

VI NPS UPDATE

Nonpoint Source Pollution Committee Newsletter

Vol. 4, No. 3

October 2001

UVI-CES Environmental Education Project Gets Big Boost From EPA

Demonstrating its continuing commitment to educating the public about the importance of a clean environment, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has awarded \$14,130 to fund an environmental education project developed by the University of the Virgin Islands Cooperative Extension Service (UVI-CES). Each year, EPA helps fund projects that foster an understanding and respect for the environment.

"By getting involved in hands-on projects like these, students of all ages will learn the lesson that we didn't really grasp just a few generations ago - that we are inextricably connected to and dependent upon the environment," said William J. Muszynski, Acting EPA Regional Administrator.

The **V.I. Home & Farm Water Quality Assessment Education and Outreach** project expands on UVI-CES' popular **VI*A*Syst** (Virgin Islands Home & Farm Water Quality Assessment) Program. Using materials tailored to the unique conditions in the Virgin Islands, VI*A*Syst educates residents about water quality, how to detect contaminants in drinking water, and the practices that can harm the Territory's important marine and terrestrial ecosystems. Through educational materials, workshops and site visits, program participants are encouraged to adopt practices in and around the home and farm that protect their health and the environment. The program, promoted by a multi-media campaign, also provides residents, with low-cost water test kits and training in their use.

EPA's grant program supports environmental education projects that enhance the public's awareness, knowledge, and skills, enabling them to make informed decisions that affect environmental quality. Information on EPA's solicitation notice for this year's grant cycle can be found in the "Available Grants" section of this newsletter on page 3. For details on the VI*A*Syst program or to schedule a site visit, contact Julie Wright or Dale Morton, UVI-CES, at (340) 693-1080 or

jwright@uvi.edu or dmorton@uvi.edu, or visit the VI*A*Syst website at <http://rps.uvi.edu/CES/viasyst.htm>.

DPNR-CZM Receives Award of Excellence

Congratulations go out to the Department of Planning and Natural Resources Division of Coastal Zone Management (DPNR-CZM) for receiving the Excellence in Local Government award in the 2001 Walter B. Jones Memorial and NOAA Excellence Awards in Coastal and Ocean Resource Management. This prestigious award is given to *"local governments that have inspired positive change in the field of coastal management by developing or implementing principles embodied by the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act."*

According to Charles N. Ehler, NOAA's Acting Director, DPNR-CZM is being recognized for its efforts to develop a marine park management plan. As part of its program to develop a Territorial Marine Park, DPNR-CZM has organized a Marine Park Committee, including representatives from the University of the Virgin Islands, The Nature Conservancy, the Island Resources Foundation and stakeholders in the community, to develop a system plan. DPNR-CZM has also hired researchers to monitor and study coral reefs around the island of St. Croix. Recently, DPNR-CZM successfully obtained federal funding to continue coral reef research and to implement the marine park management plan on St. Croix. NOAA will issue five awards in the "Excellence in Local Government" category. The awards ceremony was held October 3, 2001, in Washington, D.C.

VIMAS Tackling Marine Debris on St. Croix

The St. Croix office of the V.I. Marine Advisory Service (VIMAS, a UVI Research & Public Service component) recently celebrated its five-year anniversary of participating in the National Marine Debris Monitoring Program (NMDMP). At a luncheon held June 16th on St. Croix, The Ocean Conservancy's (formerly the Center for Marine Conserva-



Coordinators Paige Rothenberger and Marcia Taylor, The Ocean Conservancy Program Manager Charlie Barr (left), and volunteers, at a recognition luncheon for the St. Croix NMDMP program.

tion) Program Manager Charlie Barr presented St. Croix Survey Directors Marcia Taylor and Paige Rothenberger special awards for their efforts in this project.

The NMDMP is funded by the U.S. EPA through The Ocean Conservancy. The program seeks to answer questions about sources and trends of marine debris nationwide. *"With the help of many volunteers, we have been doing monthly beach cleanups and surveys at two St. Croix beaches for five years now. Our program is one of the longest running programs in the country,"* explains Marcia Taylor, the St. Croix Marine Advisor.

The other marine debris program that VIMAS-St. Croix spearheads is the annual Coastweeks event. For the last several years, VIMAS-St. Croix has been coordinating Coastweeks activities on St. Croix. Coastweeks is a three-week period in September and October during which youth groups and community organizations work to clean beaches and collect data on the types of marine debris found. The data are compiled, analyzed, and tracked year by year, revealing patterns in marine debris. The results are used to

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influence public policy on waste management and encourage communities to improve waste handling practices.

"This year we had a very good response to Coastweeks activities on St. Croix. Seventeen groups representing over 650 volunteers are scheduled to participate from September 15th to October 6th. Many of these are school groups. For these groups, VIMAS does a presentation before the cleanup, and after the cleanup the classes compile and analyze the data" explains Marcia Taylor, Coastweeks Coordinator for St. Croix.

Beach cleanups help document the detrimental impacts of marine debris, as well as the enormity of the problems associated with water pollution. Such information is a powerful, compelling tool for changing minds, changing behaviors that produce debris, and changing for the better the water quality around our islands. For more information on the St. Croix marine debris program, contact Marcia Taylor, UVI-VIMAS, at (340) 692-4046 or mtaylor@uvi.edu.

ESRI Donates Software to UVI-CDC

The Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), the world's leader in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software, recently donated copies of BusinessMAP PRO and ArcView® 8, worth over \$5,000.00, to the Conservation Data Center (CDC) at UVI's Eastern Caribbean Center. BusinessMAP PRO is a mapping application that transforms information from databases, contact managers, spreadsheets, and electronic phone books to color-filled maps. ArcView® 8 is ESRI's newest desktop mapping software, which integrates several applications that were previously separate.

The CDC compiles, analyzes, and disseminates natural resource data. The data collected are linked to a GIS utilizing ESRI's ArcView and ArcInfo software. The CDC's GIS lab provides sophisticated analysis as well as accurate and reliable map products for many areas of interest in the territory. Data Manager, Stevie Henry, says that "the software will permit the CDC to continue expanding the use of GIS as a tool for solving problems in the Territory."

ESRI, wholly owned by Jack and Laura Dangermond, is the world's leader in GIS software. The company's focus remains on producing excellent software and delivering exceptional service to users. As Jack Dangermond explains, "We at ESRI believe that better

information makes for better decisions. Our reputation is built on contributing our technical knowledge, our special people, and valuable experience to the collection, analysis, and communication of geographic information." For further information about UVI-CDC, contact Dayle Barry at (340) 693-1030 or dbarry@uvi.edu or visit <http://cdc.uvi.edu>.

Comprehensive Road Stabilization Planning Underway for Fish Bay

The V.I. Nonpoint Source Pollution Committee has initiated a project to develop a Comprehensive Road Stabilization Plan (CRSP) for the Fish Bay Watershed in St. John. After reviewing all responses to the request for bids, the Committee is currently negotiating with a consulting firm to design a plan.

Once completed, the CRSP will provide a comprehensive approach to reduce the impacts of nonpoint source pollution, specifically erosion and sedimentation, on Fish Bay. Other problems to be addressed include storm water runoff management and "first flush" runoff of oil, anti-freeze, heavy metals and other pollutants.

This project is one component of the Draft Fish Bay Management Plan developed by DPNR and the Committee, which is open for review by the residents of Fish Bay. The Committee will closely collaborate with the Fish Bay Homeowner's Associations and concerned individuals on this project. This project is being implemented as part of a pilot watershed management program to lay the groundwork for future collaboration between the Committee and other community groups that wish to develop management plans for individual watersheds or to address specific nonpoint source pollution problems in their community. For further information or to request a copy of the Fish Bay Management Plan, contact Bill Rohring, DPNR-CZM, at czmbrohring@viaccess.net or (340) 774-3320.

Southgate Watershed Coalition Formed

The Southgate Watershed Coalition held a public meeting July 31, 2001 that drew over 20 residents of the area to discuss the St. Croix Environmental Association's (SEA) plans for Southgate Pond Wildlife Preserve. The meeting was held to provide information

"V.I. Agriculture is Growing Strong"

The St. Thomas-St. John Agriculture & Food Fair Committee invites Virgin Islanders to attend the 20th Annual St. Thomas - St. John Agriculture & Food Fair to be held November 17th-18th at the Reichhold Center Grounds on St. Thomas. For details, contact UVI-CES at (340) 693-1080 or the V.I. Department of Agriculture at (340) 774-5182.

about the project to landowners in the watershed and to solicit their concerns for the watershed and what management practices landowners are interested in implementing. SEA representatives detailed the watershed planning project funded by the US Forest Service to develop a Virgin Islands model for watershed protection that includes water resource and wildlife habitat protection and improvement of the quality of water that enters Southgate Pond.

Joe San Martin, Chairman of SEA's Board of Directors, described the proposed use of SEA's property at Southgate Pond. "The primary use of the property will be as a wildlife habitat, but SEA intends to maintain public access to the beach and to provide educational hikes and bird-watching tours for students, visitors and residents."

Belinda Esham of ArborTech Environmental Consultants delivered a presentation describing watershed management principles, a brief assessment of current land use in the watershed (farming, commercial and residential), and potential threats to water quality such as eroded guts, development on steep, unstable soils and increasing quantity of impermeable (paved) surfaces. ArborTech has been hired by SEA to develop a management plan for the watershed, including management practices that can be implemented by landowners to minimize threats to water quality.

Representatives from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, DPNR Divisions of Environmental Projection and Coastal Zone Management, and the V.I. Department of Agriculture Forest Stewardship Program also delivered presentations at the meeting. They provided information to land-owners about the resources, services and funding offered by their agencies that could be utilized in the project.

The primary concerns voiced by landowners at the meeting included:

- Draining of the aquifer for commercial purposes (water company and hotels),
- The effluent from desalination being discharged back into the ground water,
- Water flowing across roads and yards

- causing potholes and damage to landscapes, particularly in Tipperary,
- Culverts blocked by debris causing flooded roadways, and
- Excessive noise from commercial activities.

The management plan was scheduled to be completed by September 30 and will be made available for review by landowners. Another meeting is planned for October to discuss the plan and management practices the group (or individual landowners) is interested in implementing. For further information on the Southgate Watershed Coalition project, contact Carol Cramer-Burke at (340) 773-1989.

Web Resources

The EPA Office of Science and Technology's (OST) draft **Waterborne Microbial Disease Strategy**, addressing microbiological contamination of the nation's waters, is available for review at www.asmtusa.org/pasrc/update.htm.

EPA Launches Interactive Permitting Program Web Site. EPA has launched a new website to provide easy access to information on its national permitting program, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). The site allows users to create and sort specialized lists of publications, guidance materials, and regulations. For details, visit www.epa.gov/npdes.

The **National Council for Science and the Environment** has 33 new and 34 updated reports available online at www.cnie.org on topics including agriculture, air quality, bio-diversity, climate change, economics, energy, forestry, legislation, natural resources, pesticides & chemicals, pollution, population, public land, risk assessment & regulatory reform, science & technology, transportation, waste management, water issues, and wetlands.

The National Agricultural Library's **Water Quality Information Center** has updated its database of online documents covering water and agriculture. Nearly 990 free electronic publications can be located using this database. For details, visit www.nal.usda.gov/wqic/wqdb/eseach.html.

The **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service - Caribbean Area** website is now online at www.pr.nrcs.usda.gov. Visit this site for information about conservation practices and the soils of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

The USDA-NRCS **Stream Corridor Restoration Handbook** (NEH Part 653) has been updated on the USDA website at www.usda.gov/stream_restoration. The document can also be downloaded as one file, including the complete list of references.

USGS Launches New Website for Nation's Water Data. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) launched its new, online National Water Information System (NWIS Web), opening the doors to the public to much more of the 100 years of water data collected by the federal earth science agency. The new website, <http://water.usgs.gov/nwis/>, allows users to access several hundred million pieces of archival and real-time data.

"*Water resources and river basin management in Latin America*" by Axel Dourojeanni is now available, **via e-mail only**. Requests should be sent to ajouravlev@eclac.cl.

Available Grants

AMR/American Airlines Foundation works to help meet the needs of non-profit organizations in the communities that American serves, especially hub cities including San Juan. Support includes air transportation as well as cash. The foundation focuses on programs, projects and institutions in areas including Community Development (educational programs aimed at increasing awareness and involvement in recycling and other environmental protection activities and partnerships and initiatives that promote economic development in AMR communities). For details, call 817-967-3545 or visit www.amrcorp.com/corp_fdn.htm.

EPA Environmental Education Grants Fiscal Year 2002. 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 December 15, 2001. For details, visit www.epa.gov/enviroed.

EPA Section 319 Nonpoint Source Grants to States and Territories Supplemental Guidelines. EPA has developed guidelines for the award of Clean Water Act section 319 nonpoint source grants in FY 2002 and subsequent years. The guidelines

are intended to assist States and Territories in identifying the process and criteria to be used in distributing section 319 grants, and are effective September 13, 2001. Visit www.epa.gov/owow/nps/cwact.html to view the new guidelines.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Grants. NOAA is soliciting grant proposals on the following topics: financial assistance for national centers for coastal ocean science, research in remote sensing of the earth and environment, under-sea research, sea grant support, independent education and science projects and programs and climate and atmospheric research. Visit www.noaa.gov for details.

The National Wildlife Federation's **Campus Ecology Fellowship Program** offers an opportunity for under-graduate and graduate students to pursue their vision of an ecologically sustainable future. For details, visit www.nwf.org/campusecology/fellowships/application.html.

Pew Charitable Trusts supports independent projects that take an interdisciplinary approach to broad issues of significant interest or concern, including the Environment program which aims to promote policies and practices that protect the global atmosphere and preserve healthy forest and marine ecosystems. Visit www.pewtrusts.com for details.

The **SC Johnson Fund** supports projects that improve people's physical and mental health and deal with environmental concerns relating to the quality of water, land, air and living species inhabiting these ecological systems. For details, visit www.scjohnsonwax.com/family/fam_com_phi_fun.asp.

Sustainable Community Innovation Grants Announced. Two CSREES programs in the Southern Region – SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education) and the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) – are offering new pilot grants for projects that strengthen agriculture and Southern communities through explicit linkages between sustainable agriculture and community development. Proposals are due November 2, 2001, with awards of up to \$10,000 per project to be made in early February 2002. For details, visit www.griffin.peachnet.edu/sare/callpage.html, http://ext.msstate.edu/srdc/grant/srdc_sare.pdf.

The W. Alton Jones Foundation **Sustainable World Program** supports efforts focusing on four inter-related themes: maintaining biological diversity; creating economic incentives and policies that will encourage environmentally sound development; developing energy resources that protect the climate; and avoiding contamination that undermines children's health. Visit www.wajones.org/grants for details.

EPA Wetlands Program Development Grants. EPA seeks to build the capacity of all levels of government to develop and implement effective, comprehensive programs for wetland protection and management. The six program areas central to achieving these goals are: regulation, monitoring and assessment, restoration, wetland water quality standards, public-private partnerships, and coordination among agencies with wetland or wetland-related programs. The proposal submission deadline is January 31, 2002. For details, visit www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/2002grant/.

Upcoming Events

Local

October 14, 2001. *Citrus Production, Sheep Production, Hot Pepper Production, Hot Pepper Processing Workshops* at *World Food Day Fair*, UVI Research & Extension Center, St. Croix. For details, contact Clinton George at (340) 692-4071 or cgeorge@uvi.edu.

October 16 & 18, 2001. *Hydroseeding Certification Training Workshop*, UVI-CES St. Croix and St. Thomas, respectively. For details, contact Julie Wright at (340) 693-1082 or jwright@uvi.edu.

October 25-27, 2001. *Fourth Water Information Summit*, Panama City, Panama. For details, contact Lenin Montano at (507) 317-0125 or wis4@cathalac.org, or visit www.cathalac.org.

November 11-14, 2001. *WEFTEC Latin America*, San Juan, PR. Sponsored by the Water Environment Federation (WEF). Visit www.wef.org/AnnualConference/confDetail.cfm?ConfID=31 to register.

November 17-18, 2001. *20th Annual St. Thomas - St. John Agriculture and Food Fair*, UVI Reichhold Center Grounds, St. Thomas. Contact UVI-CES at (340) 693-1080 or VIDA at (340) 774-5182 for details.

December 1, 8-9, 2001. *Plant Propagation Workshops*, UVI-CES St. Croix, St. Thomas, St. John, respectively. Contact UVI-CES at (340) 692-4071 on St. Croix or (340) 693-1071 on St. Thomas for details.

National

November 5-8, 2001. *The Wildland-Urban Interface: Sustaining Forests in a Changing Landscape*, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL. Visit <http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/urban> for details.

November 6-7, 2001. *The Practice of Sustainable Development*, Pittsburgh, PA. Visit www.uli.org/Pub/Pages/z_utilities/Pittsburgh/Pittsburg_BR.htm for details or to register.

February 23-27, 2002. *Watershed 2002*, Fort Lauderdale, FL. For details, visit www.wef.org/Conferences.

February 25-March 1, 2002. *International Erosion Control Association 33rd Annual Conference and Expo*, Orlando, FL. Visit www.ieca.org for details.

March 11-13, 2002. *Watershed Management to Meet Emerging TMDL Environmental Regulations Conference and Exhibition*, Fort Worth, TX. For details, visit www.asae.org.

May 13-15, 2002. *AWRA Spring Specialty Conference: Coastal Water Resources*, New Orleans, LA. For details, visit www.awra.org/meetings/Louisiana2002/.

May 20-22, 2002. *Seventh International Conference on Remote Sensing for Marine and Coastal Environments*, Miami, FL. Visit www.irim-int.com/CONF/marine/MARINE.htm for details.

May 20-23, 2002. *3rd National Water Monitoring Conference, Water Quality Monitoring 2002: Building a Framework for the Future*, Madison, WI. For details, visit www.nwqmc.org.

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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VI NPS Update is a quarterly newsletter published by 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.*

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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