



## **Ngā Rākau Taketake confirms funding boost.**

The Biological Heritage National Science Challenge programme Ngā Rākau Taketake - Saving Our Iconic Trees aims to accelerate the critical research needed to combat the spread of kauri dieback and myrtle rust.

Ngā Rākau Taketake has pledged to provide funding to support the Kauri Rescue project in two key areas of our work:

1. The ongoing monitoring of the health of trees that have already been treated as part of the Kauri Rescue Project for the next 3 years.
2. Public engagement and citizen science for the next 2 years.

This is fantastic news for our project which has been on hold since Auckland Council suspended all new contracts in March due to the Covid crisis. It will enable us to restart some of the important aspects of our work as soon as the Covid alert levels enable us to do so safely.

However this funding does not enable us to provide new participants with treatment kits, nor to support existing participants to treat more trees. But we hope that it will provide confidence and encourage more funders, including Regional Councils, to come on board and support this element of our work. We have a waiting list of landowners with confirmed kauri dieback wanting to join the project and we are keen to help them as soon as we can find enough funding.

It was the Biological Heritage National Science Challenge that funded Kauri Rescue for our first two years and our team is hugely grateful to the Ngā Rākau Taketake - Saving Our Iconic Trees team for throwing us a lifeline and continuing to support our work in these uncertain times.



# A new way to tell science stories

Another of the Ngā Rākau Taketake - Saving Our Iconic Trees programmes is [Mobilising for Action](#) which focuses on the human dimensions of forest health management, specifically kauri dieback and myrtle rust. Co-lead Dr Marie McEntee has joined with colleagues from the University of Auckland and with [Kauri Rescue](#) to tell the story of this citizen science project in a new, interactive and immersive way.

They have created a [‘story map’](#) which allows the viewer to navigate through the story of Kauri Rescue – seeing kauri forests for themselves, hearing experts explain kauri dieback and feeling the love those in ‘kauri land’ have for their ngāhere.

Marie says it’s really a story of hope.

“While science works hard to find a permanent solution to kauri dieback, scientists, mana whenua and community are working with the use of phosphite and other treatment tools to buy some time – while we wait for a permanent solution, if that is possible – that is the hope.

“There are so many things we learnt with Kauri Rescue about building a project community that can inform future citizen science work. If all we did was publish a paper in a science journal, there would be so many audiences that would miss out on hearing the story: the public; schools and universities studying kauri dieback; scientists wanting to learn about how to collaborate; the science community interested in citizen science.”

Marie says the hardest part of creating the story map was figuring out what to include from the two years of Kauri Rescue mahi (work). With lots of different audiences and levels to the story, the team knew they had to use a multi-media approach.

The end result reflects an incredible breadth of participants in the project.

“The citizen scientists, the ambassadors, the Kauri Rescue team, and the BioHeritage team who embraced this project. Kauri Rescue was a high energy project and it worked because it was collaborative. It is the community that held this project together – their energy,” Marie says.

## What next?

Kauri Rescue is in the midst of establishing themselves as a Community Trust – a status that would provide longevity and security to the project, providing a secure funding base can be established.

The story map can be continually updated to reflect Kauri Rescue's journey and Marie hopes it will act as a living record.

“As the work is tracked over the next 5 years (to see the effect of the treatments done so far) there will be more data to follow,” she says.

“It is also exciting to see how Kauri Rescue develops: how it transitions from a science research project into a Community Trust that focuses on science and even social science research.

“We need to follow this transition to better understand how research projects can evolve and survive beyond their funded period.”

[Explore the story map here.](#)

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