



Commonwealth of Dominica
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, RURAL MODERNIZATION
AND KALINAGO UPLIFTMENT

Tel: (767) 266 4648
Fax: (767) 448 4506
Email: minsecenvironmnt@dominica.gov.dm
Website: www.dominica.gov.dm

1st Floor, Financial Centre
Kennedy Avenue, Roseau
Commonwealth of Dominica

30th, June 2020

Paul R. Reillo, Ph.D.
Research Professor
Institute of the Environment,
Florida International University
1222 E Road
Loxahatchee
Florida 33470
USA

Dear Dr. Reillo,

The Ministry of the Environment, Rural Modernization and Kalinago Upliftment recognizes your organization's longstanding, collaborative history with the Government of Dominica to protect the nation's most vulnerable species and preserve her biodiversity and natural heritage. Of note is your organization close collaboration with the Forestry, Wildlife and Parks Division since 1997 under a formal MOU with Government entitled *The Wildlife Conservation Partnership*.

Notably, Over the past twenty-four (24) years, the Rare Species Conservatory Foundation (RSCF) has provided Dominica's Forestry, Wildlife and Parks Division with landcover and wildlife-monitoring technology, field/lab equipment and forestry gear, computers, hands-on field and clinical training, mowers, chain/pole saws, several four-wheel drive (4WD) vehicles, and a self-contained mobile research laboratory. In addition, the RSCF has overhauled the Parrot Conservation and Research Centre multiple times, provided ongoing operational support and feed, and constructed parrot exhibit enclosures at the Botanical Gardens. Through *The Wildlife Conservation Partnership*, the RSCF spearheaded the creation of the Morne Diablotin National Park (MDNP) with Government, with the RSCF raising US\$750,000 for land acquisition for the park, providing additional funds to annex seven adjacent properties into the park and helping complete the MDNP Visitor's Centre.

The RSCF has also petitioned the United Nations Development Programme in New York for MDNP to be included within Dominica's cluster of Natural World Heritage Sites (inspiring expansion of the UNDP Small Grant Programme). Over the span of the partnership, the RSCF has hosted many Dominican delegations in Florida, sponsored Forestry Division personnel's participation in international workshops and conferences, helped underwrite the Caribbean Endemic Birds Festival since its inception in 2002, provided funding for environmental awareness and outreach programs (e.g., Government Information Service, public radio and television), and has vetted, written and submitted many proposals on Forestry's behalf (including those yielding notable awards from the *Loro Parque Fundacion* in Tenerife, Spain).

The RSCF also provided the juicing and fruit-processing equipment for the micro-processing facility in Dublanc that serves a consortium of farmers in the Syndicate Estate area adjacent to MDNP. Moreover, the RSCF has provided photographs, video and written material for government publications and websites, always gratis (including images on www.dominica.gov). The Ministry further recognizes that the RSCF's support for wildlife conservation on Dominica is significant and unconditional, totaling nearly US\$1.8 million. The wildlife conservation-and-research partnership between Government and the RSCF is internationally acclaimed, with the parrot conservation-and-research program heralded as one of the most progressive and successful parrot-conservation endeavors ever.

Based on the aforementioned, I wish to express my gratitude to the RSCF supporters, officers, and staff for their commitment to helping protect The Nature Island's wildlife and natural areas.

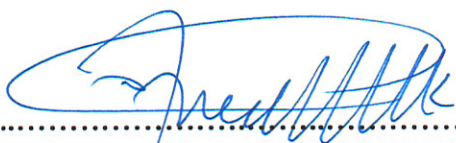
With this letter, the Ministry of Environment, Rural Modernization and Kalinago Upliftment reaffirms the continuing, joint mission of *The Wildlife Conservation Partnership* and invites the RSCF and the Tropical Conservation Institute to fully engage with the Ministry, and, by extension, the Forestry, Wildlife and Parks Division, to advance conservation-research activities on Dominica. Moving forward, we jointly acknowledge the following priorities:

- Engage Mr. Stephen Durand as Special Consulting Conservation Officer, to liaise with the Forestry, Wildlife and Parks Division to conduct wildlife-assessment surveys, help build Forestry's conservation capacity and prepare the next generation of Dominican conservation scientists and practitioners
- Repair and Renovate the Parrot Conservation and Research Centre, for wildlife rehabilitation, research, wellness and accommodations for non-releasable wildlife
- Renovate the parrot display aviaries and designs for other species exhibits (acknowledging that RSCF shipped materials to Forestry in 2018)
- Repatriate all Sisserou and Jaco parrots taken by (ACTP) to Germany in March 2018, and any offspring that may have been produced; this may require intermediate placement of birds at a credentialed zoological facility off-island until disease screening and proper quarantine can be accomplished on Dominica
- Help enhance the Botanical Gardens with specimen plant species, signage and interactive outreach messaging
- Provide subject-specific training and capacity building for Forestry staff, horticulturists, wildlife scientists, veterinarians, policy makers and program personnel, both on-island and abroad at Florida International University (TCI) and the RSCF
- Provide collaborative training workshops and development of conservation-related, public outreach, PSAs, and educational materials
- Increase science capacity with Forestry, Environment, Agriculture and Tourism to drive best policies and practices and to prepare the next generation of professionals
- Incentivize collateral partnerships with other, like-minded conservation NGOs and agencies and stimulate diversified program funding

We further acknowledge that a parrot monitoring plan has already been submitted to Forestry and that the RSCF has provided funds for its implementation. With the 2020 hurricane season upon us, assessing the status and distribution of these vulnerable species, along with their post-Maria recovery, is of paramount importance. We welcome your proven, productive collaboration with Forestry under this broad directive, to accelerating the activities enumerated above, and to expanding the mutual benefits of our friendship.

Together we look forward to meeting the many time-sensitive, critical needs of Dominica's wildlife, natural areas and to empowering the people who defend them.

Sincerely,



.....
HONOURABLE COZIER FREDERICK
MINISTER ENVIRONMENT,
RURAL MODERNIZATION
AND KALINAGO UPLIFTMENT