United States Virgin Islands

COMMERCIAL FISHER'S INFORMATION HANDBOOK

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES

DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE

2022

Note

This booklet summarizes the rules and regulations for recreational and commercial fishing in the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) and some of the federal regulations that apply in adjacent Federal waters.

This publication was prepared for general informational purposes only and has no legal force or effect. Fishing regulations are subject to change. **It is your responsibility to become familiar with the latest territorial and federal regulatory updates and to comply with the current official regulations.** Previous editions of this handbook represent outdated information and should not be used. For additional and updated regulations concerning USVI Territorial waters (0 to 3 nautical miles offshore), please contact the USVI Division of Environmental Enforcement at 340-774-3320 (St. Thomas) or 340-773-5774 (St. Croix).

For current and specific regulations for fishing in Federal waters (3 – 200 nautical miles offshore), fishers should contact the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) Southeast Regional Office at 727-824-5305 or consult official sources of information, such as the Federal Register. Fishers with questions about Atlantic Highly Migratory Species should call the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Management Division at 727-824-5399 (Spanish or English) or 301-427-8503 (English only). **If there is a discrepancy between this document and the regulations in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations** (https://gov.ecfr.io/cgi-bin/ECFR) **or the Virgin Islands Code** (http://www.lexis nexis.com/hottopics/vicode/), **the regulations take precedence.**

If you have any questions concerning fishery matters other than regulations, please contact the USVI Division of Fish and Wildlife (see back cover).

We would like to thank the following agencies for assisting in the preparation of this handbook: NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office – Sustainable Fisheries Division, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service – Habitat Conservation Division, NOAA Fisheries Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Management Division, the Caribbean Fishery Management Council, the National Park Service, the St. Croix Fishery Advisory Committee, the Pew Charitable Trusts, and the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources.

GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Office of the Commissioner

To the Commercial Fishing Community of the US Virgin Islands

Fishing is a strong part of our island way of life, whether you're a commercial fisher providing fresh catch to residents or restaurants, a charter providing recreational opportunities for our visitors and residents looking to spend the day out at sea, or an individual tossing a handline out to relax. The Department encourages all to enjoy our fisheries resources in the manner that suits them; however, to ensure the longevity of these resources, certain guidelines apply.

This handbook is the first to provide the rules and regulations for commercial fishing in the US Virgin Islands and in our adjacent federal waters. The handbook is updated with graphical representations of catch limitations, seasonal closures, and harvest restrictions, as well as the process for obtaining a commercial fishing license renewal or how to apply for the very first time. Regulations vary depending on the district you fish in (St. Thomas/St. John or St. Croix), so please be mindful of your geographic location while on the water and when landing fish.

Only with your participation in responsible resource usage will we ensure the sustainability of our great fishery. The Department looks forward to continued collaboration and active participation with the fishing community on the sustainability of our fishery now and for generations to come.

Should you have any questions regarding any of the regulations within this handbook, please contact DPNR's Division of Fish and Wildlife at (340)773-1082.

Best Regards,

Jean-Pierre L. Oriol
Commissioner

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TO ALL FISHERS OF THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

The U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) is responsible for the conservation and management of our fisheries and enforcement of boating and fishing regulations (*V.I. Code Title 12 Conservation, Title 25 Navigation,* and the *Boating Safety Act of 1972*). The Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) monitors the commercial and recreational fisheries of the USVI and provides recommendations to the Commissioner of DPNR on matters relating to fisheries management. Working with fishers to obtain accurate information is a vital component of DFW's work and will help to ensure that the fishery resources of the USVI remain sustainable for future generations.

The Division of Environmental Enforcement is responsible for the explanation and enforcement of regulations in matters pertaining to boating, fishing, and the environment.

We hope that you find this handbook useful as you engage in your fishing activities. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us (see back cover for contact information).

RELEVANT LINKS

USVI Department of Planning & Natural Resources – https://dpnr.vi.gov

USVI Division of Fish & Wildlife – https://dpnr.vi.gov/fish-and-wildlife/

USVI DFW Fisher Resources - https://dpnr.vi.gov/fish-and-wildlife/fish/

USVI Division of Environmental Enforcement - https://dpnr.vi.gov/environmental-enforcement/

USVI Division of Environmental Enforcement Forms - https://dpnr.vi.gov/environmental-enforcement/forms-2/

USVI Recreational Fishing License & Information – http://usvifishinglicense.org

Virgin Islands Code – https://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/vicode

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) – https://gov.ecfr.io/cgi-bin-ECFR

The Federal Register - https://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/national-oceanic-and-atmospheric-administration

Caribbean Fisheries Management Council – http://www.caribbeanfmc.com

NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service – https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov

NOAA NMFS Southeast Regional Office – http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov

NOAA Southeast Region Annual Catch Limit (ACL) Monitoring - https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/southeast/sustainable-fisheries/southeast-region-annual-catch-limit-acl-monitoring

NOAA Southeast Regional Office Permit Shop – https://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/permits

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (NMFS) – https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/atlantic-highly-migratory-species and https://hmspermits.noaa.gov

Highly Migratory Species Compliance Guide - https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/educational-materials/atlantic-highly-migratory-species-recreational-compliance-guide

Reef Responsible Sustainable Seafood Initiative - https://www.facebook.com/reefresponsiblevi

USVI FISHING RULES AND REGULATIONS

The remainder of this booklet summarizes the rules and regulations for fishing in the U.S. Virgin Islands and adjacent Federal waters. As fishing regulations can change, fishers are responsible for remaining up to date with regulations. For current and specific regulations for fishing in Territorial waters, fishers may contact the USVI Division of Environmental Enforcement. Regulations pertaining to adjacent Federal waters are presented on Page 27. For current and specific regulations for fishing in Federal waters, fishers should contact the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) Southeast Regional Office at 727-824-5305.

GENERAL RULES FOR FISHERS

1. *V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §322* — **No explosives, poisons, drugs, or other chemicals may be used to fish in Territorial or Federal waters.**

2. **Fishing Vessel Registration** (*V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 9A, § 311 & 312(a)*) – No person may engage in fishing and no vessel or other fishing device may be used in fishing in the territory unless registered, certified or licensed. Any and all vessels used for or engaged in commercial fishing or the hauling of traps, pots, nets or seines in the territory shall conform to the requirements for displaying numbers and colors. Annual boat registration is conducted by the Division of Environmental Enforcement during the month of June. Commercial fishers may register their boats while renewing their commercial fishing licenses in July.

3. **Boat Safety Standards** – All motorboats must meet the safety standards of the Virgin Islands Code and the Federal Boating Safety Act of 1972.

4. **Fishing in waters outside of the USVI** – The British Virgin Islands (BVI) and Puerto Rico each have their own fishing laws and regulations. Your USVI fishing license does not permit you to fish in the Territorial waters of the BVI or Puerto Rico, nor does it permit you to fish in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of other countries.

5. **Fishing in Altona Lagoon and Great Pond, St. Croix** – No commercial fishing is permitted in Altona Lagoon or Great Pond, St. Croix.

   A recreational shrimp fishing permit is required for the harvesting of shrimp (see page 26). A one-year permit for $10 is available at the Division of Environmental Enforcement's St. Croix office (contact information on back cover).

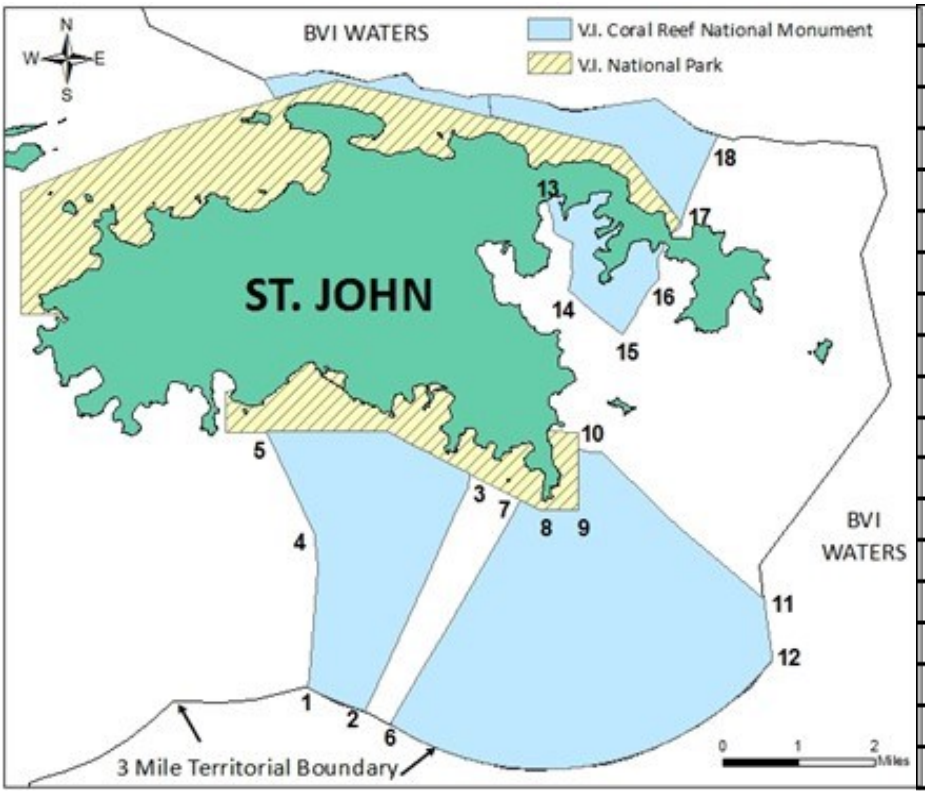
6. **St. James Marine Reserve & Wildlife Sanctuary** – A permit is required to collect baitfish with a cast net. Fishing for baitfish is not allowed within 50 feet of the shoreline or to fish with a hook and line. The line fishing permit costs $2.00 per month. The bait fishing permit costs $5.00 per month. Both permits may be purchased for a maximum of two months from the Division of Environmental Enforcement. The permits may be renewed at the end of the two months.

7. **Cas Cay/Mangrove Lagoon Marine Reserve & Wildlife Sanctuary** – A permit is required to collect baitfish using a cast net. Fishing for baitfish is not allowed within 50 feet of shorelines. The bait fishing permit is $5.00 per month and may be purchased for a maximum of two months from the Division of Environmental Enforcement.

   All other fishing and harvest of other animals and plants is prohibited in this area (see page 25). All fishing is prohibited in the **Inner Mangrove Lagoon** (see pages 25 and 37).

8. **USVI Marine Reserve System** – For information on the rules and regulations of other areas within the Virgin Islands Marine Reserve System, contact the Division of Environmental Enforcement at (340) 774-3320 (St. Thomas) or (340) 773-5774 (St. Croix). For information on the St. Croix East End Marine Park, contact the Marine Park Coordinator at (340) 718-3367.

9. **Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument (VICRNM)** (*36 CFR 7.46*) – Anchoring is prohibited and all fishing is prohibited in VICRNM, with the following exceptions: 1) Bait fishing is permitted in Hurricane Hole and 2) fishing for Blue Runner (Hardnose) is only permitted at designated mooring locations near Cabritte Horn Point. Both activities require a permit from the National Park Service (NPS). For information and regulations regarding the V.I. Coral Reef National Monument (south and northeast sides of St. John), contact NPS at (340) 776-6201. **The rules and regulations for the V.I. Coral Reef National Monument are different from those of the VI National Park waters.**



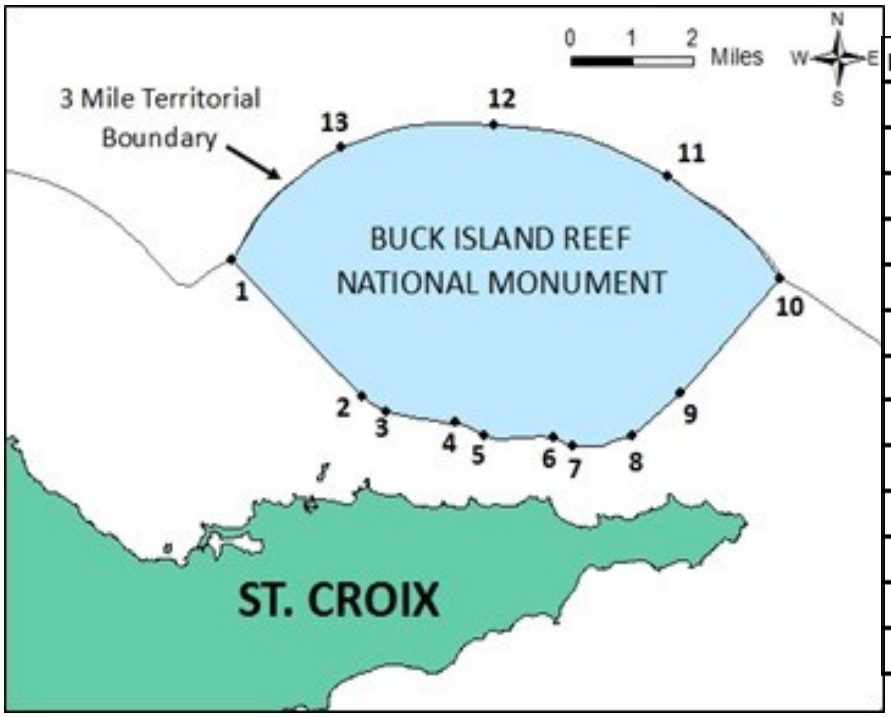
Point	Latitude	Longitude
1	18°15.799'N	64°44.878'W
2	18°15.532'N	64°44.235'W
3	18°18.178'N	64°43.036'W
4	18°17.504'N	64°44.819'W
5	18°18.692'N	64°45.354'W
6	18°15.413'N	64°43.947'W
7	18°17.899'N	64°42.451'W
8	18°17.781'N	64°42.243'W
9	18°17.791'N	64°41.808'W
10	18°18.474'N	64°41.540'W
11	18°16.790'N	64°39.678'W
12	18°16.097'N	64°39.579'W
13	18°20.772'N	64°41.877'W
14	18°20.287'N	64°41.916'W
15	18°19.762'N	64°41.292'W
16	18°20.386'N	64°40.876'W
17	18°21.070'N	64°40.629'W
18	18°21.961'N	64°40.242'W

Map and table showing locations of marker buoys delineating the VI Coral Reef National Monument.

10. **Virgin Islands National Park** (*36 CFR 7.74*) – Anchoring is prohibited except in designated areas. The Virgin Islands National Park (see figure above) has separate and specific regulations on fishing. Commercial fishing is prohibited. Fishing using rod and reel or handline is permitted. Fishing with traps of conventional Virgin Islands design and not larger than five feet at the greatest dimension is permitted. Baitfish may be taken by nets of no greater overall length than 20 feet and of mesh not larger than 1 inch stretched. The possession of or use of spearfishing equipment within park boundaries is prohibited. All fishing is prohibited: in swim zones (designated by white cylindrical boat exclusion buoys), when tied to a mooring ball, and from the following areas 1) NPS Red Hook Dock, and 2) Cruz Bay Finger Pier & Bulkhead.

    The species of crustaceans known as Caribbean Spiny Lobster (*Panulirus argus*) may be taken by hand. No person shall take female lobsters with eggs; or take more than two lobsters per person per day; or have in possession more than two days' limit. Species of mollusks commonly known as whelks (West Indian Top Snail) and conchs (Queen Conch) may be taken by hand. No person shall take more than two conchs or one gallon of whelks, or both, per day, or have in possession more than two days' limit. For information on fishing regulations within the Virgin Islands National Park, contact the National Park Service at (340) 776-6201, or visit their web site at: *https://www.nps.gov/viis/planyourvisit/ index.htm*.

11. **Buck Island Reef National Monument** (36 *CFR 7.73*) – All fishing and fishing equipment is prohibited throughout Buck Island Reef National Monument. All anchoring is prohibited except in areas designated by the National Park Service. For current information regarding rules and regulations for Buck Island Reef National Monument, St. Croix, contact the Visitor and Resource Protection Division at Christiansted National Historic Site, Christiansted Headquarters office at (340) 773-1460. NPS boundary buoys are located at points 2-9 on the figure below. NPS boundary buoys, letter designation I, J, K, L, M, N, O are yellow in color, unlighted with reflective tape.

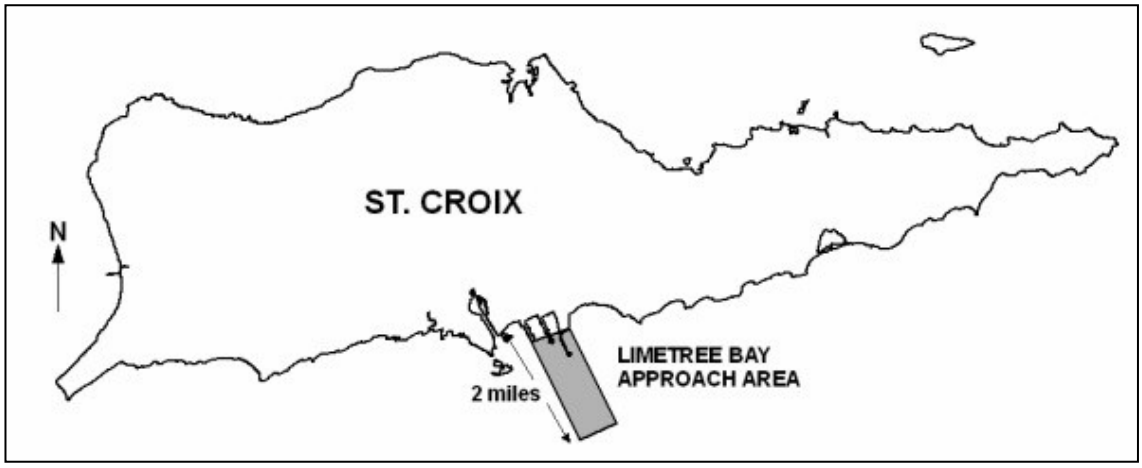


Point	Latitude	Longitude
1	17°48.871' N	64°41.242' W
2	17°47.033' N	64°39.377' W
3	17°46.825' N	64°39.040' W
4	17°46.666' N	64°38.123' W
5	17°46.498' N	64°37.634' W
6	17°46.480' N	64°36.763' W
7	17°46.351' N	64°36.364' W
8	17°46.505' N	64°35.525' W
9	17°47.283' N	64°34.618' W
10	17°48.623' N	64°33.404' W
11	17°50.246' N	64°35.558' W
12	17°50.671' N	64°37.474' W
13	17°50.376' N	64°39.673' W

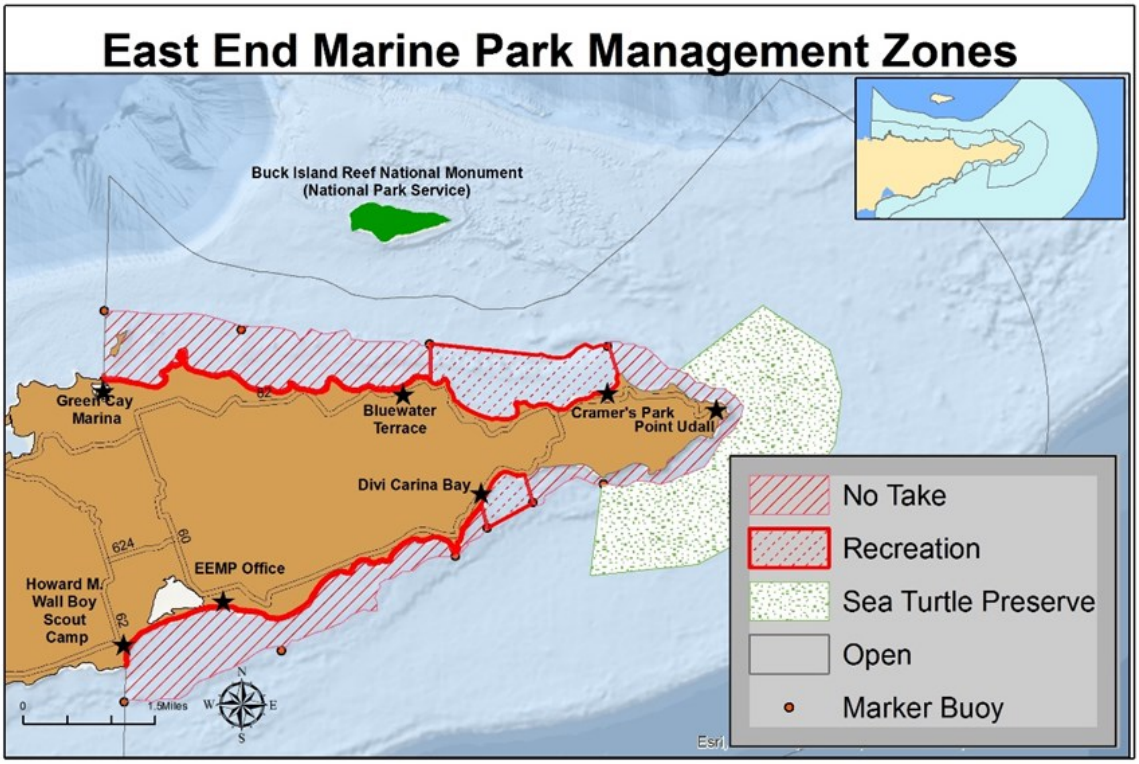
Map and table showing locations of marker buoys delineating Buck Island Reed National Monument, St. Croix.

12. **Limetree Bay Restricted Area, St. Croix**—Limetree Bay remains a Restricted Area. No vessels may enter the restricted area or cross channels or pass inside the fringing reef upon entering or leaving Alucroix Channel (see figure below). This area includes all waters two miles seaward of the Limetree Bay facility waterfront. Anchoring, mooring, or transiting this area is not permitted. For current information on restrictions, during normal business hours (Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm) contact the Marine Pilot at (340) 692-3489 or VHF Radio channel 11 or Command Center at (340) 692-3000. After business hours, please contact the 24-hour line at (340) 692-3518. You may also contact the U.S. Coast Guard in St. Croix at (340) 772-5557 ext. 209 for Boat Forces, or sector San Juan at (787) 289-2041.

13. **St. Croix East End Marine Park** (*V.I.C, Title 12, Chapter 1, §98*) — The Park includes a No-take Area, Turtle Wildlife Area, Recreation Area and Open Area, as prescribed in the St. Croix East End Marine Park Management Plan prepared by the Virgin Islands Program of the Nature Conservancy for the Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources and approved by the Virgin Islands Coastal Zone Management Commission on July 19, 2002. See more information on page 47.



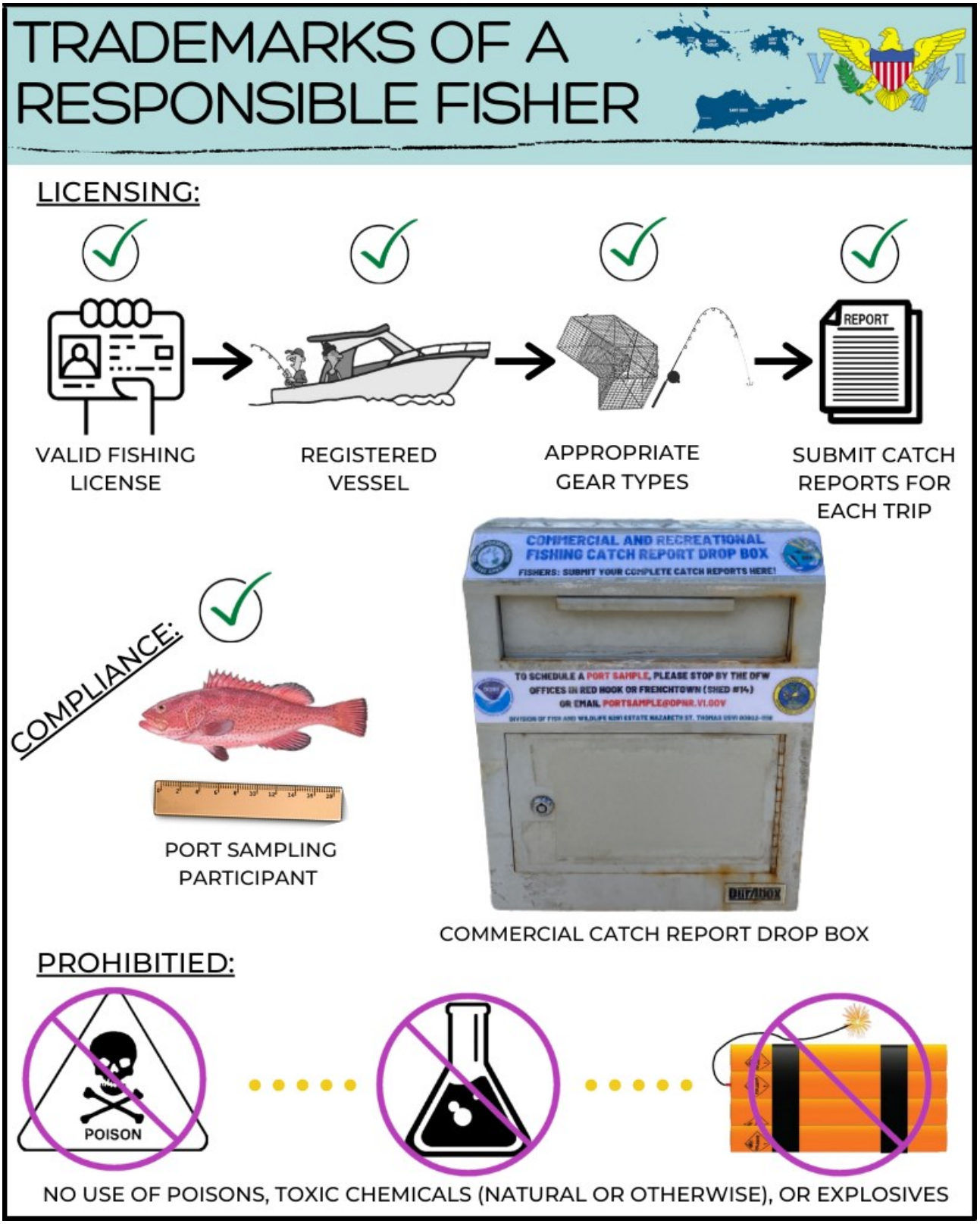
Map showing the location of Limetree Bay restricted area in St. Croix.



Map of East End Marine Park with related boundary zones.

TRADEMARKS OF A RESPONSIBLE FISHER

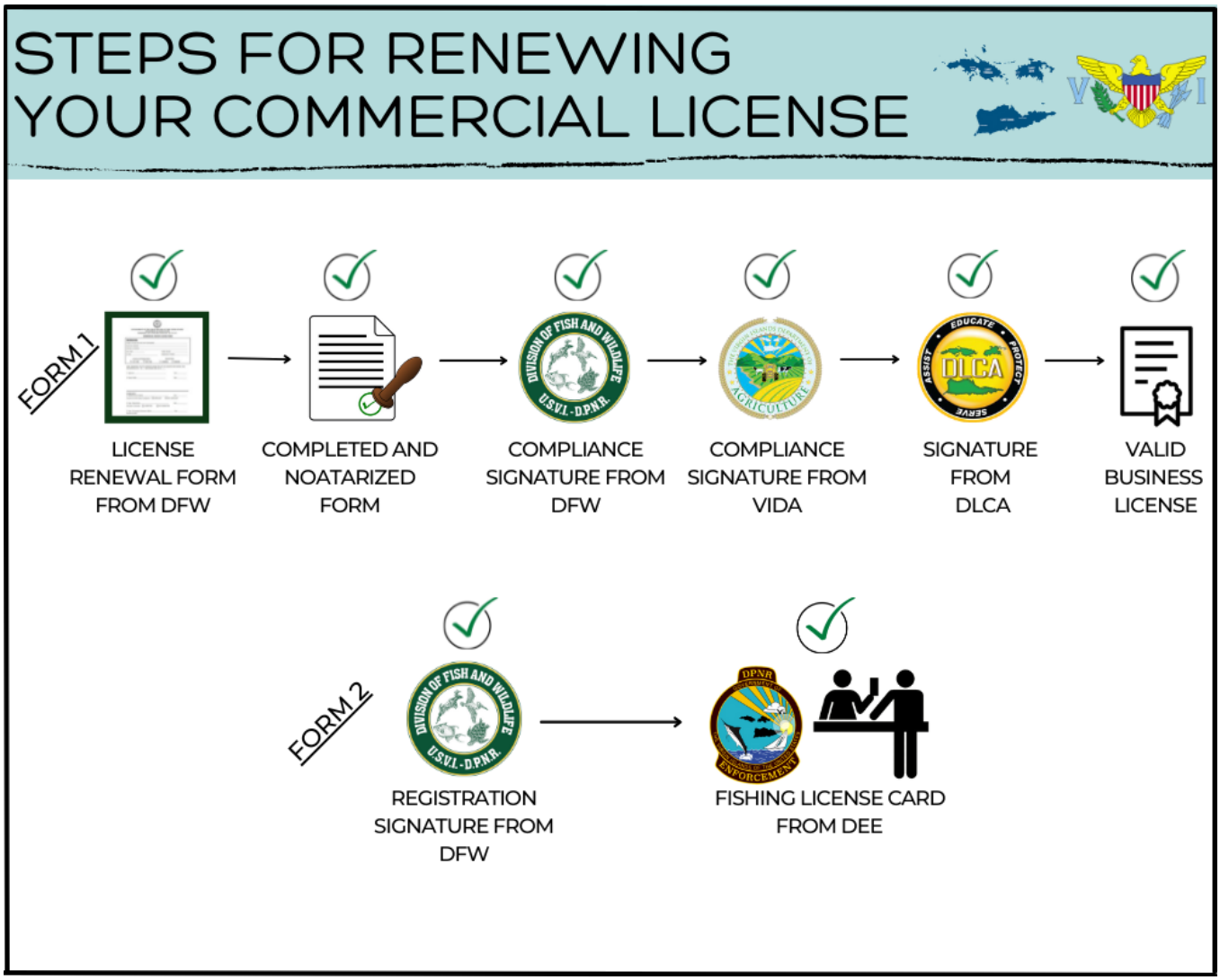
On August 24, 2001, the USVI Department of Planning and Natural Resources implemented a moratorium on issuance of new commercial fishing licenses. On October 1, 2021, the USVI Department of Planning and Natural Resources lifted the moratorium on commercial licenses. Commercial fishing licenses are now based on a limited entry application process. Please visit the DFW website at www.dpnr.vi.gov/fish-and-wildlife/fish/ to get the application form for a commercial license. Existing licenses must be renewed annually. Fishing licenses may be transferred (see next page).



TRANSFER OF USVI COMMERCIAL FISHING LICENSES

Commercial fishing licenses are transferable. *V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §312(*c) as amended by Bill number 29-0329 allows the transfer of fishing licenses to family members and fishers' helpers. License transfer requests are submitted to the Division of Fish and Wildlife and are approved or denied by the Commissioner of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources. To apply to have your fishing license transferred, pick up the required form from the DFW offices. The completed form needs to be signed by both the original license holder and the transferee (license recipient) and must be notarized. Any supporting documentation shall be included.

Commercial fishing licenses may only be issued to U.S. citizens who are permanent residents of the USVI for at least one year. No license shall be issued to a minor under 17 years old, except with the written consent of his or her parent or guardian.



LOST OR DESTROYED LICENSES AND ID CARDS

If a USVI commercial fishing license or ID card is lost, misplaced, or destroyed, the licensed fisher or helper may apply to the Division of Environmental Enforcement to receive a replacement. There is a $2.00 fee for replacing a lost license and a $25.00 fee for replacing a fisher or helper ID card. The ID card must be renewed yearly.

GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FISHERMEN AND CONSUMER ASSISTANT ACT OF 1977

COMMERCIAL FISHER'S LICENSE FORM

INFORMATION:

NAME: (PLEASE INCLUDE ANY NICKNAMES) _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

PHYSICAL ADDRESS: _____

ZIP CODE: _____ HOME PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____ EMERGENCY PHONE: _____

Commercial Fishing Status: **License Status:**

☐ **FULL TIME** ☐ **PART TIME** ☐ **RENEWAL** ☐ **TRANSFER**

NOW, THEREFORE, THE FULL BENEFITS UNDER THIS ACT ARE GRANTED FOR FISHING YEAR BEGININNING JULY 1, 20____ AND ENDING JUNE 30, 20_____.

1. Applicant: _____ Date: _____

2. Notary Public: _____ Date: _____

Certifications:

3. DPNR/Fish and Wildlife: _____ Date: _____

Commercial Catch Report Compliance: ☐ COMPLIANT ☐ NOT COMPLIANT

4. Dept. of Agriculture: _____ Date: _____

Schedule C Submitted: ☐ SUBMITTED ☐ NOT SUBMITTED

5. Dept. of Licensing & Consumer Affairs: _____ Date: _____

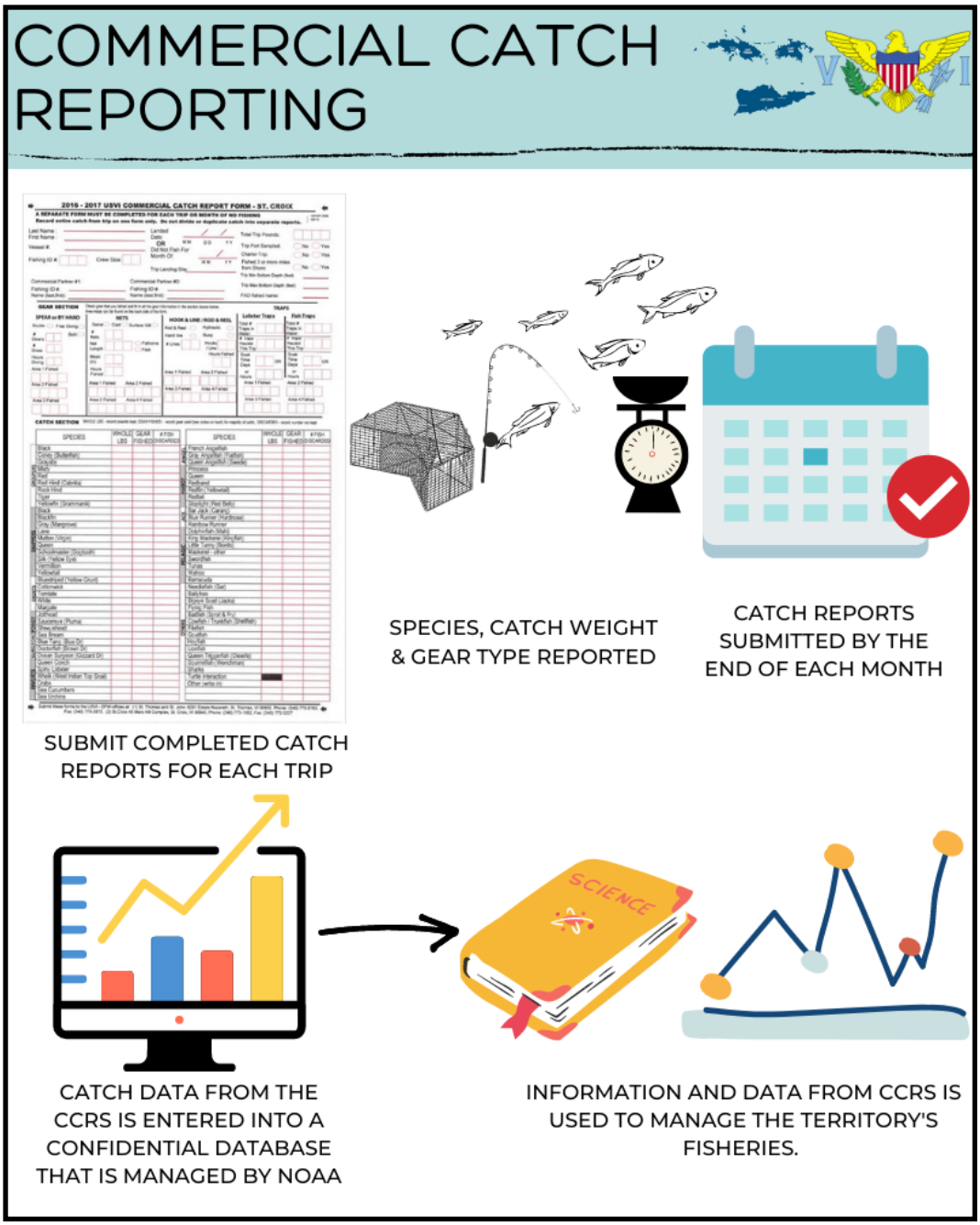
Revised July 2020

Form 1 that is needed as part of the commercial fishing license renewal process.

COMMERCIAL CATCH REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

DFW monitors fishery resources in the U.S. Virgin Islands using commercial catch reports (CCRs) submitted by fishers. These forms collect information about fishing activity. All information is entered into a confidential database by DFW staff and managed by NOAA. Accurate data is essential to fisheries management, as the information you provide contributes to a better understanding of our fishery. This allows resource managers to make more informed decisions about our fisheries, fishing industry, and related issues, ensuring that the fisheries are kept sustainable for you as well as future generations. It is in your best interests to fill out your reports as truthfully and completely as possible. Inaccurate or incomplete CCRs provide misleading data that may generate undue concern over a fishery resource.

If you do not fish during a calendar month, a CCR must still be submitted for each month that you did not fish. Record your name, fishing license #, and month you did not fish on the top of the form. **If all required CCRs are not submitted to DFW, you will not be able to renew your fishing license until the missing forms are submitted, and you may be subject to penalties.**



USVI COMMERCIAL CATCH REPORT FORM - ST. THOMAS & ST. JOHN

A SEPARATE FORM MUST BE COMPLETED FOR EACH TRIP OR MONTH OF NO FISHING
Record entire catch from trip on one form only. Do not divide or duplicate catch into separate reports.

version 4/2021

Last Name: _____
First Name: _____
Vessel #: _____
Fishing License #: _____ Crew Size: _____

Landed Date: ___/___/___ (MM DD YY)
OR
Did Not Fish For The Month Of: ___/___ (MM YY)
Trip Landing Site: _____

Total Trip Pounds: _____
Trip Port Sampled? ◯ No ◯ Yes
Charter Trip? ◯ No ◯ Yes
Fished 3 or more miles from Shore? ◯ No ◯ Yes
Trip Min Bottom Depth (ft) _____
Trip Max Bottom Depth (ft) _____
FAD fished name(s) _____

Partner #1	Partner #2
Commercial License #: _____	Commercial License #: _____
Name (Last, First): _____	Name (Last, First): _____

GEAR SECTION
Check gear that you fished and fill in all the gear information in the section boxes below.
Area maps and codes can be found on the back side of the form.

DIVING
Scuba ◯ Free Diving ◯ Both ◯
Divers _____
Dives _____
Hours Diving _____
Area 1 Fished
Area 2 Fished
Area 3 Fished

NETS
Seine ◯ Cast ◯ Surface Gill ◯
# of Nets _____
Net Length _____ ◯ Fathoms ◯ Feet
Mesh Size (in.) _____
Hours Fished _____
Area 1 Fished | Area 2 Fished
Area 3 Fished | Area 4 Fished

HOOK & LINE
Rod & Reel ◯ Hydraulic ◯
Handline ◯ Buoy ◯
Lines _____
Hooks per Line _____
Hours Fished _____
Area 1 Fished | Area 2 Fished
Area 3 Fished | Area 4 Fished

TRAPS
Lobster Traps
Total # Traps in Water _____
Traps Hauled This Trip _____
Soak Time (Days) _____
OR Hours _____
Area 1 Fished
Area 3 Fished

Fish Traps
Total # Traps in Water _____
Traps Hauled This Trip _____
Soak Time (Days) _____
OR Hours _____
Area 2 Fished
Area 4 Fished

CATCH SECTION WHOLE LBS - record pounds kept, GEAR FISHED - record gear used (see codes on back) for majority of catch, DISCARDED - record number not kept

	SPECIES	WHOLE LBS	GEAR FISHED	# FISH DISCARDED
GROUPERS	Black			
	Coney (Butterfish)			
	Misty			
	Red			
	Red Hind			
	Tiger			
	Rock Hind			
	Yellowfin (Grammanik)			
	Yellowmouth			
	Yellowedge			
SNAPPERS	Black			
	Blackfin			
	Gray (Mangrove)			
	Lane			
	Mutton (Virgin/Bunt Tail)			
	Queen			
	Silk (Yellow Eye)			
	Vermilion			
	Yellowtail			
GRUNTS	Bluestriped (Yellow Grunt)			
	Cottonwick (Whipper)			
	Margate			
	Tomtate			
	White			
PORGIES	Jolthead			
	Saucereye (Pluma)			
	Sea Bream			
	Sheepshead			
SURGEON	Blue Tang (Blue Doctor)			
	Doctorfish (Brown Doctor)			
	Ocean Surgeon (Gizzard Doctor)			
INVERTS	Queen Conch			
	Spiny Lobster			
	Whelk (West Indian Top Snail)			
	Crabs			
	Sea Cucumbers			
	Sea Urchins			
ANGELS	French Angelfish			
	Gray Angelfish (Flatfish)			
	Queen Angelfish (Swede)			

	SPECIES	WHOLE LBS	GEAR FISHED	# FISH DISCARDED
PARROTS	Princess			
	Queen			
	Redband			
	Redfin (Yellowtail)			
	Redtail (Goo-Too)			
	Stoplight (Goo-Too)			
JACKS	Bar Jack (Carang)			
	Bigeye Scad			
	Blue Runner (Hardnose)			
	Rainbow Runner			
PELAGICS	Dolphinfish (Mahi)			
	King Mackerel (Kingfish)			
	Little Tunny (Bonito)			
	Mackerel - other			
	Wahoo			
HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES	Swordfish			
	Bigeye tuna			
	Skipjack tuna			
	Yellowfin tuna			
	Caribbean reef shark			
	Great hammerhead shark			
	Nurse shark			
	Scalloped hammerhead shark			
	Tiger shark			
	Other (shark):			
OTHERS	Baitfish (Sprat & Fry)			
	Ballyhoo			
	Cowfish/Trunkfish (Shellfish)			
	Flying Fish			
	Filefish			
	Hogfish			
	Lionfish			
	Needlefish (Gar)			
	Queen Triggerfish (Olewife)			
	Squirrelfish (Redmon)			
	Turtle Interactions			
	Other (write in):			
	Other:			
	Other:			
	Other:			

➡ Submit these forms to the USVI St. Thomas and St. John DFW office at: 6291 Estate Nazareth, St. Thomas, VI 00802, Phone: (340) 775-6762 ⬅

Commercial Catch Report for St.Thomas/St. John. This form should be completed for every commercial trip. If fishing did not occur during the month, then the form should still be completed and submitted for the month(s) in which fishing did not occur.

USVI COMMERCIAL CATCH REPORT FORM - ST. CROIX

version 4/2019

A SEPARATE FORM MUST BE COMPLETED FOR EACH TRIP OR MONTH OF NO FISHING
Record entire catch from trip on one form only. Do not divide or duplicate catch into separate reports.

Last Name: _____
First Name: _____
Vessel #: _____
Fishing License #: _____ Crew Size: _____

Landed Date: ___/___/___ (MM DD YY)
OR
Did Not Fish For The Month Of: ___/___ (MM YY)
Trip Landing Site: _____

Total Trip Pounds: _____
Trip Port Sampled? ◯ No ◯ Yes
Charter Trip? ◯ No ◯ Yes
Fished 3 or more miles from Shore? ◯ No ◯ Yes
Trip Min Bottom Depth (ft) _____
Trip Max Bottom Depth (ft) _____
FAD fished name(s) _____

Partner #1	*Partner #2*
Commercial License #: _____	Commercial License #: _____
Name (Last, First): _____	Name (Last, First): _____

GEAR SECTION Check gear that you fished and fill in all the gear information in the section boxes below. Area maps and codes can be found on the back side of the form.

DIVING
Scuba ◯ Free Diving ◯ Both ◯
Divers _____
Dives _____
Hours Diving _____
_____ Area 1 Fished
_____ Area 2 Fished
_____ Area 3 Fished

NETS
Seine ◯ Cast ◯ Surface Gill ◯
# of Nets _____
Net Length _____ ◯ Fathoms ◯ Feet
Mesh Size (in.) _____
Hours Fished _____

Area 1 Fished	Area 2 Fished
Area 3 Fished	Area 4 Fished

HOOK & LINE
Rod & Reel ◯ Hydraulic ◯
Handline ◯ Buoy ◯
Lines _____
Hooks per Line _____
Hours Fished _____

Area 1 Fished	Area 2 Fished
Area 3 Fished	Area 4 Fished

TRAPS

Lobster Traps	Fish Traps
Total # Traps in Water _____	Total # Traps in Water _____
# Traps Hauled This Trip _____	# Traps Hauled This Trip _____
Soak Time (Days) _____	Soak Time (Days) _____
OR Hours _____	OR Hours _____
Area 1 Fished	Area 2 Fished
Area 3 Fished	Area 4 Fished

CATCH SECTION WHOLE LBS - record pounds kept, GEAR FISHED - record gear used (see codes on back) for majority of catch, DISCARDED - record number not kept

	SPECIES	WHOLE LBS	GEAR FISHED	# FISH DISCARDED
GROUPERS	Black			
	Coney (Butterfish)			
	Graysby			
	Misty			
	Red			
	Red Hind (Cabrilla)			
	Rock Hind			
	Tiger			
	Yellowfin (Grammanik)			
SNAPPERS	Black			
	Blackfin			
	Gray (Mangrove)			
	Lane			
	Mutton (Virgin/Bunt Tail)			
	Queen			
	Schoolmaster (Dogtooth)			
	Silk (Yellow Eye)			
	Vermilion			
	Yellowtail			
GRUNTS	Bluestriped (Yellow Grunt)			
	Cottonwick (Whipper)			
	Margate			
	Tomtate			
	White			
PORGIES	Jolthead			
	Saucereye (Pluma)			
	Sea Bream			
	Sheepshead			
SURGEON	Blue Tang (Blue Doctor)			
	Doctorfish (Brown Doctor)			
	Ocean Surgeon (Gizzard Doctor)			
INVERTS	Queen Conch			
	Spiny Lobster			
	Whelk (West Indian Top Snail)			
	Crabs			
	Sea Cucumbers			
	Sea Urchins			
ANGELS	French Angelfish			
	Gray Angelfish (Flatfish)			
	Queen Angelfish (Swede)			

	SPECIES	WHOLE LBS	GEAR FISHED	# FISH DISCARDED
PARROTS	Princess			
	Queen			
	Redband			
	Redfin (Yellowtail)			
	Redtail			
	Stoplight (Red Belly)			
JACKS	Bar Jack (Carang)			
	Bigeye Scad			
	Blue Runner (Hardnose)			
	Rainbow Runner			
PELAGICS	Barracuda			
	Dolphinfish (Mahi)			
	King Mackerel (Kingfish)			
	Little Tunny (Bonito)			
	Mackerel - other			
	Wahoo			
HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES	Swordfish			
	Bigeye tuna			
	Skipjack tuna			
	Yellowfin tuna			
	Caribbean reef shark			
	Great hammerhead shark			
	Nurse shark			
	Scalloped hammerhead shark			
	Tiger shark			
	Other (shark):			
OTHERS	Baitfish (Sprat & Fry)			
	Ballyhoo			
	Cowfish/Trunkfish (Shellfish)			
	Flying Fish			
	Filefish			
	Goatfish			
	Hogfish			
	Lionfish			
	Needlefish (Gar)			
	Queen Triggerfish (Olewife)			
	Squirrelfish (Wenchman)			
	Turtle Interaction			
	Other (write in):			
	Other:			

➡ Submit these forms to the USVI St. Croix DFW office at: 45 Mars Hill Complex, St. Croix, VI 00840, Phone: (340) 773-1082 ⬅

Commercial Catch Report for St. Croix. This form should be completed for every commercial trip. If fishing did not occur during the month, then the form should still be completed and submitted for the month(s) in which fishing did not occur.

TERRITORIAL COMMERCIAL FISHING – GENERAL RULES

1. **Gear Compliance** – Before placing any gear in service, contact the Division of Environmental Enforcement to ensure it complies with current regulations.

2. **Boat Marking** (*V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 9A §312g)* – All commercial fishers are assigned buoy colors that pertain to their fishing license number. All boats owned by commercial trap fishers must bear the fisher's colors when engaged in commercial trap fishing.

3. **Marking Fishing Gear** (*V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 9A §312e)* – All fish traps and nets must be marked with the fisher's license number. Buoys must also bear the fisher's assigned unique color scheme and the license #. The number must be cut or burned into the buoy.

4. **Trap Inspection** *(V.I.R.R., Title 12, Chapter 9A §304-6)* – All commercial fish traps must be inspected and tagged prior to use. Call the USVI Division of Environmental Enforcement (DEE) to have the traps inspected and tagged prior to taking them out to sea. For information concerning pre-fishing trap inspections and mesh regulations, contact DEE.

5. **Commercial Fishing Licenses** (*V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 9A §312c, §312h)* – Each commercial fisher is required to have a commercial fishing license. Commercial fishers must have the number of helpers who work with them indicated on their license. Both helpers and licensees must have ID cards.

6. **Fishers' Helpers** (*V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 9A §312h)* – Commercial fishers' helpers must have their own "Helpers License," issued by the USVI Division of Environmental Enforcement. The helpers may not fish without the licensed commercial fisher on board.

7. **Commercial Catch Reports (CCRs)** (*V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 9A §315)* – To monitor the status of USVI fisheries, each fisher is required to submit a commercial catch report for every fishing trip to DFW on a monthly basis. If there was no fishing activity within a calendar month, a single monthly CCR must be received no later than 15 days after the end of the month for which it was prepared.

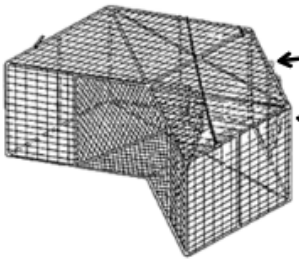
8. **Taxes** – (*V.I.C.*, *Title 7, Chapter 13, §193*) – Fishers who obtain a commercial fishing business license from the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs (DLCA) may become eligible for several tax and fee benefits. Please contact DLCA in St. Thomas at (340) 774-3130 or St. Croix at (340) 773-2226 for information about these laws.

9. **Sampling of Catch / Port Sample Interviews** – Commercial fishing policies require the submission of commercial catch reports monthly as well as participation in DFW's port sampling program, whereby DFW measures your catch to collect detailed data that aids in the management of fisheries resources. Those who are actively fishing are required to participate in at least one (1) port sample per quarter, totaling four (4) for the fishing year. Failure to comply may result in the inability to renew your fishing license. Port samples can be conducted at the dock, at the DFW office, or at another agreed upon location.

COMMERCIAL FISHING GEAR

ALLOWABLE TYPES & SPECIFICATIONS

FISH TRAPS



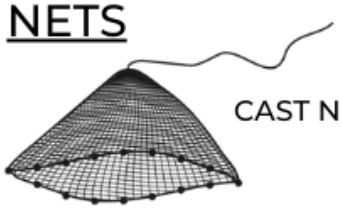
CORRECT MESH SIZE

TRAP AND BUOY LABELED PROPERLY

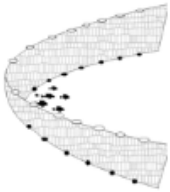
MEETS ALL MATERIAL SPECIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

ALL TRAPS MUST BE INSPECTED AND TAGGED BY THE DIV. OF ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCMENT PRIOR TO USE

NETS



CAST NETS



CORRECT MESH SIZE

PROHIBITIONS

GILLNETS, TRAMMEL NETS, AND POWERHEADS. SPEAR AND HOOK PROHIBITED IN HARVEST OF LOBSTER

EXCPETION: SINGLE-WALL SURFACE GILLNETS WITH A MESH SIZE BETWEEN 0.75-IN AND 1.5-IN. ONLY ONE 1,800FT BAIT NET IS PERMITTED PER VESSEL.

OTHER GEAR TYPES

POLE SPEAR

SNARE

HANDLINE

ROD AND REEL

SPEARGUN

LOBSTER TRAP

SEASONAL CLOSURES

FEBRUARY 1 - APRIL 30
FEDERAL AND TERRITORIAL WATERS

RED GROUPER

BLACK GROUPER

TIGER GROUPER

YELLOWFIN GROUPER

YELLOWEDGE GROUPER

JUNE 1 - OCTOBER 31
FEDERAL AND TERRITORIAL WATERS

QUEEN CONCH

APRIL 1 - SEPTEMBER 30
TERRITORIAL WATERS ONLY

WEST INDIAN TOPSNAIL (WHELK)

APRIL 1 - JUNE 30
FEDERAL AND TERRITORIAL WATERS

MUTTON SNAPPER

LANE SNAPPER

OCTOBER 1 - DECEMBER 31
FEDERAL AND TERRITORIAL WATERS

BLACK SNAPPER

BLACKFIN SNAPPER

VERMILLION SNAPPER

SILK SNAPPER

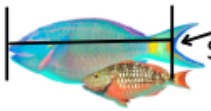
DECEMBER 1-LAST DAY OF FEBRUARY
LANG BANK SPAWNING AGGREGATION AREA

RED HIND GROUPER

For more information regarding seasonal and area closures, please visit the website of The Division of Environmental Enforcement at https://dpnr.vi.gov/environmental-enforcement/

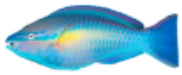
COMMERCIAL CATCH SIZE LIMITS

9-INCHES (FORK LENGTH) *ST. CROIX EEZ ONLY

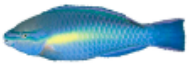


STOPLIGHT PARROT FISH

QUEEN PARROTFISH



PRINCESS PARROTFISH



STRIPED PARROTFISH

REDTAIL PARROTFISH

YELLOWTAIL PARROTFISH

8-INCHES (FORK LENGTH)
*ST. CROIX EEZ ONLY

REDBAND PARROTFISH

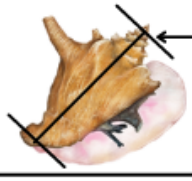
2 7/16-INCHES (DIAMETER)

WEST INDIAN TOPSNAIL (WHELK)

12-INCHES (TOTAL LENGTH)

YELLOWTAIL SNAPPER

9-INCHES (SPIRE TO DISTAL)
3/8-INCH LIP THICKNESS



QUEEN CONCH

3.5-INCHES (CARAPACE LENGTH)

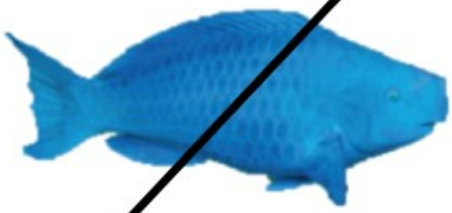
SPINY LOBSTER

PROTECTED MARINE SPECIES OF THE USVI

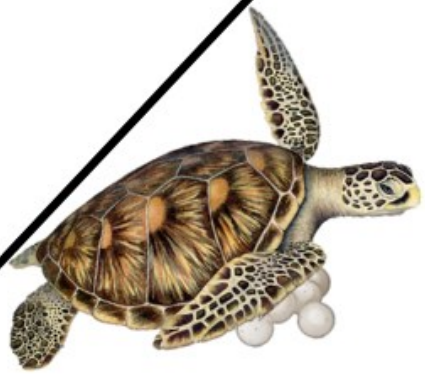
NO HARVEST OR POSESSION IN TERRITORIAL AND/OR FEDERAL WATERS AT ANY TIME

MIDNIGHT PARROTFISH *

RAINBOW PARROTFISH *

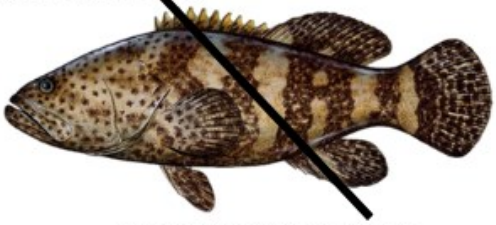


BLUE PARROTFISH *



ALL SEA TURTLE SPECIES AND THEIR EGGS

NASSAU GROUPER



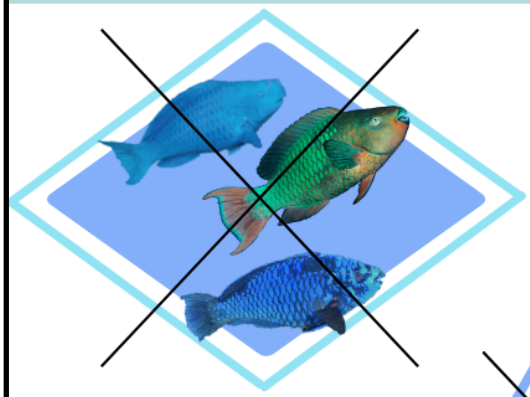
GOLIATH GROUPER

WE THANK YOU FOR NOT HARVESTING, SELLING, TRADING, SERVING, HARRASSING, OR CONSUMING THESE PROTECTED SPECIES

HARVEST OR POSSESSION MAY RESULT IN FINES

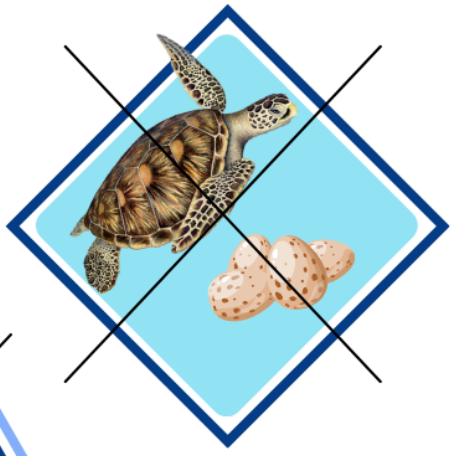
* BLUE, RAINBOW, AND MIDNIGHT PARROTFISH DO NOT HAVE ANY HARVEST RESTRICTIONS IN TERRITORIAL WATERS

NO HARVEST OR POSSESSION



BLUE PARROTFISH, RAINBOW PARROTFISH, MIDNIGHT PARROTFISH *

NASSAU GROUPER, GOLIATH GROUPER

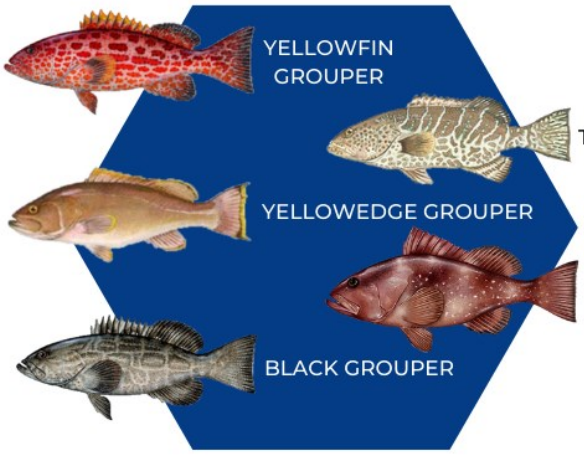


ALL SPECIES OF SEA TURTLES AND THEIR EGGS

WE THANK YOU FOR PROTECTING SPECIES THAT HAVE PROHIBITIONS ON HARVESTING, SELLING, TRADING, SERVING, HARASSING, OR CONSUMING. THEY ARE VERY RARE!

* BLUE, RAINBOW, AND MIDNIGHT PARROTFISH DO NOT HAVE ANY HARVEST RESTRICTIONS IN TERRITORIAL WATERS

ALLOWABLE SIMILAR SPECIES



YELLOWFIN GROUPER

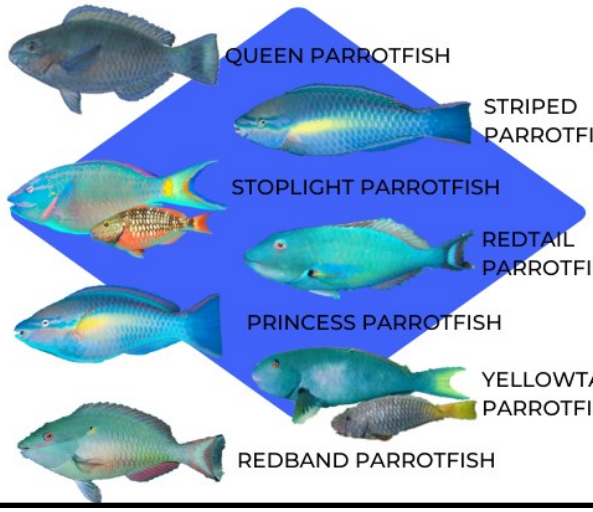
TIGER GROUPER

YELLOWEDGE GROUPER

RED GROUPER

BLACK GROUPER

REMEMBER TO ALWAYS CHECK SEASONAL CLOSURE DATES AND SIZE LIMITS BEFORE HARVESTING, SELLING, TRADING OR CONSUMING THESE SPECIES.



QUEEN PARROTFISH

STRIPED PARROTFISH

STOPLIGHT PARROTFISH

REDTAIL PARROTFISH

PRINCESS PARROTFISH

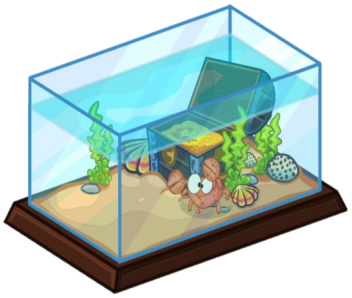
YELLOWTAIL PARROTFISH

REDBAND PARROTFISH

WE THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING THESE SPECIES TO HARVEST, SELL, TRADE, AND CONSUME! TOGETHER WE CAN KEEP OUR REEFS HEALTHY!

ANNUAL CATCH LIMITS (ACLs) AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES (AMs) IN FEDERAL WATERS

An *annual catch limit (ACL)* is the amount of a particular species or species group that can be caught in a given year in territorial plus federal waters. If met or exceeded, *accountability measures* (AMs) such as a seasonal or quota closure may be implemented in federal waters to correct or mitigate overages of the ACL. The federal Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act requires ACLs and AMs to be set by the Caribbean Fisheries Management Council to prevent over-fishing.

SPECIES	**USVI**
Tilefish	14,642 lbs
Aquarium Trade 	8,155 lbs

Annual catch limits for tilefish and aquarium trade for the entire territory.

ANNUAL CATCH LIMITS || ST. THOMAS/ST.JOHN

QUEEN CONCH
0 LBS (EEZ ONLY)

PARROTFISH
42,500 LBS

SNAPPER
133,775 LBS

GROUPER
51,849 LBS

ANGELFISH
7,897 LBS

BOXFISH
27,880 LBS

GOATFISH
320 LBS

GRUNTS
37,617 LBS

WRASSES
585 LBS

JACKS
52,907 LBS

SCUPS & PORGIES
21,819 LBS

SQUIRRELFISH
4,241 LBS

SURGEONFISH
29,249 LBS

TRIGGERFISH &
FILEFISH
74,447 LBS

SPINY LOBSTER
104,199 LBS

ANNUAL CATCH LIMITS || ST. CROIX

QUEEN CONCH
50,000 LBS

PARROTFISH
240,000 LBS

SNAPPER
102,946 LBS

GROUPER
30,435 LBS

ANGELFISH
305 LBS

BOXFISH
8,433 LBS

GOATFISH
3,766 LBS

GRUNTS
36,881 LBS

WRASSES
7 LBS

JACKS
15,489 LBS

SCUPS & PORGIES
4,638 LBS

SQUIRRELFISH
121 LBS

SURGEONFISH
33,603 LBS

TRIGGERFISH &
FILEFISH
24,980 LBS

SPINY LOBSTER
107,307 LBS

MONOFILAMENT RECYCLING PROGRAM

SEA TURTLE ASSISTANCE AND RESCUE (STAR) ORGANIZATION

SEA TURTLE ASSISTANCE & RESCUE (STAR)

PLEASE CALL STAR IF YOU ENCOUNTER:

- A SICK, INJURED, DEBILITATED, OR ENTANGLED SEA TURTLE
- A DECEASED OR DEAD SEA TURTLE
- DISORIENTED HATCHLINGS THAT ARE NOT CRAWLING OUT TO SEA

PLEASE REPORT THE FOLLOWING:

1. EXACT LOCATION
2. THE CLOSEST ACCESS POINT TO THE TURTLE
3. IF THE TURTLE IS ALIVE OR DEAD
4. THE APPROXIMATE SIZE OF THE TURTLE
5. DESCRIPTION OF ANY INJURIES

STAR

340-690-0474

REMEMBER: ALL SPECIES OF SEA TURTLES ARE ENDANGERED AND PROTECTED BOTH TERRITORIALLY AND FEDERALLY. HARVEST, POSSESSION, OR HARASSMENT OF SEA TURTLES OR THEIR EGGS IS PROHIBITED BY LAW.

YOU CAN PROTECT SEA TURTLES BY:

- OPERATING VESSELS AT SAFE SPEEDS
- STAYING IN DEEP WATER CHANNELS
- AVOIDING BOATING OVER SEAGRASS BEDS OR CORAL REEFS WHERE TURTLES FEED
- WATCHING FOR THEIR HEADS, EYES, SHELLS, OR FLIPPERS BREAKING THE SURFACE
- STAYING ALERT!!

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Resources are available to enhance fishing competencies and knowledge of the habitats and natural resources of the U.S. Virgin Islands. The following materials are available at the DFW offices.

BROCHURES	Aquatic Education Program	Regulations of Managed Areas
	Shallow Water Reef Fishing Guide	Christmas Cove Moorings
	Deep Water Game Fishing Guide	Invasive Species
	Prevent Entanglement	Shoreline Fishing Guide
	Marine Mammal/Sea Turtle Viewing Guide	A Walk Along the Coastline
	Mariner's Resource Protection Guide	Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs)
POSTERS	Summer Migrant Sea Birds	Shallow Water Reef Habitats
	Winter Resident Sea Birds	Shallow Water Game Fish
	Doves and Columbids	Mid-Water Game Fish
	Salt Ponds Habitats	Deep Water Game Fish
	Freshwater Habitats	Fish Facts
	Seagrass Habitats	Be a Responsible Resource User
	Coral Reef Habitats	
BOOKS	Invasive Species Action Plan	Animals of the VI Coloring Book
	Fish Activity Book (Grades 4-6)	Composition Book (Grades K-3)
	Fishing in the VI (Grades 4-6)	Aquatic Fact Sheet Book
	Where I Live Coloring Book	Fishing VI Style
FISHING TOOLS	Queen Conch & Whelk Measuring Gauges	Lobster Measuring Gauges
	USVI Snappers & Groupers Ruler	Commercial/Recreational Logbooks
	A Quick Reference Guide to USVI Fishing Regulations	

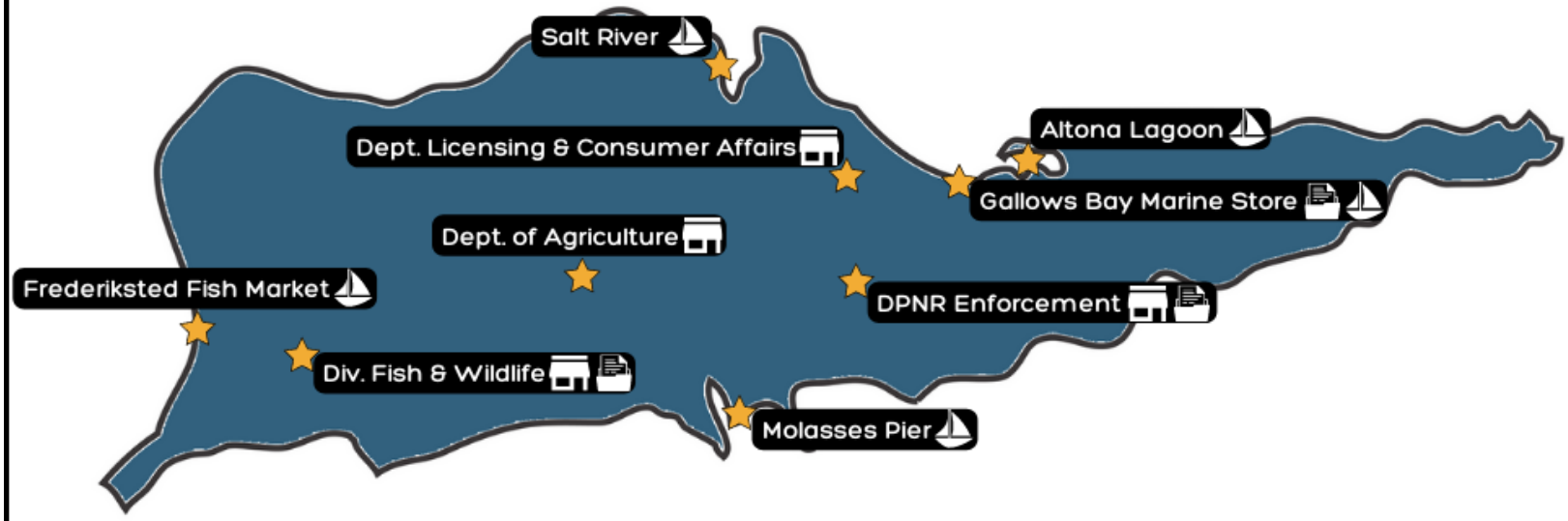
FISHER RESOURCE MAP

ST. THOMAS/ST. JOHN DISTRICT

	Catch Report Drop Box
	Office
	Boat Ramp

FISHER RESOURCE MAP

St. Croix District



	Catch Report Drop Box
	Office
	Boat Ramp

APPENDIX 1— GLOSSARY OF COMMON TERMS

Terms defined by Title 12 V.I.C. §302 shall have the same meaning when used herein. Additional terms used herein shall mean as follows:

a. "Angling" means Fishing with hand line or rod with naturally or artificially baited hook.

b. "Annual Catch Limit" as determined by the federal NOAA Caribbean Fisheries Management Council, is a level of catch intended to ensure overfishing does not occur. These limits are set less than or equal to the overfishing limit and acceptable biological catch.

c. "Area closure" is the closure to fishing by particular gear(s) of an entire fishing ground, or a part of it, for the protection of a section of the populations (e.g. spawners, juveniles), the whole population, or several populations. The closure is usually seasonal, but it could be permanent.

d. "Bag limit" refers to the number and/or size of a species that a person can legally take in a day or trip.

e. "Cast Net" means a type of circular falling net, weighted on its periphery, which is thrown and retrieved by hand.

f. "Catch" 1. To undertake any activity that results in taking fish out of its environment dead or alive. To bring fish on board a vessel dead or alive; 2. The total number (or weight) of fish caught by fishing operations. Catch should include all fish killed by the act of fishing, not just those landed; 3. The component of fish encounter-ing fishing gear, which is retained by the gear.

g. "Catch and Release" means fishing where immediate release is required back to the waters from which the fish was removed, without avoidable injury, and no take or retention is permitted.

h. "Closed season" means the period of time prescribed by the Commissioner during which it shall be unlawful to catch those species of fish, mollusks, crustaceans or other marine or aquatic animals that the Department may deem it advisable to protect during spawning or breeding season or to restore the fauna in those areas where continuous fishing has depleted fish resources.

i. "Commercial Catch Report (CCR)" refers to the official form that is used to record and submit commercial catch landings; required for every commercial fishing trip or once a month if fishing does not occur in that month, in order to remain compliant with the rules and regulations of holding a commercial fishing license.

j. "Commercial Fisher" means any person engaged in the harvest and sale of marine organisms, including fish, shellfish, crustaceans, invertebrates, algae, or marine plants, either whole or processed, for profit, barter, or trade. "Income" as used herein shall not include a prize or award offered as a prize in a fishing tournament.

k. "Commercial fishery" relates to the whole process of catching and marketing fish and shellfish for sale. It refers to and includes fisheries resources, fishermen, and related businesses.

l. "Commercial Fishing License" is the formal documentation granted to eligible applicants to fish in the jurisdictional waters of the Territory for commercial purposes, with intent to sell.

APPENDIX 1– GLOSSARY OF COMMON TERMS

m. "Commercial Fisher Registration" refers to the official act of registering for one's commercial fishing license, required annually, every July, for compliance. Registering for a commercial fishing license requires approval from the Division of Fish & Wildlife , Division of Environmental Enforcement , The Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs .

n. "Commercial Trip Limit" means the maximum weight of a species that is allowed to be harvested and landed in a single trip, per registered commercial vessel on which a registered commercial fisher must be present.

o. "Commercial Vessel" means any vessel used or engaged in trade or business including, but not limited to, carrying passengers for hire, charter fishing, bare boat, or any type of charter, maintenance, diving, towing, or any trade or business wherein the vessel is used in any manner to promote the venture, or is registered or licensed with the Territory, or documented by the United States Coast Guard for commercial purposes; Provided, however, that the provisions of this paragraph shall not apply to commercial fishing vessels other than commercial charter fishing vessels.

p. "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources.

q. "Compliance" means meeting the conditions required to hold a commercial fishing license as described in this handbook and pursuant to VIC Title 12 Chapter 9A Commercial Fishing.

r. "Conservation Officers" means the enforcement officers of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources.

s. "DEE" means the Division of Environmental Enforcement

t. "Department" means the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR).

u. "Discard" means to release or return fish to the sea, dead or alive, whether or not such fish are brought full on board a fishing vessel.

v. "DFW" means the Division of Fish and Wildlife.

w. "Estuary" or "Estuarine" means that part of a river or stream or other body of water having a tidal connection with the sea, where the sea water is measurably diluted with fresh water derived from land drainage.

x. "Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)" is the area that extends from the seaward boundaries of the coastal states (3 nautical miles (n. mi.)) to 200 n. mi. off the U.S. coast. Within this area the United States claims and exercises sovereign rights and exclusive fishery management authority over all fish and all continental shelf fishery resources.

y. "Federal Waters" refers to the waters extending from 3 to 200 nautical miles offshore. These waters are governed by the United States federal rules and regulations.

z. "Fillet" is to slice of meat without bones, cut out for human consumption.

APPENDIX 1— GLOSSARY OF COMMON TERMS

aa. "Fish" includes, when used as a noun, fish, oysters, clams, conches, crabs, lobsters, shrimps, turtles and other marine or aquatic animals, mammals, mollusks, and crustaceans and includes any part, product, egg, or offspring thereof, or the dead body or parts thereof.

bb. The verb "To Fish" in all its modes and tenses means to take or attempt to take fish by any method or means, whether or not such method or means results in their capture.

cc. "Fish Stock" refers to the living resources in the community or population from which catches are taken in a fishery. Use of the term fish stock usually implies that the particular population is more or less isolated from other stocks of the same species and hence self-sustaining. In a particular fishery, the fish stock may be one or several species of fish but here is also intended to include commercial invertebrates and plants.

dd. "Fisher" is a gender-neutral name for a person (male or female) participating in a fishery.

ee. "Fisher Helper" is a person who assists a licensed commercial fisher with fishing duties, as well, as assisting with the selling of their catch. A fisher helper must hold an official Helper's ID card provided by the Division of Environmental Enforcement. A fisher helper is not allowed to sell any catch without the licensed commercial fisher present.

ff. "Fishery Dependent" refers to data collected directly on a fish or fishery from commercial or sport fishermen and seafood dealers. Common methods include logbooks, trip tickets, port sampling, fishery observers, and phone surveys.

gg. "Fishery resource" means any fish, any stock of fish, any species of fish, and any habitat of fish.

hh. "Fishing" means any activity, other than scientific research conducted by a scientific research vessel, that involves catching, taking, or harvesting of fish; or any attempt to do so; or any activity that can reasonably be expected to result in the catching, taking, or harvesting of fish and any operations at sea in support of it.

ii. "Fishing gear" means (a) any vessel and (b) any equipment, whether or not attached to a vessel which is used in the commercial handling or harvesting of living marine resources.

jj. "Fork Length" is a measurement used frequently for fish length when the tail has a fork shape. Projected straight distance between the tip of the snout and the fork of the tail.

kk. "Gear" refers to fishing gear as a tool used to catch fish, such as hook-and-line, trawl net, gillnet, pot, trap, spear, etc.

ll. "Gear Restriction" 1. A type of input control used as a management tool whereby the amount and/or type of fishing gear used by fishers in a particular fishery is restricted by law; 2. Limits placed on the type, amount, number, or techniques allowed for a given type of fishing gear.

mm. "Harvest" means the catching or taking of an organism followed by a reduction of the organism to possession. Harvest includes the unnecessary harming or killing of an organism regardless of possession. Please note that catch, harvest and landings are different.

APPENDIX 1— GLOSSARY OF COMMON TERMS

nn. "Highly Migratory Species" are marine species whose life cycle includes lengthy migrations, usually through the exclusive economic zone of two or more countries as well as into international waters. This term usually is used to denote tuna and tuna-like species, sharks, swordfish, and billfish.

oo. "Internal combustion engine" means a device used to generate power by converting chemical energy bound in the fuel via spark-ignition or compression ignition combustion into mechanical work to power a vehicle or other device.

pp. "Land" when used in connection with the harvest of an organism, means the physical act of bringing the harvested organism ashore.

qq. "Landings" 1. The number or poundage of fish unloaded by commercial fishermen. Landings are reported at the locations at which fish are brough to shore; 2. The part of the catch that is selected and kept during the sorting procedures on board vessels and successively discharged at dockside.

rr. "Landings Data" is information on the amount of fish caught and landed per year.

ss. "License" also known as permit. A license or permit is a document giving the producer the right to operate in a fishery according to the terms established by the regulating authority.

tt. "Limited Entry Fishery" refers to a fishery where the number of operators is restricted through license limitation or quota systems, to control the amount of fishing effort. It frequently involves conditions relating to the transfer of fishing rights or the replacement of vessels.

uu. "Logbook" is a detailed, usually official, record of a vessel's fishing activity registered systematically on board the fishing vessel, usually including information on catch and its species composition, the corresponding fishing effort and location. Completion of logbooks may be a compulsory requirement for a fishing license.

vv. "Mesh size" refers to the size of holes in a fishing net. Minimum mesh sizes are often prescribed by regulations in order the avoid the capture of the young of valuable species before they have reached their optimal size for capture.

ww. "Minimum Mesh Size" is the smallest size of mesh permitted in nets and traps; this allows smaller individuals than a defined mesh size to escape unharmed.

xx. "Moratorium" refers to a mandatory cessation of fishing activities on a species, in an area, with a particular gear, and for a specified period of time.

yy. "Motorboat" means a vessel equipped with machinery for propulsion, irrespective of whether the propulsion machinery is in actual operation.

zz. "Nautical Mile" is the international unit of distance equal to 1,852 meters or 6,067 feet.

aaa. "NOAA" means the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration.

APPENDIX 1— GLOSSARY OF COMMON TERMS

bbb. "Port Sample" refers to the biostatical data that is collected by a DFW staff member of the entirety of a commercial fisher's landings for a single trip. One port sample is required each quarter per commercial fisher in order to remain complaint.

ccc. "Pots" also known as traps, designed to catch fish or crustaceans, in the form of cages or baskets of various materials (wood, wicker, metal rods, wire netting, etc.) and having one or more openings or entrances. Usually set on the bottom, with or without bait, singly or in rows, connected by ropes (buoy-lines) to buoys on the surface showing their position.

ddd. "Quota" is a specified numerical harvest objective, the attainment (or expected attainment) of which causes closure of the fishery for that species or species group.

eee. "Resident" means any natural person who has had the Territory as their legal place of residence for one full year immediately preceding the time of consideration.

fff. "Territorial Waters" refers to the waters within the area extending from the Territorial shoreline to 3 nautical miles offshore. These waters are governed by U.S. Virgin Islands territorial rules and regulations.

ggg. "Total Catch" is the landed catch plus the discard mortality.

hhh. "Total Length" refers to the length of a fish defined as the straight-line distance from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail (caudal fin) while the fish is laying on its side, normally extended.

iii. "Transferer" refers to the current commercial fishing license holder with intentions to transfer their commercial fishing license to immediate relatives, family, or fisher helpers.

jjj. "Transferee" refers to the receiver of a transferred commercial fishing license

kkk. "Trip Limit" is a quota that each fisher or vessel is allowed to catch per trip out to sea. Trip limits are the commercial equivalent of a recreational bag limit.

lll. "Seasonal Closure" means closed season. The banning of fishing activity (in an area or of an entire fishery) for a few weeks or months, to protect juveniles and spawners.

mmm. The verb "to sell" in all its modes and tenses shall include offers for sale, possession for profit, exchange, negotiation, or the engagement in any other activity of a commercial nature.

nnn. "Seller" means any person who offers for sale, possession for profit, exchange, negotiation, or the engagement in any other activity of a commercial nature any Fish.

ooo. "Scientific or educational purposes" means purposes directly related to learning, teaching, training, research, and development that are part of the instructional or research functions performed by an accredited educational or research institution or other authorized educational organization that do not include commercial, professional or any other for-profit purposes.

ppp. The word "shall" is mandatory, not directory.

APPENDIX 1— GLOSSARY OF COMMON TERMS

qqq. "Size Limit" is the minimum or maximum limit on the size of fish that may be legally caught.

rrr. "Spear Fishing" means the taking of Fish through the instrumentality of a hand or mechanically propelled, single, or multi-pronged spear or lance, barbed or barbless, operated by a person swimming at or below the surface of the water.

sss. The verb "to take" in all its modes and tenses means to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, kill, trap, capture, intentionally wound, or collect, or attempt to engage in any such conduct.

ttt. "Trammel net" means a net constructed of two or more walls of netting hung from the same cork and lead lines, with one wall having a larger mesh than the other(s), which traps a fish in a pocket of netting when the fish pushes the smaller mesh wall through a mesh in the larger mesh wall.

uuu. "Vessel" means every description of watercraft, other than a seaplane on the water, used or capable of being used as a means of transportation on water

APPENDIX 2—SUMMARY OF FISHING REGULATIONS: U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS TERRITORIAL WATERS

TERRITORIAL WATERS EXTEND FROM SHORE TO 3 NAUTICAL MILES OFFSHORE

1. **Whelk (West Indian Top Snail):** *V.I.R.R., Title 12, Chapter 9A, § 316-5, 316-6, & 316-7*

Size Limit:	Minimum size of shell must be greater than 2 7/16" in diameter across the width of the shell at its widest point. No Harvest of undersized whelk is permitted
Landing Restriction:	Must be landed live and whole in the shell
Closed Season:	**No harvest or possession April 1 through September 30.**

2. **Queen Conch:** *V.I.R.R.., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §316-1:4*

Size Limit:	Minimum size of 9-inch shell length from the tip of the spire to the distal end of the shell, or 3/8-inch lip thickness (width) at its widest point. No harvest of undersized conch is permitted
Harvest Quota:	Quota = 50,000 pounds of the St. Croix District.
Commercial Trip Limit:	Limited to 200 conch per day per registered commercial fishing vessel on which a licensed commercial fisher must be present.
Landing Restriction:	V*.I.R.R., Title 12, chapter 9A, §316-2* Conch must be landed alive and in the shell and reported in the district from which they were harvested. It is prohibited to land conch shells on offshore islands and cays for the purpose of removing meat from the shell. It is prohibited to dispose of conch shells by throwing the empty shells back in the water.
Sale Restriction:	No sale of undersized conch shell or meat from undersized conch. No sale of imported conch meat unless shipment is accompanied by a CITIES export permit and shipment is cleared at the Port of Miami.
Closed Season:	**No harvest or possession June 1 through October 31.** *Commissioner Prescribed Rule 2008 under V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §316(c); V.I.R.R., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §316-1* *(a).* Once June 1st is reached, the season will close until November 1st of that year. No harvest, possession, or sale of fresh or preserved (frozen, salted, or treated in chemical solution) conch which has been caught in the U.S. Virgin Islands seven days after the start of the closed season. V.I.C *(b).* Sale and transportation of conch is permitted during the closed season if the conch is imported from outside the U.S. Virgin Islands or is caught and stored prior to the closing of the season.

3. **Caribbean Spiny Lobster:** *V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §319*

Size Limit: Minimum size limit of no less than 3.5 inches carapace length.

Harvest Quota: No harvest quota in Territorial waters. Annual catch limits apply in Federal waters.

Landing Restriction: Must be landed whole.
No harvest of female with eggs.

Gear Restrictions: No explosives, poisons, drugs, other chemicals, spears, hooks, or similar devices may used to take lobsters. No gill nets or trammel nets may be used.

4. **Shrimp:** *Commissioner Prescribed Rule 1992 under V.I.R.R., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §303(a)(1)*
No commercial harvest or sale in Altona Lagoon or Great Pond
Recreational harvest allowed only with permit (See page 2).

5. **Goliath Grouper:** *Commissioner Prescribed Rule 2005 under V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §316*
The harvest and possession of Goliath Grouper is **prohibited year-round** in the territory.

6. **Nassau Grouper:** *V.I.R.R., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §316-14(e)*
The harvest and possession of Nassau Grouper is **prohibited year-round** in the territory.

7. **Other Groupers:** *V.I.R.R., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §316-14(a)*
Red, Black, Tiger, Yellowfin, & Yellowedge: No harvest or possession from **February 1 through April 30** in the territory.

8. **Snappers**: *V.I.R.R., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §316-13 and §316-14*
Black, Blackfin, Silk & Vermillion: No harvest or possession **October 1 through December 31** in St. Thomas/St. John district. **St. Croix is exempt from the seasonal closure for these species in Territorial waters.**

Lane & Mutton: No possession from **April 1 through June 30** for the territory.
Commissioner Prescribed Rule 2015 under V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §316 (for Mutton Snapper) and *Commissioner Prescribed Rule 2022 under V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §316* (for Lane Snapper).

9. **Billfish, Swordfish, Tuna & Shark:** *V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 9A*
Federal regulations (e.g., permit, gear, landing, reporting requirements) may apply in both federal and Territorial waters for recreational and commercial permit holders. See pages 40-41 for specific regulations.

V.I.R.R., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §303(a)(1-3) and (b) and §316-14(g)
10. **Tarpon & Bonefish:** No harvest. Catch and release using hook and line only.

11. **Sea Turtles:** *V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §318; Chapter 2 §105(b)*
Endangered species. No harvest, no possession, and no harassment of sea turtles or their eggs (See pages 16 and 22).

12: **Traps:**

Fish Trap Reduction Program: *V.I.R.R., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §304(b)*
The Virgin islands Fish Trap Reduction Program was signed into law by the Governor of the USVI in August 2017. The purpose of these rules and regulations is to establish a sustainable management program for the fish trap fishery within Territorial waters in order to achieve the following general intentions and purpose of the Government of the United States Virgin Islands:

1) Limit participation in the Virgin islands fish trap fishery; 2) Cap the maximum number of allowable fish traps per fisher; 3) Reduce the total number of fish traps by about 20% relative to the status quo in St. Thomas/St. John; 4) Reduce total number of fish traps by about 10% relative to the status quo in St. Croix; 5) Improve the economic efficiency of the fish trap fishery by increasing catch per trap.

Fish Trap Reduction Program Eligibility: All fishers who held a valid USVI commercial fishing license on February 10, 2011, and who recorded landings on commercial catch records with fish trap gear between February 10, 2010 and February 10, 2011 will be eligible to participate in the program. A valid USVI fish trap license is required to utilize fish traps within USVI Territorial waters. A valid USVI fish trap license is required to land fish in the USVI that have been harvested with fish trap gear from Territorial waters.

Reduction for St, Thomas and St. John District: Each fisher with a USVI fish trap endorsement will be authorized to set a specific number of fish traps within USVI Territorial waters based on their prior reported landings. Each eligible fisher's trap tags allocation will be calculated to an amount 20% less than the maximum number of traps they recorded on commercial catch reports between February 10, 2010 and February 10, 2011, unless a greater reduction is required to cap them at the 250 trap maximum. 250 is the maximum number of fish trap tags any fisher may possess.

Reduction for St. Croix: The maximum number of fish traps that any fisher can receive is 150. Each eligible fisher's fish trap tags allocation will be calculated to an amount equal to 10% less than the maximum number of traps they recorded on commercial catch reports between February 10, 2010 and February 10, 2011., unless a greater reduction is required to cap them at the 150 trap maximum.

Administration: All fish traps set in USVI Territorial waters must be identifiable with a uniquely lettered/numbered USVI fish trap tag composed of a durable material not easily destroyed. All lost or stolen fish traps must be reported to DPNR—Division of Environmental Enforcement through submission of a Lost or Stolen Fish Trap Report. Replacement tags may be requested from DPNR through submission of a Fish Trap Tag Replacement Application. Fish trap authorization will be issued on an annual basis. Annual renewal will occur in conjunction with DPNR's commercial fisher registration.

Fees: The Division of Environmental Enforcement shall charge an annual one dollar ($1.00) fish trap license fee for each fish trap authorized and registered pursuant to this Regulation. The annual license fee shall commence for the registration period starting July 1, 2018, and shall be paid in accordance each calendar year on or before June 30. A one-time total late fee of $25.00 shall be assessed, if payment is received after July 1st. A $5.00 monthly fee will be assessed after August 1st and for every month for which the annual fish trap license fee is due and owing.

Enforcement: Any person violating or otherwise failing to comply with these rules and regulations shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be fined not more than $500.00 or imprisoned for not more than six months, unless otherwise provided by law. Any person convicted of a violation of these rules and regulations by a court of competent jurisdiction shall have their fish trap license suspended and inoperative for one month for the first offense, three months for the second offense, and for one year for the third and subsequent offenses. All suspended or void fish trap licenses shall be surrendered forthwith to the Commissioner.

Gear Restriction: *V.I.R.R., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §304-4 & 304-6*

District of St. Thomas/St. John: All fish traps must have a minimum 2-inch square mesh. All fish traps must be inspected and tagged by the Division of Environmental Enforcement prior to use.

District of St. Croix: *V.I.R.R., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §304-5 & 304-6*

All traps placed in Territorial waters must have a minimum of 1.5-inch hexagonal or 2-inch square mesh as the smallest mesh on two sides of the fish traps. All fish traps must be inspected and tagged by the Division Environmental Enforcement prior to use.

Both Districts: *V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §304(b) & §321(c)*

Fish traps may be constructed of any material; provided that the entrance, or one side of the fish pit, or the door or the fastening of the door for the removal of fish shall be constructed of some material less durable than that used in the construction of the fish pot itself, such as twine, bamboo, or soft wood. No person shall use wooden or bamboo or metal buoys on any traps, pot, or set in the inland or coastal waters of the territory after January 1, 1973.

All buoys shall be marked with the licensee's number, which shall be burned or cut into the surface thereof. All buoys, pots, and traps that are not marked as required shall be removed from the jurisdictional waters by any conservation officer and held for a period of 2 months.

13. **Nets:**

Mesh Restrictions: *V.I.R.R., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §304(b)*
Seine nets shall have no meshes smaller than 1 1/2 inches stretch measure; except that seines specifically used for catching bait fish may have smaller meshes; provided that such bait seines and the use thereof shall otherwise conform to the rule and regulations.
The use of all gill and trammel nets (single or multiple wall entanglement nets) is prohibited in the territory, with the exception of single-wall surface gillnets for the baitfish ballyhoo (Familg Hemiramphidae), gar (Family Belonidae), and flying fish (Family Exocoetidae). Surface gillnets must be tended to at all times, may not be more than 1,800 ft in length as measured by the float line, and may not be used within 20 ft of the bottom. Mesh size may not be smaller than 0.75-inch square or 1.5-inch stretch. Only one 1,800 ft bait net is permitted per bat. Restricted gill and trammel nets may not be possessed onboard vessels in Territorial waters.

Gear Prohibition: *V.I.R.R., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §321-1*
The use of **trammel nets** (multiple wall entanglement) **is prohibited.**
The penalties for gill and trammel net violations are $1,000 fine and confiscation of vessel and equipment.

14. Year-Round Closures/Marine Reserves: No fishing or collecting of any kind is allowed **except as noted** below.

Cas Cay/Mangrove Lagoon Reserve: *V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 1, §96-2 and §96-5*
Permitted Acts: The use of a cast net with a minimum square mesh size of 0.25-inch to capture bait fish ("fry"). Fishing for baitfish is not allowed within 50 feet of the shoreline.

Fishing Permits: A special monthly permit is required to catch baitfish in the Reserves. Obtain a permit from the Division of Environmental Enforcement.

Prohibited Acts: In the Inner Mangrove Lagoon (see Appendix 4, page 46), no fishing, no traps, and no seines are permitted. In short, no take at all. Use of internal combustion engines is prohibited.

Compass Point Marine Reserve and Wildlife Sanctuary, St. Thomas: *V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 1, §96-1*
Designated September 24, 1992. No fishing, hunting, or taking of any plants or animals within the marine reserve and wildlife sanctuary (See page 44).

Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve, St. Croix: *V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 1, §96*
Designated July 19, 1995. It is unlawful to (1) collect, take, or possess any fish, coral, bird, or other wildlife, or part thereof; (2)use of possess any firearm, bow and arrow, spear gun or any trap, net, or other contrivance designed to be, or capable of being, used to take birds, fish, or other wildlife or to discharge any firearm or release any arrow into the sanctuary. Contact the DPNR Division of Environmental Enforcement at (340) 773-5774 or the National Park Service at (340) 773-1460 x234 for complete regulations

The Small Pond at Frank Bay Wildlife and Marine Sanctuary, St. John: *V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 1, §96-4*
Designated on March 24, 2000, signed on April 11, 2001. No hunting, fishing, or harvest of fisheries or wildlife resources. The use of a motorized vessel is prohibited within Frank Bay Pond.

15. **Territorial Marine Parks:** *V.I.C., Title 12, Chapter 1, §98*

St. Croix East End Marine Park: Designated on January 9, 2003. Regulations designate certain restricted zones within the park boundaries, including areas where fishing is completely prohibited (no-take zones) and areas which require special permits for some fishing activities, Terrestrial signage and marker buoys indicate and demarcate zones. Contact the Marine Park Coordinator at (340) 718-3367 or the Division of Environmental Enforcement for regulations at (340) 773-5774.

16. **Altona Lagoon and Great Pond Shrimp Management:**
Commissioner Prescribed Rule 1992 under V.I.C. Title 12, Chapter 9A, §303. Portions of this rule have been superseded by provisions of the East End Marine Park.
    a. All seine nets, gill nets, and traps are prohibited in Altona Lagoon, Great Pond, and their respective connecting channels to the sea.
    b. All seine nets, gill nets, and traps are prohibited in Christiansted Harbor within 100 yards of the mouth of Altona Lagoon channel. All seine nets, gill nets, and traps are prohibited in Great Pond Bay, as it is part of the No-Take Zone of the East End Marine Park.
    c. No motorized vessels are allowed in Altona Lagoon, great Pond, and their respective connecting channels to the sea.
    d. A recreational shrimp fishing permit is required to harvest shrimp on St. Croix. A permit may be obtained from the Division of Environmental Enforcement. The annual fee for this permit is $10.00.
    e. Monofilament or nylon cast nets of 3/8-inch square mesh (3/4-inch stretch mesh) may be used to shrimp in Altona Lagoon channel. Cast nets of knotless nylon netting are prohibited.
    f. Cast nets of 1-inch square mesh (2-inch stretch mesh) may be used to harvest fish in Altona Lagoon and the channel connecting it to the sea. Cast nets of knotless nylon netting are prohibited.
    g. The sale of southern pink shrimp is prohibited. Vendors selling shrimp must possess a certificate of origin for the shrimp.
    h. The use of lights to attract shrimp for harvest is prohibited.
    i. Recreational handline and rod and reel fishing are **permitted** in Altona Lagoon and the channel connecting it to the sea. Recreational handline and rod and reel fishing are **prohibited** in Great Pond and the channel connecting it to the sea.

17. **General Provision:** *V.I.R.R., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §316-14(f)*
Filleting: The filleting of fish in Federal waters of the U.S. Caribbean is prohibited and it is required that fish captured or possessed in Territorial waters be landed with heads and fins intact.

V.I.R.R., Title 12, Chapter 9A, §321(f)
Use of hookah gear to harvest marine resources in Territorial waters is prohibited.

APPENDIX 3—FEDERAL WATERS AROUND THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS SUMMARY OF FISHING REGULATIONS

FEDERAL WATERS EXTEND FROM 3 TO 200 NAUTICAL MILES OFFSHORE

1. **Queen Conch:**

Size Limit:	*50 CFR 622.492*— Minimum size of limit is either 9 inches in length, that is, from the tip of the spire to the distal end of the shell, or 3/8 inch lip width (thickness) at its widest point (See page 15). No harvest, possession, sale, or purchase of undersized conch.
Landing Restrictions:	*50 CFR 622.493*— Queen Conch in or from the Caribbean EEZ must be maintained with meat and shell intact.
Seasonal and Area Closures:	*50 CFR 622.491*— No person may fish for, or possess on board a fishing vessel, a Caribbean Queen Conch in or from the Caribbean EEZ, **except during November 1 through May 31** (or earlier depending on the quota), in the area east of 64°34' W longitude which includes Lang Bank east of St. Croix, USVI. When the USVI closes Territorial waters off St. Croix to the harvest and possession of queen conch the EEZ will close concurrently.
Commercial Trip Limit:	*50 CFR 622.495*— Commercial trip limits on the amount of applicable species that may be possessed on board or landed, purchases, or sold from a vessel per day. A person who fishes in the EEZ may not combine a trip limit specified in this section with any trip or possession limit applicable to state waters. The commercial trip limit for Queen Conch in or from the Caribbean EEZ is 200 Queen Conch per day. This applies to a vessel that has at least one person on board with a valid commercial fishing license issued by the USVI DPNR.
Recreational Bag Limit:	*50 CFR 622.494*— The recreational bag limit for Queen Conch in or from the Caribbean EEZ is 3 per person or, if more than 4 persons are aboard, 12 per boat.
Prohibited Gear and Methods:	*50 CFR 622.490(a)*— No person may harvest Queen Conch by diving by using a device that provides continuous air supply from the surface.
Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures:	*50 CFR 622.12*— Annual catch limits (ACLs) and accountability measures (AMs) apply to Queen Conch in the EEZ (See pages 19-20).

2. **Caribbean Spiny Lobster:**

	5*0 CFR 622.2*— Caribbean Spiny Lobster or Spiny Lobster refers to the species *Panulirus argus*, or a part thereof.
Size Limit:	*50 CFR 622.454*— Minimum size is no less than 3.5 inches, carapace length (see page 15).

	Harvest Prohibition on egg-bearing Spiny Lobster:	*50 CFR 622.453(a)*— Egg-bearing Spiny Lobster in the Caribbean EEZ must be returned to the water unharmed. An egg-bearing Spiny Lobster may be retained in a trap, provided the trap is returned immediately to the water. An egg-bearing Spiny Lobster may not be stripped, scraped, shaved, clipped, or in any other manner molested in order to remove the eggs.
	Landing Restrictions:	*50 CFR 622.455*— Caribbean Spiny Lobster in or from the Caribbean EEZ must be maintained with head and carapace intact.
	Recreational Bag Limit:	*50 CFR 622.455*— The recreational bag limit for Spiny Lobster in or from the Caribbean EEZ is 3 per person per day, not to exceed 10 per vessel, whichever is less.
	Prohibited Gear and Methods:	*50 CFR 622.9*— An explosive may not be used to fish in the Caribbean EEZ. *50 CFR 622.452(a)*— A spear, hook, or similar device may not be used in the Caribbean EEZ to harvest a Spiny Lobster. The possession of a speared, pierced, or punctured Caribbean Spiny Lobster in or from the Caribbean EEZ is evidence of violation. *50 CFR 622.452(b)*— A gillnet or trammel net may not be used in the Caribbean EEZ to fish for Spiny Lobster. Possession of a gillnet or trammel net and any Caribbean Spiny Lobster in or from the Caribbean EEZ is *prima facie* evidence of a violation of this paragraph.
	ACLs and AMs:	*50 CFR 622.12*— ACLs and AMs apply to Spiny Lobster in the EEZ (See pages 19-20).
	Reef Fish:	
3.	**Goliath Grouper:**	*50 CFR 622.434(a) and (b)*— No harvest or possession. Such fish caught in the Caribbean EEZ must be released immediately with a minimum of harm.
4.	**Nassau Grouper:**	*50 CFR 622.434(a) and (b)*— No harvest or possession. Such fish caught in the Caribbean EEZ must be released immediately with a minimum of harm.
5.	**Other Groupers:** Seasonal Closures: Red, Black, Tiger, Yellowfin, Yellowedge Groupers:	*50 CFR 622.435(a)(1)(i)*— **February 1 through April 30**, no fishing for or possession of these species in or from the Caribbean EEZ. This prohibition on possession does not apply

6. **Snappers:**

Seasonal Closures: Black, Blackfin, Silk, Vermillion Snappers: *50 CFR 622.435(a)(1)(iii)*— **October 1 through December 31**, no fishing for or possession of these species in or from the Caribbean EEZ. This prohibition on possession does not apply to such snapper harvested and landed ashore prior to the closure.

Lane and Mutton Snappers: 50 *CFR 622.435(a)(1)(iv)*— April 1 through June 30, no fishing for or possession of these species in or from the Caribbean EEZ. This prohibition on possession does not apply to such snapper harvested and landed ashore prior to the closure.

Size Limit: Yellowtail Snapper: *50 CFR 622.436(a)*— Minimum size is 12 inches total length (See page 18).

7. **Parrotfish:**

Harvest Prohibition: Midnight, Blue, Rainbow Parrotfish: *50 CFR 622.434(a) and (c)*— No person may fish for or possess these species in or from the Caribbean EEZ. Such fish caught in the Caribbean EEZ must be released without harm.

Other Parrotfish: Size Limits: *50 CFR 622.436(c)*— 8-inch fork length minimum size for Redband Parrotfish (*Sparisoma aurofrenatum*) applicable to all fishers (St. Croix EEZ only)

50 CFR 622.436(b)— 9-inch fork length minimum size for all other allowable parrotfish species in Federal waters off St. Croix (including Princess, Queen, Striped, Redtail, Stoplight, and Redfin parrotfish) applicable to all fishers (St. Croix EEZ only).

No minimum size limit for harvest in St. Thomas/St. John EEZ

8. **Aquarium Trade:**

Sale/Purchase Restriction: *50 CFR 622.438(a)*— Live Red Hind or live Mutton Snapper in or from the Caribbean EEZ may not be sold or purchases and used in the marine aquarium trade.

9. **Prohibited Gear and Methods:** *50 CFR 622.9 and 50 CFR 622.433(a)*— Explosives, poisons, drugs, or other chemicals may not be used to fish for Caribbean reef fish in the Caribbean EEZ

5*0 CFR 622.433(b)*— A powerhead may not be used in the Caribbean EEZ to harvest Caribbean reef fish. The possession of a mutilated Caribbean reef fish in or from the Caribbean EEZ and a powerhead is *prima facie* evidence that such fish was harvested by a powerhead.

50 CFR 622.434(c)— A gillnet or trammel net may not be used to fish for Caribbean reef fish. Possession of a gill or trammel net and any Caribbean reef fish is *prima facie* evidence of violation.

10. **Reef Fish ACLs and AMs:** *50 CFR 622.12*— ACLs and AMs apply to all managed reef fish species in the EEZ. (See pages 18-20).

11. **Spiny Lobster and Reef Fish Traps:**

Marking: *50 CFR 622.450 and 50 CFR 622.430*— Spiny Lobster and reef fish traps must display the official number specified for the vessel by the USVI.

Unmarked Traps/ Buoys: All individual traps or end of trap lines require a surface buoy that must display the official number and color code. An unmarked trap or an unmarked buoy deployed is illegal and may be disposed of by an authorized officer.

Trap Tending: *50 CFR 622.451(b) and 50 CFR 622.431(b)*— A spiny lobster or a reef fish trap may be pulled or tended only by a person (other than an authorized officer) aboard the trap owner's vessel or aboard another vessel if such vessel has on board written consent of the trap owner, or if the trap owner is aboard and has documentation verifying his identification number and color code.

Reef Fish Trap Specifications:

Minimum Mesh Size: *50 CFR 622.431*— A bare-wire fish trap that has hexagonal mesh openings must have a minimum mesh size of 1.5 inch in the smallest dimension measured between centers of opposite strands. A bare-wire fish trap that has other than hexagonal mesh openings or a fish trap of other than bare-wire, such as coasted wire or plastic, must have a minimum mesh size of 2 -inch in the smallest dimension measured between centers of opposite strands.

Escape Mechanisms: A fish trap must have a panel located on one side of the trap, excluding the top, bottom, and side containing the trap entrance. The opening covered by the panel must measure not less than 8 by 8 inches. The mesh size of the panel may not be smaller than the mesh size of the trap. The panel must be attached to the trap with untreated jute twine with a diameter not exceeding 1/8-inch, and such fastening is at the top of the door so that the door will fall open when such twine degrades. Jute twine used to secure a panel may not be wrapped or overlapped.

Lobster Trap Specifications: *50 CFR 622.451(a)(1)*— A spiny lobster trap must contain on any vertical side or on the top, a pane no smaller in diameter than the throat or entrance of the trap. The panel must be made of or attached to the trap by either: untreated fiber of biological origin with a diameter not exceeding 1/8-inch. This includes, but is not limited to, tyre palm, hemp, jute, cotton, wool, silk, or ungalvanized or uncoated iron wire with diameter not exceeding 1/16-inch that is, 16-gauge wire.

12. **Corals:**

Prohibited Corals:

50 CFR 622.470(a) — Required permits. (1) Prohibited coral. A Federal permit may be issued to take or possess Caribbean prohibited coral only as scientific research activity, exempted fishing , or exempted educational activity.

50 CFR 622.2— Caribbean prohibited coral includes gorgonians (Class Anthozoa, Subclass Octocorallia, Order Gorgonacea); live rock; or stony coral (Class Hydroza [fire corals and hydrocorals] or Class Anthozoa, Subclass Hexacorallia, Orders Scleractinia (stony corals) and Antipatharia (black corals)); or a part thereof. *(See Table 1 of Appendix A of 50 CFR 622 for full list).*

Sale/Purchase Restriction:

50 CFR 622.472— Caribbean prohibited coral may not be fished for or possessed in or from the Caribbean EEZ. The taking of Caribbean prohibited coral in the Caribbean EEZ is not considered unlawful possession provided it is returned immediately to the sea in the general area of fishing

Coral Reef Resources (Aquarium Trade):

Prohibited Gear and Methods:

50 CFR 622.473— No person may sell or purchase a Caribbean prohibited coral harvested in the Caribbean EEZ. A Caribbean prohibited coral that is sold in the USVI will be presumed to have been harvested in the Caribbean EEZ, unless it is accompanied by documentation showing it was harvested elsewhere.
Coral Reef Resources for the Aquarium Trade are listed in Table 1, Appendix A of 50 CFR 622.

50 CFR 622.9— Explosives, chemicals, plants, or plant-derived toxins cannot be used to fish in the Caribbean EEZ. A toxic chemical may not be used in the coral area.

50 CFR 622.471— A Power assisted tool may not be used in the Caribbean EEZ to take a Caribbean coral reef resource.

ACLs and AMs:

50 CFR 622.12— ACLs and AMs apply to harvest of aquarium trade species (See page 18).

13. **Billfish, Swordfish, Tuna & Sharks:**

50 CFR 635— The NOAA Fisheries Highly Migratory Species Management Division regulates billfish, Swordfish, Atlantic tunas (Bigeye, Albacore, Skipjack, Yellowfin, Bluefin), and sharks in the U.S. Caribbean waters. For more information, contact the HMS Management Division at 727-824-5399, visit the Atlantic HMS Management Division Website at https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/atlantic-highly-migratory-species) or the websites below.

HMS Commercial, Recreational, and Dealer Compliance Guides:

https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/atlantic-highly-migratory-species/atlantic-highly-migratory-species-fishery-compliance-guides

Permit Information:	An HMS recreational permit is required to recreationally fish for, take, retain, possess, or land Atlantic tunas in territorial and Federal waters; and sharks, billfish and Swordfish in Federal waters. An HMS commercial permit is required to commercially fish for, take, retain, possess, land or sell Atlantic tunas in Territorial and Federal waters; and sharks and Swordfish in Federal waters. For more information, contact the HMS Management Division at 727-824-5399. To purchase permits please vist the websites below (numbers provided are for permit shop customer service).
NOAA Permit Shop 888-872-8862	https://hmspermits.noaa.gov Atlantic HMS Angling permit (recreational) HMS Charter/Headboat permit Atlantic Tunas permits (General Category. Harpoon, Purse Seine) Swordfish General Commercial
Greater Atlantic Region Permits Office 978-828-8438	https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/aps/permits/index.html Atlantic Tuna Dealer (Bigeye, Albacore, Skipjack, Yellowfin, Bluefin Tuna)
Southeast Regional Permits Office 877-3764877	Sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/permits Commercial Caribbean Small Boat Permit Atlantic Tunas Longline Shark Directed/Incidental and Dealer Swordfish Directed/Incidental and Dealer
Retention and Size Limits:	Retention and size limits vary for Swordfish, sharks, Bluefin Tuna, BAYS (Bigeye, Albacore, Yellowfin, Skipjack) tunas, and marlin depending on the type of permit, the type of fishing (recreational or commercial), the condition of the fish, and in-season adjustments to retention limit, among other things. Please see the HMS Compliance Guides listed above or call the HMS Management Division at 727-824-5399 for latest retention and size limit information Fishers and dealers must comply with commercial and recreational reporting requirements. See the HMS Compliance Guides listed above for the HMS Management Division with questions.
HMS Reporting:	Recreational billfish landings and Bluefin Tuna landings and dead discards must be reported within 24 hours online at www.hmspermits.noaa.gov, or by calling the Billfish Reporting Line (800-894-5528) and the Bluefin Tuna Reporting Line (888-872-8862).

14. **Sea Turtles:** *50 CFR 17.11*— No harvest, possession, or harassment of sea turtles or their eggs (See pages 3 and 20).

15. **Seabirds:** *50 CFR 10.12*— Seabirds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. To minimize injury to seabirds, do not discard fishing line at sea.

16. **Year-Round Closures:**

Hind Bank Marine Conservation District (MCD), St. Thomas: *50 CFR 622.435(b)(1)*— No fishing for any species, and no anchoring by fishing vessels. See Appendix 5, page 46 for coordinates and map of boundaries.

17. **Seasonal Area Closures:** *50 CFR 622.435(b)(2)*— **Fishing with pots, traps, bottom longlines, gill-nets or trammel nets is prohibited year-round** in the three seasonally closed areas specified below.

Grammanik Bank, St. Thomas: *50 CFR 622.435(a)(2)(iii)(B)*— **February 1 through April 30**, no person may fish or possess any species of fish, except highly migratory species, in or from the Grammink Bank closed area. "Fish" means finfish, mollusks, crustaceans, and all other forms of marine animal and plant life other than marine mammals and birds. "**Highly migratory species**" means Bluefin, Bigeye, Yellowfin, Albacore, and Skipjack Tunas; Swordfish; sharks (listed n Appendix A to part 635), and White Marlin, Blue Marlin, Sailfish, and Longbill Spearfish. See Appendix 5, page 46 for coordinates and map of boundaries.

Red Hind Spawning Aggregation Area, East of St. Croix: *50 CFR 622.435(a)(2)(ii)(A)*— **December 1 through February 28**, no fishing in those parts of the area that are in the EEZ. See Appendix 6, page 47 for coordinates and map of boundaries of the Red Hind Spawning Aggregation seasonal closure are.

Mutton Snapper Spawning Aggregation, St. Croix: *50 CFR 622.435(a)(2)(i)*— **March 1 through June 30**, no fishing in that part of this area that is in the EEZ. See page # for coordinates and a map of boundaries for the Mutton Snapper Spawning Aggregation seasonal closure area.

18. **General Provisions:** Filleting: 5*0 CFR 600.1200-1203*— Sharks must be landed with fins naturally attached to the carcass. Finning at sea is prohibited. Shark fins that are not naturally attached may not be landed, transferred, possessed, purchased, or sold.

50 CFR 622.10(a)— Finfish must be maintained with head and fins intact.

50 CFR 622.3(b); 50 CFR 600.1203; 50 CFR 635.30—Sharks, billfish swordfish, and tunas may not be filleted at sea.

50 CFR 635.30— **Billfish** must be landed with heads, fins, and bill intact through offloading. **Atlantic tunas** must be maintained through offloading either in round form or eviscerated with the head and fins removed, provided one pectoral fin and the tail remain attached. The upper and lower lobes of the tuna tail may be removed for storage purposes as long as the fork of the tail remains intact. **Sharks** must not have the backbone removed and must not be halved, quartered, filleted, or otherwise reduced. All fins, including the tail, must remain naturally attached to the shark through offloading.

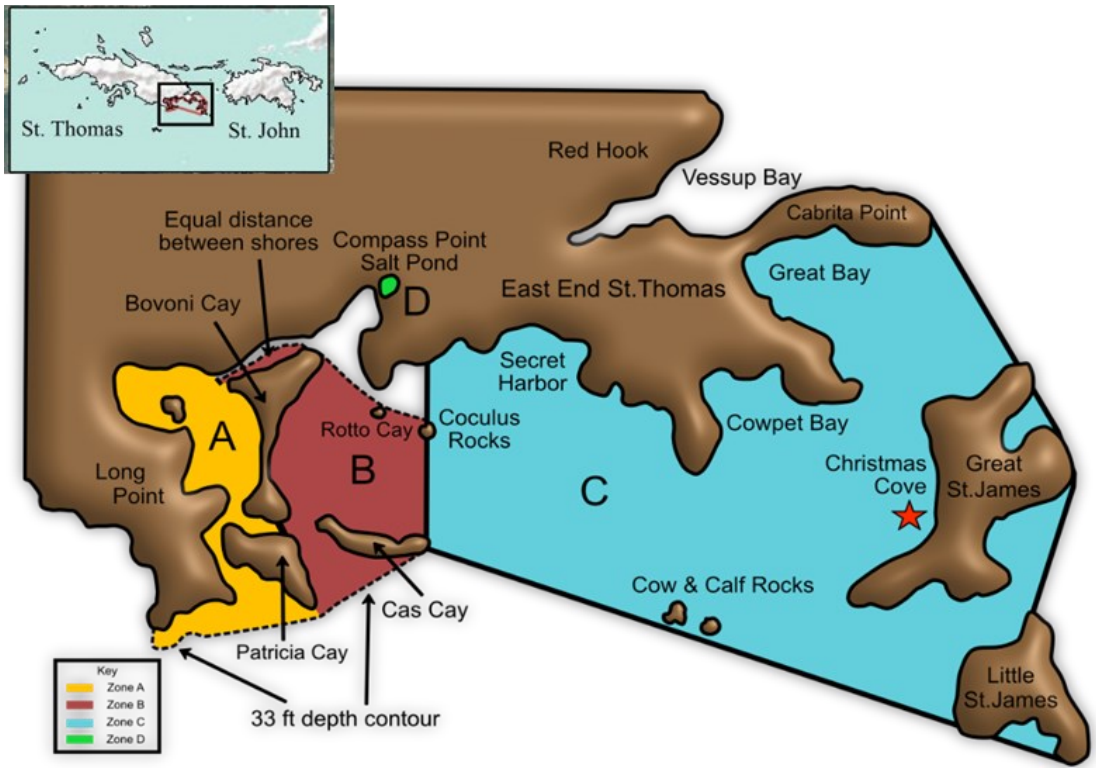
5*0 CFR 622.10(c)(1)*— Bait is exempt from requirement to be maintained with head and fins intact.

5*0 CFR 622.10(c)(2)*— Legal-sized finfish possessed for consumption at sea on the harvesting vessel are exempt from the requirements to have head and fins intact, provided: (i) such finfish do not exceed any applicable bag limit,; (ii) such finfish do not exceed 1.5lb (680 g) of finfish parts per person aboard; and (iii) the vessel is equipped to cook such finfish on board.

Anchoring:

50 CFR 622.432(a)— Any fishing vessel, recreational or commercial that fishes for or possesses Caribbean reef fish must ensure that the vessel uses only an anchor retrieval system that recovers the anchor by its crown, thereby preventing the anchor from dragging along the bottom during recovery. For a grapnel hook, this could include an incorporated anchor rode reversal bar that runs parallel along the shank, which allows the rode to reverse and slip back toward the crown. For a fluke– or plow-type anchor, a trip line consisting of a line from the crown of the anchor to a surface buoy would be required.

APPENDIX 4— SOUTHEAST ST. THOMAS MARINE RESERVES AND WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES



A. Inner Mangrove Lagoon – No fishing or take of any natural resources is allowed. No internal combustion engines. Electric motors, sails or paddles are acceptable. Engines cause wakes, noise, and pollution.

B. Cas Cay/Mangrove Lagoon – No fishing or take of any natural resources is allowed, except that use of a cast net for baitfish within 50 feet of the north and west shorelines of Cas Cay is allowed only with a permit from DPNR Division of Environmental Enforcement (340-774-3320).

C. St. James – No fishing or take of any natural resources is allowed, except that baitfishing using a cast net within 50 feet of the shoreline (except for Cow and Calf Rocks) and fishing by hook and line is allowed with a permit from DPNR Division of Env. Enforcement (340-774-3320).

D. Compass Point Salt Pond – No fishing, hunting, or take of any natural resources is allowed within this marine reserve and wildlife sanctuary.

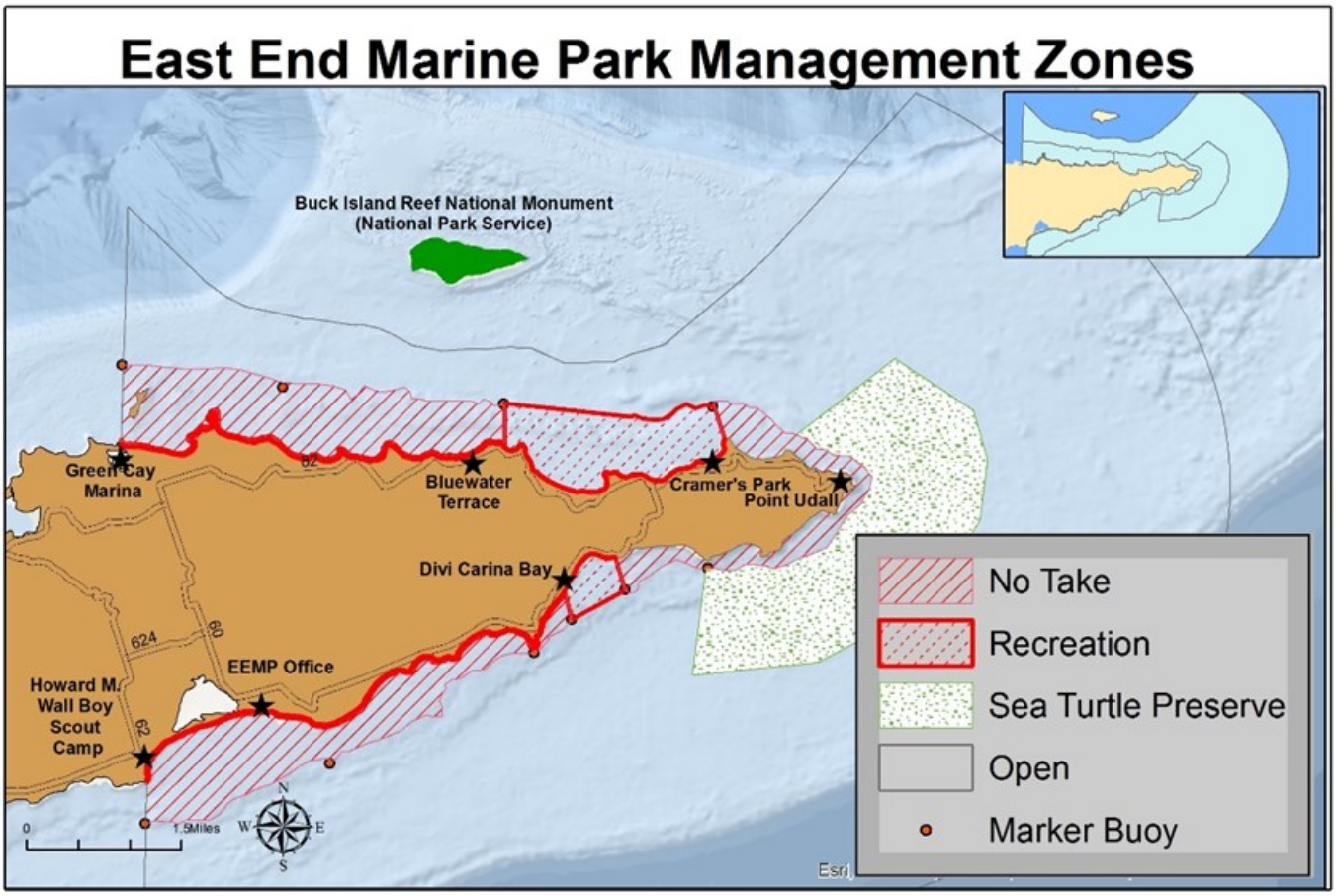
These areas have been protected for a variety of reasons, all of which will benefit your use and enjoyment of our marine natural resources.

These marine reserves:

1. Contribute to commercial and recreational fishery resources by protecting a portion of spawning stock from exploitation.
2. Preserve important coral reef, mangrove, and seagrass habitat for larval, juvenile, and adult fish and invertebrates, such as lobster and conch
3. Provide coastal and marine viewing and recreation areas for the public, snorkelers and SCUBA divers, school groups, and scientists.

For more information on these marine reserves and wildlife sanctuaries, please call DPNR Division of Fish and Wildlife at (340) 773-1082. To obtain permits or to report violations, contact the Division of Environmental Enforcement at (340) 774-3320.

APPENDIX 5— ST CROIX EAST END MARINE PARK (STXEEMP) ZONE REGULATIONS



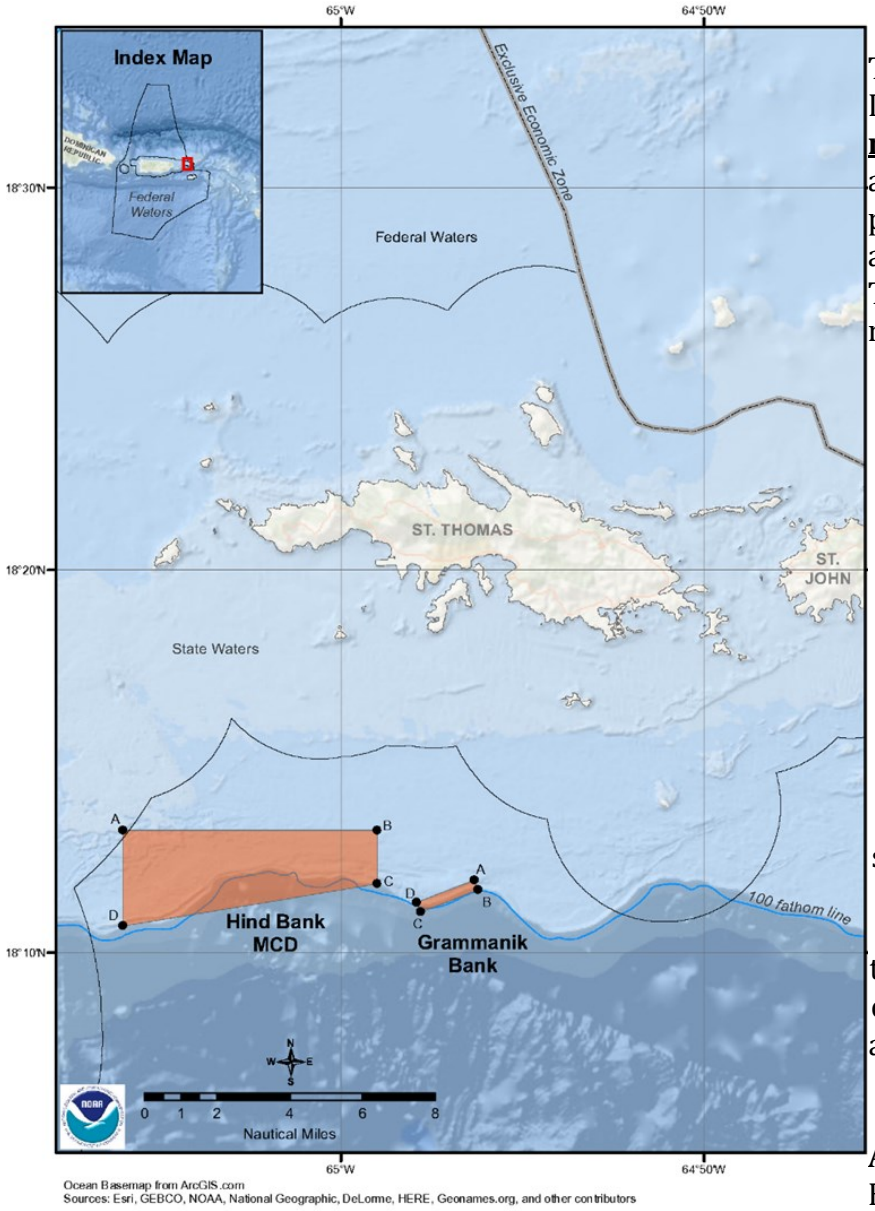
No-Take Zone – Traditional fishing (including spearfishing, fish traps/pots, gillnets, lobster, whelk and conch harvesting) is **prohibited** in this zone [Section 98-5(d)(2)]. Removal of, injury to, or possession of living or dead coral (without a permit) is **prohibited** [Section 98-4(a)(1)]. Allows snorkeling, diving (with a flag), and boating. Operating a personal watercraft is prohibited. The seaward boundaries of this zone are marked in the water with a series of white spar buoys.

Recreational Zone – Traditional fishing (including spearfishing, fish traps/pots, gillnets, lobster, whelk and conch harvesting) is **prohibited** in this zone. [Section 98-5(d)(2)]. Removal of, injury to, or possession of living or dead coral (without a permit) is **prohibited**. [Section 98-4(a)(1)]. Allows snorkeling, diving (with a flag), and boating. Recreational shoreline line fishing (to 100 ft from shore) is permitted from Green Cay Marina to Cottongarden Point (north shore) and from Grapetree Point to Milord Point (south shore). Special Marine Park permits may be issued for cast-net baitfishing and catch-and-release guide fishing (please check with the Park for the status of permits which are in development). Personal watercraft are permitted in this zone.

Wildlife Preservation Zone / "Sea Turtle Preserve" – Protects nesting female sea turtles using beaches in East End, Isaac, Jack, and Boiler Bays to lay eggs (St. Croix East End Marine Park Management Plan; *V.I.C, Title 12, Chapter 1, §98*).

Open Zone / Park Wide – Taking or injuring coral, altering the seabed, discharging materials, groundings, anchoring on hard bottom or coral communities, and diving without a flag are prohibited.

APPENDIX 6— HIND BANK MARINE CONSERVATION DISTRICT AND GRAMMANIK BANK CLOSURES, ST. THOMAS



HIND BANK MARINE CONSERVATION DISTRICT, ST. THOMAS

The Hind Bank Marine Conservation District (MCD) is **closed year-round**. Fishing for any species and anchoring by fishing vessels are prohibited in this 14-square mile area south of western St. Thomas. The following points define the corners of the closed area:

A – 18° 13.2' N, 65° 06.0' W
B – 18° 13.2' N, 64° 59.0' W
C – 18° 11.8' N, 64° 59.0' W
D – 18° 10.7' N, 65° 06.0' W

GRAMMANIK BANK SEASONAL CLOSURE, ST. THOMAS February 1 to April 30

From **February 1 through April 30**, no person may fish for or possess any species of fish, except highly migratory species (bluefin, bigeye, yellowfin, albacore, skipjack tunas; swordfish; sharks; billfish), in or from the Grammanik Bank closed area. The following points define the corners of this closed area:

A – 18° 11.898' N, 64° 56.328' W
B – 18° 11.645' N, 64° 56.225' W
C – 18° 11.058' N, 64° 57.810' W
D – 18° 11.311' N, 64° 57.913' W

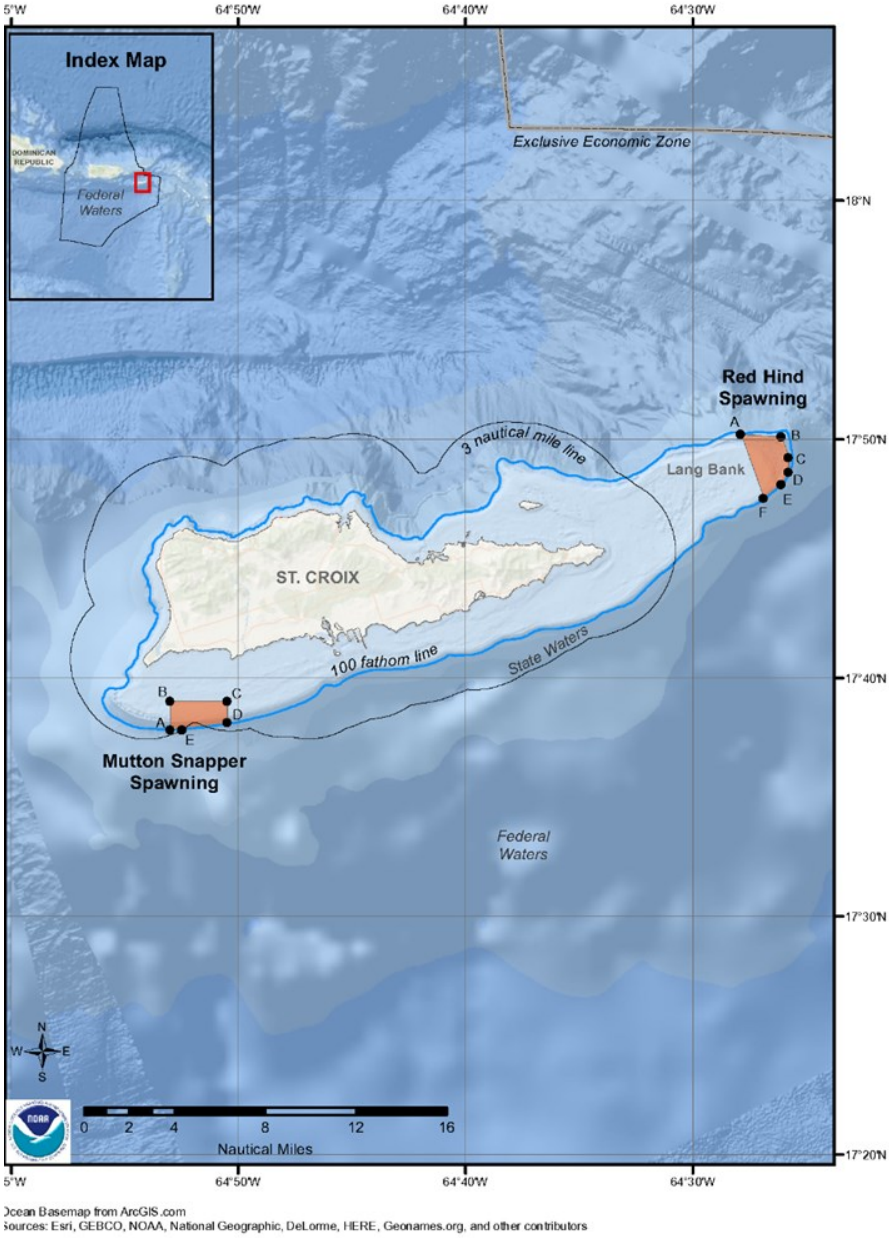
Fishing with pots, traps, bottom longlines, gillnets, or trammel nets is prohibited year-round in both Hind Bank Marine Conservation District and Grammanik Bank Seasonal Closure.

APPENDIX 7—LANG BANK RED HIND SPAWNING AGGREGATION AND MUTTON SNAPPER SPAWNING AGGREGATION SEASONAL CLOSURES, ST. CROIX

LANG BANK RED HIND SPAWNING AGGREGATION SEASONAL CLOSURE, ST. CROIX
December 1 to February 28

The Lang Bank Red Hind Spawning Aggregation seasonal closure is from December 1 to February 28. Fishing is prohibited during these months. The following points define the boundaries of this closed area:

A – 17° 50.2' N, 64° 27.9' W
B – 17° 50.1' N, 64° 26.1' W
C – 17° 49.2' N, 64° 25.8' W
D – 17° 48.6' N, 64° 25.8' W
E – 17° 48.1' N, 64° 26.1' W
F – 17° 47.5' N, 64° 26.9' W

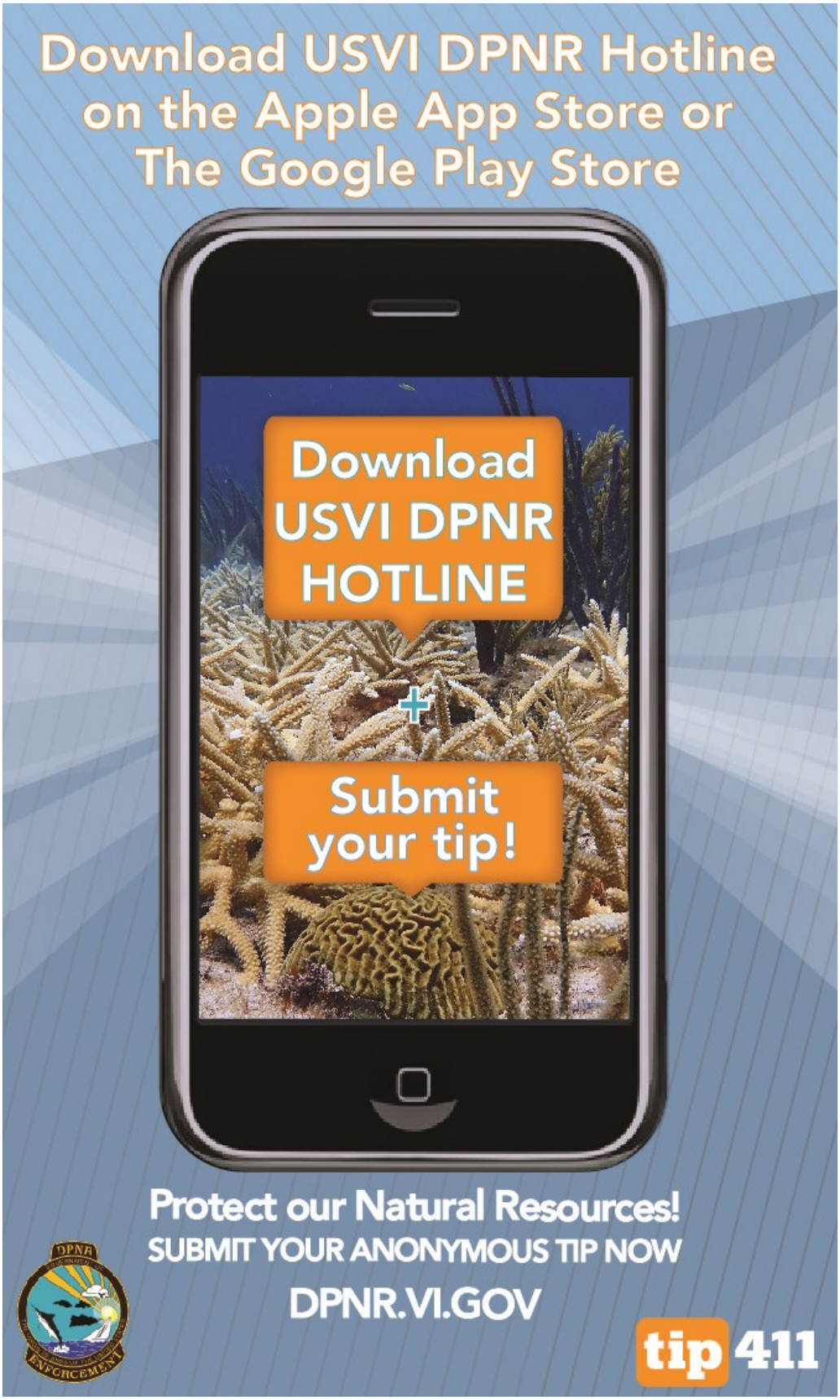


MUTTON SNAPPER SPAWNING AGGREGATION SEASONAL CLOSURE, ST. CROIX
March 1 to June 30

From March 1 through June 30, fishing is prohibited in the part of the Mutton Snapper Spawning Aggregation that is located within the Exclusive Economic Zone. This area is defined by the following points:

A— 17° 37.8' N, 64° 53.0' W
B— 17° 39.0' N, 64° 53.0' W
C— 17°39.0'N, 64° 50.5' W
D— 17° 38.1' N, 64° 50.5' W
E— 17° 37.8' N, 64° 52.5' W

Fishing with pots, traps, bottom longlines, gillnets or trammel nets is prohibited <u>year-round</u> in both Lang Bank Red Hind Spawning Aggregation Seasonal Closure and Mutton Snapper Spawning Aggregation Seasonal Closure.



The DPNR Hotline is a tool for our community members to alert us when you see activity affecting our natural resources. Connect with the Divisions of Environmental Enforcement, Coastal Zone Management, Environmental Protection, Building Permits, and Fish & Wildlife to help us take care of our important natural resources! Submit your report anonymously, and don't forget to check back for your updates! Reports can also be submitted online at dpnr.vi.gov/home/dpnr-hotline . If this is an emergency, please call 911.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR RELEVANT AGENCIES AND HELPFUL RESOURCES

Medical Contacts

St. Thomas Hospital Roy L. Schneider Hospital……(340) 776-8311
St. Croix Hospital Juan F. Luis Hospital…… (340) 778-6311
Morris F. deCastro Clinic…… (340) 776-6400
Morris F. deCastro Fire Department……(340)776-6333
Poison Information…… 1-800-222-1222

SCUBA Emergencies

St. Thomas Hyperbaric Chamber…… (340) 776-8311 (ER)
St. Croix SCUBA emergencies…… (340) 778-6311 (ER)
Divers Alert Network (DAN)…… (919) 684-2948/ (919)684-9111

U.S. Coast Guard

St. Thomas/St. John (duty phone)…… (340) 344-3537/ (340)776-3497
St. Croix (duty phone)…… (340) 719-9611
Search and Rescue …… (787) 289-2040/ (787)289-2041
USCG 24-Hour Emergency Line……(787) 289-2041
SeaTow…… (1-800) 473-2869

USVI Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA)

St. Thomas…… (340) 774-2244
St. John…… (340) 776-6444
St. Croix…… (340) 773-2244

National Park Service

St. Thomas/St. John…… (340) 776-6201
St. Croix…… (340) 773-1460

NOAA Fisheries

National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Regional Office……(727) 824-5301
Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Division……(727) 824-5399

USVI Department of Planning and Natural Resources

DPNR St. Thomas/St. John…… (340) 774-3320
DPNR St. Croix……(340) 773-1082

Division of Environmental Enforcement

St. Thomas/St. John…… (340) 774-3320
St. Croix…… (340) 773-5774

Coastal Zone Management

Toxic Spills…… (800) 424-8802
St. Croix East End Marine Park …… (340) 718-3367

Division of Fish and Wildlife

St. Thomas/St. John……(340) 775-6762
St. Croix……(340) 773-1082

Image created by Paul Borghi

DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

6291 Estate Nazareth
St. Thomas, VI 00802

45 Mars Hill Complex
Frederiksted, St. Croix, VI 00840
(340) 773-1082

DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT

VIYA Building
Tutu Park Mall
St. Thomas, VI 00802
(340) 774-3320

6003 Anna's Hope
Christiansted
St. Croix, VI 00821
(340) 773-5774