

DPNR Requests Proposals for Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Grants

DPNR has released a request for proposals for fiscal year 2007 federal Clean Water Act funds available to government agencies and nonprofit organizations to address nonpoint sources of pollution in the territory. The two different categories of funding available are:

1. **Base funds:** traditional §319 NPS funding for education and demonstration of innovative best management practices, and
2. **Incremental funds:** water quality restoration funding.

Example projects for base funds include:

- ▶ Demonstration and evaluation of innovative Best Management Practices (BMPs) for activities such as agriculture, stormwater, onsite wastewater (septic) systems, etc.;
- ▶ NPS pollution awareness and educational activities, including community-based educational efforts (storm drain stenciling, public service announcements, etc.);
- ▶ Smart Growth and Low Impact Development Demonstration & Education projects;
- ▶ Monitoring that quantifies mass loading of nutrients and/or pathogens from properly functioning conventional onsite wastewater treatment (septic) systems to surface water; and
- ▶ Monitoring that quantifies changes in water quality and aquatic life resulting from urbanization.

The goal of Incremental funds is to restore waters impaired by nonpoint source pollution. The USVI's current, official list of impaired waters [the 303(d) list] can be found at www.dpnr.gov.vi/dep. For fiscal year 2007, proposals addressing any of the criteria listed below will be given greater priority in the review process:

- ▶ Watershed and subwatershed restoration strategies.
- ▶ Identification and targeting of critical areas for BMP implementation.
- ▶ Monitoring for changes in mass loading of pollutants that includes before/after components with adequate baseline period and appropriate features for trend assessment such as upstream/downstream and control/treatment paired watersheds.

Public meetings have been scheduled to explain the grant application process. The St. Croix public meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m., January 31, 2007, in the DPNR Main Conference Room in DPNR's Frederiksted office. The St. Thomas – St. John public meeting will be held at 1:00 p.m., February 2, 2007, in the DPNR-DEP Conference Room, located upstairs in the Cyril E. King Airport.

Guidelines to develop NPS Pollution control and Implementation proposals may be found at www.dpnr.gov.vi/dep. For more information, contact Diane Capehart, Program Administrator, at 340-773-1082 or capehart.diane@vidpnr-dep.org. The deadline for proposal submissions to DPNR is March 5, 2007.

St. Croix Environmental Information Repository to Receive Historic V.I. Environmental Records

Islands Resources Foundation (IRF) has donated hundreds of its historic environmental documents to the Virgin Islands Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc. (VI RC&D) to be housed in the *St. Croix Environmental Information Repository*. These valuable records were previously housed in IRF's Red Hook, St. Thomas, Library, and now will be housed in the Repository Library in the Cooperative Extension Service Natural Resources building on the UVI St. Croix West Campus.



UVI-CES Natural Resources Specialist, Olasee Davis, displays a selection of Repository materials.

IRF's materials will be transported to St. Croix by February 2007. The records cover environmental issues and studies researched by IRF, including: V.I. coastal zone management, the V.I. Territorial Park System, water quality and ground water studies, disaster mitigation, wetlands, biodiversity, the V.I. Resource Management Cooperative, environmental impact studies, sand mining, environmental education and forestry.

The *St. Croix Environmental Information Repository* is a compilation of reports, maps, educational materials and other environmental documents related to St. Croix. Repository partners include VI RC&D, the St. Croix Environmental Association (SEA) and the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI). The project was funded by a grant from U.S. EPA to support their U.S. Virgin Islands Environmental Information Management and Outreach Initiative for St. Croix. The addition of the IRF documents represents a windfall for the Repository project.

"Having these records available to the public opens up the environmental history of the Virgin Islands to all citizens," said Julie Wright, RC&D Coordinator for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. *"The Council is extremely fortunate to have been chosen by IRF to receive such a significant and generous donation,"* said Council President, Marcia Taylor.

Once the documents arrive in St. Croix, the Repository partners will solicit volunteers to help catalogue and digitize the collection. For more information about the Repository or to volunteer, contact Olasee Davis at 340-692-4053 or odavis@uvi.edu. Repository documents are also available online at www.usvircd.org/STXEIR. For more information about the Island Resources Foundation, visit www.irf.org.

Table of Contents

DPNR Requests Proposals for Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Grants	1
St. Croix Environmental Information Repository to Receive Historic V.I. Environmental Records	1
VI RC&D Hosts Project Design & Evaluation Short Course	2
U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meets in St. Thomas	2
EPA Seeks Nominations for 2007 Environmental Quality Awards	2
EPA Awards Beach Water Quality Monitoring Funds to DPNR	3
New Research Analyst On Board at UVI-VIMAS	3
UVI Launches New Marine & Environmental Science Masters Program	3
Web Resources	3
Available Grants	3
Upcoming Events	4

VI RC&D Hosts Project Design & Evaluation Short Course

Funding agencies and employers are increasingly requiring managers to effectively demonstrate that their projects and programs have measurable impacts. To help project managers succeed in their fields, VI RC&D, in partnership with the UVI Cooperative Extension Service, is hosting a two-day, hands-on *Project Design & Evaluation Short Course*, conducted by trainers from the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Coastal Services Center. The short course's interactive curriculum is designed to help management, education, outreach and research professionals increase their project effectiveness by providing attendees with the knowledge, skills, and tools they need to design and implement projects that have measurable impacts on their target audience. The Short Course will be held:

- **St. Croix:** January 29-30, 2007, 8:30-5:00, UVI Research & Extension Center Room 133.
- **St. Thomas:** February 1-2, 2007, 8:30-5:00, UVI Small Business Development Center Conference Room, Nisky Center.

The *Project Design & Evaluation Short Course* is ideal for government agencies, community groups and nonprofit organizations managing projects that require strong evaluation components. It will help professionals design projects that have specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely goals and objectives. It will also help them design their project evaluation strategy, a key requirement for successful project management.

Training information and materials will be provided, along with refreshment breaks and lunches, for a nominal \$50.00 per person registration fee. VI RC&D Council members and UVI-CES staff will receive a 20% discount. Participants may register either online at www.vircd.org or with the V.I. RC&D office at 340-692-9632 x.5.

U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meets in St. Thomas

The Virgin Islands coral reef issues were in the spotlight at the *16th U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting*, held October 23- 27, 2006, at Marriott Frenchman's Reef Hotel on St. Thomas. Over 200 participants from Florida, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Pacific Territories met to learn about and take action on key coral reef conservation issues in the Caribbean. Task Force members also discussed recent accomplishments, existing challenges and needs in addressing coral reef research, and global conservation issues.

The 16th annual meeting was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Interior and the Virgin Islands Government, led by DPNR's Coastal Zone

Management Division. During the meeting, the Task Force heard from leading experts on coral diseases, coral bleaching, the state of domestic and international coral reef ecosystems, scientific research, and new tools to better understand and conserve coral reef ecosystems.



Coral Reef Task Force Meeting participants listen to report on Status of the USVI Coral Reef Ecosystem.

Several updates were provided, including the Endangered Species Act listing of *Acropora* (elk-horn) corals as threatened. Reports were given on the International Tropical Marine Ecosystem Management Symposium, International Coral Reef Initiative and Local Action Strategies.

Over 20 exhibits were on display and 7 workshops were held on various coral reef topics. VINE, the V.I. Network of Environmental Educators, sponsored a student presentation delivered by four members of the Environmental Rangers. Entitled "Students making a difference in the protection of coral reefs," the presentation was a meeting highlight for Task Force members and participants.

During the Business Meeting, the Task Force discussed and acted on 11 key decision items:

- Establish a new working group on cooperative conservation to help build public-private partnerships to conserve coral reefs.
- Participate in preparing a "The State of Coral Reef Ecosystems of the United States and Freely Associated States" report.
- Endorse plans to complete a progress report on Implementation of the U.S. National Coral Reef Action Strategy 2004-2006.
- Support planning and implementation of the 2008 International Year of the Reef.
- Support planning and implementation of the 2008 International Coral Reef Symposium.
- Request that the Coral Disease and Health Consortium develop and coordinate strategies to address coral disease issues.
- Establish a new working group to coordinate actions regarding tools for responding to major injury events to coral reef habitat.
- Support development and implementation of response plans to coral bleaching.
- Support recommendations from the Status of USVI Coral Reef Ecosystem Workshop.

The Coral Reef Task Force was created by President Clinton in 1998, and is made up of many federal agencies and governments, including the Virgin Islands. The group meets every six months to coordinate efforts to protect and preserve coral

reef ecosystems, and to help guide public policy for coral reef protection. The full details of meeting sessions, workshops and decision items, along with details about the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force, can be found at www.coralreef.gov.

EPA Seeks Nominations for 2007 Environmental Quality Awards

Each year, U.S. EPA bestows its Environmental Quality Awards to recognize and honor individuals and organizations who contributed significantly to improving the environment in New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The awards recognize achievement in 6 categories:

- Individual Citizen
- Non-Profit Organization, Environmental or Community Group
- Environmental Education
- Business and Industry
- Federal, State, Local or Tribal Government or Agency
- Press and Media

"This coming April, we will again celebrate Earth Day, a day for us all to reflect on the importance of the environment," said EPA Region 2 Administrator Alan J. Steinberg. "What better way to mark that occasion than by honoring those organizations and individuals whose work has furthered the cause of the environment and whose dedication stands as an inspiration to us all."

Award nominations are solicited from both within and outside EPA and must be submitted by February 14, 2007. Award recipients will be honored at an April ceremony in EPA's Manhattan offices. Self-nominations are welcome. Visit www.epa.gov/region2/eqa for details on award criteria, prior winners and nomination instructions, or contact Chris Sebastian, Public Affairs Division, at sebastian.chris@epa.gov or 212-637-3597.

EPA Awards Beach Water Quality Monitoring Funds to DPNR

For the third year in a row, the V.I. Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) will receive a water quality monitoring and public notification grant from the U.S. EPA. The U.S. Virgin Islands is one of 35 states and territories to receive the money.

The territory is slated to receive \$303,270 for the program. DPNR will use these funds to perform weekly water quality tests at 42 beaches across the territory. The results will be released every Friday to the media and on DPNR's website at

www.dpnr.gov.vi/dep/notices.htm. Caribbean Safewater Laboratories, Inc. performs the testing in the St. Thomas – St. John district and Ocean Systems Laboratory conducts the testing on St. Croix.

According to EPA, the grants are awarded based on beach season length, beach miles and beach use. "By improving water quality and informing beachgoers, EPA is helping states and communities protect public health and coastal ecosystems and economies," EPA Assistant Administrator for Water Benjamin H. Grumbles stated. During the past seven years, EPA has spent nearly \$62 million under the Beaches for Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act of 2000. Before the act passed, state and local monitoring and notification programs often differed across the country. For details, visit www.dpnr.gov.vi/dep/home.htm.

New Research Analyst On Board at UVI-VIMAS

UVI's Virgin Islands Marine Advisory Service has hired a new research analyst, Emily Tyner. Emily is a recent graduate of Smith College in Massachusetts, where she obtained degrees in Biology and Marine Sciences. She has also worked on coral reef research and education projects in Belize and in the Bahamas. She looks forward to acquainting herself with the local environment and meeting folks in the marine research and education fields.

Emily will continue to offer VIMAS' Nonpoint Source (NPS) Pollution presentations to school, youth and community groups in St. Croix. VIMAS presentations often include the EnviroScape, an interactive model that accurately depicts the features of a typical St. Croix watershed. VIMAS can also work with organizations or schools to form a field base experience examining NPS in addition to classroom activities. Please feel free to contact Emily to discuss ideas for spreading the word on NPS! She can be reached at 340-692-4144 or etyner@uvi.edu.

UVI Launches New Marine & Environmental Science Master Program

The University of the Virgin Islands' Division of Science and Mathematics, Center for Marine and Environmental Studies (CMES), and Virgin Islands Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (VI-EPSCoR) are pleased to announce the launching a new Masters of Marine and Environmental Science (MMES) degree program.

The two-year MMES will offer two tracks of study: a science-based track for those students who wish to focus on research, and a management based track for those who wish to focus on resource management issues. Students in both tracks will enroll in the same core courses during the first year of the program. These team-taught, hands-on courses will provide a broad base of knowledge and the tools needed to effectively conduct research and manage natural resources

for all participants. There will be a strong emphasis on Caribbean ecology and environmental management, as well as significant emphasis on problem-solving skills applicable well beyond the region. Students take additional elective courses and engage in individual thesis research during the second year of study.

Graduates of the program will be qualified for academic, government, and private sector positions in science and resource management at the local, regional, and national levels. The Master of Science degree will be offered through the Division of Science and Mathematics. Applications for the Fall 2007 semester are now being accepted. Visit <http://mmes.uvi.edu> for details.

Web Resources



The *National Marine Sanctuary Program* has launched a new website focused on the evaluation of environmental and marine education programs. The website includes information on how to create program evaluation plans, an environmental education literature review, tools and techniques for evaluation, examples of objectives and goals, an evaluation glossary, and an online resource guide to evaluation. For details, visit <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education/evaluation>.

Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM) is an innovative management approach to address the challenges posed by human and resource interactions. Human activities on land and in the ocean are changing coastal and marine ecosystems and threatening their ability to provide important benefits to society, such as healthy and abundant seafood, clean beaches, and protection from storms and flooding. EBM considers all ecosystem components, including humans and the environment, rather than managing one issue or resource in isolation. To learn more about EBM, visit www.ebmtools.org.

Available Grants



Beyond the Sea: PADI Foundation Grants. The PADI Foundation encourages and supports underwater science, environmental projects, and education. The Foundation funds projects that will enrich understanding of the aquatic environment and encourage sensitivity to and protection of the delicate ecological balance of underwater life. Maximum proposal budgets awarded are \$20,000. PADI will not fund overhead or other indirect expenses. For details, visit www.padifoundation.org/index.htm.

Boat U.S. Foundation Clean Water Grants provide support for projects that teach boaters to reduce their impact on the waters they use for boating. Topics can range from petroleum pollution prevention to keeping trash out of waterways. The annual application deadline is February 1st. For details, visit www.boatus.com/foundation/cleanwater/grants.

EPA 2007 Indoor Environments: Reducing Public Exposure to Indoor Pollutants Grant. EPA is soliciting grant proposals for the Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools Program, asthma projects, or an integration of both. Proposed projects must support demonstration, training, outreach and/or education grants that reduce exposure to indoor air pollutants and yield

measurable environmental outcomes. The application deadline is March 02, 2007. For details, visit www.epa.gov/region02/grants/finalregion2_rfp_revised_011107.pdf.

Fish America 2007 Community-Based Habitat Restoration Projects. The Fish America Foundation has \$800,000 available for hands-on, grassroots projects to restore marine, estuarine and riparian habitats. Projects must result in on-the-ground habitat restoration of marine, estuarine and riparian habitats clearly significant to fisheries (sportfish) resources, and must involve community participation through an educational or volunteer component tied to the restoration activities. Applications are due February 5, 2007. Visit www.fishamerica.org for details.

Global ReLeaf, a program of American Forests (www.americanforests.org), is offering annual grants for tree planting projects. Grants are available to support rural seedling projects restoring damaged forest ecosystems. Proposals are due July 1, 2007. Details regarding Global ReLeaf Grants can be found at: www.americanforests.org/global_releaf/grants.

The National Geographic Society Conservation Trust is dedicated to conserving the world's biological and cultural heritage. The Trust funds projects that contribute significantly to the preservation and sustainable use of the Earth's biological, cultural, and historical resources. Both field projects and public education campaigns that inform individuals about global issues, connect conservation issues to daily life, and enable people to take action are supported. Applications are accepted throughout the year. For details, visit www.nationalgeographic.com/conservation/grant_application.html.

NFWF Five-Star Restoration Matching Grants provide modest financial assistance on a competitive basis to support community-based wetland, riparian, and coastal habitat restoration projects that build diverse partnerships and foster local natural resource stewardship through education, outreach and training activities. Proposals are due March 9, 2007. For details, visit www.nfwf.org/programs/5star-rfp.cfm.

NFWF Native Plant Conservation Initiative Grants support on-the-ground conservation projects that protect, enhance, and/or restore native plant communities. Projects usually fall into one or a combination of three categories: protection and restoration, information and education, and inventory and assessment. Preproposals are due February 15, 2007. For details, visit www.nfwf.org/programs/npci.cfm.

NFWF Natural Resources Conservation Service: Conservation on Private Lands grants support high quality projects that engage private landowners, primarily farmers and ranchers, in conserving and enhancing fish, wildlife and natural resources on their lands. The primary focus is on conservation projects that enhance agricultural land upstream from or adjacent to coral reefs. Preproposals are due April 1, 2007. For details, visit www.nfwf.org/programs/nrcsnacd.cfm.

The *Project AWARE Foundation* funds projects that conserve marine and freshwater underwater environments. Grant program areas include coral reef conservation, shark protection, sustainable fisheries, ecotourism, and aquatic education. Shoreline and underwater cleanups and mooring buoy installation and

maintenance are also funded. The next application deadline is March 15, 2007. For details, visit www.projectaware.org/americas/english/grants.asp.

USDA-NRCS Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG). The CIG program is designed to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies. For FY 2007, up to \$20 million is available for the National CIG competition. Funds for single- or multi-year projects up to three years will be awarded through a nationwide competitive grants process. The three CIG categories available in FY 2007 are Natural Resource Concerns, Chesapeake Bay Watershed and Technology. For details, visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig.

USDA-NRCS Caribbean Area Conservation Innovation Grants are also available for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The Caribbean Area has \$275,000 available this year. Project proposals are due April 13, 2007. For details, contact Edwin Mas at 787-831-3421 or Edwin.Mas@pr.usda.gov.

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service Private Stewardship Grants support individuals and groups engaged in local, private, and voluntary conservation efforts that benefit federally listed, proposed, or candidate species, or other at-risk species. For details, visit www.fws.gov/engangered/grants/private_stewardship/index.html.

Upcoming Events

Local

February 17-19, 2007. **St. Croix Agri-Fest**, V.I. Department of Agriculture Fairgrounds, St. Croix, USVI. Contact 340-778-0997 for details.

February 21, 2007. **Understanding Your Septic System Workshop**, UVI-SBDC Training Room, Nisky Center, St. Thomas, VI. Contact Dale Morton, UVI-CES, at 340-693-1080 or dmorton@uvi.edu for details.

March 1, 2007. **Understanding Your Septic System Workshop**, UVI-REC 133, St. Croix, VI. For details, contact Dale Morton, UVI-CES, at 340-693-1080 or dmorton@uvi.edu.

National

February 4-8, 2007. **NACD 61st Annual Meeting, "Power of Conservation,"** Los Angeles, CA. For details, visit www.2007.nacdnet.org.

February 8-9, 2007. **Design of Stormwater Management Systems**, Dallas, TX. For details, visit www.waterlearning.org.

February 12-16, 2007. **EC07: the International Erosion Control Association Annual Conference & Expo**, Reno, NV. For details, visit www.ica.org/conference/annual/aboutec.asp.

February 20-21, 2007. **Design of Stormwater Management Systems**, Orlando, FL. For details, visit www.waterlearning.org.

February 26-27, 2007. **Design of Stormwater Management Systems**, Nashville, TN. For details, visit www.waterlearning.org.

March 1-2, 2007. **Design of Stormwater Management Systems**, Columbus, OH. For details, visit www.waterlearning.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.

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, Claudette Lewis, Acting Commissioner.*

Editor & Designer:
Julie Wright, USDA-NRCS
Reviewers:
Diane Capehart, DPNR-DEP,
Rudy G. O'Reilly, Jr., USDA-NRCS,
Lillian Moolenaar, DPNR-CZM,
Dr. Robin Sterns, UVI,
Marcia Taylor, UVI-VIMAS,
Toni Thomas, UVI-CES

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 VI Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc., 5030 Anchor Way, Suite 2, Gallows Bay, Christiansted, VI 00820, fax (340) 692-9607, email: vircd@usvircd.org.

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