

Contact: Sharon Coldren, President
Coral Bay Community Council
9901 Emmaus
St. John, VI 00830
Phone/Fax 340 776 2099
coralbaycommunitycouncil@hotmail.com

Press Release

2

CBCC Continuing Efforts to Reduce Muddy Stormwater Sediment Reaching Coral Bay - Using New DPNR EPA 319h Grant Funds.

(Coral Bay, St John, VI, March, 20, 2017) - The Coral Bay Community Council (CBCC) is pleased to announce the receipt of a \$74,250 grant from the Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) and its funding partner, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), through the 319h program. A public meeting to get the grant underway for the benefit of Coral Bay neighborhoods will be held Monday March 27th at 6:30 pm sharp at the Guy H. Benjamin Community Center - Room 6, in Coral Bay.

CBCC's goal is turbidity reduction by decreasing muddy sediment loading to coastal marine habitats in Coral Bay. This will be accomplished using best management practices (BMPs) such as stabilizing dirt roads, vegetated swales, water bars, and road paving in two drainage basin neighborhoods with local homeowner cooperation. For this grant, we expect to continue these efforts over the next 15 months.

The grant commits CBCC and local residents to an in-kind match, including volunteer services, construction funds, and partner activities, for a project with a total effort of over \$100,000.

There will be a start-up meeting for this grant, and for the other similar grant received by CBCC for these kinds of stormwater management projects on Monday March 27th at 6:30 pm sharp at the Guy Benjamin Community Center, Room 6. All interested homeowners and landowners in Coral Bay are encouraged to attend, since there are funds for engineering evaluation of future projects, as well as the ones that will be done this year in cooperation with interested neighborhoods. Everyone is invited to attend, and especially those in the neighborhoods listed below that are eligible for projects under this grant:

Johnny Horn Trail, Fortsberg Road, Calabash Boom road, Freeman's Ground, Harold's Way, John's Folly Shore Road, Various Near-Shore Parking Areas, Lalaland Road and Ghut Stabilization.

Other neighborhoods can also ask for design assistance in their watersheds and on their roads, and become eligible through this process for future financial grant assistance.

Conservation Goal

The Coral Bay Community Council's (CBCC's) conservation goal is to improve water quality by returning sediment runoff to natural levels and ensuring that all development proceeds in an environmentally friendly manner. Past and current efforts to address this issue include partnering with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) & National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to implement a series of measures to minimize sedimentation and a 2016 National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grant with similar goals. To date, CBCC has implemented aspects of 7 out of 11 objectives from the 2008 Watershed Management Plan (WMP) using EPA and NOAA grant funds and financial support from other partners.

Very significantly, CBCC's EPA Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) and NOAA American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) projects demonstrated how new techniques could be used locally, including bio-retention basins, swales, and waterbars to direct water flow and effectively reduce sediment-laden runoff into Coral Bay and onto fragile coral reef habitat. While these efforts have demonstrated great progress towards sedimentation reduction, additional targeted watershed restoration actions are still needed and will yield more benefits. "Residents and homeowners continually ask us whether we can find more grant funds to proceed with these improvements and indicate a willingness to provide matching funds. Thus CBCC has sought and received several grants for this purpose. We encourage all neighborhoods with dirt roads and bad drainage practices to participate in improving our environment." Said Sharon Coldren, President. More information is available at www.CoralBayCommunityCouncil.org

CBCC has also received a \$68,000 grant from from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Coral Reef Conservation Fund and its funding partner, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for use in 2017 in similar projects. Another press release will cover this grant work. In combination, almost \$250,000 of stormwater management work will be undertaken in Coral Bay to protect the marine coral and seagrass habitats from damage from stormwater.

CBCC's office (across from the Coral Bay fire station) is open Monday-Friday from 8 am to 5 pm. CBCC encourages people to stop by the office to discuss the project and volunteer to assist. People can also contact CBCC at 340-776-2099 or coralbaycommunitycouncil@hotmail.com.

For more information Contact: Sharon Coldren
coralbaycommunitycouncil@hotmail.com

###

Coral Bay Community Council
9901 Emmaus
St, John, VI 00830
Phone/Fax: 340 776 2099
