

**LOCAL ACTION STRATEGY:
LACK OF PUBLIC AWARENESS
U.S. Virgin Islands**



U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting

March 2007

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ISSUE & IMPACT: LACK OF PUBLIC AWARENESS

Impacts in the USVI:

- Socioeconomic values provided by reefs
- Cultural, heritage and aesthetic values of reefs
- Environmental protection from storms and beach erosion
- More sustainable tourism industry



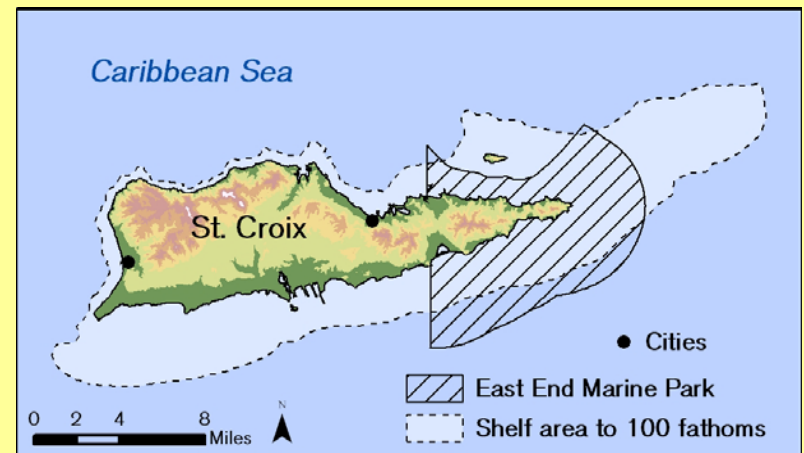
PRIORITIES: LACK OF PUBLIC AWARENESS

The UVSI directed all LAS activities for fiscal years 2005 to 2007 within the St. Croix East End Marine Park.

Top priorities for Lack of Awareness:

To build awareness of the importance of coral reefs & teach and encourage positive behaviors that will protect and nurture them through:

- 1) Integrating coral reef education into the schools.
- 2) Promoting the understanding of the values of coral reefs locally.
- 3) Increasing coral reef education for visitors through hotels, cruise ships etc.



VINE

Virgin Islands Network of Environmental Educators Member Logos



The Ocean Conservancy

Advocates for Wild, Healthy Oceans



"One Environment, Protect It"



Friends of
**VIRGIN ISLANDS
NATIONAL PARK**

VINE Accomplishments

- Development of an organizational structure with 2 active VINE chapters; St. Croix and St. Thomas/St. John
- Database of environmental programs, educators and resources in USVI
- Annual VINE teacher workshops
- VINE sponsored media campaigns
- Quarterly newsletter distributed to territorial schools
- Series of capacity building workshops for members
- VINE model in development in British Virgin Islands



VINE "Leave Paradise in It's place" public awareness campaign developed for CFMC



VINE quarterly newsletter





The Virgin Islands Coral Conservation Consortium (VICCC)

An agency-neutral network created to develop a coral reef awareness media campaign for the USVI

www.coralreefs.vi

VICCC Project Scope:

- Target residents and visitors of VI
- Materials will be produced in both English and Spanish
- Increase coral reef conservation and stewardship of reefs through
- Broad-based education campaign



Project Outcomes/Products:



Duratrans installed in Miami International Airport

- Duratrans advertising placed in Miami, DC and NY airports
- Postcards
- Local and Visitor – targeted video PSAs (*Coming Soon!*)
- Beverage Coasters (*Coming Soon!*)
- Posters and Banners
- Website (www.coralreefs.vi)

VICCC Members:



Environmental Mobile Van

- Development of a mobile environmental education and outreach program



CHALLENGES: LACK OF PUBLIC AWARENESS

- Incorporating participation into work plans
- Lack of financial incentive for the individual organizations → Limited potential collaboration efforts
- Technical capacity = the one with the \$\$



NEEDS: LACK OF PUBLIC AWARENESS

- Evaluate current LAS initiative
- Diversify LAS efforts beyond STX East End Marine Park
- Provide financial incentives through access to LAS funding for project partners to implement projects



FUTURE PLANS: LACK OF PUBLIC AWARENESS

- Practice adaptive management in determining direction and form for future LAS initiative
- Reinvigorate the LAS initiative based upon evaluation results



Thank you!



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I. Integrating coral reef education into the schools

- Meet with Science Coordinators and Administrators
- Hire an Environmental Education Specialist to teach, conduct workshops and coordinate coral reef education activities.

II. Promote understanding of the value of coral reefs locally

- Develop a snorkeling excursion program for local residents in order to increase awareness about coral reefs

III. Increase coral reef education for visitors through hotels, cruise ships etc.

- Kiosks at the St. Croix Airport and Christiansted boardwalk with written materials and a billboard about the East End Marine Park
- St. Croix East End Marine Park video and materials for hotels
- Develop guidelines and written materials for private tour operators about coral reef resources and the East End Marine Park.
- Educational snorkeling excursions for visitors