

**Subject:** Re: Gizmodo Media Inquiry

**From:** John Godwin <godwin@ncsu.edu>

**Date:** 4/7/2017 4:47 PM

**To:** Karl Campbell <karl.campbell@islandconservation.org>

**CC:** Royden Saah <royden.saah@islandconservation.org>, Heath Packard <heath.packard@islandconservation.org>, "Fred Gould (fred\_gould@ncsu.edu)" <fred\_gould@ncsu.edu>, Gregg Howald <gregg.howald@islandconservation.org>

Hi All,

Thanks for bringing this up Royden. With a Safe Genes announcement likely coming before very long here (guessing within 3 weeks?), I think it would be valuable to have a basic fact sheet readily available if we can. Different ways to approach this, but can imagine that some introductory information and then a FAQ format with appropriate links if possible might be good (e.g., What's the problem we're addressing?, Why Genetics?, What has been done so far, What still needs to be done?, What are the challenges?, what measures are being taken for biosecurity?, etc.). Then perhaps finish with some links for those that are willing to dig in a little more - there are a couple of good ones already at IC's page, the in depth examination the graduate students here at NCSU put together (<https://research.ncsu.edu/ges/igert/igert-research/island-mice-conserving-island-biodiversity/>), and possibly others we could use.

Interested certainly to hear Heath's thoughts on this and how we might best prepare for what could be an awful lot of attention in a few weeks here.

John

On Fri, Apr 7, 2017 at 3:15 PM, Karl Campbell <[karl.campbell@islandconservation.org](mailto:karl.campbell@islandconservation.org)> wrote:

Thanks Royden,

Appropriate of you to raise this point and will be good for us to deal with this up-front before it becomes a major issue (hopefully it isn't yet).

One challenge to #1 will be coordination, but I agree that what you propose is worth striving for. We'll need some guidelines so we're tripping over each other on calls like this.

I would also note that all press to this point has been reactive. We may want to adjust that moving forward and actually target some appropriate journalists to pitch our story to. I believe Heath has been thinking about this already.

Cheers,

Karl

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**From:** Royden Saah

**Sent:** Friday, April 07, 2017 1:05 PM

**To:** Karl Campbell <[karl.campbell@islandconservation.org](mailto:karl.campbell@islandconservation.org)>; [jrgodwinnc@gmail.com](mailto:jrgodwinnc@gmail.com) <[godwin@ncsu.edu](mailto:godwin@ncsu.edu)>; Heath Packard <[heath.packard@islandconservation.org](mailto:heath.packard@islandconservation.org)>

**Cc:** Fred Gould ([fred\\_gould@ncsu.edu](mailto:fred_gould@ncsu.edu)) <[fred\\_gould@ncsu.edu](mailto:fred_gould@ncsu.edu)>; Gregg Howald <[gregg.howald@islandconservation.org](mailto:gregg.howald@islandconservation.org)>

**Subject:** RE: Gizmodo Media Inquiry

**Importance:** High

Hi All,

Thanks for sharing the info about interviews with this media outlet. I am more blunt than usual in this email, but I think our process as a group needs to be examined and changed. We have experienced the same problems in a recurrent manner – these being, inaccuracies on major aspects of the program and IC getting a disproportionate amount of organizational focus in media at the exclusion of GBIRd partnership and our other organizations.

I have two suggestions: #1) media requests that focus on GBIRd issues be conducted as a GBIRd partnership with more than one organization involved *on the initial call*, rather than sequentially. Heath can listen in real time and coach and/or give post interview feedback comparing actual communication to stated partnership communication goals. #2) Create a website to share accurate information as GBIRd. Heath and I reasserted this priority just before his vacation.

The fact that we (partnership) have gotten this far is amazing. I concerned that intensified media attention and prospect of large awards will stress the partnership. Both of these will occur with a DARPA grant.

Heath will be joining for the next steering committee call. I trust we can come to agreement for clear steps to solve the recurring issues and observe future successes in this matter. Organizational partners (Fred and Gregg) copied for awareness.

Thanks

Royden

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**From:** Karl Campbell  
**Sent:** Friday, April 07, 2017 11:27 AM  
**To:** [jrgodwinnc@gmail.com](mailto:jrgodwinnc@gmail.com) <[godwin@ncsu.edu](mailto:godwin@ncsu.edu)>; Paul Thomas <[paul.thomas@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:paul.thomas@adelaide.edu.au)>; David Threadgill <[dwthreadgill@tamu.edu](mailto:dwthreadgill@tamu.edu)>; Heath Packard <[heath.packard@islandconservation.org](mailto:heath.packard@islandconservation.org)>; Royden Saah <[royden.saah@islandconservation.org](mailto:royden.saah@islandconservation.org)>  
**Subject:** RE: Gizmodo Media Inquiry

Thanks for following up with Kristen. When I spoke with her, also on Tuesday, she had said we had mice ready and where were we going to release them. I spent several minutes clarifying that we had no mice 'driving'.

Thanks for clarifying this in writing back with her.

Cheers,

Karl

**From:** John Godwin [<mailto:godwin@ncsu.edu>]  
**Sent:** Friday, April 07, 2017 9:00 AM  
**To:** Paul Thomas <[paul.thomas@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:paul.thomas@adelaide.edu.au)>; David Threadgill <[dwthreadgill@tamu.edu](mailto:dwthreadgill@tamu.edu)>; Karl Campbell <[karl.campbell@islandconservation.org](mailto:karl.campbell@islandconservation.org)>; Heath Packard <[heath.packard@islandconservation.org](mailto:heath.packard@islandconservation.org)>; Royden Saah <[royden.saah@islandconservation.org](mailto:royden.saah@islandconservation.org)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Gizmodo Media Inquiry

Response from Gizmodo writer. Hopefully fixes it.

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Kristen Brown <[kristen.brown@gizmodo.com](mailto:kristen.brown@gizmodo.com)>  
**Date:** Fri, Apr 7, 2017 at 9:51 AM  
**Subject:** Re: Gizmodo Media Inquiry  
**To:** John Godwin <[godwin@ncsu.edu](mailto:godwin@ncsu.edu)>

Hi John,

I think that's already what this actually says, but will tweak to make clearer. The story clearly says a gene drive has only been achieved in insects/yeast

Sent via iMagic.

On Apr 7, 2017, at 9:08 AM, John Godwin <[godwin@ncsu.edu](mailto:godwin@ncsu.edu)> wrote:

Hi Kristen,

Thanks for sending me the link to your story and I think it nicely highlights how important it is to approach developing this technology cautiously and deliberately. We are concerned about the short section focused on our group's efforts as it does significantly overstate progress to date. Our group has not yet achieved engineering mice that have only single-sex offspring and also has not yet achieved development of a functional gene drive. These are goals certainly and the work is in progress, but we're just not there yet. Modifications like those below would more accurately convey where we are in the project.

*"Two scientific teams in Australia and Texas, in collaboration with the US group Island Conservation are working to engineer mice to only birth male offspring, a bias meant to drive down mouse populations. It would be a major breakthrough—**the first time a gene drive had been achieved in mammals**—and New Zealand is one of the places the self-destructive mice might be deployed."*

I've copied my colleagues in Texas and Australia as well as Island Conservation folks so they're in the loop here and in case they'd like to chime in. Happy to help if I can offer clarifications as well.

Rgds, John

On Thu, Apr 6, 2017 at 6:05 PM, Kristen V. Brown <[kristen.brown@gizmodo.com](mailto:kristen.brown@gizmodo.com)> wrote:

Sending this your way (and sorry to not do so earlier, was on a plane).

<http://gizmodo.com/new-zealand-could-use-gene-editing-to-kill-off-its-cute-1794014119>

Please stay in touch!

**Kristen V. Brown**

**senior writer, gizmodo**

**[949.874.5507](tel:949.874.5507)**

On Tue, Apr 4, 2017 at 6:42 PM, John Godwin <[godwin@ncsu.edu](mailto:godwin@ncsu.edu)> wrote:

Hi Kristen,

I think it's fair to say it's only insects and yeast at this point as things are not further along in mice or other mammals to my knowledge at least. I've attached that paper from Greg Backus and Kevin Gross I mentioned earlier here.

John

On Tue, Apr 4, 2017 at 9:34 PM, Kristen V. Brown <[kristen.brown@gizmodo.com](mailto:kristen.brown@gizmodo.com)> wrote:

John,

Fair to say synthetic drives have only been demonstrated in insects/yeast, or would you say your cohorts mice count as a 'demonstration.'

**Kristen V. Brown**

**senior writer, gizmodo**

**[949.874.5507](tel:949.874.5507)**

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