GOVERNMENT HOUSE
UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 9, 2022
Press Contact
Richard Motta
340-474-2399
www.vi.gov
richard.mottajr@go.vi.gov



Governor Bryan Signs Legislation Enabling Territorial Park System

U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS — Governor Albert Bryan Jr. signed legislation on Tuesday, August 9, that brings to life a Territorial Park System and revises a Territorial Park System Trust Fund Board, actions that will allow the Bryan-Roach Administration to manage and acquire land and recreational areas and implement the Maroon Sanctuary Zone on the West End of St. Croix.

During a signing ceremony at Government House on St. Croix Tuesday morning, Governor Bryan also named the first four members to the seven-member Park System Trust Fund Board: Department of Planning and Natural Resources Commissioner Jean-Pierre Oriol, Sports, Parks and Recreation Commissioner Calvert White and private-sector members Carlos Tesitor Jr. of St. Croix and Conn Davis II of St. Thomas.

Governor Bryan thanked Senator Samuel Carrion for sponsoring Bills No. 34-0267, which establishes the parks system, and 34-0268, which creates the Park System Trust Fund Board, and for the opportunity to sign legislation that can change the course of the Territory.

“Nothing gives me more pleasure than to set up a parks system that will determine a legacy of preservation for all Virgin Islanders to see in perpetuity,” Governor Bryan said. “There are so many pieces of land in the Virgin Islands, whether St. Thomas, St. John, St. Croix or Water Island, that we want to see preserved in perpetuity. To do that, what we needed to do was create the Territorial Parks System of the Virgin Islands.”

The Governor said the Territorial system is similar to the National Park Service, which has allowed for the preservation of the Caneel Bay Trail, the Christiansted Fort and other landmarks in the Virgin Islands.

The legislation allows the Government of the Virgin Islands to take more than 30 properties and put them into the Territorial Parks System to be reserved for beaching, recreation, hiking trails, nature preserves and parks that will be protected from commercial development.

These areas include:

St. Croix:

- Great Salt Pond
- Cramer's Park
- Parcel No. 5 & 56 Salt River

St. John:

- Oppenheimer Beach
- Steven Cay

St. Thomas:

- Cas Cay
- Bovoni Cay
- No. 1 Neltjeberg
- Portion of Water Island at Sprat Bay
- No. 6 & 7 Hassel Island

"One of those places is Maroon Ridge right here on St. Croix. Since the 1980s we have had a set-aside that was by law in order for us to create a preserve and an easement for Crucians and Virgin Islanders alike," Governor Bryan said. "Earlier this year we took notified the owner that we were implementing a zoning condition established in 1983 for a conservation easement of 1,000 acres for such a preserve."

Joining Commissioner Oriol and Commissioner White on the oversight commission are Mr. Tesitor and Mr. Davis.



Attending Tuesday's bill-signing were, from left, Senator Samuel Carrion; Chief of Staff Karl Knight; Conn Davis; DPNR Commissioner Jean-Pierre Oriol; Chief Legal Counsel David Bornn; and Carlos Tesitor Jr.

Mr. Tesitor is the president of the Trust for Virgin Islands Lands, a VI land preservation and conservation organization and who has experience operating a preservation trust fund.

Mr. Davis was appointed for his financial background and experience managing finances, which will be one of the principal roles of the Board, and for the fact that his family has used a preservation easement to donate land on St. Thomas to the Trust for Virgin Islands Lands.

The Bryan-Roach Administration is investing in the Territory's people, infrastructure and future through transparency, stabilizing the economy, restoring trust in the government and ensuring that recovery projects are completed as quickly as possible. Visit transparency.vi.gov

###