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Jean-Pierre L. Oriol, Commissioner  
Department of Planning and Natural Resources  
Charles W. Turnbull Regional Library  
4607 TuTu Park Mall  
St. Thomas, VI 00802

### **GHD Request for Coastal Consistency for the Savan Gut Phase II Project**

Dear Commissioner Oriol

GHD on the behalf of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers respectfully request a Decision of Coastal Consistency for the Savan Gut Phase II Project in St. Thomas, VI. The purpose of the project is to reduce flood damages to the Jane E. Tuitt Elementary School and the Central Business District in downtown Charlotte Amalie during a one-hour SPF (Standard Project Flood) published in Engineer Manual (EM) 1110-2-1411. Heavy rainfall in the upland catchment basin of Savan Gut causes rocks and other debris to be washed down the channel toward the sea. Two constrictions reduce flows so that the flood waters overflow the channel banks and flood the school as well as the business district. The Savan section of Charlotte Amalie has extremely high runoff rates due to the steep slopes in the upper basin. Flash floods from intense thunderstorms are a common event affecting this area and can occur anytime during the year. Effects from Hurricane Maria, which hit the island in September 2017, prompted the Corps to include the project for consideration for funding.

The initial project, authorized under the Continuing Authorities Program (CAP), Section 205 of the Flood Control Act of 1948 (Public Law 80-858), as amended (33 U.S.C. § 701s), was divided into two phases for preparation of plans, specifications, and construction with the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Public Works (USVI DPW) as the Non-Federal Sponsor (NFS). Construction was completed on Phase I in April 1989 and Phase II was advertised in 1999. However, the bids received exceeded the government estimate and costs exceeding the Corps' statutory limit; therefore, Phase II of the project was not awarded for construction. Since Phase II has not been constructed, significant residual flooding impacts occur in Charlotte Amalie. The Final Savan Gut, CAP Conversion Feasibility Report was completed in 2020, which verifies the full project and Phase II as a standalone project (the unconstructed features) are both economically justified, environmentally acceptable, and feasible from an engineering standpoint and that no additional reformulation is needed. The information provided herein is furnished in support of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) Coastal Zone Management Federal Consistency Environmental Assessment for a unified and comprehensive design plan to mitigate the flooding along Savan Gut. The proposed application seeks to obtain authorization for Phase II of the project plan, further detailed in the supplemental information.

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