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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DPNR AND *VI ECOTOURS* PARTNER TO OFFER 400 FREE KAYAK TOURS FOR ST. THOMAS RESIDENTS

Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) is inviting St. Thomas residents to experience the beauty of the Virgin Islands' unique coastal ecosystems through a series of free guided kayak eco-adventures offered on select Saturdays in November and December 2026.

The program, coordinated by DPNR's Division of Fish and Wildlife in partnership with Virgin Islands EcoTours, will provide residents with the opportunity to explore the Mangrove Lagoon Wildlife Sanctuary and Marine Reserve while learning about the territory's natural resources and diverse habitats. Free tours will be available on the following dates:

- Saturday, November 14, 2026
- Saturday, November 21, 2026
- Saturday, November 28, 2026
- Saturday, December 5, 2026
- Saturday, December 12, 2026

"As part of our mission, the Division of Fish and Wildlife encourages Virgin Islanders to enjoy, understand, and appreciate the incredible natural resources found throughout our islands," said Dr. Nicole Angeli, Director of the Division of Fish and Wildlife. "We are excited to provide 200 free vouchers for a three-hour guided experience that includes kayaking, hiking, and snorkeling with Virgin Islands EcoTours. Through the company's generous support in matching our sponsorship, a total of 400 free tours will be available to residents."

Vouchers will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis beginning November 14, 2026, and are available exclusively to current U.S. Virgin Islands residents. Each excursion lasts approximately three hours and will be offered during two daily sessions:

10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Additional tour dates may be added by Virgin Islands EcoTours if demand exceeds availability.

Participants will enjoy an immersive outdoor adventure that includes paddling through scenic mangrove waterways, hiking on Cas Cay, and exploring natural features such as tidal pools, volcanic cliffs, and a geological blowhole before returning to Mangrove Lagoon Marina.

Children must be at least 10 years old to participate and must be accompanied by an adult. Reservations are limited to eight participants per booking, and each resident may redeem one voucher.

As part of the program, participants will be asked to complete a brief survey following their tour to help DPNR evaluate and improve future outdoor recreation and conservation education opportunities.

To reserve a tour, contact Virgin Islands EcoTours at 340-779-2155 or toll-free at 1-877-684-2441 and mention the promotional code DPNR-DFW2026. Reservations can also be made online at viecotours.com.

For additional information, contact the Division of Fish and Wildlife at 340-774-3320 ext. 5206.