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U.S. Department of the Interior

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## Virgin Islands National Park News Release

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### National Park Service Announces Caneel Bay Listening Session, Environmental Investigation Updates

St. John, USVI – The National Park Service (NPS) will hold a listening session next Thursday to receive public input on the future of Caneel Bay at Virgin Islands National Park.

“With the September 2023 expiration of the Rockefeller retained use estate in sight, the listening session will enable the public to help shape future protection and use of this world treasure for generations to come,” said park superintendent Nigel Fields. “We welcome broad participation in our long-term commitment to preserving and commemorating the area’s natural and cultural heritage.”

The virtual forum will kick off with Caneel Bay updates and feature an opportunity for the public to inform the National Park Service vision for Caneel Bay with response to four key questions:

- 1) What type of connection have you had with Caneel Bay?
- 2) What are your thoughts on preserving the history and culture of Caneel Bay and St. John?
- 3) What have been its greatest challenges?
- 4) How can the National Park Service improve operations at Caneel Bay for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?

**The Caneel Bay Listening Session will take place April 8 at 5:30 pm. Members of the public can attend the virtual event or submit written comments by visiting [go.nps.gov/CaneelBay](http://go.nps.gov/CaneelBay).**

#### Environmental Investigation

The listening session comes as NPS makes plans to release a report of its findings to the Caneel Bay environmental site assessment by late spring. Field investigations for the [Environmental Evaluation and Cost Analysis \(EE/CA\) process initiated in February](#) included collecting soil samples, conducting surveys to find buried waste and visually inspecting building materials for signs of asbestos. Field investigations were completed February 25 and soil samples are currently being analyzed by an accredited laboratory.

After analyses are concluded, NPS will present the investigation results, the calculated risks to human health and the environment, and response action alternatives (if required) in a draft EE/CA report to be made available for public review and comment. A public Notice of

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Availability of the report will be published in the Virgin Islands Daily News and on the project website at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/CaneelBayAssessment>.

The EE/CA public comment period will last at least 30 days and will be extended for an additional 15 days upon timely request. **During the environmental assessment comment period, NPS will hold a public meeting on June 10** to help convey its findings and proposed cleanup actions and to answer questions. After the comment period ends, NPS will select an alternative, inform the public and stakeholders of its decision, and provide responses to significant public comments in an Action Memorandum.

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*About the National Park Service. More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 423 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Learn more at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov), and on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#).*