

9th VI Nonpoint Source Conference Postponed Until November 2005



View of Westin St. John Resort & Villas grounds (photo courtesy of Dale Morton, UVI-CES).

The VI Nonpoint Source (NPS) Pollution Committee is pleased to announce the Call for Presentations for the 9th VI Nonpoint Source Pollution Conference: *"Preventing Pollution in the Caribbean: Reshaping Our Communities for the Future."* The conference will be held November 28-30, 2005 at the Westin St. John Resort & Villas, the home of the last two VI NPS Conferences. Scientists, educators, regulators, decision-makers, community groups, farmers, members of the construction, plumbing & boating industries, realtors, non-governmental organizations, students, vendors and other interested individuals are encouraged to participate.

The NPS Conference Planning Committee is particularly interested in abstracts that focus on implementing and/or adapting new or proven environmentally-friendly practices to reduce or prevent pollution of terrestrial and marine environments in the Caribbean. Other topics of interest include:

- Watershed Management
- Coastal Management
- Government Initiatives
- Low-Impact Development / Best Management Practices
- Land Use / Island Planning
- Nonpoint Source Education & Outreach
- Resource Monitoring &/or Protection

The submission deadline for training seminar, oral and poster presentation abstracts as well as information & vendor exhibit applications is **August 1, 2005**. Please use the enclosed **Call for Presentations form** to submit abstracts for the Conference. For conference details, including abstract submission and conference registration forms, hotel registration site and area information visit www.usvircd.org/NPSconf.html. For details on submitting seminar, paper, poster, exhibit or display abstracts, contact Anita Nibbs, DPNR-DEP, at 340-773-1082 or nibbs.anita@vidpnr-dep.org. For conference registration details, contact Vanessa Peter, DPNR-DEP, at 340-773-1082 or peter.vanessa@vidpnr-dep.org.

Land Owner's Workshop: Guts in the Landscape

The St. Croix Environmental Association (SEA), in partnership with the V.I. Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc. (VI RC&D) and the USDA Forest Service/International Institute of Tropical Forestry hosted a *Guts in the Landscape* seminar for over 70 land-owners and members of the general public in Christiansted, St. Croix on January 27, 2005. The seminar was conducted by North Carolina State University Professor Dr. Greg Jennings and USDA-NRCS District Conservationist Rudy G. O'Reilly, Jr. They discussed the functions and benefits of guts, proper gut management, and how to get technical or financial assistance to manage or restore guts.



Dr. Greg Jennings and SEA staffer, Carol Cramer-Burke, measure the extent of gut erosion in a Southgate pasture.

Many guts throughout the territory have experienced severe erosion and landslides from recent storm events. The seminar was held to address this problem by encouraging land owners to adopt gut stewardship practices that reduce flooding and erosion, improve water quality, protect gut habitats and increase property values. The presenters and project partners also toured a selection of severely eroded guts on St. Croix with to determine the extent of damage and make recommendations for restoration.

"I was very impressed with the public turnout and audience participation at the seminar," stated SEA's Carol Cramer-Burke, seminar co-sponsor. *"It was wonderful to see how interested people were in putting what they learned into practice in their neighborhoods. I hope that the information provided will lead to the formation of watershed coalitions to address gut flooding issues."*

The seminar was sponsored as part of a series of workshops to be held for property owners in the Southgate watershed, along with other interested persons. The series will provide information and tools to reduce pollution, as well as protect property and habitats in the watershed, as part of SEA's Southgate Watershed Management Plan.

For more information on the *Guts in the Landscape Workshop* or gut restoration, contact Carol Cramer-Burke, SEA, at 340-773-1989 or cburke@seastx.org.

DPNR to Host 24th Annual International Submerged Lands Management Conference

DPNR's Coastal Zone Management Division will be hosting the prestigious *International Submerged Lands Management Conference*. The 24th annual conference will be held October 16 - 21, 2005 at the Westin St. John Resort & Villas.

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The International Submerged Lands Management Conference brings together representatives who deal with issues pertaining to the administration of submerged lands and adjacent uplands from the United States, the Canadian Provinces, the Caribbean basin and countries across the globe. The Conference objective is for government agencies, private port facility agencies, universities, homeowners, community groups, builders, architects, engineers and environmental organizations to share information and exchange ideas to ensure solutions to some of the problems and issues facing submerged lands globally. Presentations will focus on tools, strategies, case studies, and lessons learned. This conference provides participants with an opportunity to learn from peers and colleagues, keep up to date on the issues affecting submerged lands, and a forum for sharing successful problem resolution.

Mark your calendar today and plan to attend and participate in this very important Conference. For conference details, contact DPNR-CZM at 340-774-3320 on St. Thomas or 340-773-1082 on St. Croix. For hotel reservation details, call 340-693-8000.

VINE, A Network of Environmental Educators, Sprouts in the VI!

Local educators seeking to share information and community contacts to improve environmental and cultural education in the U.S. Virgin Islands have launched the Virgin Islands Network of Environmental Educators (VINE). VINE, formed in August 2004, offers environmental education programs and resources to teachers and the community. The network links K-20 educators and stakeholders with 24 local and national natural and cultural resource organizations to promote environmental and cultural education opportunities throughout the territory. VINE is actively developing new programs and materials on a number of topics, including the impacts of water pollution, the role of mangroves in the marine environment, the life cycle of the leatherback sea turtle, energy conservation, the cultural history of the Virgin Islands, and preventing soil erosion, to name just a few.



VINE members present environmental education resource information to St. Croix teachers at QuEST.

VINE members presented information on partner programs to 72 teachers attending the October 18, 2004 Quality Education Standards in Teaching (QuEST) teacher professional development workshop at the St. Croix Education Complex. The

high teacher interest indicated to VINE members the need for more environmental outreach programs both on St. Croix and throughout the territory. For a directory of VINE members and programs, contact Susan Curtis, DPNR-CZM, at 340-773-1082 or susan.curtis@viczmp.com.

USDA-NRCS & FSA Announce Grassland Reserve Program Sign-Up

Juan A. Martinez, USDA-NRCS Caribbean Area Director, and Kevin Kelley, USDA-FSA State Executive Director, announce that both Agencies are now accepting applications for the Grassland Reserve Program (GRP). GRP is a voluntary program that helps landowners and operators restore and protect grassland, pastureland and other lands. Participants voluntarily limit future use of the land, while retaining the right to conduct common grazing practices, produce hay, and other approved practices. VI land owners may submit enrollment applications for rental agreements of 10 to 30 years for at least 40 contiguous acres of land. For details, contact Rudy G. O'Reilly, Jr., USDA-NRCS, Gallows Bay, St. Croix, at 340-692-9662 x. 106, or visit www.pr.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/GRP/index.html.

VI RC&D Brings Public Issues & Conflict Management Training to the VI

The V.I. Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc. (VIRC&D) sponsored two two-day workshops March 14-15, 2005 on St. Croix and March 17-18, 2005 on St. Thomas. Thirty-one local resource management, extension, and education professionals learned meeting management and facilitation skills and increased their knowledge and understanding of the anatomy of conflict. They also improved their skills and processes needed to deal with conflict.

VIRC&D provided this training opportunity to VI natural resource managers and educators because meeting management and facilitation skills are becoming increasingly important in the territory. It is essential that professionals and volunteers make the most of their limited and valuable time. Planning and conducting meetings efficiently and learning to deal with conflict is one important means to this end. While not intended to create negotiators or mediators out of training attendees, this knowledge will help enable participants to avoid or diffuse conflict when involved in potentially contentious public meetings.

The short course was conducted by NOAA Coastal Services Center trainers Kristy Ellenberg and Karen Guglielmon, who lead similar workshops across the country. The *Public Issues and Conflict Management Training* is just one of a series of professional development workshops offered by the NOAA Coastal Services Center.

For more information on last month's training or other VIRC&D programs, contact the VIRC&D office at 340-692-9632 x. 5 or visit the VIRC&D website at www.usvircd.org. For more information on NOAA Coastal Service Center professional development courses and other services, visit www.csc.noaa.gov.



Web Resources

The *Environmental Careers Organization*, in collaboration with several national conservation organizations and agencies, is conducting a national project to research and report on activities and initiatives that aim to educate, recruit and retain under-represented groups within conservation careers in the U.S. The project will result in a searchable, online directory to connect students and others to organizations and opportunities. To complete a brief survey of your activities, visit <http://pragmatic-research.com/Surveys/10/eco.htm>.

Livable Communities and Urban Forests. The Local Government Commission's Center for Livable Communities has released a free factsheet, *Livable Communities and Urban Forests*. The factsheet includes discussions on the economic, environmental, and public health and safety benefits of trees in communities. Tips on how local governments and organizations can improve their communities' tree canopy are also provided. Visit www.lgc.org/freepub/PDF/Energy/livcomm_urban_forests.pdf to download the factsheet.

EPA's National Water Quality Assessment Database Now Online. The U.S. EPA Office of Water has released the first-ever interactive database of state water quality assessment data, which provides the public with easy Web access to water quality information at the state and local levels. National summary water quality statistics are also available. The database may be viewed at www.epa.gov/305b/2002report/.

New Partners for Smart Growth 2005. PowerPoint speaker presentations and audio files are now available from the 4th Annual *New Partners for Smart Growth: Building Safe, Healthy and Livable Communities* conference held January 27-29, 2005 in Miami Beach, Florida. For details, visit the Smart Growth Resource Library at www.smartgrowth.org/library/articles.asp?art=1493&res=1024.

New Report on U.S. Virgin Islands' Coral Reefs. In the U.S. Virgin Islands, as elsewhere, coral reefs and the ocean life they harbor are declining. With the launch of *The State of the Reefs of the US Virgin Islands*, The Ocean Conservancy and its partners hope to better understand what is happening to coral reefs and advance a dialogue with government officials, scientists, fishermen and other interested communities to improve conservation of these diverse and important ecosystems. To download the report, visit www.oceanconservancy.org/site/PageServer?pagename=stateofthereefs.

EPA's NPDES Website has recent additions including:

- Permitting for Environmental Results: www.epa.gov/npdes/PER,
- Stormwater Case Studies: www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/casestudies,
- Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination Manual for Stormwater Phase II Communities: www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater.

The Center for Watershed Protection (CWP) has released Version 2.0 of Manuals #1, #8, #10 and #11 of its **Urban Subwatershed Restoration Manual** series, originally made available in 2004. (Manual #1: *An Integrated Framework to Restore Small Urban Watersheds*; Manual #8: *Pollution Source Control Practices*; Manual #10: *Unified Stream Assessment: A User's Manual*; Manual #11: *Unified Subwatershed and Site Reconnaissance: A User's Manual*). Visit the CWP website at www.cwp.org to download or order these manuals.

The Water Resources Learning Center announces two upcoming courses for continuing education units: **Design of Storm Sewers and Pavement Drainage** (1.4 CEUs) and **Design of Stormwater Management Systems** (1.4 CEUs). For details, visit www.waterlearning.org.

Available Grants



Beach Water Quality Monitoring Grants. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has \$10 million available to eligible territories, tribes and states for beach water quality monitoring. Funds will help improve water monitoring and public information programs to alert beach-goers about the health of their coastal waters. To learn more about the grants and the beach program, visit www.epa.gov/waterscience/beaches/.

Brownfields Training, Research and Technical Assistance Grants. U.S. EPA's Brownfields Office is holding a competition for eligible applicants to apply for federal funding for brown fields-related training, research or technical assistance. The application deadline is May 1, 2005. For details, visit www.epa.gov/brownfields/applicat.htm#trta.

Caribbean Undersea Research Grants. The Caribbean Marine Research Center (www.perryinstitute.org) is soliciting proposals for undersea research in the Caribbean region for FY2006 for three specific funding opportunities:

- One to two year projects that focus on research priorities under the "Examinations of the effectiveness of 'no-take' marine protected areas" theme;
- One to two year projects that address over-fishing, pollution, coral disease, bleaching, and invasive species, and the impact of these stressors on coral reef ecosystems for the U.S. Caribbean. The evaluation of management effectiveness is also encouraged.

- One or two year projects that address basic assessment of resources, understanding reef processes, research to enhance the MPA process, water quality and coral reef health, and dynamics of coral diseases and syndromes in Puerto Rico.

Visit www.perryinstitute.org for proposal guidelines, full RFP, and submission instructions. Pre-proposals must be submitted by email by May 15, 2005 to pims@perryinstitute.org. Final proposals are due August 1, 2005.

Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) Grants. EPA is launching the new CARE grant program to provide financial and technical assistance to help communities understand and reduce the risk of exposure to toxic chemicals. CARE grants can also be used to reduce releases of toxic pollutants and minimize exposure to them. Applications are due May 20, 2005. For details, visit <http://cfpub.epa.gov/care/>.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) General Matching Grant Program. NFWF's General Matching Grant Program awards grants utilizing federal funds at the ratio of \$2 raised in matching funds to every federal dollar awarded. Grants are awarded to projects that: address priority actions promoting fish and wildlife conservation and the habitats on which they depend; work proactively to involve other conservation and community interests; leverage NFWF-provided funding; and evaluate project outcomes. The next pre-proposal deadline is May 13, 2005. Application guidelines are available at www.nfwf.org.

NOAA Environmental Literacy Grants. NOAA's Office of Education & Sustainable Development is soliciting 1- to 3-year proposals for environmental literacy projects. Funding is available to encourage the development of partnerships and to support existing, or foster growth of new, environmental literacy projects. Applications are due May 12, 2005. For details, visit www.oesd.noaa.gov.

Nominations for Targeted Watershed Grants. EPA is calling for nominations for the third year of Targeted Watersheds grants. These grants provide assistance to state and local community groups to protect inland and coastal watersheds. Governors and tribal leaders are invited to submit nominations for projects that will promote and advance the successes of existing watershed work. Nominations are due on or before May 19, 2005. The Federal Register Notice with the Call for Nominations, and other information is available at www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/initiative/.

USDA Renewable Energy Grants. USDA has competitive grant funds now available to support investments in renewable energy systems and energy efficiency improvements by agricultural producers and rural small businesses. A wide range of technologies encompassing biomass; geothermal, hydrogen, solar and wind energy; and

energy efficiency improvements will be supported. Applications must be postmarked by June 13, 2005. The grant announcement can be found at www.usda.gov/2005/03/0107.xml.

Upcoming Events

Local/Regional

April 20-22, 2005. **2005 St. Croix EcoFair**, St. George Village Botanical Garden. Contact Anna Parrotta at SEA at 340-773-1989 for details.

May 11, 2005. **Safe & Healthy Home & Healthy Indoor Air Workshop**, UVI-CES Office St. John. Contact Dale Morton, UVI-CES, at 340-693-1086 or dmorton@uvi.edu for details.

May 18, 2005. **4th Annual VI Nonpoint Source Pollution Committee Annual Meeting**, St. Croix. For details, contact Marcia Taylor, UVI-VIMAS, at mtaylor@uvi.edu or 340-692-4046.

May 31, 2005. **Safe & Healthy Home & Healthy In-door Air Workshop**, UVI-REC Room 133 St. Croix. Contact Dale Morton, UVI-CES, at 340-693-1086 or dmorton@uvi.edu for details.

June 2, 2005. **Safe & Healthy Home & Healthy Indoor Air Workshop**, UVI Sports & Fitness Center, St. Thomas. Contact Dale Morton, UVI-CES, at 340-693-1086 or dmorton@uvi.edu for details.

June 2 - August 9, 2005. **Record-Keeping & Computer Literacy Workshop for Farmers**, UVI St. Thomas. Contact Dr. Louis Petersen, UVI-CES, at 340-693-1072 or lpeters@uvi.edu for details.

June 7, 2005. **Safe & Healthy Drinking Water Workshop**, UVI-CES Office St. John. For details, contact Dale Morton, UVI-CES, at 340-693-1086 or dmorton@uvi.edu.

June 9, 2005. **Safe & Healthy Drinking Water Workshop**, UVI-REC Room 133 St. Croix. For details, contact Dale Morton, UVI-CES, at 340-693-1086 or dmorton@uvi.edu.

June 14, 2005. **Safe & Healthy Drinking Water Workshop**, UVI Sports & Fitness Center, St. Thomas. Contact Dale Morton, UVI-CES, at 340-693-1086 or dmorton@uvi.edu for details.

June 30, 2005. **Pest Control Workshop**, Frenchman's Reef, St. Thomas. For details, contact Nevlin Williams, DPNR-DEP, at 340-773-1082 or williams.nevlin@vidpnr-dep.org.

July 1, 2005. **Pest Control Workshop**, Carambola, St. Croix. Contact Nevlin Williams, DPNR-DEP, at 340-773-1082 or williams.nevlin@vidpnr-dep.org for details.

July 3, 2005. **Mango Melee**, St. George Village Botanical Garden, St. Croix. Contact Lesley Hoffman at 340-692-2874 for details.

July 4-8, 2005. **II International Symposium on Coastal Ecosystem Management**, Havana, Cuba. Contact Roberto Pérez de los Reyes, Institute of Oceanography, at 537-271-6008 or marga@oceanio.inf.cu or visit www.medioambiente.cu.

July 11-15, 2005. **10th Caribbean Urban & Community Forestry Conference**, Caguas, PR. For details, visit www.uprm.edu/cucf2005.

October 16-21, 2005. **24th Annual International Submerged Lands Management Conference**, Westin Resort & Villas, St. John. Contact DPNR-CZM at 340-774-3320 for details.

November 28-30, 2005. **9th VI Nonpoint Source Pollution Conference**, Westin St. John Resort & Villas, USVI. For details, visit www.usvircd.org/NPSconf.html.

National

May 11-12, 2005. Muddy Water Blues: Erosion Control Expo, Nashville, TN. For details, visit www.ieca.org/Conference/Regional/MuddyWaters_Tennessee.asp.

May 17 & 18, 2005. *Getting in Step with Phase II: A Workshop for Stormwater Program Managers*, Memphis, TN. For details, visit www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater and click on "training".

June 15, 2005. *Getting in Step with Phase II: A Workshop for Stormwater Program Managers*, Oklahoma City, OK. For details, visit www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater and click on "training".

June 21-24, 2005. *98th Annual Air & Waste Management Association Conference*, Minneapolis, MN. For details, visit www.lgean.org/html/conferences_detail.cfm?id=805.

July 18-21, 2005. *StormCon 2005: 4th National Surface Water Quality Conference & Exposition*, Orlando, FL. Visit www.StormCon.com for details.

August 3 & 4, 2005. *Getting in Step with Phase II: A Workshop for Stormwater Program Managers*, Indianapolis, IN. For details, visit www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater and click on "training".

February 20-24, 2006. *International Erosion Control Association Conference: Environmental Connection 2006*, Long Beach, CA. For details, visit www.ieca.org.

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Nonpoint source (NPS) pollution results from rain water flowing over and through the ground, picking up pollutants and depositing them into guts, salt ponds, beaches, coastal waters, and ground water.

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To have your article, announcement or activity included in VI NPS Update, please mail, fax or email your submission to the Editor at: VI NPS Update, c/o VI Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc., 5030 Anchor Way, Suite 2, Gallows Bay, Christiansted, VI 00820, fax (340) 692-9607, email: vircd@usvircd.org.

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