

GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DPNR SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT ON U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN

Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR), through the Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), is inviting the public to review and provide feedback on the U.S. Virgin Islands' State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). Public comments will be accepted from **Monday, July 14 through August 15, 2025**, via the newly launched website: <https://sites.google.com/view/usvistatewildlifeactionplan/home>.

Every ten years, states and territories across the U.S. update their wildlife action plans in collaboration with scientists, conservationists, landowners, and community members. These plans serve as strategic roadmaps to conserve wildlife and habitats before species become endangered. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service requires this update as a condition for receiving federal funding through the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program.

The updated plan highlights **Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)**—including federally and locally listed threatened and endangered species—as well as their habitats, threats, and proposed conservation actions. New features in this revision include a focus on **wildlife health, plant and pollinator species**, and **Conservation Opportunity Areas** with spatial data.

This marks the **third major revision** of the Virgin Islands' SWAP. Earlier this year, DFW hosted a kickoff meeting at the Caribbean Conservation Community of Practice at the University of the Virgin Islands. Now, the public is encouraged to weigh in on proposed species lists, habitat priorities, threats, and conservation strategies for the next decade.

"Our team works hand-in-hand with community partners to protect vital ecosystems—from wetlands and coral reefs to native species like American Eels, leaf litter geckos, seabirds, and invertebrates," said Dr. Nicole Angeli, Director of the Division of Fish and Wildlife. "We're excited to hear from the public and incorporate your ideas into this important conservation blueprint."

For more information, contact the Division of Fish and Wildlife at **340-773-1082 (St. Croix)** or visit www.dpnr.vi.gov.