DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS, PARKS & RECREATION
GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER REGARDING EMANCIPATION GARDEN

U.S. Virgin Islands – On July 1, 2022, the Department of Sports, Parks, and Recreation grounds crew pruned several trees to beautify the Emancipation Garden as part of our preparations to commemorate Emancipation Day. As they have done several times, they removed branches thought to be hazardous. I want to assure the public that this was not done with malice and was not done with any intent to desecrate this sacred space. The men and women of this Department, in this case, specifically the ground crew, approach their jobs seriously and with sensitivity to our cultural, historical, and natural resources. As the Commissioner of DSPR, I am mindful of the concerns expressed by members of the community and take full responsibility for our actions.

The Department of Sports, Parks, and Recreation will continue working with the Department of Planning and Natural Resources' State Historic Preservation Office concerning the care and maintenance of trees in our historic districts. I encourage the community to become educated on safe tree practices and the identity of heritage trees during our own everyday lives. DSPR remains dedicated to the care and maintenance of our parks and recreational facilities, particularly those of cultural and historical significance.

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