

APPENDIX E

**COASTAL ZONE CONSISTENCY
DETERMINATION**



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service
Christiansted National Historic Site
Buck Island Reef National Monument
Salt River Bay Historical Park and Ecological Preserve
2100 Church Street #100
St. Croix, Virgin Islands 00820
(340) 773-1460



June 4, 2008

Janice Hodge
Director
Coastal Zone Management
45 Mars Hill
Frederiksted, VI 00840

Subject: Federal Consistency Determination for Abandoned Hotel Demolition at Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve

Dear Ms. Hodge,

As previously stated in an agency coordination letter dated July 2006, the National Park Service prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the above referenced project located at Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve (SARI), St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands. The EA was prepared in accordance with the U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service National Environmental Policy Act guidance (Director's Order 12). The proposed action includes the demolition of an abandoned hotel structure located on the east side of Salt River Bay. This hotel structure was part of a development project started in the late 1960s that was never completed. The structure is deteriorating and presents safety and environmental concerns for the park. The park proposes to remove the entire structure, reuse and recycle as much of the materials as possible, and return the site to a more natural condition.

The Proposed Action is located in Tier 1 of the Coastal Zone and constitutes as a Federal Agency Activity, as defined in Section 902-2 in the VICZM Act. Therefore, this Federal Consistency Determination was completed, as required by Section 904-7 of the VICZM Act. In addition, to comply with the VICZMP, the NPS was required to initiate preliminary consultation with the USVI DPNR/Division of Coastal Zone Management (DCZM) in the form of a preliminary meeting to discuss the proposed project. The preliminary meeting occurred on August 21, 2006 and a list of attendees is presented in Appendix C of the EA. The NPS proposes that this project will be conducted in a manner consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with the Virgin Islands Coastal Zone Management Program (VICZMP).

Details of the Proposed Action, Alternatives Analysis, Existing Conditions, Environmental Consequences, Cumulative Impacts, Mitigation, Environmental Commitments, Regulatory Compliance, and Agency and Public Consultation are included in detail in the attached EA for this project and sections are referenced throughout this letter. Although the EA includes two projects (construction of a Marine Research and Educational Center and the demolition of the abandoned hotel structure), the NPS is only applying for Federal Consistency with the VICZMP at this time for the demolition of the abandoned hotel structure and associated actions (Proposed





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Action). This letter serves as the Consistency Determination for the NPS and includes the following, as required by Section 904-7(8) of the VICZM Act:

- (a) As part of the proposed action, the NPS proposes to demolish the existing partially constructed hotel structure and return the site to a more natural, vegetated setting. The EA provides more details and relevant technical data, including tables and figures applicable to the project. The Proposed Action includes the following projects:
 - 1) Construct a haul-out road for equipment access and removal of debris.
 - 2) Mechanically demolish the abandoned hotel structure.
 - 3) Following demolition, all materials would be removed from the site (including areas on the peninsula adjacent to the hotel site) via the haul-out road. The NPS proposes to reuse and recycle as much of the material as possible.
 - 4) The haul-out road would be converted into a low traffic permeable surface service road and terminate at a small parking area for park use only.
 - 5) The site would be rehabilitated, revegetated, and returned to a more natural condition.
- (b) The project and its effects are consistent to the maximum extent possible with the goals of the VICZM Act [Section 903(b)]. Specifically, the following goals are applicable to this project:
 - 1) The overall quality of the environment in the coastal zone at SARI will be restored through revegetation and habitat improvement on the peninsula on the east side of the park following the demolition of the abandoned hotel and removal of construction materials. Approximately 7.10 acres of permanently improved habitat would be created in the coastal zone as a result of the Proposed Action, and non-native invasive plant species would be targeted for removal. This improvement in existing habitat is a long-term, moderate, beneficial impact.
 - 2) Because the abandoned hotel structure is currently located in Tier 1 of the coastal zone, coastal-dependent development (in the form of demolition, removal of debris, and rehabilitation) associated with the Proposed Action in the coastal zone will occur.
 - 3) The orderly, balanced utilization and conservation of the resources of the coastal zone were considered as will the social and economic needs of the residents of the Virgin Islands (See Section 5.9.2 of the EA). The Proposed Action would remove the deteriorating abandoned hotel structure that poses a safety hazard for the public. See Section 5.9.6 Energy Requirements and Conservation in the EA for more details.
 - 4) As a result of the Proposed Action, SARI will continue to be preserved, protected, and maintained as parkland to promote the general welfare of the people of the Virgin Islands.



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- 5) The Proposed Action will ensure that the public, individually and collectively, has and shall continue to have the right to use, and enjoy the shorelines of SARI, as appropriate, and to maximize public access to and along the shorelines consistent with the protected rights of private property owners.
 - 6) As a result of the Proposed Action, ecologically significant resource areas will continue to be conserved for their contribution to marine productivity and valuable wildlife habitats, and the function and integrity of reefs, marine meadows, salt ponds, mangroves and other significant natural areas will also continue to be preserved.
 - 7) The Proposed Action will maintain water quality through control of erosion and sedimentation run-off, improve/restore watershed drainage into the large salt pond on the east side of the park and Triton Bay, and control siltation during all construction activities. As stated in Section 5.2.1, an Erosion Control Plan and a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) would be required and implemented prior to, during, and following ground-disturbing activities.
- (c) A detailed assessment of the probable effects of the proposed activity and its associated facilities on the VICZMP was analyzed in Section 5.3.3 of the EA. Short-term, minor adverse impacts to the coastal zone are anticipated during the construction activities. However, the abandoned hotel structure would be removed from the coastal zone, and would result in a long-term, moderate, beneficial impact to the coastal zone.
- (d) The proposed activity is consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with the VICZMP and will be conducted in a manner consistent with such program.

Sincerely,

Joel A. Tutein
Superintendent

Enclosures

cc: S. Wright, NPS

