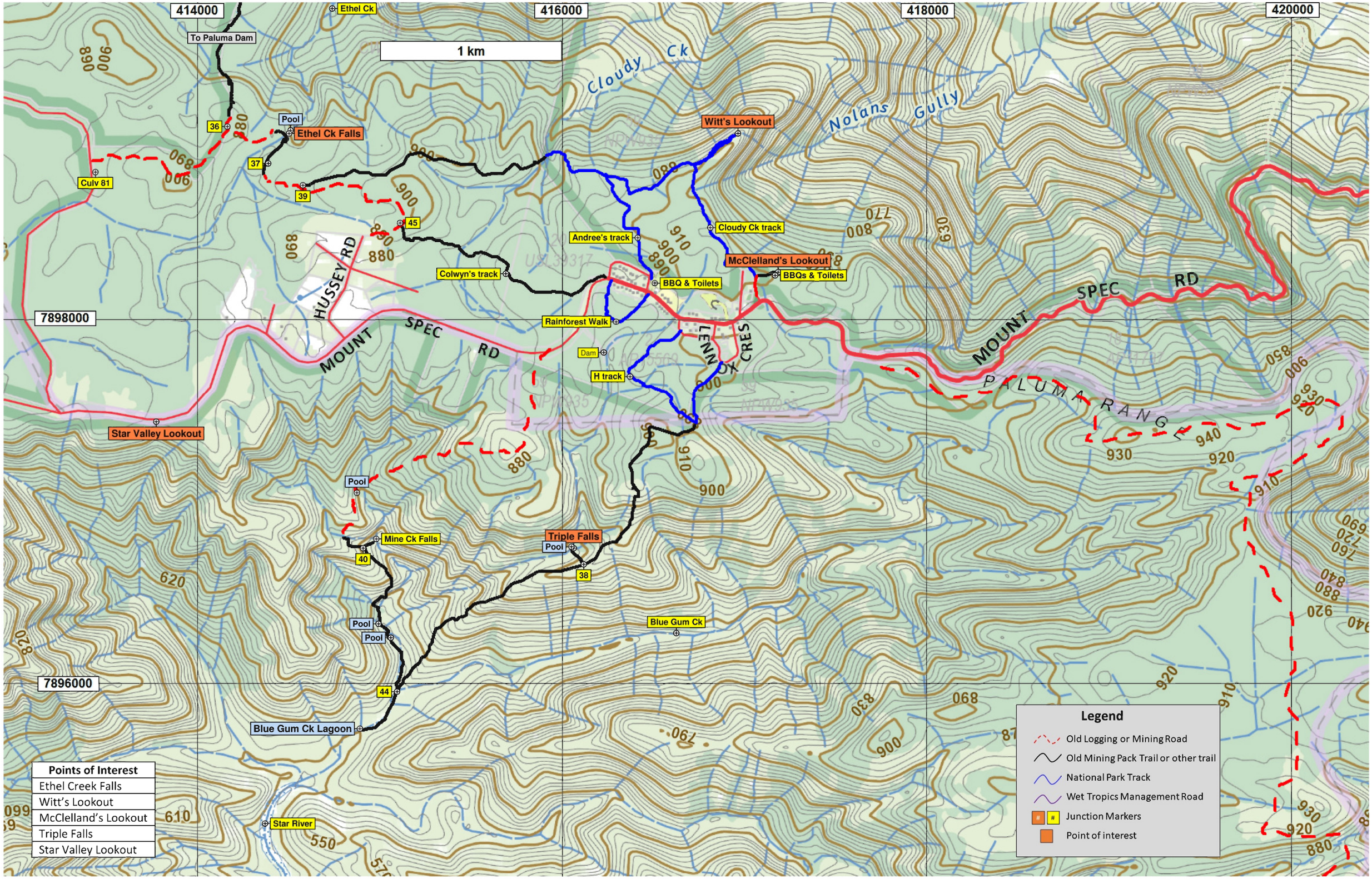
Qtopo_mtspec 50k--2.png Australian Geocentric 1994 (GDA94) 4/06/2023
Paluma V3



Paluma Local Walking Track Notes (Ver. 1 – Oct 2023)

The historical pack horse tracks, tin miners' tracks & logging roads in the Mt Spec area provide walkers with the opportunity to explore old mining and alluvial tin workings, enjoy spectacular views of the coastal areas from rocky look-outs and discover the unique flora & fauna of the highland rainforest. The area is mostly National Park & is part of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, spanning from Paluma to Cooktown. The average temperatures are about 8°C lower than along the coast, making hiking in summer more enjoyable.

As you are walking in a high rainfall area remember that rocks & tree roots can be very slippery. The water in the running creeks appears clear; however purification tablets are a good precaution for drinking water. Remember, the creeks around the Paluma Dam are part of the water catchment for the supply of Townsville water. If you need to relieve yourself whilst on a walk anywhere in the region please ensure you do so at least 50m from all water courses.

SAFETY
The tracks marked in blue on the map are fairly short easy walks for the general public. The others are bush tracks that require a degree of fitness and preparation. The following guidelines apply to these tracks.

Don't travel alone. Always advise someone, with reference to the map, where you are going & for how long. The area is covered by thick rainforest which makes navigation very difficult due to a lack of reference points. Please stick to the marked tracks. You should not attempt these tracks unless you or someone with you is an experienced & appropriately equipped bushwalker.

Always carry a map & compass or GPS. Mobile phones cannot be relied upon for communication due very patchy coverage. Telstra appears best in the area. So a PLB (personal locator beacon) should be carried for emergency. An unplanned night out in the area can be cold & wet so carry extra clothes & protection. Stinging trees and wait-a-while vines can quickly grow up on all tracks and cause significant discomfort or injury. Either walk around these or carefully cut your way through with a pair of secateurs and wear gloves. Carry water & a first aid kit including a compression bandage for snake bites.

There has been extensive mining in the area south of Mt spec & there may be forgotten mining shafts. People have disappeared in this area. **Stick to the tracks.**

NAVIGATION
Supplementing normal bushwalking navigation methods is a network of track junction markers. The markers are a disk mounted on a star picket. At each junction the marker indicates the destination of each track & the number allocated to the junction. These junction numbers are also shown on the maps. Walkers that stick to the tracks & track their position on the map with reference to the junction markers will find it difficult to get lost.

WILDLIFE
Snakes: Most common are pythons & tree snakes which are harmless, however the dangerous Red Belly Black snakes are also present. Treat all snakes with caution & respect and do not attempt to catch them.
Native Rats: are nocturnal & are attracted by the smell of food. Keep your camping area clean & pack all food at night in your tent or suspend from a tree.
Golden Bower Birds: A number of their stick mound bowers can be seen on or near the walking tracks.
Tooth-billed Cat Birds: Their bower consists of a round area cleared of all leaf matter & then decorated with upturned silvery leaves from a particular tree.
Ticks: Most common in the dryer season. Are best killed with a freezing spray or the application of lyclear cream (for smaller ticks). Both are available from a chemist.
Leaches: Are easily removed by sprinkling them with salt or heating their rear end with a match or lighter. They also fall of with the application of insect repellent.
Wild pigs & cane toads: Unfortunately they have also found their way into the area. Pigs are very destructive to the vegetation on and around track. While attacks from pigs on people are very rare, the larger ones could be dangerous if startled.
Cassowaries, whilst rarely seen, are evident from their big piles of seed droppings sometimes found on the tracks. In time these droppings become little islands of seedlings.

FLORA
Quandong, Silky Oak, Cedar, Pimply Pine, Iron Wood, & Satin Ash are just some of the tree species found in the rain forest.
Fungi : Shape & size vary greatly, colours range from white, yellow, orange, purple & black.
Wait-a-while vine: Has long hanging tendrils that catch clothing & skin. Is most common in dense thickets & along creeks.
Gympie or Stinging tree: Mainly found on the margins of the rain forest or in regrowth under open canopy. Can inflict excruciating pain if touched. Contact with any part of this plant should be avoided. The plant is recognised by its large, heart shaped furry leaves & purple berries.

MAPS
For a copy of walking track maps of Paluma Range NP contact Wilfred Karnoll on phone 07 47788441 or email wilfred.suzanne@bigpond.com.au

DISCLAIMER
Whilst all care has been taken in the production of this map, no responsibility will be taken for its inaccuracy or the safety of anyone using it.

YOUR SAFETY IS OUR CONCERN – BUT - IT IS **YOUR** RESPONSIBILITY!!!

For more maps & track file downloads go to https://paluma.org/attractions/walking-tracks/map-downloads