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## Public urged to help protect kauri

Everyone heading out to enjoy the bush this summer is being asked to do their bit to help stop the spread of kauri dieback, a disease attacking kauri trees.

John Sanson, Kauri Dieback Management Programme spokesperson, says the disease is spread by soil movement and there are simple things people can do to help prevent it.

“We need people to always stick to defined tracks in parks and reserves and keep off kauri tree roots. Footwear, tyres and any equipment that comes into contact with soil before and after leaving areas of kauri forest needs to be cleaned”.

“This is especially important for people moving between areas of kauri forest when they are out enjoying the warmer weather as there are some areas that aren’t showing signs of the disease and we want to keep it that way,” he said.

John Sanson says kauri dieback, or *Phytophthora taxon Agathis* (PTA), is a serious threat to one of New Zealand’s most treasured species and there is a need for vigilance to prevent it from having devastating effects.

The Kauri Dieback Management Programme is made up of MAF Biosecurity New Zealand, the Department of Conservation, the Auckland Council, Northland Regional Council, Bay of Plenty Regional Council and Environment Waikato who are all working together in partnership with Maori.

A five year programme underway to contain this new to science disease includes research to find out more about how it spreads and what can be done to stop it, as well as surveillance to identify infected trees.

“There is a lot to learn about kauri dieback and it’s essential we find out more to continually improve the things we are doing to protect kauri,” said John Sanson.

“This summer people will notice signs at parks and tracks across the natural range of kauri reminding them to always stay on track and keep gear clean. We also have a website ([www.kauridieback.co.nz](http://www.kauridieback.co.nz)) and 0800 number (0800 NZ KAURI) people can call to get more information.”

Kauri dieback can kill trees of all ages. Affected trees show yellowing leaves, canopy thinning, dead branches and lesions that bleed resin across the lower part of the trunk.

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