



## Coral Bay Community Council 2018 & 2019 Combined Annual Report

### **CBCC is "For People who love Coral Bay"**

*Our mission is to serve by protecting the environment, improving infrastructure, supporting education, encouraging social progress, and planning for appropriate low-impact development.*

Using CBCC's substantial nonprofit organization presence built over the last 16 years, CBCC was ready to help in 2017 when our world changed completely in 6 hours as the intense 185+ mph winds of Hurricane Irma destroyed or damaged our homes, businesses, boats, and the environment. With generous support from residents, property owners and foundations, CBCC has been able to expand its scope. CBCC's work in 2018 and 2019 was guided by a broad [agenda](#) covering environmental protection and restoration, infrastructure planning, hurricane recovery and resiliency, and community engagement under an overall umbrella of "ridge to reef" watershed management. While most of our projects are done under federal and local grants, the support we receive from over 450 members, as well as donors and volunteers, is crucial in allowing us to expand our services to benefit everyone in the community of Coral Bay and our environment.

**Hurricane Relief and Recovery:** It is hard to believe that over two years have passed since Hurricanes Irma and Maria. Thankfully, we made it through a mild 2019 hurricane season with only a couple of close calls. Recovery efforts are ongoing, and signs of progress continue to appear, slowly. Many abandoned cars have been removed and shoreline cleanups are making a difference. Hurricane Relief donations paid for distribution of relief supplies, connecting people to services, debris cleanup, completion of repairs and furnishings for the Coral Bay Fire Station (furniture, water filtration system), and supplying 30 large group meals for the All Hands & Hearts volunteers. Six "flea market" Stuff Depot events were held to help the community get back on its feet.



**Community Facilities Planning:** CBCC is engaging the community, including local government agencies and nonprofits, to participate in planning for future public facilities in Coral Bay. The first phase of this project resulted in identifying several concepts that will be further vetted with the community:

- 1) Community center gathering space and emergency shelter;
- 2) Sports and recreation facilities like a multipurpose field;
- 3) Emergency services center; and
- 4) Solid waste management center.

We'll continue this work in 2020, with preliminary designs and permit application studies for two of these concepts. This project is funded by USDA.

*Meeting at a Restaurant in Coral Bay—as there is no place else to meet—post 2017 hurricane devastation.*



**Community Vision Survey:** As a follow-up to the 2018 post-hurricane recovery survey, and as part of a USDA Community Facilities Planning grant, CBCC conducted a Community Facilities and Vision Survey in summer 2019. The survey asked residents their progress on hurricane recovery, what they like most and least about Coral Bay, what type of public facilities they would like to see in Coral Bay, and what their vision is for Coral Bay's future? [See the results here.](#)

#### **Board of Directors – Dec. 2019**

Josh Bourassa  
Sharon Coldren  
Shena Esannason  
Steve McKibben  
K. Sara O'Neill  
Kate Reed  
Loraine (Pat) Richards  
David Silverman  
Terry Witham

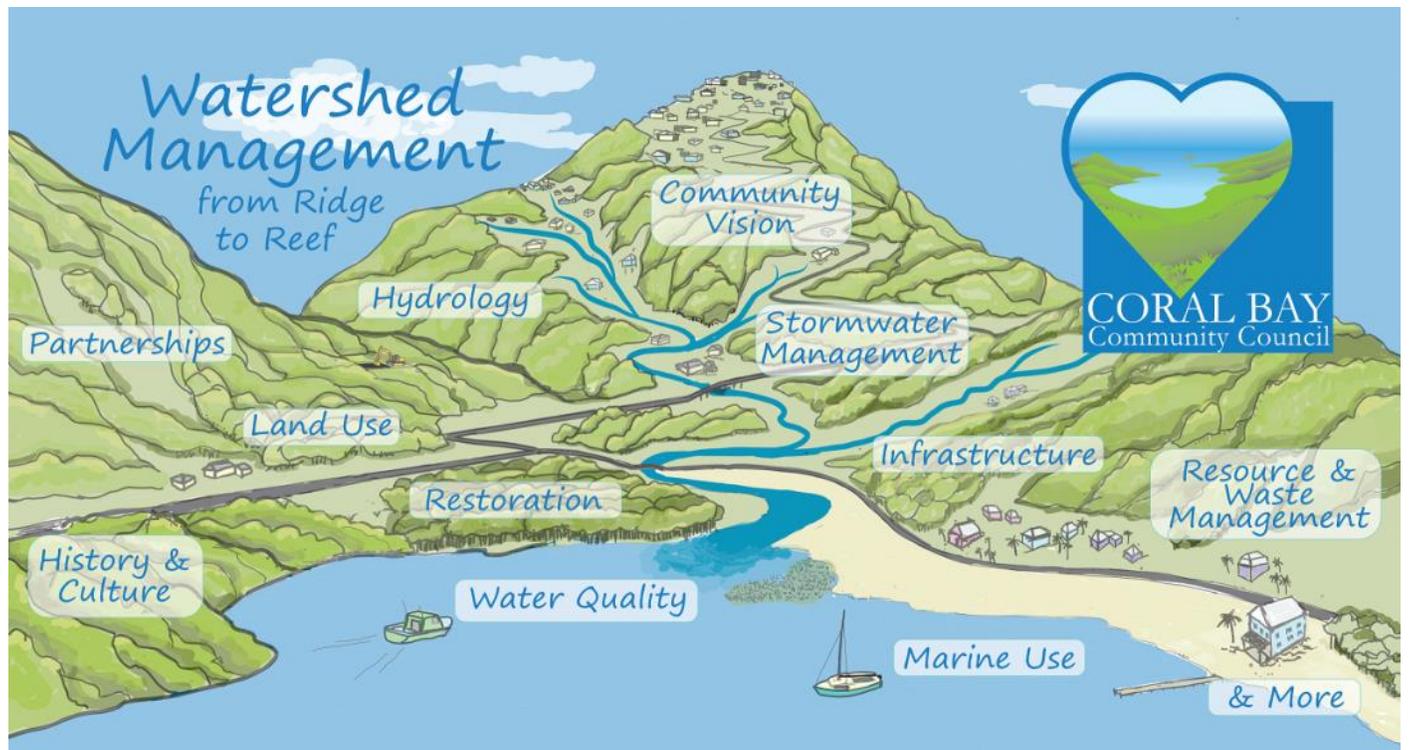
#### **Officers**

President  
Sharon Coldren  
Vice President  
K. Sara O'Neill  
Secretary  
David Silverman  
Treasurer  
Robert DeBonis

**Please Make a Tax-Deductible Donation & Become a Member!**

CBCC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and relies on your assistance, both volunteer and financial.

Please give generously so we can be even more caring in service to Coral Bay. *Thank you!*



**OUR FUTURE IS BASED ON BALANCING ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT FROM "RIDGE TO REEF"**

For over a decade, CBCC has demonstrated its ability to be an effective Watershed Management Agency for the large Coral Bay watershed. CBCC is both a planning and implementation-oriented advocate for environmental protection, that is balanced with economic growth within the community vision. CBCC accomplishes this through community forums and projects, partnerships with USVI government agencies, including the Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Public Works, Agriculture, Sports, Parks and Recreation, and federal agencies, homeowners' associations, local businesses and individual volunteers. Since 2008, CBCC has received more than a dozen grants from federal agencies (EPA, NOAA, USDA), foundations, professional associations, and local agencies, all for various components of effective watershed management planning and restoration implementation.

Since the 2017 hurricanes, CBCC has worked with local and federal agencies on key stormwater and infrastructure issues to assure we invest federal disaster relief dollars to become more resilient, have safer structures and reduce landslides and flooding in the future.



**Stormwater Management Projects:** In 2019, CBCC finished two grants from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation and worked on two more from the US EPA 319(h) program via DPNR to implement stormwater best management practices (BMPs) and educate the community about runoff and erosion control for local roads. A retaining wall was completed on a landslide slope in Freeman's Ground, and a switchback at Gerda Marsh Road (shown) was paved with integrated swales to reduce erosion. Engineers provided advice and developed plans, and CBCC secured DPNR permits for these and other neighborhoods. CBCC published a [BMP maintenance brochure](#) for homeowners and held [presentations on stormwater runoff](#) for the community. CBCC's in-kind match exceeded \$174,000 for the two combined NFWF

grants: including cash contributions from residents towards construction, and the value of volunteer services & discounts from contractors. This demonstrates how invested our community is in these small projects that improve roads, and ultimately water quality. Work under the DPNR 319(h) grants is continuing in 2020 for Johnny Horn Trail, Eden, Spring Garden, and others.

This program is part of **The Coral Bay Watershed Management Project**



**On-site Wastewater Treatment Systems:** In February 2018, CBCC started research on onsite wastewater treatment systems to implement recommendations from the 2015 Coral Bay Potable Water Supply and Wastewater Treatment Plans and ultimately published the 2019 [Advancing Onsite Wastewater Treatment in the USVI: An Evaluation of Current Usage and Emerging Technologies on St. John, USVI \(Phase 1\) Report](#). This first phase was a background study to understand the history, operation and maintenance and types of onsite wastewater treatment systems in the Coral Bay Watershed Management Area, and included a seminar co-hosted by DPNR with all drinking water and wastewater professionals in the USVI. The second phase is a performance study of selected onsite wastewater treatment systems, which began in October of 2019 and will continue into late 2020. **Learn more on our [website](#).**

## Communications, Office Resources and CBCC Financials

**COMMUNICATIONS:** CBCC members receive periodic emails about news and upcoming events. Email is the major way we share news, and "call" for volunteers, participation and donations. We also maintain a list of other people in the community whom we can contact and include in public issues and activities.

**Follow us on Facebook—[Coral Bay Community Council](#)**

**CBCC continues to encourage real planning processes for Coral Bay and all the Virgin Islands that focus on capacity and infrastructure planning that will serve both people and the natural environment.**

**OFFICE:** Stop by CBCC's office across from Skinny Legs and see the resources that our members support. Many brochures are available with good advice. Hurricane Recovery assistance and free COVID-19 masks available too.

**FINANCIALS:** CBCC's annual detailed financial reports are available on our website.

**Wetlands Park:** CBCC supports and funds the Wetlands Corner Park restoration from hurricane devastation and continued maintenance, so we can all enjoy its beauty and there is a place for liming.



**Global Giving—Revitalizing Children's Programs:** With a \$25,000 grant from Global Giving, CBCC has been able to help revitalize children's programs by providing transportation to summer events, costumes for the Dynamic Dancers for their summer cruise, horseback riding lessons at Carolina Corral, and pottery lessons at Pottery in Paradise, and funded a sign for the new St. John Christian Academy Coral Bay Preschool. In partnership with My Brother's Workshop, "Little Libraries" were installed at Calabash Boom Apartments and next to the Coral Bay fire station containing donated books for children of all ages to enjoy.



**Annual Potluck Meeting:** Our Annual Meeting and Potluck were held both years in November at Miss Lucy's. This is always a great opportunity to meet our neighbors old and new and find out what CBCC is doing.

**CBCC Bizarre Bazaar:** Each year the CBCC Bizarre Bazaar is held in early December. More than 400 people enjoy 75 local vendors of art and gifts, local food and music, and a visit from Santa.

**Coral Bay Christmas Tree Lighting and Carol Sing** took place on Friday, Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at the Coral Bay Agriculture Center, co-hosted by community members Donna Roberts and Lucia Frances and CBCC. Neighborhoods joined together to vie for the title of "merriest caroling group." This is a tradition that began 50 years ago—only missed once after the 2017 hurricanes. Santa also made an appearance to give presents to the children. Thank you to everyone who generously donated gifts.



**Drinking Water Testing:** Residential drinking water testing and research was also conducted to better understand and provide information about available and effective household and emergency drinking water treatment systems. In July 2018, CBCC and DPNR co-hosted a Potable Water Supply & Wastewater Systems Professional Workshop focusing on best management practices, technologies and updates for industry professionals in the USVI. CBCC hosted a workshop providing residents with information about their onsite wastewater and drinking water treatment systems and arranged for professional consultations at their home or business. These activities were funded by grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Rural Utilities Service (USDA-RUS).

CBCC has assisted residents with getting access to potable/drinking water testing leveraging a special program funded by the St. Thomas Rotary Club II in partnership with Ocean Systems Laboratory. These tests are done in accordance with EPA standards for residential drinking water. CBCC's program was designed to help residents manage their potable water supply by testing for contaminants and bacteria above EPA limits. CBCC supports this directly as well as through grant funding and will continue this service in 2020. CBCC also provides educational information, such as [how to replace water filters and UV lamps](#).

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## 2020 Update to the Coral Bay Watershed Management Plan

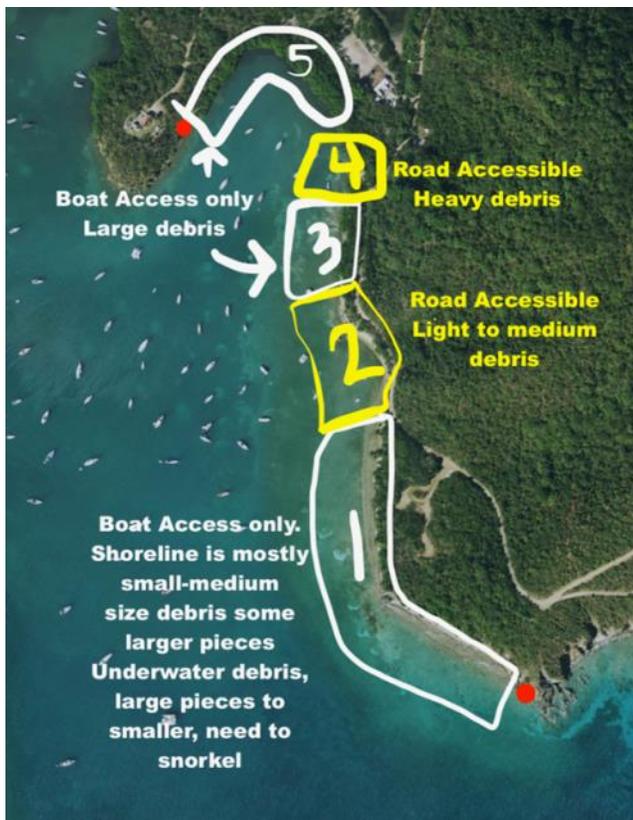
**Plan:** Using the Coral Bay Watershed Management Plan has been instrumental in securing federal and local grants for stormwater mitigation, solid waste, drinking water, and wastewater issues by providing measurable objectives and strategies for these areas of work. In 2019, CBCC and Watershed Consulting Associates, LLC, held two community meetings and traveled through the watershed to get information to begin to update the Plan for the next 5 years. This work is supported by a WaterSMART grant to CBCC from the US Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation and by the Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources - Coastal Zone Management Program.



**FEMA Hazardous Mitigation Grants and other Hurricane Relief projects -** CBCC submitted more than \$17 Million in applications for repairs of hurricane damaged roads and public property during this period and provided hundreds of hours of requested consultations with FEMA and VI and other federal agency personnel. To-date no applications have been approved for CBCC to move forward in any of the needed areas. CBCC is also unaware of any other local public or non-profit agencies being able to move forward to make significant progress on repairs/rebuilds in Coral Bay, as of this writing.



**Marine Debris Clean-up:** Stretches of our shorelines are more beautiful and debris-free thanks to volunteer collectors, boaters and divers, and funding from grants from the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CVFI) and Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) to pay for bins and hauling. These efforts **removed 125 cubic yards (6 large waste bins)** of leftover hurricane debris from the shorelines of Coral Bay and Fortsberg areas in late 2019 and early 2020. We are continuing this work in 2020. Young entrepreneur contractors have been paid for pickup and hauling.



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