

VINPS UPDATE

Nonpoint Source Pollution Committee Newsletter

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January 2003

NPS Committee Holds 2nd Annual Meeting on St. Croix

The University of the Virgin Islands' Cooperative Extension Service (UVI-CES) organized and coordinated the *Second Annual Meeting of the Virgin Islands Nonpoint Source Pollution Committee* January 24, 2003 at St. Croix's Tamarind Reef Hotel. The meeting brought together NPS Committee members from St. Croix and St. Thomas to facilitate interaction between the two districts, update Committee members on progress of the V.I. Department of Planning and Natural Resource's (DPNR) current Nonpoint Source Pollution Management (§319) grants and projects, and provide information on Committee activities to supervisory personnel and colleagues.



Committee Chair Marcia Taylor opens the V.I. Nonpoint Source Committee Second Annual Meeting.

The morning business meeting featured a presentation on the status of DPNR's §319 program, overviews of current nonpoint source management projects funded through DPNR-DEP 319 grants, a presentation on new DPNR Water Pollution Program initiatives, a discussion of up-coming Committee activities, and informational displays on current issues and projects. After the meeting, Committee members enjoyed a relaxed luncheon and then toured 319-funded projects at Salt River, Estate Little LaGrange (Lawaetz Museum), and the V.I. Department of Agriculture.

The Virgin Islands' Nonpoint Source (NPS) Pollution Control Committee was created in 1992 to provide oversight to DPNR's NPS Pollution Management Program, as stipulated in the 1989 V.I. NPS Management Plan. The Committee meets quarterly to discuss Committee business, review proposals and reports and to plan future projects. Past Committee projects include convening V.I. Nonpoint Source Pollution Conferences, and conducting monitoring, demonstration, BMP implementation and education and

outreach projects throughout the territory.



Committee members listen to Hans Lawaetz description of the Estate Little LaGrange Gut Restoration Project during the afternoon tour.

The Committee's Annual Meeting was funded by DPNR through a §319 grant awarded to UVI-CES to coordinate Committee activities. For more information on the V.I. Nonpoint Source Pollution Committee, contact Julie Wright, UVI-CES, at 340-693-1082 or jwright@uvi.edu, or Committee Chair Marcia Taylor, UVI-VIMAS, at 340-692-4046 or mtaylor@uvi.edu. For information on DPNR's Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Program, contact Diane Capehart at 340-773-1082.

UVI-CES Conducts Roadside Maintenance Training for St. Thomas DPW Contractors

In response to concerns voiced by government personnel and the general public, UVI-CES collaborated with the St. Thomas-St. John Anti-Litter and Beautification Commission (ALBC) and the DPNR Coastal Zone Management Program (CZM) to provide training to St.

Thomas roadside maintenance crew supervisors contracted by the V.I. Public Works Department (PWD) on November 7, 2002.

Over thirty supervisors from fifteen roadside maintenance companies attended the all-day training.



Eroded soil from a denuded roadside clogs Raphune Hill drainage swale.

During the morning session, UVI-CES' staff instructed attendees in site assessment, erosion control, native plant preservation, use of ground covers, correct pruning practices and safe equipment handling. Other presenters from DPNR-CZM and Paradigm Design spoke about the importance of V.I. environmental laws and the value of beautifying roadsides with good landscape design.

After lunch, participants were led on a tour of various areas of the island with roadside stops to observe evidence of desirable and undesirable roadside maintenance practices. Workshop participants were enthusiastic and requested individual site visits and future training sessions that would also include maintenance crews. After hearing about the initial success of the training workshop, Ms. Ruth Thomas, former Charlotte Amalie High School Principal and UVI Board of Trustees member, donated ground covers from her property for roadside beautification. These were then planted along the Litton's Fancy roadside to stabilize the slope (see photo below). Future training sessions are being planned for the spring for both islands. For more information on this project, contact ALBC Executive Director Cordell Jacobs at 340-777-3073 or albcstj@viaccess.net, or UVI-CES at 340-693-1080.



Ground covers donated by Ms. Ruth Thomas planted along Litton's Fancy roadside.

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Eastern Caribbean Center Studies Sediment and Reefs in the Coral Bay APC

The health of the Virgin Islands' economy depends to a large extent on maintaining healthy coastal waters and coral reefs, features essential for maintaining productive fisheries and tourism activities. However, human activities in upland areas are adversely affecting marine resources. Unpaved roads and land clearing for residential and commercial building construction can cause high erosion and sedimentation rates. Runoff, carrying sediment, partially-treated sewage and other toxins, reduces marine water quality, poisons reefs, harms human health, and degrades the coastal environment.



Aerial view of Coral Bay watershed, St. John.

Coral Bay watershed, St. John, is an Area of Particular Concern and, at 3003 acres, is one of the largest watersheds in the territory. It also has the fastest growth rate and growth potential of any area in the Virgin Islands. Nonpoint source pollution resulting from stormwater runoff is a common problem in Coral Bay and throughout the Virgin Islands. The Coral Bay watershed is partially developed with both paved and unpaved roads that contribute large sediment loads to Coral Harbor. This sediment eventually circulates to the adjacent marine environments of Hurricane Hole, Lagoon Point and the new National Monument areas – areas that are rich in diversity of marine habitat types and fringing wetland systems. In fact, Hurricane Hole supports the longest fringing mangrove system in the Territory.

A new study, planned and managed by the UVI Conservation Data Center (CDC) and funded by a \$21,288 Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Grant from DPNR, is investigating long term sediment deposition rates, coral reef conditions, water quality, and fish diversity in selected locations in Coral Harbor and Coral Bay. Coral reefs in the area, fish populations and water quality data will be analyzed using information collected by UVI-CDC, VINP, USGS and NOAA. The goal of the project is to understand sediment deposition patterns in Coral Bay and the impact on reefs and other resources. The data collected will establish baseline conditions for the bay and be compared to other

developed and undeveloped bays around the islands as a means of understanding the broad influence of this form of pollution. The results will then be presented to Coral Bay residents as a public service to help initiate best management practices (BMPs) leading toward a healthier ecosystem.

During early June 2002, UVI-CDC staff in partnership with marine geologists from Eckerd College Galbraith Marine Lab in Florida, collected 12 sediment cores and numerous surface sediment samples from Coral Harbor and the adjacent waters. These cores, from 2-3 meters long, chart the history of sediment deposition in the bay over the past 5,000 or more years. They tell the story of where the sediment is being deposited, how much is deposited and when the deposition occurred. In some cases, cores were driven right into the ancient mangrove shoreline and in several other cases, cores contained pockets of human fecal matter, exposing a growing problem in our coastal areas.

The CDC is a unit within the Eastern Caribbean Center at the University of the Virgin Islands, dedicated to providing “information today for tomorrow’s resources.” For more information on this project, contact Dr. Barry Devine, CDC Chief Scientist, at 340-693-1038 or bdevine@uvi.edu.

Sign-up Now for March Sediment & Erosion Control Plan Development Training

UVI-CES, DPNR, and VI RC&D are sponsoring training workshops to provide regulators, inspectors, engineers, architects, contractors and other interested parties with practical information on using the *2002 Revised Environmental Protection Handbook* to develop and review erosion, sediment & stormwater control plans for construction sites (Comprehensive Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans). The *Reviewing Sediment and Erosion Control Plans for Effectiveness Training Workshop* will be held Tuesday, March 4, 2003 in the Research & Education Center Room 133 on the UVI St. Croix campus and Thursday, March 6, 2003 at the SBDC Training Room in Nisky Center on St. Thomas. At all times, instruction for inspectors shall be presented on what to observe and recommended solutions of problems encountered.

The *Developing Effective Sediment and Erosion Control Plans Training Workshop* will be held Tuesday, March 18, 2003 in the Research & Education Center Room 133 on the UVI St. Croix campus and Thursday, March 20, 2003 at the SBDC Training Room in Nisky Center on St. Thomas. These workshops will provide training in principles of erosion and sediment control, use of effective methods to control erosion and remove sediment from stormwater, protecting small

drainage channels, and developing an effective erosion and sediment control plan. In addition, attendees will participate in a class project to develop a sediment and erosion control plan for a hypothetical development.

The instructor for the *Developing Effective Sediment and Erosion Control Plans Training Workshop* is Dr. Jerald Fifield, Certified Professional Erosion & Sediment Control Specialist (CPESC). Dr. Fifield is a practicing hydrologist who designs and implements sediment and erosion control plans daily. He trains various federal, state and local agency personnel, as well as private individuals and organizations, across the country and has authored numerous research papers and erosion control manuals.

Reserve your spot soon, because each session is limited to 35 participants. Those attending are expected to have knowledge of sediment & erosion control BMPs, either through experience or by taking a previous class. Also, attendees should bring a calculator and be prepared to participate in classroom discussions and activities.

The cost for the *Comprehensive Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan Development Training Workshop* is \$50. Continuing education credits (CEUs) are available for architects and engineers participating in this workshop. For further information or to register for the *Developing Effective Sediment and Erosion Control Plans Training Workshop*, please contact Julie Wright, UVI-CES, at 340-693-1082 or jwright@uvi.edu, or Faye Williams, V.I. RC&D Council, Inc., at 340-692-9632 or Faye.Williams@vichristia.fsc.usda.gov.

V.I. Agriculture: Collaborate, Cultivate & Celebrate!

That's the theme of the 32nd annual St. Croix Agriculture and Food Fair, to be held Saturday through Monday, February 15-17, 2003, at the VI Department of Agriculture's Fair grounds. Food & drinks, fruits, vegetables, plants and arts & crafts will all be on sale. There will also be educational displays, livestock exhibits, pony rides, and live entertainment. Admission is \$2.00 for children under 12, \$3.00 for seniors and \$5.00 for everyone else. For details, call the V.I. Agriculture Department at 340-778-0998 or UVI-CES at 340-692-4060.

Web Resources



EPA's *Draft Storm Water Construction General Permit* and *Draft General Permit Factsheet* are now available for public comment at cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/const.cfm#draft. EPA has developed the new construction general permit to regulate both large and small, Phase I and Phase II, construction activities. The draft general permit is open for comment until February 3, 2003.

The Marine Conservation Biology Institute announces a comprehensive directory containing federal funding opportunities for marine conservation biology research to help guide researchers in their funding search. For details visit MCBi's website at www.mcbi.org and click on "Sources of federal funding for marine conservation biology research."

EPA has announced the availability of **Nutrient Criteria Technical Guidance Manual: Estuarine and Coastal Waters**. Download the document from www.epa.gov/OST/standards/nutrient.html.

EPA has announced the availability of an updated national recommended water quality criteria compilation (document #EPA-822-R-02-047). The compilation is a summary table containing EPA's water quality criteria for approximately 150 pollutants, and is available for review or to download at www.epa.gov/waterscience/pc/revcom.pdf.

The Northeast-Midwest Institute has published **Smart Growth at the Frontier: Strategies and Resources for Rural Communities**. According to the report, the smart growth approach to land use has been widely accepted and used by suburban and urban communities, but it has not yet been applied to rural areas. For more information, visit www.nemw.org/RuralSmartGrowth.pdf.

EPA has published a series of fact sheets on best management practices (BMPs) for activities that may impact the sources of drinking water. Each bulletin discusses how particular activities can be managed in such a way as to prevent drinking water contamination. For a copy of the document, visit www.epa.gov/ogwdw/protect/swpbull.html.

The Institute for Environmental Negotiation at the University of Virginia recently produced **A Stream Corridor Protection Strategy for Local Governments**, a guide to help local government staff and others formulate a protection strategy for their stream(s). While targeted to communities within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, the guide is relevant to all local government planners, engineers, planning commissioners, boards of supervisors and city and town councilors. Download the guide from www.virginia.edu/ien/stream%20guide_final.pdf%202.

The International City/County Management Association has formally launched www.BrownfieldSource.org. The website provides instant access to news, events, research reports, and other materials related to brownfields revitalization, focusing on the latest in community, economic, environmental, governmental, innovative, legal, and redevelopment issues. ICMA has also released **Growing Greener: Revitalizing Brownfields into Greenspace**. The report provides information about different types of greenspaces, examples of success-

ful projects from a variety of communities, and strategies for creative financing, leveraging resources, and open and active communications to address community issues. The report can be ordered from <http://bookstore.icma.org>.

Mark your calendars for the upcoming **4th annual Dive In To Earth Day!** All are invited to take part in this international celebration that helps protect the planet's oceans and coral reefs. Dive In is a great way for anyone to organize or participate in a coral reef and marine conservation activity during the week of Earth Day (April 15-22, 2003). It's inexpensive, engages your local community, and we provide lots of support materials to make it easy for you to get involved! Visit www.coral.org/divein/ for details.

A new federal website, www.science.gov, has been launched. The goal of this site is to make scientific information gathered by different agencies more accessible to the public. The site is an offshoot of www.Firstgov.gov, and is useful because it houses information under one roof from the multiple agencies that perform scientific research.

The National Library of Medicine invites you to preview a new web site, **Tox Town**, at <http://toxstown.nlm.nih.gov/>. Tox Town is designed to give information on: everyday locations where you might find toxic chemicals, non-technical descriptions of chemicals, links to selected, authoritative chemical information on the Internet, how the environment can impact human health, Internet resources on environmental health topics.

Available Grants



Boat U.S. Foundation Clean Water Grants. Grants up to \$2,000 are available to nonprofit groups with projects that reach boaters about clean water and pollution prevention. These grants are excellent ways for small nonprofit groups to make a positive impact on the local lakes, rivers, and coastal waters they know best. The grant deadline is February 1, 2003. Visit www.boatus.com/cleanwater/grants for details.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is soliciting proposals for projects that build public-private partnerships to reduce and prevent degradation of coral reefs and associated reef habitats. Projects may address causes of coral reef degradation wherever they occur, from inland areas to coastal watersheds to the reefs and surrounding marine environment. Grant awards will be between \$10,000 and \$50,000 with partner matching funds required. The proposal submission deadline is January 31, 2003. For details, visit www.nfwf.org/programs/coralreef.htm.

Community Toolbox for Children's Environmental Health provides funding and technical assistance for capacity building to groups in high risk

communities around the country. Applications for funding for 2003-04 are now available. First round applications are due on February 28, 2003. The complete guidelines and applications are also available at www.communitytoolbox.org.

EPA Environmental Education Grants Fiscal Year 2003. EPA is soliciting grant proposals from education institutions, environmental and educational public agencies, and not-for-profit organizations to support environmental education projects that design, demonstrate, or disseminate environmental education practices, methods, or techniques, including assessing environmental and ecological conditions or specific environmental issues or problems. The submission deadline is February 14, 2003. Visit www.epa.gov/enviroed/pdf/02_31901.pdf for the Federal Register notice.

The National Association of Counties are accepting applications for the **2003 Five Star Restoration Challenge Grants**. The grant program awards and aids community-led initiatives that focus on wetland and watershed restoration. Project sites can be public land, such as parks, streams, and school campuses, or private land, such as corporate facilities. Applications are due March 3, 2003. For details, visit www.naco.org/programs/environ/water/grants.cfm.

The NOAA Restoration Center announces funding available in 2003 to implement grass roots habitat restoration projects that will benefit living marine resources, including anadromous fish, under the NOAA Community-based Restoration Program (CRP). A copy of the Notice and all the necessary standard NOAA grants application forms, as well as supplemental information specifically tailored to the CRP are available on the NOAA Restoration Center webpage at: www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration. Applications must be postmarked by March 3, 2003.

Smart Growth America has released **Measuring Sprawl and its Impact: The Character & Consequences of Metropolitan Expansion**. According to the report, metropolitan areas that sprawl more have higher traffic fatality rates, more traffic, and poorer air quality than less sprawling areas. For details, visit www.smartgrowthamerica.com/sprawlindex/sprawlindex.html.

Upcoming Events

Local/Regional

February 15-17, 2003. **St. Croix Agri-Fest**, St. Croix, VI. Contact Stafford Crossman, UVI-CES, at 340-692-4054 or scrossm@uvi.edu for details.

February 20, 2003. **Brownfields Development in the Virgin Islands Workshop**, Holiday Inn Windward Passage, St. Thomas. Contact Gerard F. McKenna, New Jersey Institute of Technology, at 973-596-5882 or mckennag@njit.edu.

February 28, 2003. **Pond Liner Maintenance Workshop**,

UVI/Bordeaux Pond, St. Thomas. Contact Dr. Louis Petersen, UVI-CES, at 340-693-1071 or lpeters@uvi.edu.

March 4 & 6, 2003. *Reviewing Sediment and Erosion Control Plans for Effectiveness Training Workshop*, St. Croix and St. Thomas, respectively. For details contact Julie Wright, UVI-CES, at 340-693-1082 or Bill Rohring, DPNR-CZM, at 340-774-3320 or bill.rohring@noaa.gov.

March 9, 2003. *Container Gardening Workshop*, St. Thomas. Contact Carlos Robles, UVI-CES, at 340-693-1083 or crobles@uvi.edu for details.

March 18 & 20, 2003. *V.I. Agriculture Forum*, St. Croix & St. Thomas, respectively. Contact Dr. Louis Petersen, UVI-CES, at 340-693-1071 or lpeters@uvi.edu for details.

March 18 & 20, 2003. *Developing an Effective Sediment and Erosion Control Plan Training Workshop*, St. Croix & St. Thomas, respectively. For details, contact Julie Wright, UVI-CES, at jwright@uvi.edu or 340-693-1082 or Faye Williams, VI RC&D, at 340-692-9632 or faye.williams@vichristia.fsc.usda.gov.

March 25-27, 2003. *Safe & Healthy Drinking Water Workshops*, St. Croix, St. Thomas & St. John, respectively. Contact Dale Morton, UVI-CES, at 340-693-1086 or dmorton@uvi.edu for details.

April 9, 2003. *Natural History of Salt River*, UVI-CES St. Croix. Contact Olasee Davis, UVI Research & Extension Center Room 133, at 340-692-4053 or odavis@uvi.edu for details.

April 19, 20 & 23, 2003. *Cucumber Production Workshop*, St. John, St. Thomas & St. Croix, respectively. Contact Stafford Crossman, UVI-CES, at 340-692-4054 or scrossm@uvi.edu for details.

National

February 17-20, 2003. *Urban Storm Water: Enhancing Programs at the Local Level*, Chicago, IL. Contact Bob Kirschner at bkirschn@chicagobotanic.org for details.

February 24-28, 2003. *International Erosion Control Association 34th Conference & Expo*, Las Vegas, NV. Visit www.icaa.org for details.

April 7-11, 2003. *Bureau of Reclamation International Workshop on Integrated Water Resource Management*, Denver, CO. For details, visit www.usbr.gov/international/trn_integrated.htm.

April 13-16, 2003. *Inaugural National Conference on Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration*, Baltimore, MD. Visit www.estuaries.org for details.

June 2 - 4, 2003. *National Source Water Protection Conference*, Washington, D.C. For details, visit www.epa.gov/safewater/protect/swpconf.html.

June 23-25, 2003. *Fourth National Workshop on Constructed Wetlands/BMPs for Nutrient Reduction and Coastal Water Protection*, Wilmington, NC. Visit www.cals.ncsu.edu/waste_mgt/workshop.htm for details.

June 29-July 2, 2003. "Watershed Management for Water Supply Systems," New York, NY. Call for papers due November 15, 2002. For details, visit www.awra.org/meetings/NewYork2003/index2.html.

July 26-30, 2003. *Soil and Water Conservation Society 2003 Annual Conference*, Spokane, WA. Visit www.swcs.org for details.

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 Julie Wright, UVI Cooperative Extension Service, #2 John Brewers Bay, St. Thomas, VI 00802-9990, fax (340) 693-1085, email: jwright@uvi.edu.

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