



GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

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Tuesday, October 24, 2023

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**UNITED STATES CORAL REEF TASK FORCE ANNUAL JURISDICTIONAL MEETING TO BE  
HELD ON ST. THOMAS FROM OCTOBER 21ST - 28TH**

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Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol of the Department of Planning & Natural Resources is pleased to announce that The United States Coral Reef Task Force (USCRTF), which is comprised of members from 13 federal agencies, seven U.S. states, territories, and commonwealths, and three Freely Associated States, is holding their annual jurisdictional meeting in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands in from October 22-27, 2023 at The Westin Beach Resort & Spa at Frenchman's Reef.

Established in 1998 by Presidential Executive Order, the USCRTF leads U.S. efforts to preserve and protect coral reef ecosystems by building partnerships, strategies, and support for on-the-ground action to conserve coral reefs. The USCRTF works in cooperation with state, territorial, commonwealth, and local government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, the scientific community, and commercial interest to further the understanding and conservation of coral reef ecosystems. The USCRTF allows partners from across the world to participate in cross-jurisdictional learning exchanges, hands-on training, and collaborations on coral reef management solutions.

DPNR's Division of Coastal Zone Management is using this in-person meeting to highlight the on the ground initiatives being undertaken in the Territory for the preservation of coral reef ecosystems, to promote natural infrastructure as a resilience response to climate change issues, and to discuss challenges shared across all jurisdictions.

The Business Meeting of the USCRTF will be held on Thursday October 26, 2023, from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm at The Westin Beach Resort & Spa at Frenchman's Reef in the Harbor Ballroom and is open to the public. Members of the community are encouraged to attend. To facilitate public participation there will be a safari shuttle from the small parking lot adjacent to Benny Iguana Sushi, just across from The Tap & Still restaurant, at the Havensight Mall to the meeting location; shuttles will run at 7:00 am, 7:30 am, and 8:00 am. Shuttle users must park in this area.