Prime Minister John Key has officially launched construction of the first part of the national cycle trail project announced at the job summit in February.

On Tuesday, Mr Key turned the first sod on what will complete the final two sections of the 100km Waikato River Trail near Karapiro.

The two sections, costing $3 million, will stretch over 40km linking the track with Lake Karapiro. They are expected to be completed in time for the World Rowing Cup on the lake in October next year.

Mr Key says the trail will open up some inaccessible parts of the conservation estate to New Zealanders and tourists.

He also launched the National Cycle Trail brand, Nga Haerenga, which will be used in overseas marketing in conjunction with 100% Pure New Zealand.