

MPAs, Recreation & Tourism, USVI Manager Perspectives

A scenic view of a tropical beach with turquoise water, white sand, and lush green hills. The beach is curved and surrounded by dense vegetation. In the distance, there are several small islands and a larger island with a small building. The sky is blue with some clouds.

Paige Rothenberger
USVI Dept. of Planning & Natural Resources
MPA Center Federal Advisory Council Meeting
June 14, 2012

MPAs, Recreation & Tourism



- **Definitions**
 - Residents, Visitors
- **Challenges**
- **Opportunities**
- **How do we engage?**
- **Messaging**
- **Needs, tools?**
- **Role for the Center/FAC**

Importance to USVI MPAs

- Traditional, cultural, recreational value/uses – residents
- Tourism dollars – extend beyond direct benefit to MPAs to other sectors of local economy
- Users are potential advocates, funders, laborers, enforcers; Friends organizations



Challenges

- User conflicts
- Traditional/cultural uses vs. tourism
- How much is too much?









Challenges

- User conflicts
- Traditional/cultural uses vs. tourism
- How much is too much?
- Insufficient enforcement capacity
- Lack of data on values, and assumptions
- Communication needs
- Managing public expectations
- Potential additional coral ESA listings



Opportunities

- **Development and expansion of recreational opportunities**
- **Engage users in management process**
- **Citizen science and use monitoring**
- **Cultural, heritage and ecotourism potential**
- **Use MPAs as the anchor to support recreational opportunities and the operators that provide them**



Engagement

- Youth – school programs, camps
- Adult/youth – snorkel skill clinics





- **Resource Users**
 - Outreach venues
 - Management planning
 - Use assessments
 - Development of guidelines
 - Friends organizations

Monday, October 10, 2011 VIRGIN ISLANDS

(Daily News Photo by CHRISTIAN SIMESCU)

A watershed management plan is being developed for St. Croix East End Marine Park.

Public to get final say on management plan

By DANIEL SHEA
Daily News Staff

ST. CROIX — VI. Department of Planning and Natural Resources officials, with the help of private contributors, have almost concluded their watershed management project for the St. Croix East End Marine Park—a study that one official said could provide a foundation for dealing with watersheds throughout the territory.

The final meeting for public comment will be held Tuesday at 6 p.m. at the St. Croix Yacht Club, which

“But we need to protect all of our waters from this. Hopefully this will be a case study, and the solutions that we find in these plans can be and will be transferred to other areas in the territory.”

The watershed management plan, developed during the last year by the Horsley Witten Group, is available for review online. It outlines the work that needs to be done—paving and stabilizing roads; constructing wet bars and small buffer systems; and planting vegetation to grip loose soil—and homes in on problem areas

The vast system of dirt and gravel roads in many residential areas compounds problem, according to a statement from the USDA’s Natural Resource Conservation Service.

The four miles of dirt roads within the Solitude watershed contribute about 112 tons of sediment into the sea annually, which is a rate 11 times higher than under normal conditions, the statement said.

The severely eroded gut in Southgate is carrying out 10-15 feet of pasture land to the sea every year.

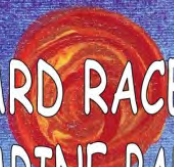
The St. Croix Environmental







1st ANNUAL



STAND UP PADDLE BOARD RACE FOR THE ST. CROIX EAST END MARINE PARK

Sunday, September 4, 2011
@ The St. Croix Yacht Club
8am till...

Come win our grand raffle prize,
a brand new stand up paddle board and paddle!!!

Trophies and prizes!!!

FUN
ACTIVITIES
FOR ALL

Live Music By:
Deanna Brown
Dick's Garage

Raffle Prizes

Info Booths

and more....

Adult Races (Elite & Open) \$40
(includes race shirt, reusable water bottle, raffle ticket & lunch)

Kids Fun Race \$20
(includes race shirt, reusable water bottle, raffle ticket & lunch)

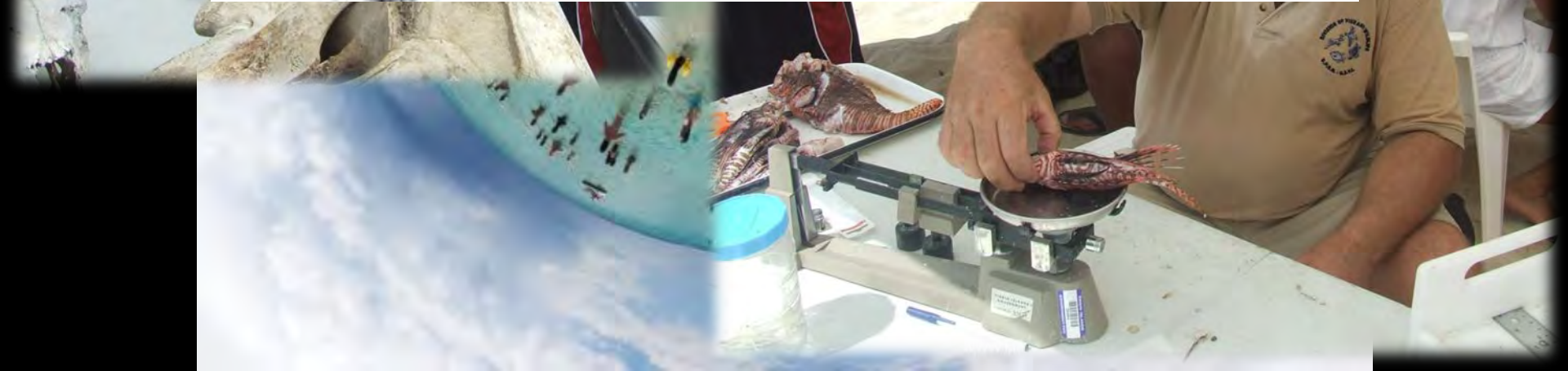
General Admission \$5
(includes raffle ticket)

No board? No problem
FREE Boards for competitors
Limited number of boards available,
online registration encouraged



DETAILS & REGISTRATION: www.friendsofstxeemp.org
CONTACT: (340)718-3367, Friends.STXEEMP@gmail.com





Messaging

An underwater photograph of a coral reef. The water is clear and blue. In the foreground, there is a large, brain-like coral structure with a complex, maze-like pattern. To its right, there are several flat, plate-like coral structures. In the background, more coral structures are visible, along with a few small, yellowish fish swimming. The overall scene is vibrant and colorful.

- **Communicate the value of MPAs**
 - Ecological, economic, cultural
- **Rules and regs for MPAs – many people want to do the right thing, but don't know what that is**
- **Sustainability, balance and partnerships**
- **Important not to pit users against each other**
- **Must be careful and culturally sensitive in message creation**

Needs/Tools

- **Communication – framing the messages**
- **Translation of science into lay terms**
- **Training**
 - **Peer to peer learning opportunities**
 - **User to user; manager to user; industry, agency, etc.**
 - **On recreation and tourism issues**
 - **For tourism industry on MPA issues**
- **Technical assistance on specific issues (moorings, climate adaptation, effectiveness assessments, etc.)**
- **Clearinghouse of best practices and tools; match-making service**

MPA Center/FAC Role

- **Leverage for support of MPAs and Network**
- **Provide guidance to agency staff on need for and value of MPAs and National System**
- **Tap into system partners to provide success stories and examples**
- **Seek out opportunities to incorporate MPA messaging in other venues and initiatives**



Questions?

