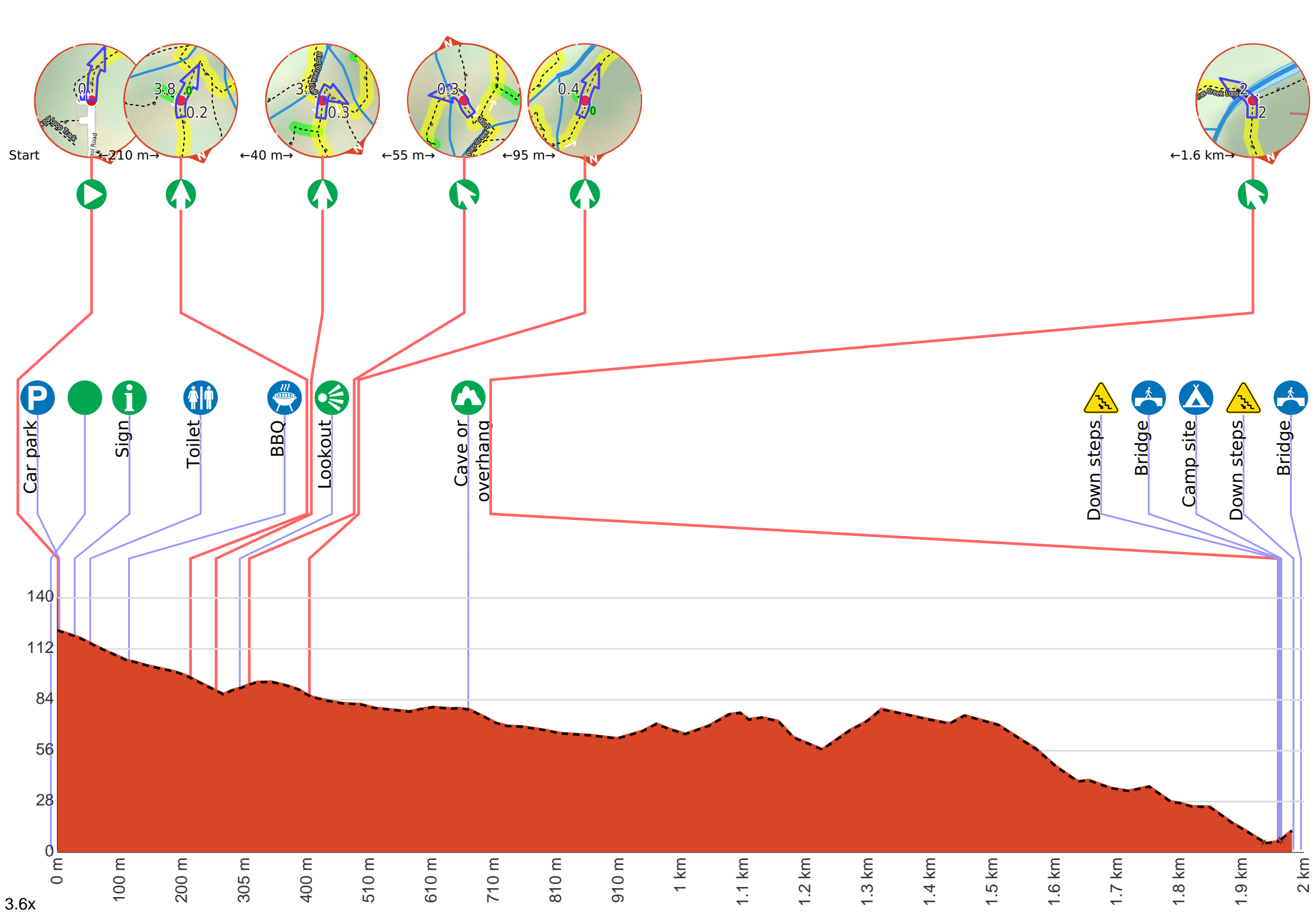
- Tell someone you trust where you are going and what to do if you are late returning
- Have adequate equipment, supplies, skills & knowledge to undertake this journey safely
- Consider weather forecasts, park/track closures & fire dangers
- Can respond to emergencies & call for help at any point
- Are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

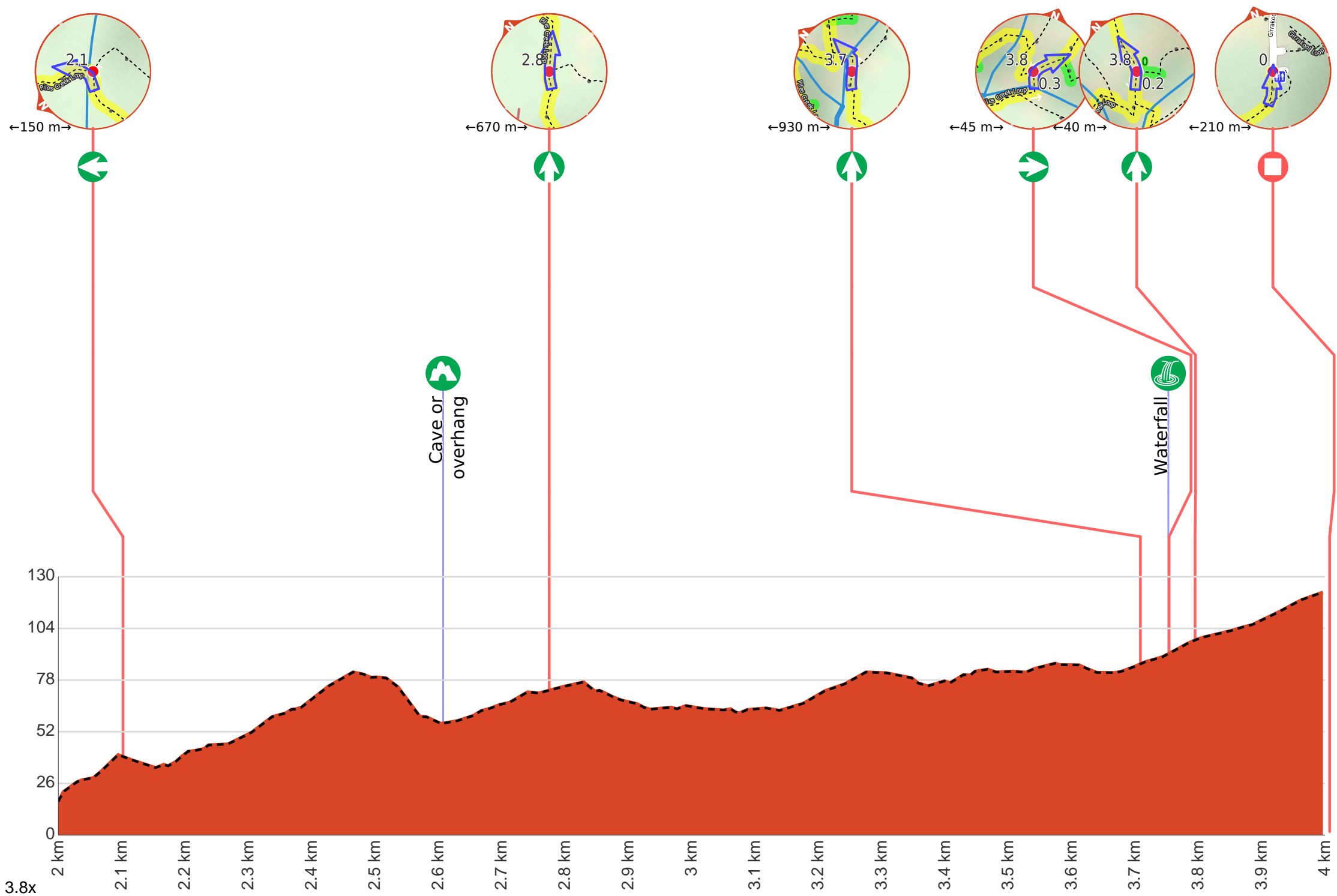
If not, change plans and stay safe. It is okay to delay and ask people for help.

Share
[Bushwalk.com](https://bushwalk.com/j/A3FOBN)
[/j/A3FOBN](https://bushwalk.com/j/A3FOBN)

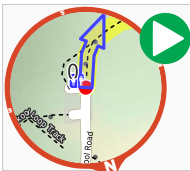








Getting started: From the lower side of the car park, this walk follows the 'To The Great North Walk' sign down the path to the lower picnic area. The walk passes the toilet block (on the left) and comes to another picnic area. The path passes through this picnic area to turn right following the 'Piles 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.



Start.



Find the car park at the start.



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'.



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



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

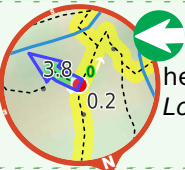


After another 60 m pass the BBQ (25 m on your left).

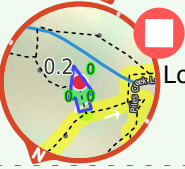


Continue straight.

Start of an optional side trip: An optional side trip to Broula Lookout.



To start this optional side trip turn left here. **Start** heading along *Girrakool Loop Track*.



Continue another 30 m to find Broula Lookout at the end.



"Broula Lookout".



Broula Lookout is fenced and a fairly short walk down from the Girrakool picnic area. Over time, the trees in the area have grown, filtering what would otherwise be a great vantage point for the Piles Creek waterfall. Broula is an Aboriginal word referring to a place of trickling water.



About 85 m past the end is "Piles Creek Cascades".



Piles Creek Cascades are an informally named set of cascades on a wide rock platform and Piles Creek, in Brisbane Water National Park. The creek, at this point, flows across a rock platform with many interesting sink holes, small water holes and cascades. This is a nice spot to explore. Care is needed as the rocks are slippery, with unfenced drops, and the area may not be passable after rain.



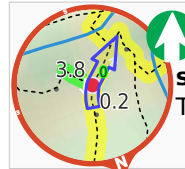
Turn around and retrace your steps back the 30 m to the main route.



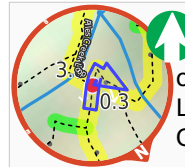
Back at the main route turn left and follow on from the 210 m waypoint.



Back at the main route turn right and follow on from the 3.8 km waypoint.



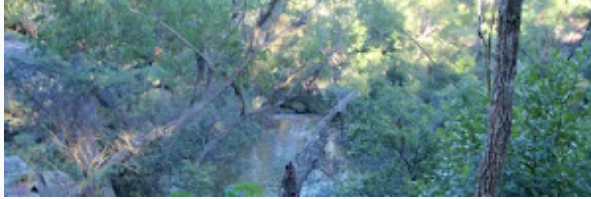
After another 165 m **continue straight**, to head along Girrakool Loop Track.



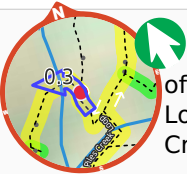
After another 40 m (at the intersection of Girrakool Loop Track & Piles Creek Loop) **continue straight**, to head along Girrakool Loop Track.



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.

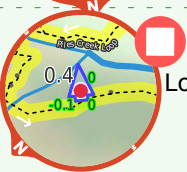


After another 15 m (at the intersection of Girrakool Loop Track & Piles Creek Loop) **veer left**, to head along Piles Creek Loop.

Start of an optional side trip: An optional side trip to Bundilla Lookout.



To start this optional side trip veer left here. **Start.**



Continue another 10 m to find Bundilla Lookout at the end.



"Bundilla Lookout".



Bundilla Lookout provides a good (but filtered) view from the southern side of the Leask and Piles Creeks junction. From the fenced lookout, you can see the top part of Piles Creek waterfall and much of the surrounding bushland. Bundilla is an Aboriginal word meaning 'meeting of waters'.



About 65 m past the end is "Piles Creek Waterfall".



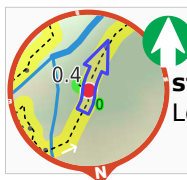
The large waterfall on Piles Creek is south of Girrakool Picnic Area in Brisbane Water National Park. At the Piles Creek Loop track crossing at the top of the falls, there is a large rock platform. The cliff edge is unfenced and would be dangerous to approach for the view. The water falls down the large 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.



Turn around and retrace your steps back the 10 m to the main route.



Back at the main route turn left and follow on from the 400 m waypoint.



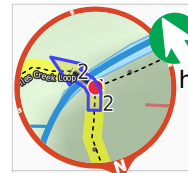
After another 95 m **continue straight**, to head along Piles Creek Loop.



After another 255 m find the "Western Piles Creek Caves" (on your left).



The Western Piles Creek Caves are series of sandstone caves, not formally named, on the north western side on Piles Creek. The Piles Creek loop passes at the base of a cliff helping find these sandstone caves. Each overhang providing a cool sheltered spot for walkers to rest and enjoy the surrounding bushland. Some are very tall and others much shorter, but all fairly narrow.



After another 1.3 km **veer left**, to head along Piles Creek Loop.



Then head down the metal steps (about 3 m long)



Then cross the bridge (about 20 m long)



Then come to the camp site (10 m on your right).



After another 20 m head down the metal steps (about 4 m long)



After another 8 m come to the "Phil Houghton Bridge".



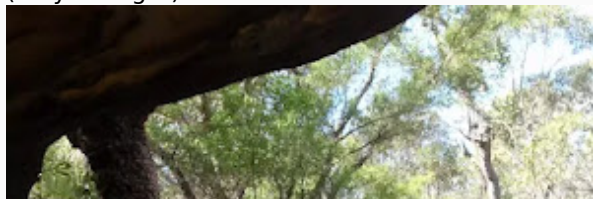
The Phil Houghton Bridge is a metal suspension bridge that crosses Piles Creek. It is part of the Great North Walk and replaces an older bridge, with part still visible upstream. The bridge can hold up to 8 people and feels very stable. There are great views both up and downstream half way across this bridge. There is a clearing on the northern side that people have used for camping.



After another 115 m **turn left**, to head along Piles Creek Loop.

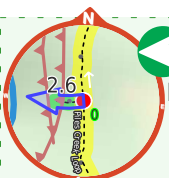


After another 500 m find the "Monolith Cave" (on your right).



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.

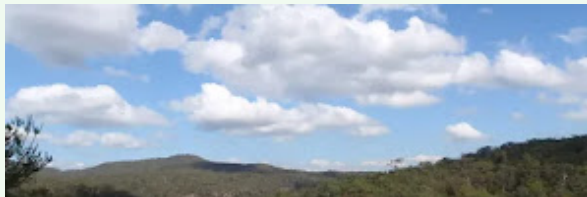
Start of an optional side trip: An optional side trip to Piles Ck Lookout.



To start this optional side trip turn left 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.

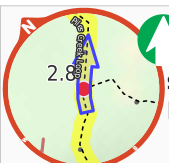


Turn around and retrace your steps back the 25 m to the main route.

Back at the main route ERROR >360 and follow on from the 2.6 km waypoint.



After another 30 m **continue straight**, to head along Piles Creek Loop.



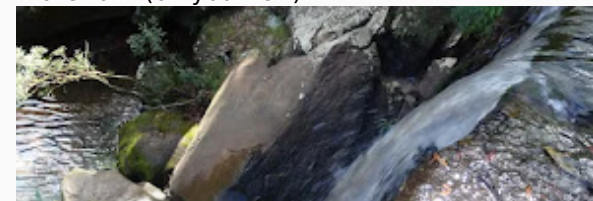
After another 135 m **continue straight**, to head along Piles Creek Loop.



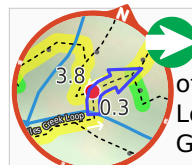
After another 930 m **continue straight**, to head along Piles Creek Loop.



After another 45 m find the "Piles Creek Waterfall" (on your left).



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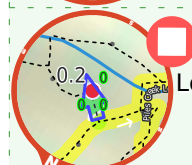


After another 1 m (at the intersection of Girrakool Loop Track & Piles Creek Loop) **turn right**, to head along Girrakool Loop Track.

Start of an optional side trip: An optional side trip to Broula Lookout.



To start this optional side trip turn right here. **Start** heading along *Girrakool Loop Track*.



Continue another 30 m to find Broula Lookout at the end.



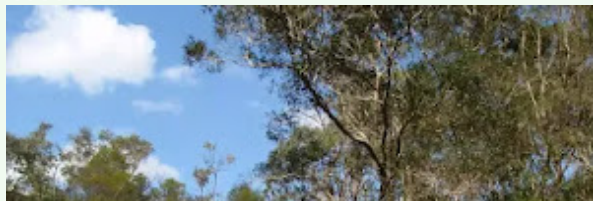
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Turn around and retrace your steps back the 30 m to the main route.



Back at the main route turn left and follow on from the 210 m waypoint.



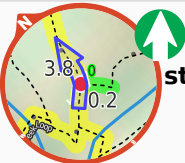
Back at the main route turn right and follow on from the 3.8 km waypoint.



After another 210 m come to a car park.



The end.



After another 40 m **continue straight.**