

ACTION ALERT: Mega Marina Impacting Park Resources

From: Friends of Virgin Islands National Park (friends_of_virgin_islands_nation@mail.vresp.com)

To: dlsilverman@yahoo.com

Date: Tuesday, January 20, 2015, 12:30 PM AST



[Click to view this email in a browser](#)

Dear Friends,

First off I would like to wish you the very best for the new year and I hope that you will use the promise of a new year to join an effort to confront a serious threat to the marine resources of Virgin Islands National Park and the Coral Reef National Monument.

I wrote to you in November about plans to build a large marina in Coral Bay. The marina project appears to be moving forward and the US Army Corps of Engineers recently issued a public notice and opened a public comment period about the project. Please follow this link to read the public notice:

<http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/PublicNotices/tabid/6072/Article/559161/saj-2004-12518-sp-jms.aspx>

There is widespread concern about this development on social, economic, and environmental grounds. In addition, the viability of its location and its feasibility as a sustainable business is also called into question. You can read more about these concerns at www.savecoralbay.com

We remain particularly alarmed about environmental issues and the impact this development will have on nearby VI National Park lands and VI Coral Reef National Monument waters both at Hurricane Hole and to the south of St. John.

If you share our concern I urge you to voice your opinion by responding to the US Army Corps of Engineers' request for public comment. You can provide your comments by mail or electronically (see addresses below), but please do so as soon as possible – the deadline for receiving comments is January 31, 2015.

We have not provided a form letter or boilerplate and hope that you will send a more personal response on what this marina will mean to you and the national park that means so much to you. Whether you send one sentence or a full page please register your concern now.

Some talking points you may want to consider include:

This marina would be a significant threat to nearby NPS-protected lands and waters. National Park land abuts the site of the proposed marina and the waters of Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument are only a mile away as a gull flies and 1½ miles by water.

Within Coral Harbour it would eliminate a minimum of nine acres of seagrass beds, create a sizeable obstruction to water flow in the bay, add an unknown amount and number of contaminants to the bay waters from all the vessels and generally lead to severe degradation of

water quality. There are no physical barriers in the sea and the degradation of the waters of Coral Bay will have a negative impact on the waters of nearby Hurricane Hole and beyond.

The National Monument contains significant biological flora and fauna, including several threatened and endangered species, which forage, breed, nest, rest, or calve in the waters. Humpback whales, pilot whales, four species of dolphins, brown pelicans, roseate terns, least terns, hawksbill sea turtles, leatherback sea turtles, and green sea turtles all use portions of the monument. Countless species of reef fishes, invertebrates, plants and algae utilize these submerged lands during their lives, and over 25 species of seabirds feed in the waters. Between the near shore nursery habitats and the shelf edge spawning sites, habitats in the monument play essential roles during specific developmental stages of reef associated species, including spawning migrations of many reef fish species and crustaceans. These are threatened by the marina and the development has given no consideration to the potential negative cumulative impacts to park and monument resources caused by significantly increased vessel traffic.

Mitigation measures proposed by the developers, such as planting seagrass where there is none presently (and where they probably would not grow), and planting mangroves in an area unsuitable for mangroves, are simply not adequate.

The Environmental Assessment prepared for this marina gives no consideration to impacts to the monument's water quality, marine resources, wetlands (mangroves) coral reefs, sea grasses, fish, marine invertebrates, and species of concern protected by the Endangered Species Act.

I again urge you to voice your concerns about this marina.

Mail can be sent to:

District Engineer
Antilles Permits Section
400 Fernández Juncos Avenue
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00901-3299

Emails can be sent to: Johann.M.Sasso@usace.army.mil

In both cases be sure to include the application number (SAJ-2004-12518) in the subject line.

There is an opportunity to request a public hearing about the application for the marina. In your response to the US Army Corps of Engineers please request a public hearing, and give a reason such as the need for more information, or because of the public controversy.

Lastly, please copy the Friends on your communication about the marina. Please copy emails to nomarina@friendsvinp.org, or fax letters to 340-693-9973.

Thank you for your concern regarding this threat to park and monument resources. Together we can make a difference.

Sincerely,

Joe Kessler
President

Thank you for supporting Friends and our VI National Park. Park-owned land can never be developed - and with our help it will be preserved, protected and educating others future generations. This is what makes St. John so special, and your support so important.



If you no longer wish to receive these emails, please reply to this message with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line or simply click on the following link: [Unsubscribe](#)

[Click here](#) to forward this email to a friend

Friends of Virgin Islands National Park
PO Box 811
St. John, 00831
VI

[Read](#) the VerticalResponse marketing policy.

vertical DELIVERED BY
response
Try It Free Today!