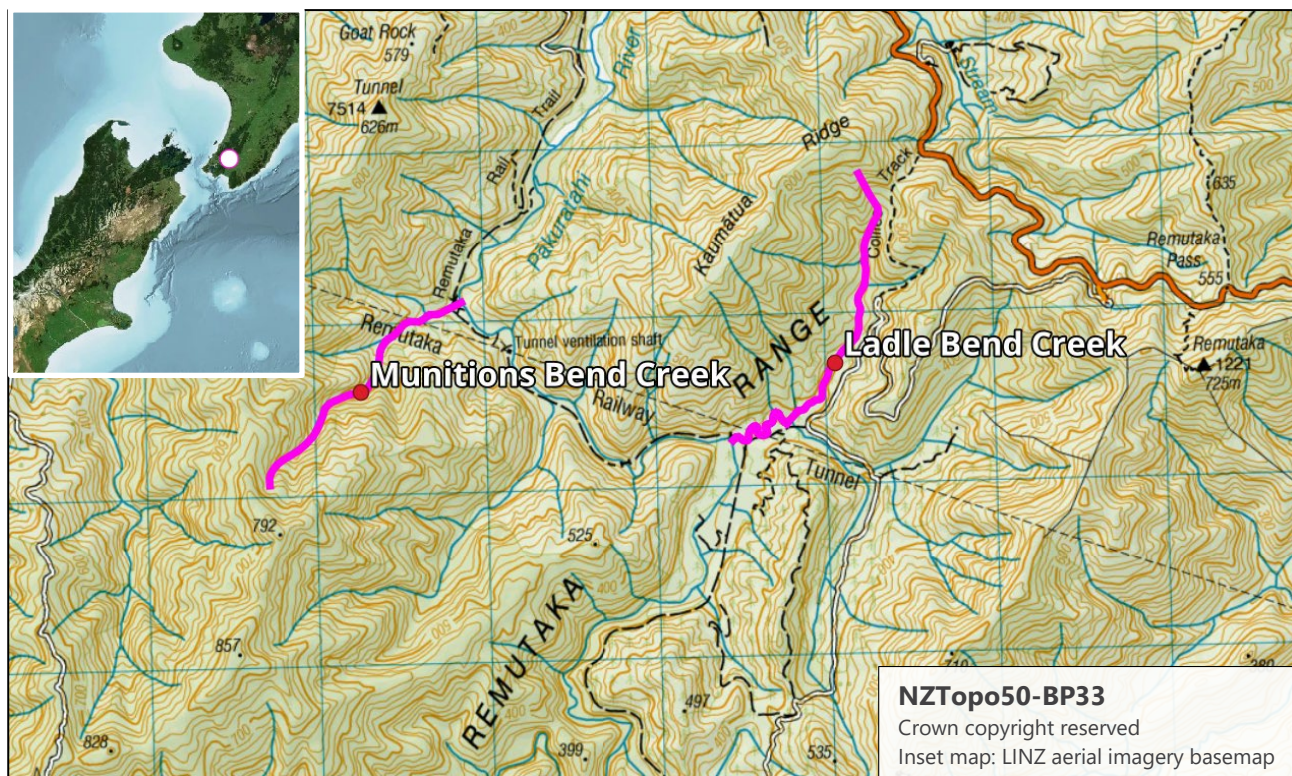


Proposal report considered by the Board on 30 April 2026 with the Board's decisions for:

Ladle Bend Creek, Munitions Creek

[new names]



Summary

The proposals are to assign Ladle Bend Creek and Munitions Bend Creek as the official geographic names of unnamed streams flowing into Pākura River, Remutaka Range. A bridge crosses each creek along the highly popular Remutaka Rail Trail, a 18km recreational walking and cycling trail from Kaitoke to the former Summit station, within Pākura Forest.

The proposer wishes to name the creeks after the associated localities 'Ladle Bend' and 'Munitions Bend' (historical local use names). The localities are connected to the former Wellington and Masterton Railway and are now sites of historical and recreational interest along the Remutaka Rail Trail. These names appear in various publications and maps relating to the Remutaka Rail Trail. An 1874 PWD¹ plan for the Wellington and Masterton Railway, names 'Ladle Bend Creek'. The name Munitions Bend (for the historical locality) dates to the 1910s.

The proposer and Secretariat contacted mana whenua about the proposals in October 2023 and March 2026 respectively. Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira advised that they have no known traditional names for the creeks and had no objection to the proposals in principle. However, they encouraged the priority use of any traditional or historical names for the creeks that may held by other

¹ Public Works Department. See [PWD 1666 \(Sheet 5 of 7\)](#), Archives New Zealand, accessed 31 March 2026.

iwi in the area. No other responses have been received to date. Should the Board accept the proposals, mana whenua will be advised prior to public notification and could make a formal submission.

The proposals may also be of interest to Greater Wellington Regional Council who manages the Remutaka Rail Trail from Kaitoke to the Summit.²

Board's decisions

At its 30 April 2026 hui the Board made these decisions on the proposals:

Accept the proposals to **assign Ladle Bend Creek** and **Munitions Bend Creek** as the official geographic names of unnamed streams flowing into Pākuratahi River, Remutaka Range, based on:

- evidence of long-term local use of the name Ladle Bend Creek and long-term local use of the name Munitions Bend (for the associated historical location), and
- naming of the features being useful for emergency services given their location along the Remutaka Rail Trail, a highly popular walking and cycling trail,

and

Notify as proposals to **assign** for two months.

Secretariat assessment and advice

The proposal

The proposals are to assign Ladle Bend Creek and Munitions Bend Creek as the official geographic names of two unnamed streams flowing into Pākuratahi River on Remutaka Range. These two proposals are among a suite of 45 proposals received from the proposer between late 2021 and early 2023 for features around Wainuiomata, the Ōrongorongo River and on Remutaka Range.³ Twenty-eight of these proposals are still to be processed by the Secretariat. In February 2026 the proposer confirmed that they still wish to proceed with all 28 proposals. The Secretariat will therefore process them in small batches at each Board hui.

The Ladle Bend Creek and Munitions Bend Creek proposals are each supported by a document containing:

- a map marking the feature, and
- a physical description of the feature and historical information about the proposed name, including evidence of local use (for the associated localities Ladle Bend and Munitions Bend).

The proposer cites *A Guide To The Rimutaka Rail Trail (Kaitoke – Cross Creek)* as a key information source.⁴

² The Department of Conservation manages the section of the former incline from Summit to Cross Creek.

³ The Board received one proposal in late 2021, 41 in mid-2022 and three in early 2023. In 2023 the Board declined 13 of the proposals for 'hill' names (due to not meeting minimum requirements). Proposals to alter Skerrets Creek to Skerretts Creek and assign Ryan Creek to an unnamed creek on Remutaka Range were approved in 2022. In 2024 the Board declined a proposal to alter Nicholl (hill) to Nicols and the Minister for Land Information rejected a proposal to alter Abbots Creek to Abbotts Creek.

⁴ Graeme Jupp, (2015, 4th edition), *A Guide To The Rimutaka Rail Trail (Kaitoke – Cross Creek)*, Featherston: Fell Locomotive Museum.

Names shown on plans and maps

The creeks have been depicted on topographic maps since NZMS1 N161 Rimutaka (1st edition, 1943) but not named. NZMS 274 'Rimutaka & Haurangi Forest Park' (2nd edition, 1989) names 'Ladle Bend Creek Bridge'.
No survey plans were found with the creeks named.
Plan PWD 1666 (Sheet 5 of 7) 'Wellington and Masterton Railway' (1874) names Ladle Bend Creek.

Location of the feature, generic term

The creeks are in Greater Wellington Regional Council's Pākuratahi Forest and the bridges that cross the creeks are key features on the Remutaka Rail Trail. Ladle Bend Creek flows for ~2.2km from the slopes of Kaumātua Ridge, southwards into Pākuratahi River. The associated locality Ladle Bend is a popular recreational area along the trail, with a camping site and toilet.⁵ Munitions Bend Creek flows for ~1.7km from the slopes south-southwest of Goat Rock (hill), northeast into Pākuratahi River. Munitions Bend is also a popular recreational area and is marked as a picnic spot on Greater Wellington's map of Pākuratahi Forest.⁶
The generic term [Creek](#) accurately describes the features, and is commonly used for similar features within the wider area. [Stream](#) is also commonly used within the wider area.

[New Zealand Gazetteer](#), associated place names and duplication

The two creeks aren't named in the *NZ Gazetteer*.
'Ladle Bend' and 'Munitions Bend' are associated local use names for historical localities on the Remutaka Rail Trail, now popularly used as recreational areas.
There is no duplication of 'Ladle' or 'Munitions' in the *NZ Gazetteer*. There are many 'Bend' named features that partially duplicate the proposed names, the nearest being [Big Bend](#), a bend on Ōrongorongo River, ~30km south-southwest of the creek features. These are not likely to cause any confusion.

Research, history and references to the feature

Ladle Bend is a descriptive name for a historical locality, reportedly referring to the contour of the track of the former Wellington and Masterton Railway (opened in 1878) at this point (the '30 mile' mark).⁷ Ladle Bend Creek is named on an 1874 PWD plan for the Wellington and Masterton Railway and Ladle Bend is cited in an 1875 newspaper report on the 'Pākuratahi contract' for the Wellington and Masterton Railway.⁸ A railway bridge was constructed over the creek in 1876.⁹ An access road was also created to Ladle Bend, enabling

⁵ ['Remutaka Rail Trail'](#), Department of Conservation, accessed 1 April 2026.

⁶ Greater Wellington's 'Pākuratahi Forest' pamphlet, <https://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Documents/2021/07/Pakuratahi-Forest.pdf>, accessed 31 March 2026.

⁷ ['14 Miles of Memories'](#), *Evening Post*, 30 July 1955, p.17.

⁸ [PWD 1666 \(Sheet 5 of 7\)](#), Archives New Zealand; ['The Pākuratahi contract'](#), *Wairarapa Standard*, 15 July 1875, p.2. This contract, one of four contracts let for the formation of the railway line between Upper Hutt and Featherston, covered the section of line extending from just north of Kaitoke Station to just shy of Summit.

⁹ New Zealand Archaeological Association Site Record Form for S27/46, 'Ladle Bend Creek Bridge and Settlement'. However, ['Pākuratahi Forest'](#), *Greater Wellington*, cite the bridge's construction date as 1875. Greater Wellington restored the bridge in 2002.

materials to be conveyed for the formation of the railway line.¹⁰ The railway opened in 1878 and various historic photographs depict Ladle Bend and show two small cottages at this location.¹¹ One source notes that Ladle Bend was 'a sheep station in miniature'.¹² Ladle Bend was a popular day excursion for picnicking, with railway trips offered to Ladle Bend from Wellington City and the Hutt in the late 1890s.¹³ Greater Wellington Regional Council restored the bridge over Ladle Bend Creek in 2002.¹⁴

A railway bridge was constructed over the creek at Munitions Bend in 1876 (later washed out in the 1960s).¹⁵ Munitions Bend takes its name from a siding where munitions and military equipment were stored during World War One.¹⁶ The storage area was reportedly chosen for its remote location, 'accessible only by official persons'.¹⁷ In 2003 Greater Wellington Regional Council and the Silverstream Railway Trust installed a footbridge and replica section of railway track across the abutments and timber spans remaining from the 1876 bridge. In late 1955 the last trains made the journey from Kaitoke to Cross Creek, due to the opening of a new railway route through the Remutaka Range, including an 8.8km tunnel. The track was removed and the track bed was later developed into the Remutaka Rail Trail. Ladle Bend and Munitions Bend are now points of historical and recreational interest along the trail.

Consultation with iwi and others

In October 2023 the proposer wrote to these iwi organisations about the proposals they submitted to the Board in mid-2022 and early 2023:

- Te Ātiawa
- Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa
Tāmaki nui-a-Rua
- Rangitāne o Wairarapa¹⁸
- Muaūpoko
- Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust (Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika)
- Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira Inc

The Secretariat has not been advised of any responses to the proposer's email.

On 13 March 2026, the Secretariat also wrote directly to these iwi organisations about the proposals to seek their views, particularly if original Māori names were known for the creeks. Noting that Pākuratahi River formed part of a Māori trail linking Wellington Harbour / Port Nicholson and the Wairarapa.¹⁹

¹⁰ 'Pākuratahi Forest', *Greater Wellington*, accessed 31 March 2026.

¹¹ For example: Ladle Bend on the Wairarapa railway line between Kaitoke and the Summit. Godber, Albert Percy, 1875-1949: Collection of albums, prints and negatives. Ref: APG-0073-1/2-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand, [/records/22841665](#); Train with a Fairlie locomotive on Ladle Bend, Rimutaka Incline. Godber, Albert Percy, 1875-1949: Collection of albums, prints and negatives. Ref: PAColl-3039-1-033. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand, [/records/23200545](#).

¹² '14 Miles of Memories', *Evening Post*, 30 July 1955, p.17.

¹³ 'To-day's trip to Ladle Bend', *New Zealand Times*, 13 February 1895, p.2.

¹⁴ The bridge is a scheduled heritage feature in the Upper Hutt City Council District Plan (Operative 17 July 2025). See Ref No. 3, Map Ref, 28, Upper Hutt City Council [Operative District Plan](#), accessed 31 March 2026.

¹⁵ New Zealand Archaeological Association Site Record Form for S27/46, 'Munitions Bend', accessed 31 March 2026.

¹⁶ Excerpt from *A Guide To The Rimutaka Rail Trail (Kaitoke – Cross Creek)* (2015) included as part of the proposal to the Board.

¹⁷ 'Remutaka Place Name Origins', *Tararua Tramping Club*, accessed 31 March 2026.

¹⁸ The proposer advised that his October 2023 email to Rangitāne o Wairarapa Inc bounced back and he could not find another email address. The Secretariat subsequently provided a direct contact address for Mike Kawana, Cultural Advisor for Rangitāne o Wairarapa Inc and the proposer emailed him.

¹⁹ As shown on SO 10452, 1844.

- Te Ātiawa
- Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa Tāmaki nui-a-Rua Settlement Trust
- Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust (Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika)
- Rangitāne o Wairarapa Inc
- Muaūpoko
- Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa (Taiwhenua group)
- Rangitāne Tū Mai Rā Trust
- Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira Inc

Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika and Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira Inc acknowledged receipt of the Secretariat’s email and on 7 April 2026, Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira Inc advised their position to the Board. They stated that they had no known traditional names for the creeks and had no objection to the proposals in principle. However, should other iwi in the area have traditional or historical names for the creeks, then they encouraged that those names ‘be given due consideration and where appropriate, prioritised for use.’

No other responses have been received. It’s therefore still unknown if either feature has an original Māori name. If the Board accepts these proposals, iwi will have a further opportunity to provide their views during the public notification period.

Greater Wellington Regional Council views are unknown, noting that the regional council manages the Remutaka Rail Trail from Kaitoke to the Summit.

Relevant sections from the [NZGB Act 2008](#) and the [Standard for New Zealand place names](#)

Section 3(e) of the NZGB Act 2008 provides for appropriate recognition to be accorded to cultural and heritage values associated with geographic features.

1.1 Acceptable names

- (a) Names that reflect New Zealand’s exploration, events, tradition and history, and its diverse and inclusive society and culture.

Secretariat comment: the name Munitions Bend Creek reflects New Zealand’s World War One history, noting that the wider area was closely connected with activities during the war, with military training camps established at Trentham and Featherston. Thousands of troops marched from Featherston Military Camp over Remutaka Hill to Trentham, before continuing to Wellington to board ships headed for the Western Front.

- (b) Descriptive names that characterise shape, colour, composition or other distinguishing features, provided that they are not too general and do not need to be explained.

Secretariat comment: Ladle Bend Creek is a descriptive name, associated with the historical locality Ladle Bend, the name characterising the contour of the railway track of the former Wellington and Masterton Railway line at this point.

1.3 Undesirable names and other considerations

- (b) New names should be distinctive and preferably unique.

Secretariat comment: the names are both distinctive and unique.

(h) Minor features or places of low importance or physical significance should not be named.

Secretariat comment: while relatively minor features, the creeks are associated with Ladle Bend and Munitions Bend (local use names), localities of historical and recreational interest on the Remutaka Rail Trail. Bridges take trail users over the creeks on their journey along the trail. Naming of the creeks is warranted given the considerable popularity of the Remutaka Rail Trail.

Concerns or issues for emergency services

Officially naming the features means they could be easily identified in an emergency, noting their association with the Remutaka Rail Trail which has very high visitor numbers. The areas next to the bridge over each creek are popular stopping points along the trail due to their recreational and amenity values.

Media

Some media attention is possible, given the features' location on the Remutaka Rail Trail, a highly popular biking and walking trail.

Supporting information

1. Proposal for Ladle Bend Creek – 2022-06-18
2. Proposal for Munitions Bend Creek – 2022-07-23
3. Letter from Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira with feedback – 2026-04-07²⁰

²⁰ The letter was emailed to the Board on 7 April 2026 but is dated 31 March 2025 (noting this should have read 2026).