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Doing our part to deliberately craft a more livable, lovable, luscious Guam.

May 18, 2020

TO: Dr. Ronald Weeks, Program Point of Contact, USDA-APHIS-PPQ

Dear Dr. Weeks,

This is a request for a one-year, no-cost extension for Award AP19PPQS&T00C168: *Biological Control for Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Biotype G (CRB-G) on Guam.* The performance period for this project which is currently from August 8, 2019 to August 7, 2020. If granted , the extension will allow completion of project objectives which are:

- to find, propagate, and release an OrNV isolate which will act as an effective biocontrol agent for CRB-G.
- to establish an island-wide monitoring system to track damage to coconut palms by CRB-G

Justification for program delays

Progress on this project was delayed for several reasons:

- My technician/grad student assigned to this project left unexpectedly during the first month of the performance period. It took several weeks to hire a replacement. And much training was needed.
- Travel plans had to be postponed because of public health emergencies. A planned trip to American Samoa to collect virus susceptible rhino beetles needed for comparative bioassays was canceled in December because of a measles outbreak. A second attempt to make this trip in March was also postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Completion of laboratory bioassays and pre-release CRB damage field surveys have been delayed because of a COVID-19 "stay-at-home" order mandated by the Governmsnt of Guam
- During Fall term 2019, August through December, I was tasked with teaching an entomology course with lecture and lab sessions. My high workload reduced time and effort available for my work on this project, slowing initial progress.

Program impact without the extension

Despite delays, significant progress towards completion of the project goals was achieved as evidenced in the two semiannual reports I submitted. Laboratory bioassays have identified two isolates of *Oryctes* rhinoceros nudivirus as candidate biocontrol agents for CRB-G. An extension will allow us to realize the goal of releasing these biocontrol agent in the field under conditions of an existing USDA-APHIS permit to implement effective biocontrol of CRB-G on Guam.

Please note that the Guam CRB Biocontrol Program is partially funded by grants from other agencies, one of which funds a post-doc insect pathologist. However, loss of support from USDA-APHIS puts the program in jeopardy because we depend on this support to provide operating expenses and to hire technical help.

The anticipated completion date

I request a change in the end of the performance period from August 7, 2002 to August 07, 2021.

Thank you for considering my extension request. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

I have attached a revised work plan and SF-424.

Sincerely,

Aubrey Moore

Aubrey Moore PhD
Entomologist
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APPROVED BY

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