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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DPNR INVITES COMMUNITY TO NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA PROGRAM PRESENTATION AND STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSION ON ST. CROIX

Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR), through the Virgin Islands State Historic Preservation Office (VISHPO), is inviting community stakeholders, cultural organizations, government agencies, businesses, and residents to attend a special presentation and stakeholder discussion on the St. Croix National Heritage Area.

The presentation will be led by representatives of the National Park Service National Heritage Area Program during their upcoming visit to St. Croix and will provide an overview of the National Heritage Area Program, the development of a National Heritage Area Management Plan, and the collaborative process that will help shape the future of the Saint Croix National Heritage Area.

Commissioner Oriol said the meeting represents an important opportunity for the community to learn more about the National Heritage Area designation and contribute to a shared vision for preserving and promoting the rich cultural, historic, and natural resources of St. Croix.

"Community participation is essential to ensure that the Saint Croix National Heritage Area reflects the unique history, traditions, and stories of our island," said Sean L. Krigger, Director of the VI State Historic Preservation Office. "We encourage stakeholders and residents to join this discussion and help guide a planning process that will strengthen heritage preservation, education, interpretation, and sustainable economic opportunities for generations to come."

Topics to be discussed include:

- An overview of the National Heritage Area Program and its objectives;
- Key elements and requirements of a National Heritage Area Management Plan;
- Strategies for stakeholder and community engagement;

- Opportunities for heritage preservation, interpretation, education, and tourism;
- Governance, partnerships, and long-term sustainability of the Heritage Area; and
- Next steps in the planning process for the Saint Croix National Heritage Area.

The session will provide attendees with an opportunity to engage directly with National Park Service and VI State Historic Preservation staff, ask questions, and discuss the role of community partners in shaping the long-term management strategy for the Heritage Area.

The meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 17, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Florence Williams Public Library, located at 49 and 50 King Street in Christiansted, St. Croix.

DPNR encourages all interested stakeholders and members of the public to attend and participate in this important discussion focused on preserving, interpreting, and promoting St. Croix's heritage resources while helping shape the future direction of the Saint Croix National Heritage Area.

For additional information, please contact the Director, Sean L. Krigger, at sean.krigger@dpnr.vi.gov.