

**PPQ Deputy Administrator's Outstanding Achievement Award Nomination:
Asian Gypsy Moth (AGM) Offshore Mitigation Program**

Nominees

Michael Simon (group leader); Senior Staff Officer, USDA APHIS PPQ, 4700 River Rd. Riverdale, MD 20737; 301-734-4374. His role is to coordinate the AGM offshore mitigation program. He took the lead on technical negotiations and coordinates the Japan AGM initiative.

Victor Mastro; Lab Director, USDA APHIS PPQ, Pest Survey Detection and Exclusion Lab, Bldg. 1398, Otis ANGB, MA 02542; 508-563-9303x212. He is the CPHST representative for Japan and Korea, he provides the traps, and he analyzes the moth specimens. He is on the negotiation team to represent the research and science aspect of the project.

Baode Wang; Senior Entomologist, USDA APHIS PPQ, Bldg. 1398, Otis ANGB, MA 02542; 508-563-9303x 224. He is the CPHST lead for the China AGM initiative. He is coordinating the moth trapping and other work with the Chinese officials.

Weyman Fussell; Gypsy Moth Program Manager, USDA APHIS PPQ, 4700 River Rd. Riverdale, MD 20737; 301-734-5705. His role is to coordinate the AGM offshore mitigation program, with emphasis on the Korea and China AGM initiatives.

George A. Ball; Area Director, USDA APHIS IS, American Embassy, Seoul, Korea, Unit 15550, APO AP 96205-0001; 82-2-397-4198. His role is integral in obtaining cooperation from the Korean government for the AGM trapping. His involvement allowed our work in Korea to occur very smoothly.

Yunhee Kim; Agriculture Specialist, USDA APHIS IS, Rm 303 Leema Bldg., 146-1 Susong-dong, Jongro-gu, Seoul, Korea 110-755; 82-2-397-4147. Her role is to coordinate with the Korean NPQS and she has been extremely helpful in making the necessary arrangements.

Roeland Elliston; Program Manager, USDA APHIS PPQ WR, 2150 Centre Ave. Bldg B-3E 10, Ft. Collins CO 80526; 970-494-7500. He is the main domestic contact for gypsy moth in the Western Region. He communicates with the Western States about the AGM program and was also involved in negotiations in Japan and training officials in Korea.

Joann Cruse; State Plant Health Director, USDA APHIS PPQ, 1 Gifford Pinchot Dr. Rm 229, Madison, WI 53726; 608-231-9545. Her role is to communicate with the Eastern Region about the AGM program and train officials in Korea to do trapping.

Mark Prescott; FSO, USDA APHIS IS, American Embassy, Unit 45004 Box 231, APO AP, 96337-5004, Tokyo Japan; 081-3-3224-5112. He is the Key IS officer in Japan and worked to coordinate the delicate negotiations with MAFF.

Allen Steven Munson; USDA Forest Service Intermountain Region - Group Leader/Entomologist, OFO, Forest Health Protection, Ogden, UT 84403. He is the Forest Service representative to the AGM programs.

Theresa Boyle; APHIS Attache, USDA APHIS IS, PSC 461 Box 50, FPO AP 96521, Beijing, China; 011-86-10-6532-3212x206. Her role was to coordinate the initial meetings for the China AGM program.

Fred Thomas; USDA APHIS IS, Rm. 618, Beijing International Club Office Bldg., No. 21, Jianguomenwai Ave., Beijing, China 100020; 011-86-10-6532-3212x206. His role is to coordinate the China program as the IS officer.

Brief Narrative of the Achievement

The Asian Gypsy Moth (AGM) Offshore Mitigation Program has prevented AGM from establishing in the United States and Canada through scientific and technical cooperation with Japan, Russia, Korea, and China. Likewise it involved partnering with CBP on bolstering port of entry activity. In the past year, vessels inspections for AGM began in Japan, as a result of several years of seaport monitoring. Also in the past year, seaport monitoring was initiated in Korea and China.

Asian gypsy moth (*Lymantria dispar*) is a serious and destructive pest of forest resources. It can be spread as a hitchhiker by marine conveyances from areas in Asia where the pest is known to be established. Periodic detections and outbreaks in the United States have led to control and eradication programs costing millions of dollars. It is predicted that AGM could spread rapidly in the United States and be very destructive as a forest defoliator in North America.

The AGM Offshore Mitigation Program is a collaborative effort between APHIS and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). The project uses a wide variety of strategies and techniques in order to identify, measure, and mitigate the risk of an introduction of AGM with little or no disruption to commercial maritime traffic. This strategy is unique in that USDA provided risk monitoring and vessel inspection support and training for the first time to a developed shipping economy in Asia. In addition, risk is mitigated at minimal cost to the U.S. government.

The AGM offshore mitigation program in Japan has several components. Many high-traffic marine ports in Japan are monitored to determine AGM population levels and periods where adult moths may be depositing egg masses on vessels and containers that could be transported to the United States. Extensive negotiations with the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF) were required to allow AGM traps to be placed in 19 port areas throughout Japan. APHIS supplied the

traps and gave training to Japanese inspectors about how to place and check the traps. Information acquired from this collaboration led to a much greater understanding of where AGM counts are historically high and high-risk flight times occur. The trap monitoring data is providing both countries with accurate data to determine the risk associated with AGM. APHIS uses this information to efficiently target high-risk periods for the spread of AGM from Japan.

In addition, the data has allowed APHIS to exclude many areas of Japan from being considered as high-risk for AGM. The project also authorized and trained inspection companies in Japan to issue preinspection certificates that are accepted by CBP for entry at U.S. ports and provide additional risk mitigation assurance.

In late 2005, APHIS-PPQ initiated high-risk vessel lists to be used by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) at all U.S. seaports. The lists provide information on which vessels are high risk for carrying AGM and require inspection at arrival in U.S. ports. The vessel preinspection program was just fully implemented beginning in June 2007. In 2007, approximately 300 vessels from the high-risk list were inspected by CBP. Due to these targeting techniques, CBP Agriculture Specialists in Seattle, Washington and Long Beach, California intercepted live AGM egg masses for the first time on vessels from Asia. The vessels had transited a high-risk port in Japan.

The experience of negotiation and collaboration with Japan led to an expansion of cooperative seaport monitoring to determine the risk of AGM spread from Korea and China, other Asian countries where AGM is known to exist. Information gathered includes the dates of male moth flight and relative populations throughout the countries. In Korea, trapping was conducted in two ports, Busan and Incheon, in 2007. Korea agreed to expand to eight ports for 2008. In 2008, APHIS first reached agreement with China to have gypsy moth traps placed in areas near three seaports.

APHIS PPQ's AGM offshore mitigation project is a very successful program that is integral to the safeguarding efforts which preventing the entry of Asian gypsy moth into the United States. The model first implemented in Japan has successfully been replicated in other Asian countries. By conducting proactive port monitoring in Japan, preinspection of vessels and providing U.S. port inspectors with lists of targeted vessels, the risk of an introduction has been substantially reduced. The trapping in China and Korea is also important to allowing APHIS to gather information on populations and flight patterns of AGM to start determining relative risk to the United States of AGM in those countries. There has been little to no disruption to maritime shipping schedules and trade due to the increased surveillance. This program has provided an effective offshore warning system and mitigation system for AGM, with the potential to save millions of dollars in future costs for control and eradication efforts in the United States. APHIS' stakeholders, both at home and abroad, are supportive of the AGM program because it streamlines the inspection process while strengthening the United States' defenses against AGM. Through the project, the partnerships between APHIS and USFS, as well as with CBP, have been improved. APHIS' working relationships with Japan, Korea, and China have also been

strengthened. The AGM program is an excellent example of APHIS taking initiative to exclude a serious pest from the United States. It fulfills our mission to safeguard our forest resources against the entry, establishment, or spread of destructive pests like AGM. While protecting U.S. agriculture from pests is part of APHIS' day-to-day work, the accomplishments of the AGM offshore mitigation project group go beyond the scope of daily duties and exceeded expectations. If not for the efforts of this team, AGM would likely have entered and become established in the United States.