



DAVID JAMES/UNIVERSAL CITY STUDIOS & AMBLIN

Good cause. *Lost World* film premier will benefit mouse genetics laboratory in Montana.

Spielberg Movie to Aid Mouse Research

Lost World, the sequel to Steven Spielberg's blockbuster movie *Jurassic Park*, will premier on 20 May in Great Falls, Montana, the town where the Unabomber suspect's grand jury met. Why the remote location? *Lost World's* producer, Gerald Molen, wants to help out the local McLaughlin Research Institute (MRI), a little-known center for studies of mouse genetics.

MRI began in 1957 as a one-scientist lab operated by Ernst Eichwald and, later, Jack Stimpfling. The two dissected the genetics of the mouse's immune system and also developed a colony of research mice. In 1990 MRI expanded, and today it has a new facility and four scientists using transgenic mice to study Alzheimer's disease, obesity, heart disease, and development. Among the institute's advisers are immunologists Irving Weiss-

man of Stanford and Lee Hood of the University of Washington, who both grew up in the Great Falls area.

But the nonprofit MRI, which relies on National Institutes of Health and foundation grants, has a very small endowment. The movie opening—coordinated by Molen, a Great Falls native and a member of MRI's development committee—is meant to help fill that void. The institute plans to make \$120,000 selling tickets at \$100 each as part of a larger \$1 million fund-raising drive, says George Carlson, MRI's director. With the new funds, "we hope to bring two more scientists who work in mammalian genetics," says Carlson.

As for the movie itself, expect more kinds of unfriendly creatures and gadgets for fighting them. The research team of actor Jeff Goldblum's character discovers an island where dinosaurs were secretly bred for *Jurassic Park*. Scientists with good and bad intentions arrive at this lost world to battle the dinosaurs—and each other.

NCI Plans Attack on HIV Resistance

The National Cancer Institute (NCI), criticized last year for its handling of an AIDS drug-discovery program, has recruited Tufts University molecular biologist John Coffin to lead a new project on viral drug resistance—one designed to come up with new strategies to attack AIDS. The program, focused on the structure and function of viruses, will be run out of NCI's campus in Frederick, Maryland.

Science has learned that Coffin, a retrovirus expert, has agreed to serve part-time as the program's chief. Coffin, who has already begun work at NCI, declined to discuss specifics or the size of the research program, but said "It won't be small." He expects to spend "about 2 days a week" in Frederick. In taking the job, he follows in the footsteps of other outside scientists asked to guide NCI programs, such as Alfred Knudson of the Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia, who helps direct research on genetics and cancer.



Coffin

Coffin says he hopes the new AIDS program also will have an extramural component, and that it will mesh well with drug-development projects in industry. He expects to have an approved research plan in hand by July.

Popovic Loses Part of Lawsuit

AIDS researcher Mikulas Popovic has suffered a serious setback in his \$5 million lawsuit against the government. Popovic, formerly a cell biologist in the lab of Robert Gallo at the National Institutes of Health, sued last fall after an appeals board cleared him in 1993 of charges that he had made false statements in several research papers. The charges had been brought by the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Research Integrity (ORI). Popovic's suit accused the government and ORI staffer Suzanne Hadley of conducting a "baseless" investigation that prevented him from working for 4 years (*Science*, 14 February, p. 920).

Last week, Judge Peter J. Messitte of the U.S. District Court in Greenbelt, Maryland, agreed to the government's request to

dismiss three of five counts—negligence, invasion of privacy, and refusal to hire for reasons contrary to public policy. However, on two counts—intentional infliction of emotional distress and violation of due process, the latter against Hadley—the court de-

ferred its ruling until both sides file more briefs. Paul Thaler, one of Popovic's attorneys, says his client will also ask the judge to rehear at least one dismissed count. "The case is not going to go away until we prevail, or a final word has been made," Thaler says.

U.S. Weapons Program Faces Legal Challenge

The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and 38 other environmental and activist groups were planning to file a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., this week against the Department of Energy's (DOE's) \$40 billion stockpile-stewardship program.

The groups argue that DOE's environmental reviews of plans to modernize the weapons complex, as well as the consideration it gave to alternatives to stockpile stewardship, were technically deficient or were never done. For example, says NRDC's Tom Cochran, the government hasn't adequately considered the possibility of major fires at facilities where plutonium weapons components are constructed. And DOE failed to consider consolidating its weapons

labs "to reduce the size and environmental impact" of the overall program, Cochran says.

The groups planned to ask for a preliminary injunction to delay construction of several DOE facilities, including the National Ignition Facility, a \$1.2 billion project to use lasers to create fusion reactions that is set to break ground at Lawrence Livermore National Lab later this month. Spokespersons for DOE and Livermore declined to comment.

The suit's chances of success were unclear. But some of the same groups filed a lawsuit challenging the environmental plan for DOE's nuclear weapons programs a decade ago. As a result, the department agreed in 1989 to conduct the reviews now being questioned.