

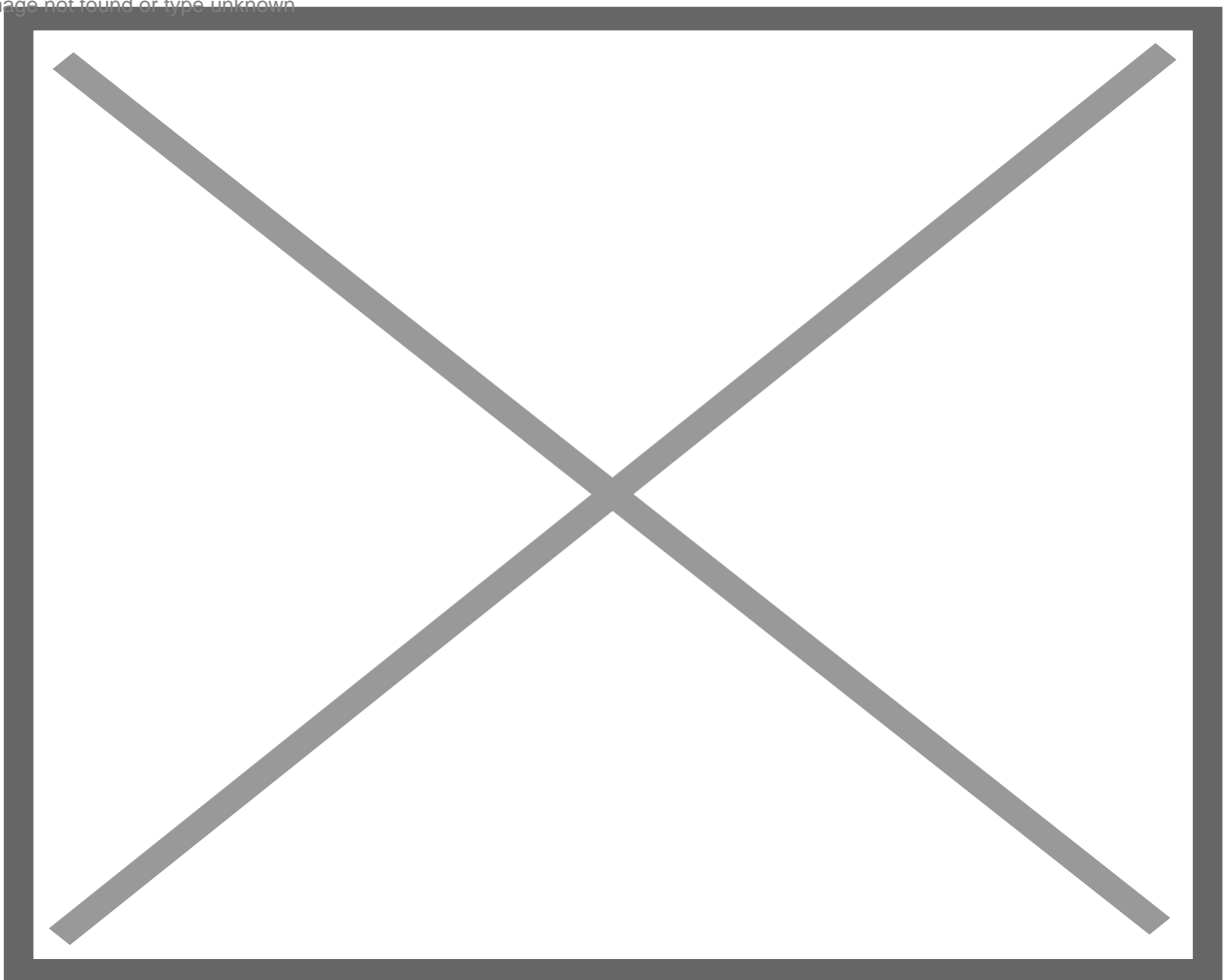
Tropical Storm Warning Issued for Puerto Rico and USVI as Cyclone Approaches

Flash flood watch in effect; heavy rains, landslides, strong winds, and hazardous coastal conditions anticipated from Tuesday evening through Thursday morning

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The forecast track of the system expected to become Tropical Storm Ernesto.

A tropical storm warning is now in effect for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands as Potential Tropical Cyclone Five continues its approach. The system is forecast to move west-northwestward, potentially impacting the region as a tropical storm by early Wednesday.

A flash flood watch is also in place for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands from Tuesday evening through Thursday morning. The disturbance is expected to develop into a tropical

depression later today or tonight, and further intensify into a tropical storm as it nears the Leeward Islands.

The primary threats from this system include flooding rains, landslides, strong winds, and hazardous coastal and marine conditions. Based on the current forecast track, the system's closest approach will be near or over the northern U.S. Virgin Islands early Wednesday morning. This is an opportune time for residents to begin preparatory measures to mitigate potential direct or indirect impacts from the storm.

The National Hurricane Center has advised all residents in the affected areas to closely monitor updates and follow local advisories. The next update from the NHC will be at 5:00 p.m. AST Monday, or sooner if necessary.

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