



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DPNR PERMITS REQUIRED FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) reminds the scientific community, as well as the public, that a permit is required to conduct all scientific research projects within the territory.

Under VIC Title 12, Chapter 2, Subsections 105 and 106, “collectors for recognized museums, educational institutions, and scientific research organizations; persons engaged in bona fide scientific research in connection with such organizations; and persons engaged in approved recovery and propagation activities” are required to obtain a research permit prior to conducting any activity within the territory. Permits are available to conduct research activities on endangered species, scientific and educational projects, and for the visitation to offshore cays.

The Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) issues approximately 80 permits per year. Projects range from the use of sargassum seaweed as fertilizer, to exploring the types of spiders in the territory. DFW also issues permits for indigenous and exotic species retention, nuisance species collection, and mangrove trimming. Additionally, DFW collaborates with the Department of Agriculture in approving importation permits for non-indigenous species entering the territory.

DPNR also announces an upcoming series highlighting local research projects currently underway by the scientific community. **The RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT** series will include projects with lizards, corals, sediment sampling, earthworms, marine fish and invertebrates, marine turtles, and agaves. Among the permitted researchers are the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), SEAS Islands Alliance, SEA Turtle Assistance Rescue (STAR), and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

For further questions or the current permit application, please contact the Division of Fish and Wildlife at 340-773-1082 on St. Croix, 340-776-6762 on St. Thomas/St. John, or visit the department website: www.dpr.vi.gov.