

**U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting
St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands
October 2006**

U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Workshop Schedule - October 24 & 28, 2006					
Time	Tuesday, October 24			Saturday, October 28	
	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	Room 1	Room 2
8:30-10:15	Tools for Responding to Injury Events in Coral Reefs	USVI Coral Management Issues		TNC Caribbean Decision Support System	Grant Writing Skills
Break					
10:30-12:15					
Lunch					
1:30-3:15	above cont.	Sustainable Tourism			
Break					
3:30-5:30	<i>Acropora</i> Management Update		<i>A Reef Manager's Guide to Bleaching</i>		

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24 WORKSHOPS

Workshop: Tools for Responding to Major Injury Events in Coral Reefs

Date: Tuesday, October 24

Time: 8:30 – 3:15

This workshop will bring together experts from federal, state, and territory agencies to increase participants’ capacity through training and sharing of tools and lessons learned to help prevent, respond to, assess, and mitigate major injury events in coral reef ecosystems. Some sessions offer a broad perspective on response, policy development, and agency capabilities, while others offer more technical discussions of specific tools. Presenters may include staff of NOAA, USFWS, USEPA, USCG, DOJ, and the State of Florida. In addition, workshop participants will be involved in a discussion of needs for tools, training, and technical assistance that are beyond the scope of the current workshop but that may be addressed in the future through CRTF activities. The overall goal of this workshop is to stimulate a discussion and gather information on the jurisdictions’ needs to guide future CRTF efforts and tailor effective regional workshops.

Workshop: *Acropora* Management Update**Date:** Tuesday, October 24**Time:** 3:30 – 5:30

This workshop will serve as an update on the recent listing of elkhorn and staghorn corals as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The NOAA Fisheries Service is in the process of developing protective regulations and designating critical habitat. A summary of the progress of these regulations will be addressed. Additionally, the process of recovery planning will be discussed. The goal of this workshop is to engage attendees in open discussion on these management tools.

- Update on Final ESA Listing
 - Summary of Conservation Workshops held in May 2006
 - Update on development of “4(d) rule” and Critical Habitat rule
 - Overview of Section 7 process for Federal Agencies
 - Research Permitting
 - Overview of Recovery Planning
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Workshop: U.S. Virgin Islands Topics in Coral Reef Ecosystem Management**Date:** Tuesday, October 24**Time:** 8:30 – 12:15

The objective of this workshop is to engage in a solution-oriented discussion about the state of coral reef ecosystems in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The workshop, organized into two sessions: USVI Coral Reefs: Issues, Status and Solutions and USVI Marine Protected Areas: History, Status and Future, will consist of a series of presentations followed by panel discussion. The moderated discussions will include multiple perspectives from federal and local agency managers, academia, NGOs, policy makers and other stakeholders, enhancing the range and depth of the exchanges. Topics in each of these sessions will include the current state of knowledge, challenges, possible solutions, and local initiatives that address these issues.

Outcomes from this workshop will be reported to CRTF members during the Friday business meeting session on Caribbean Coral Reefs. Discussion of the findings will culminate in the identification of actions that local and federal policy makers can take to address the issues and challenges facing territorial coral reefs.

Workshop: Coral Reef Conservation through Sustainable Tourism**Date:** Tuesday, October 24**Time:** 1:30 – 5:30**Brief description of workshop:**

Four-hour workshop and “café conversations” discussing sustainable tourism practices for tour operators, hotels and their customers, and for conducting volunteer monitoring by recreational scuba divers and snorkelers.

Workshop Outline:

This workshop will provide practical tools to tourism businesses and resource managers for conserving coral reefs and maintaining their recreational and natural values. Speakers and participants will share experiences in practicing sustainable tourism and volunteer monitoring in the U.S. Virgin Islands, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and other coral reef areas. Speakers and the audience will participate in informal “café conversations” to share firsthand knowledge of sustainable business practices, ecotourism and cooperative approaches between local businesses and government. Boat and yacht charters, recreational dive and snorkel operators, ecotourism businesses, hotels, and their customers in U.S.V.I. are invited to attend, as well as other coral reef jurisdictions and nonprofit organizations that work with the tourism sector. Speakers and participants also will discuss how to establish volunteer fish and coral monitoring programs to enable SCUBA divers and snorkelers to protect the resources they enjoy. This workshop will provide tourism industry representatives and coral reef task force members with model approaches for integrating sustainable tourism practices into their operations.

Workshop: Rethinking local responses to mass coral bleaching: *A Reef Manager's Guide to Coral Bleaching*

Date: Tuesday, October 24**Time:** 3:30 – 5:30

Brief description of workshop: This interactive workshop is proposed in response to the recent Caribbean mass bleaching event and USCRTF resolutions related to coral bleaching, climate change, and *A Reef Manager's Guide to Coral Bleaching*. It will build on workshops hosted in 2005 by TNC that focused on integrating reef resilience into MPA design by exploring ideas about short-term responses managers can implement during mass bleaching events and considering broader long term responses. Authors of *A Reef Manager's Guide to Coral Bleaching* will stimulate discussion with a synthesis of ideas from the *Guide* and case studies from around the world. Facilitated discussion and peer-learning will be used to assist managers in exploring strategies that may be useful to

his/her context in terms of the potential benefits and challenges associated with various actions.

Goals of workshop: By the end of this workshop, managers will:

- be familiar with emerging ideas about responding to mass coral bleaching, and
 - have considered the potential benefits and challenges of actions they identify as relevant to their context.
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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28 WORKSHOPS

Workshop: Use and Application of the Caribbean Decision Support System

Date: Saturday, October 28

Time: 8:30 – 12:30

Description of Workshop: This intensive half day workshop will have two basic parts.

Part 1: First would be a presentation and introduction of the CDSS by Steve Schill. (1 hour followed by 15 minute break)

- Demonstrate for government partners and regional and national conservation organizations how CDSS tools and methods, and the GIS information that has been collected and analyzed can be used to inform the setting of regional conservation priorities

Part 2: The presentation would be followed by an interactive session where participants would be taken through multiple and site specific examples using the system followed by

Q &A. Examples would be chosen to address coral reef conservation topics that are prevalent in the Insular Caribbean. (2.45 hrs)

- Provide on-line demonstrations of how to search and query the vast Caribbean GIS geodatabase and associated metadata records that are maintained at the recently launched SERVIR GeoPortal website. Users will learn how to register in order to access all data, map services and models, publish metadata and manage data channels.
- Provide a technical training component for use and application of the CDSS ArcGIS modules. This training will include a step-by-step discussions on how to
 - a) create and customize marine Environmental Risk Surfaces (ERS) that can be used to assess habitat viability and also as cost estimates for MARXAN models;
 - b) calculate relative biodiversity indices (RBI) for locating unique pockets of habitats across a marine landscape; and
 - c) set up and execute conservation optimization marine models using the MARXAN data preparation and analysis tool.

Goals of workshop: TNC's vision is to promote the conservation of the region's irreplaceable terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine biodiversity by providing this premier decision-support system to guide action, achieve results and measure success.

Materials would be made available to all participants with relevant background and contact information.

Workshop: NFWF Funding Opportunities and Grant Writing

Date: Saturday, October 28

Time: 8:30 - 12:30

Description of Workshop: The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, in partnership with NOAA, NRCS and the Harold T. Castle Foundation, are announcing available funding for conservation work through our Coral Reef Conservation Fund Program. In this workshop, Foundation staff will provide an overview of the Coral Reef Conservation Fund Program, offer recommendations and tips for writing a competitive proposal, navigate the new logic framework component of the application to assist in developing a work plan and evaluation structure and answer any questions that potential applicants may have about this year's program. Representatives from NOAA, NRCS and the State government will also be invited to share their priorities for USVI coral conservation and potential applicants may identify new project opportunities and contacts for technical assistance in project development and implementation.

Participants will have opportunities to go through the NFWF application forms and have their questions answered by the NFWF Marine Program staff. We will also be unveiling some new changes that will streamline our application process.

Workshop Goals: We want to provide future USVI applicants with an opportunity to learn how to write competitive proposals to ensure a continuation of quality NFWF-funded coral reef conservation work in the USVIs.