

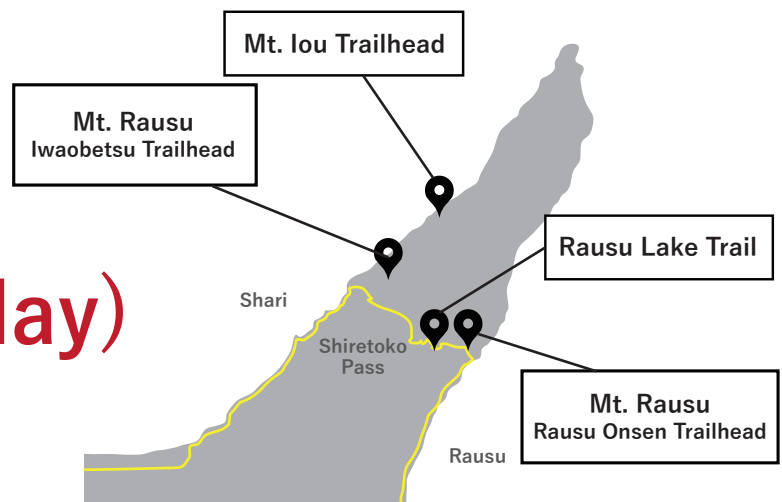
Attention Hikers! :

Notice Concerning Efforts for Re-Opening Hiking Trails in the Shiretoko Mountain Range

In response to a brown bear attack on Mt. Rausu in August 2025, the trails indicated in the below map are currently closed. Measures are being implemented to prevent a recurrence, and the trails in are planned to be re-opened July 2026.

Planned Re-Opening:
5 July 2026 (Sunday)

※Date subject to change



Please help prevent brown bear attacks!

The Shiretoko Peninsula is home to a high concentration of brown bears. Understand the risks associated with brown bears, check the latest information, and prepare accordingly. A trail being open does not mean it is necessarily safe. Considering your own skills and equipment, make your own decision whether to hike/climb or not, based on your understanding of the risks. Please also submit a climbing plan.

Avoid Sudden Encounters



Unexpected encounters with brown bears are the most dangerous. When hiking, take precautions to protect yourself, including: make noise (with bear bells or by yelling), be especially careful in areas with poor visibility or during dark hours, and avoid hiking alone.

Be Prepared for Emergencies



We strongly recommend carrying bear repellent spray in case of a bear attack on the trail. Do not store it inside your backpack; carry it where you can access it immediately. Also be careful to prevent accidental discharge (by using a holster, etc.).

*Bear repellent spray rentals are available at the Shiretoko Nature Center, Shiretoko Rausu Visitor Center, and Rusa Field House (¥1,100 per 24 hours).

Do Not Attract Bears



Brown bears have an extremely keen sense of smell. To avoid attracting them with odors of human food or trash, put anything that emits a scent into a sealed bag. If you are staying overnight in the mountains, stay only in a designated campsite and be sure to store your food and garbage in the food lockers provided at the campsite.

New Initiatives to Prevent Accidents from Recurring

Providing Information on Brown Bears in Hiking Areas

We will strengthen the dissemination of brown bear information for hikers at trailheads and on websites. In particular, we plan to regularly update and disseminate information about brown bear sightings and safety advisories that hikers should be aware of before using trails (July-September).

Emergency Trail Closures Based on Brown Bear Risk Levels

If a brown bear exhibiting dangerous behavior (a problem bear) is confirmed on a trail, or if the risk of injury to hikers is deemed to be high, trailheads will be closed immediately.

Strict Response Measures for Problem Bears

Measures will be strengthened to respond to brown bears exhibiting dangerous behavior (problem bears), including their capture. Steps will be put in place to strictly enforce guidelines prohibiting approaching or feeding bears, in accordance with the National Parks Act and other relevant laws.

Get answers to your questions, and be fully prepared to head into the mountains.

Answers to key questions regarding new preventative measures and future usage of hiking trails

1

Does the reopening of hiking trails mean they are now safe?

No. Mountains pose various risks—not just brown bears, but also weather-related hypothermia, rockfalls, slips, and more. Even if a trailhead is open, these risks still exist. In principle, you are responsible for protecting your own safety. Before hiking, please review your skills, equipment, knowledge, and other preparations in order to decide whether and how to proceed.

2

Will trailhead closures be announced in advance? Where will information be posted if a trailhead is closed?

Because decisions may be made on an emergency basis, advance notice is not possible. However, if a trailhead is closed, we will update information in real time on our website and on the information board at the trailhead. Please check the "Shiretoko Information Box" and "Shiretoko Brown Bear" websites before hiking.

Shiretoko Brown Bear: <https://brownbear.shiretoko.or.jp/>

Shiretoko Information Box: <https://center.shiretoko.or.jp/i-box/>

3

Will these "new initiatives" be implemented on other hiking trails as well?

These measures apply specifically to the Mt. Rausu Trails (Iwaobetsu Course and Rausu Onsen Course), the Mt. Iou Trail, the Shiretoko Mountain Range Traverse Route, and the Lake Rausu Trail. They do not apply to coastal trekking towards Cape Shiretoko, stream climbing, or winter mountain climbing. As before, these activities are to be undertaken at your own risk and responsibility.

4

What should I do if the trailhead is closed when I am already using the trail?

If you receive information that the trailhead has been closed while you are on the trail, please try to obtain the latest information and discontinue your climb. When descending, proceed with caution, paying close attention to your surroundings. If there are others also using the trail, try to stay together and descend in a group whenever possible.

5

Will hikers be required to follow any specific precautions or procedures?

When planning a hike in the Shiretoko region, please review and comply with the Guidelines for Use (Rules). The Guidelines will include information on required precautions concerning brown bears. Additionally, please be sure to check updated risk information (warning level advisories) before hiking. (Information on the Guidelines for Use and risk information will be available as soon as they are finalized.)

6

Will hiking trail usage periods be fixed in the future?

This year (2026), to prepare for measures to prevent recurrence, the trailheads will be open starting July 5. After the reopening of the hiking trails, there are no plans to set specific periods for using the hiking trails in the future; ongoing brown bear countermeasures—such as information dissemination and emergency closures—will be conducted, mainly during the period from July through September.

For the latest information on brown bear sightings, please check the following website:

<https://brownbear.shiretoko.or.jp/>



Shiretoko Brown Bear

For the report (Japanese only) concerning the fatal brown bear attack on a hiker on Mt. Rausu in August 2025, and an overview of measures to prevent recurrence, please check the following URL:

Shiretoko Data Center Website (Ministry of the Environment)
<https://shiretokodata-center.env.go.jp/press/houdou.html>