

Subject: Genetic Biocontrol researchers

From: Heath Packard <heath.packard@islandconservation.org>

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Hi Steve,

Thank you for your interest in the Genetic Biocontrol of Invasive Rodent's (GBIRd) program. Here is an introduction to the organizational leads and a short summary of the program.

The **Genetic Biocontrol of Invasive Rodents (GBIRd) program** brings together world class geneticists, evolutionary biologists, ethicists, risk assessors, math modelers, regulatory experts, social scientists, and conservation professionals to engage one of the most serious threats to biodiversity today: unchecked invasive rodents on islands. Our non-profit conservation and humanitarian mission engages dozens of experts from [CSIRO](#), [Island Conservation](#), [Landcare Research](#), [North Carolina State University](#), [Texas A&M University](#), and [USDA's APHIS](#).

Together, we are cautiously investigating the feasibility of, and assessing the social, ethical, and biological risks of, gene-drive modified organisms for eradication of island invasive species. The science and partnership has been underway for several years; GBIRd's formalized coordination and strategy emerged in 2016. Together, we are advancing gene drive research that has potential to scale up efforts to protect island communities and prevent island species extinctions.

We are investigating both the feasibility and suitability of this potential tool. Our step-wise, values-based, scientific, social, ethical, and risk-assessments aim to answer the following key questions in the coming decade:

- .. *Could we create a self-limiting gene-drive modified mouse that biases future generations to be male (or female) only, thereby achieving eradication by attrition?*
- .. *If we could do this, should we? How? And, under what conditions?*

Below is a list of the principals from each organization and the various focus areas that their organizations are helping to lead. They are each cc'd here so you can reach out to them directly to learn more about their work.

- Dr. Peter Brown, CSIRO (ecological risk assessments)
- Dr. Karl Campbell, Island Conservation (GBIRd Island Selection Criteria; IC's GBIRd Program & Galapagos Program Director)
- Dr. John Godwin, NCSU (mouse mate choice, modeling, social engagement)
- Dr. Fred Gould, NCSU (mouse mate choice, modeling, social engagement)
- Gregg Howald, Island Conservation (GBIRd Regulatory, Island Selection)
- Dr. Toni Piaggio, USDA (genetic characterization, intellectual property)
- Dr. Paul Thomas, U. of Adelaide (CRISPR gene drive mouse construct development)
- Dr. Dan Tompkins, Landcare Research (regulatory, stakeholder engagement)

- Dr. David Threadgill, TA&M (native gene drive t-complex mouse construct development)
- Royden Saah (GBIRd coordinator, Island Conservation)

If you would like further background or media relations assistance, please let me know and I'd be happy to help.

Thank you again for your interest in our research.

Best,

Heath Packard

Director of Marketing & Communications

Island Conservation

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