From: [redacted]
To: Jack Horner [redacted]
Subject: Re: Dinochicken meeting proposal
Date: Sat, 01 Sep 2012 17:13:43 +0000

You as well

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 1, 2012, at 12:53 PM, Jack Horner [redacted] wrote:

Thanks [redacted], much appreciated!

Have a great weekend!

Jack

On Sep 1, 2012, at 10:38 AM, [redacted] wrote:

Thank you!! Passing this on to Jeffrey.

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 1, 2012, at 12:18 PM, Jack Horner [redacted] wrote:

Dear Jeffrey,

First off , many thanks for the invitation to your ranch, I had a great time, especially spending time with you and the girls, and seeing your Cretaceous sediments and the old railroad. I don't get many chances to spend time with non paleontologists or see places and things like that these days.

I talked to my post docs and Co-PI when I returned and got the scoop on the transgenic chickens situation, for as you know I was very surprised to hear that such a thing existed since my co-researchers were saying they didn't. As it turns out, although there are such a thing, there is simply no established protocol to create them, and they, at present do not pass on their characteristics, so in effect are useless for our project. What it is that we need to do is to be able to target a specific region of DNA, and that technology is not yet available in birds, but is expected within a year or two, so within our time frame. We hope someone else will do it first so we can use it, as this technology (homologous recombination technology, aka knockout technology) is essential to the success of this project. We do not aim to generate chickens that express an extraneous gene (a transgene), but we plan on finding the very small changes in the regulation of existing genes that curb tail, hand, and tooth development. In order to make these very small changes in the chicken genome, homologous recombination technology needs to be developed.

Anyway, this is the sort of stuff we will discuss in our summit meeting, and I very much appreciate your considering the funding of this meeting. It is obviously the most important first step, and I thank you for suggesting we do it.

Please give all the girls my very best wishes, and to you, whom I envy,

Thanks again,

Jack

9.1.12

Proposal Attached and Separate (attachment)

<THE DINOCHICKEN PROJECT 'SUMMIT' MEETING PROPOSAL.docx>

THE DINOCHICKEN PROJECT 'SUMMIT' MEETING PROPOSAL

The overall goals of the 'Dinochicken Project' are to 'reverse engineer' an avian dinosaur (in this case, a chicken or quail) to have morphological characteristics of a non-avian dinosaur. In its purest form, the project entails reactivating dormant or latent genetic pathways that would generate atavistic characters. The characters to be modified initially are those identified previously as key differences between avian and non-avian dinosaurs: presence of teeth, hands/claws instead of wings, and a long true tail.

A key component to any project is identifying what is already known and establishing connections with other scientists who may have relevant information already in hand. There are 6 PIs who will make the research decisions, and another 11 people who we know have expertise, and are interested in participating. The current, unpublished knowledge of these other researchers would definitely help to decide the research directions of the various PI lead teams.

I am proposing to bring 12 people to Montana for the two day 'summit' and we have another 5 that live here, so the meeting will include 17 research scientists plus a couple of MSU graduate students who would help with logistics. The summit meeting would be held at the Museum of the Rockies, Montana State University. Participants are currently working on [redacted] to determine a meeting time prior to the end of 2012. The link is attached in the event that you could attend: [redacted]

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Summit Meeting Proposed Participants

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Montana State University

Jack Horner **Lead PI** (Paleontologist)

Christa Merzdorf **Co PI** (Developmental geneticist) (tail development)

Anne Blackwell Post-Doc (Developmental geneticist) (tail development)

Dana Rashid Post-Doc (Developmental geneticist) (tail regeneration)

Dan Post-Doc (Developmental geneticist)

*Two Graduate Student Assistants

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