APHIS Issues Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for Erythrina Gall Wasp Biological Control

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has issued an environmental assessment (EA) and finding of no significant impact (FONSI) for releasing *Aprostocetus nitens* in Hawaii. This stingless parasitic wasp is a biological control agent intended to help manage the *Erythrina* gall wasp (*Quadrastichus erythrinae*), a pest that has severely impacted *Erythrina* trees across the State. After careful analysis, APHIS determined that releasing *A. nitens* will not significantly impact the quality of the human environment in Hawaii.

Erythrina gall wasp was first detected on Oahu in 2005 and quickly spread across Hawaii. This invasive insect attacks *Erythina* species, including the native wiliwili tree (*Erythrina sandwicensis*), an important component of Hawaii’s lowland dry forests. The pest has caused extensive leaf damage and the loss of thousands of *Erythrina* trees statewide.

APHIS will begin reviewing permit applications for the environmental release of *A. nitens* in Hawaii. Each permit application includes a consultation period with the affected State before APHIS makes a final decision.

The EA and FONSI are available for public review at National Environmental Policy Act Documents: Plant Protection and Quarantine.

For more information, send an email to ppqbiocontrol@usda.gov and include "*Aprostocetus nitens*" in the subject line.