

NPS Committee Annual Meeting



NPS Committee members view severely eroded gut in Catherine's Rest, St. Croix, during the field trip for their Annual Meeting.

On May 18, 2005, the Virgin Islands Nonpoint Source Pollution Committee (VINPS Committee) held its annual meeting at the Cormorant Beach Resort. The VINPS Committee is an advisory committee for DPNR's nonpoint source pollution management and prevention programs. The morning session was led by Committee Chair Marcia Taylor, and consisted of thirteen nonpoint source pollution management project (section 319) updates. Additionally, DPNR staff reported on the progress of the Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Division's NPS program, the Division of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) program, and DEP's changes in permitting in relation to the TMDL program.

The business portion of the meeting was followed by lunch and visits to three field sites. The first site was a mass-wasted (landslide damaged) gut at the base of Southgate Watershed proposed for gut restoration. This was followed by a visit to Catherine's Rest where another severely eroded gut is threatening a public road and private home. The last site visited was the Bethlehem Old Works Emergency Watershed Protection project installed by USDA-NRCS in partnership with VI RC&D, DPNR and the VI Department of Agriculture.

The Committee's annual meeting was coordinated by the V.I. Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc. (VI RC&D), and was made possible by a 319 grant from DPNR to VI RC&D. For more information on the NPS Committee, contact Committee Chair Marcia Taylor, at (340) 692-4046 or mtaylor@uvi.edu.

St. Croix Environmental Information Now Being Collected

Are you concerned about environmental issues on St. Croix? Do you want information, but don't know where to look?

VI RC&D, the St. Croix Environmental Association (SEA), and the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) are collaborating to create the *St. Croix Environmental Information Repository* – an Internet database and physical library of environmental information specific to St. Croix that will be housed on the UVI St. Croix campus.

The *St. Croix Environmental Information Repository* project partners are working to identify environmental concerns in the St. Croix community and to improve the public's access to environmental information through the creation of this repository and database. The project is being conducted through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA), Region 2 offices, which identified this need in the community.

Project partners are currently collecting information from government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, community groups, businesses and individuals. Community members are also being surveyed as to their specific needs and interests. Anyone who receives a survey is encouraged to please complete and return the survey to SEA in order to assist it in creating a dynamic library of information for the St. Croix community. For more information about the project, contact the VI RC&D offices at (340) 692-9632 x.5 or vircd@usvircd.org, SEA's Sue Ladwig at (340) 773-1989, or Olasee Davis, UVI-CES, at (340) 692-4053 or odavis@uvi.edu. You can also leave a message at the Repository at (340) 692-4059 or stxenviroinfo@yahoo.com.

9th VI NPS Conference Call for Papers Deadline Approaching Fast!

The VI Nonpoint Source (NPS) Pollution Conference Planning Committee is still seeking 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 Committee is seeking abstracts that focus on implementing 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, the **Call for Presentations** form, details on conference and hotel registration, and hotel and area amenities can be found at www.usvircd.org/NPSconf.html. The submission deadline for presentation abstracts and exhibit applications is **August 1, 2005**. 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.

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CZM Hosts Environmental Enforcement Training

The DPNR Coastal Zone Management Division (CZM) hosted four days of environmental enforcement training workshops from May 23-26, 2005. The workshops were coordinated among CZM, the Department of Justice, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) under the auspices of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force. Numerous federal agencies presented information at the workshop, including: Department of Justice, Environmental Protection Agency, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, United States Coast Guard, Department of Interior – Fish and Wildlife Service, The National Park Service (St. Croix and St. John), and the U.S. Attorney's Office (St. Croix and St. Thomas).

Approximately 90 staff members from the Divisions of Permits, Environmental Enforcement, Environmental Protection, Coastal Zone Management, and Fish & Wildlife attended the workshops. A representative from the Virgin Islands Office of the Attorney General also participated in the St. Thomas workshop.

The Environmental Enforcement Workshops were held to introduce federal environmental laws, agencies, enforcement practices and other relevant information to the local enforcement community in order to strengthen and improve coordination and enforcement of environmental laws and statutes. The objectives of the workshops were to:

- Provide information concerning federal laws that may not be readily available to participants.
- Provide contacts between territorial and federal enforcement officials.
- Provide territorial officials with an opportunity to interact with each other and begin developing procedures to address issues and cases that may cross jurisdictional lines.

Presenters provided information about the US Coral Reef Task Force, the Clean Water Act, the Oil Pollution Act, Vessel Facility Pollution Prevention Regulations, the Endangered Species Act, the Magnuson Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Lacey Act, How to Conduct a Successful Investigation and Prepare a Report, Civil Settlements, and Supplemental Environmental Projects.

The Division of Coastal Zone Management realizes that while environmental laws may be primarily the responsibility of one division,

one investigation may uncover violations that could affect more than one division within DPNR. CZM is hopeful that this training will allow departmental inspectors to take the necessary actions to address environmental violations noticed during routine inspections.

EPA Awards Environmental Achievers in the USVI

In celebration of the 35th anniversary of Earth Day, the U.S. EPA honored an individual and a non-profit group for their outstanding efforts to protect the environment in the Virgin Islands. Deputy Regional Administrator George Pavlou presented EPA's Environmental Quality Awards at a ceremony in EPA's offices in Manhattan. *"These winners are environmental trail blazers who make our world a better place,"* said Deputy Regional Administrator Pavlou. *"By being leaders and making local changes, the award recipients demonstrate that we can all have a positive impact on the health of our nation's air, land and water."*

Individual Citizen Awardee: Nicholas Drayton. Nicholas Drayton is Caribbean Ecosystems Manager for The Ocean Conservancy in the U.S. Virgin Islands. He is a lifelong advocate for the environment and ocean resources. Nick has been instrumental in planning and developing the Virgin Islands Rapid Ecological Assessment, an extensive study that provides agencies and individuals with data to better understand the extent of ocean and land resources. He completed a spawning aggregation study to provide management recommendations and information for the public. Recently, he initiated the publication, *State of the Coral Reefs of the Virgin Islands*, to inform the VI government, elected officials and decision-makers about these natural resources and the threats they face.

Non-Profit Organization, Environmental or Community Group Awardee: The Bio-diesel Project Group. The Biodiesel Project Group of the St. Croix Vocational Diesel Technology Program was the outgrowth of a lesson plan on diesel fuel systems. Students became interested in alternative fuels and their effect on the environment, operation of the equipment, and fuel mileage. Their instructor encouraged a pilot program that included researching less-polluting bio-fuels, their production and effects. This project led to a second in which the students created a biodiesel fuel. Their project gained recognition locally and nationally, and the students continued the project with the design and construction of a biodiesel processor that can produce 10 gallons of biodiesel fuel in one cycle. The fuel was tested in several

vehicles, and the byproduct was also used to make hand soap.

EPA selects Environmental Quality Award winners from non-profit, environmental and community groups, individual citizens, educators, business organizations, and members of the news media. The honor is given to those individuals or organizations that have made significant contributions to improving the environment in EPA Region 2, which covers New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and seven federally-recognized Indian Nations. The Agency receives nominations for the awards from both inside and outside EPA. For more information about the competition, visit www.epa.gov/region02.

USDA Farm Service Agency Accepting County Committee Nominations from St. John

Virgin Islands County Executive Director Michelle Thurland-Martinez announced the USDA will be accepting nomination forms from June 15 - August 1, 2005, for eligible St. Johnian candidates to serve on the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committee.

"I encourage local St. John producers to become a member of their local FSA County Committee and make a difference," said Thurland-Martinez. *"FSA County Committees have an important role in the decision-making process for commodity price support loans and payments, conservation and disaster programs, and other important agricultural issues in their farming community."*

Almost anyone participating or cooperating in a local FSA program, and of legal voting age, may be a candidate. Individuals may nominate themselves or others. People uncertain of their eligibility to vote in the FSA County Committee election should contact the St. Croix FSA office. Affirmation of eligibility to vote must be determined in order for a vote to count in an election.

All nomination forms must be received in the County FSA Office or be post-marked by August 1, 2005. Voting takes place from November 4 to December 5, 2005. For details on the County Committee elections, including the nomination form, contact the St. Croix FSA County Office at the USDA Service Center in Gallows Bay, (340) 773-9146, or visit www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/publications/elections/default.asp.

EPA Funding Protects Beach-Goers in the U.S. Virgin Islands

As Americans plan their summer vacations, EPA is helping the U.S. Virgin Islands with its beach monitoring and public notification programs. EPA granted almost \$10 million nationally to assist in monitoring for pathogens in recreational waters. The U.S. Virgin Islands is slated to receive more than \$303,000, and has received nearly \$960,000 since the program began in 2001.

"Beaches play a central role in recreation and tourism in the U.S. Virgin Islands," said Kathy Callahan, Acting EPA Regional Administrator. "This grant will help enhance the territory's monitoring program so that the public and visitors can continue to enjoy trips to the U.S. Virgin Island's beaches with confidence."

Congress passed the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act (BEACH Act) in October 2000 to make monitoring programs more consistent nationwide, improve beach water quality testing, and help beach managers better inform the public about water quality problems. The Act authorizes EPA to award grants to help eligible states, tribes, and territories develop and implement beach water quality monitoring and notification programs.

EPA's Clean Beaches Plan helps state, commonwealth, territory, tribal, and local beach managers strengthen their programs. This plan describes how EPA will achieve two major goals: promote recreational water quality programs nationwide and create scientific improvements that support timely recreational water monitoring and reporting. The plan also recognizes that beach managers need tools that allow for local and regional differences in pollution sources and climate. For information about beach water quality, local protection programs and other beach-related activities, visit www.epa.gov/waterscience/beaches.

Web Resources



EPA Debuts New Water Webpage for Kids. A special Kids Page is making a debut on the EPA Office of Water's website. The star of the site is a new character called "Thirstin." The site contains games, activities and narrated/animated classroom experiments. Some of the new activities include an animated water cycle, word scramble, word search, water trivia and "Thirstin's Wacky Water Adventure." Teachers and students can work on-line or download information and activities from

www.epa.gov/safewater/kids/index.html. For details, contact Charlene Shaw at 202-564-4635 or Charlene.Shaw@epa.gov.

EPA Offers National Water Program Guidance Online. The National Water Program Guidance for FY '06 is now available on the Office of Water's website at www.epa.gov/water/waterplan. The Guidance outlines the program's progress toward the environmental and public health goals described in the U.S. EPA's *Strategic Plan* and provides direction for continued advancement. It also describes the work being done by EPA, states, tribes and others to assure that the nation's waters are clean and safe. The Guidance includes measures of program activities supporting each of the key environmental goals.

EPA Training Module Connects Smart Growth and Water Resource Protection. EPA's Watershed Academy Web has a new online training module, "Growth and Water Resources." The module illustrates how historic trends in growth patterns and activities on land have become the most significant challenge for preserving water quality and meeting future water resource goals. The module focuses on the connections between smart growth approaches and Clean Water Act programs. It also includes tools, resources, and case studies illustrating how land use decisions made at the local and state levels can help protect and restore water resources by using innovative approaches that meet economic, environmental and social goals. This training module is available online at www.epa.gov/watertrain/smartgrowth/.

Smart Growth Checklist. New Westminster, British Columbia, has developed a Smart Growth Checklist to assist landowners or developers and their consultants to create the most sustainable project possible. The checklist is applied to any project seeking a zoning amendment or development permit. Developed by city staff in consultation with local architects and developers, the checklist suggests ways to include smart growth ideas and reach stated community goals. Available online as a PDF document at <http://icma.org/upload/library/2005-03/{78ED8983-0A6F-4517-82C9-B5A3F6CC0C1E}.pdf>.

Sustainable Communities Web Resource. The Center for Sustainable Communities, part of the National Association of Counties, provides a forum for county officials to work with other government leaders, the private sector, and communities to develop policies and programs that lead to economic enhancement, environmental stewardship and social well being, the three pillars of sustainable communities. The Center promotes community leadership initiatives, facilitates multi-jurisdictional and public-private partnerships, provides technical assistance and training, and conducts community policy and educational forums. The Website

includes resources and publications that help local government officials solve their communities' problems. For details, visit www.naco.org/sustainable.

NACD Launches Urban and Community Conservation Web Page. Conservation districts now have a new urban and community conservation resource, thanks to the vision and efforts of NACD's Urban, Community and Coastal Resources Committee. A new urban and community conservation webpage has been launched on the NACD website to give conservation districts and their partners a place to gather information and exchange ideas about their urban and community conservation activities. For details, visit www.urban.nacdnet.org.

Free Urban Forestry Webcast CD-ROM Available from ICMA. LGEAN, in cooperation with American Forests, hosted a webcast in May 2004 called "Seeing Green with Trees: The Economic and Environmental Benefits of Urban Forests." The webcast demonstrated how trees have been used by local governments to meet environmental regulatory requirements, save money, and improve community quality of life. A free multimedia CD-ROM recording of the webcast is now available. Visit www.lgean.org/html/whatsnew.cfm?id=853 for details.

Available Grants



EPA Offers Smart Growth Implementation Assistance. The Development, Community and Environment Division in U.S. EPA's Office of Policy, Economics & Innovation is seeking applications from communities wishing to target development to meet environmental and other community goals. For communities that are selected, a team of multidisciplinary experts will work with local leaders to provide technical assistance to help with either policy analysis (e.g., reviewing state and local codes, school siting guidelines, transportation policies, etc.) or public participatory processes (visioning, alternatives and build-out analysis, etc.). Visit www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/sg_implementation.htm for details and application materials.

Upcoming Events

Local

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

July 4, 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/cucfc2005.

July 19-21, 2005. *USDA-FSA Town Meetings*, Legislative Conference Room, St. John; UVI Sports & Fitness Center St. Thomas; & UVI REC 133 St. Croix, respectively. For details, contact Michelle Thurland-Martinez at 340-773-9146.

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.

July 17-21, 2005. *Coastal Zone '05 Conference: "Balancing on the Edge"*, New Orleans, LA. For details, visit www.csc.noaa.gov/cz.

July 27-30, 2005. *TrailLink 2005, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's International Trails and Greenways Conference*, Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN. Visit www.railtrails.org/trailink2005/ for details.

July 30 - August 4, 2005. *2005 Annual Soil and Water Conservation Society Conference: Environmental Management*, Rochester, NY. Visit www.swcs.org/en/international_conference 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."

October 17-20, 2005. *NPS/Stormwater Outreach and Education Conference*, Chicago, IL. For details, visit www.epa.gov/npdes/training.

October 29 - November 2, 2005. *WEFTEC 05: Water Environment Federation's 78th Annual Technical Exhibition & Conference*, Washington, DC. For details, visit www.weftec.org.

November 17-18, 2005. *National Conference on Urban Ecosystems*, Charlotte, NC. For details, visit www.americanforests.org/conference.

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

National

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

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.

VI NPS Update is a quarterly newsletter published by the Virgin Islands Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc. for the University of the Virgin Islands Cooperative Extension Service, Kwame Garcia, State Director, and produced by the Virgin Islands Nonpoint Source Pollution Committee to inform the public about projects funded by U.S. EPA Nonpoint Source Pollution Management (§319) grants and other NPS pollution control/prevention projects in the territory, and to provide information and material regarding the control/prevention of NPS pollution. No endorsement of products or firms is intended, nor is criticism implied of those not mentioned. Issued by the Virgin Islands Cooperative Extension Service and the U.S. Department of Agriculture in furtherance of the acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914. Extension programs and policies are consistent with federal and state laws and regulations on non-discrimination regarding race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability or gender preference. *Funding for VI NPS Update provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Program through the Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Dean C. Plaskett, Esq., Commissioner.*

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