

The Virgin Islands Consortium

New Stormwater Resilience Program Launches in Bovoni to Tackle Flooding, Erosion and Runof Program Expands to Bovoni With Focus on Flooding, Erosion and School-Based Education

Led by the V.I. Conservation Society and DPNR Coastal Zone Management, the new pilot program in Bovoni will combine community outreach, school-based education, and small stormwater interventions to address flooding, erosion, and runoff into coastal waters

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A new expansion of the VI Clean Coasts program is bringing stormwater education and nature-based solutions to Bovoni, where flooding, drainage and erosion challenges have made the area a focus for community-based intervention. The effort, led by the V.I. Conservation Society in partnership with the Department of Planning and Natural Resources' Coastal Zone Management Division, is designed to provide both practical resources and on-the-ground improvements aimed at reducing stormwater-related problems in vulnerable neighborhoods.

The Stormwater Resilience and Outreach Program is being launched in Bovoni as a pilot initiative within the Jersey Bay watershed. According to the announcement, the project is intended to address drainage, runoff and erosion issues in communities and neighborhoods that experience flooding and other vulnerabilities, while also improving climate resilience, community quality of life and conditions in the marine environment.

Improperly managed stormwater, the release explains, often increases flooding and erosion on residential and commercial properties. It also carries sediment and pollutants along roads and ghuts into coastal waters, where fragile habitats such as coral reefs can be harmed. The project is aimed at helping U.S. Virgin Islands residents better understand stormwater management while also providing solutions intended to reduce those effects.

To carry out that work, the VI Clean Coasts team will conduct community outreach and educational activities and will also install small stormwater interventions. The release states that the project draws on local resources, including the U.S. Virgin Islands Watershed Plans, and that Bovoni was selected as the pilot area in partnership with DPNR.

A major part of the effort is already taking shape at Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School, where VI Clean Coasts has been working with the school and other community stakeholders to provide stormwater education and small interventions meant to reduce flooding. That work includes a three-session curriculum with optional field trips, as well as the construction of an outdoor classroom space that connects watershed education to real examples of stormwater interventions on campus.

DPNR Coastal Zone Management Director Marlon Hibbert said the department is encouraged by the expanded collaboration and the expected local response. "the Department is excited to expand our collaboration with VICS and we are excited to see the community response and implementation of these initiatives at BCB and in the Bovoni neighborhood."

Principal Terence Corbett also welcomed the initiative at Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School. "Bertha C. Boschulte MS welcomes the Stormwater Resilience and Outreach Program which will bring both a partnership with Eco-Schools USVI...and instruction to BCB. I look forward to a beneficial project for our students, teachers, and campus."

Through the Bovoni initiative, VICS is also expanding Eco-Schools USVI to Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School. The organization said it is working with teachers to incorporate instruction on stormwater interventions, watershed concepts and schoolyard habitats into the educational experience.

The Stormwater Resilience and Outreach Project is funded through an award from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Marine Fisheries Service.

The release also provides broader context about VI Clean Coasts, describing it as a partnership between the Virgin Islands Conservation Society and DPNR's Division of Coastal Zone Management that helps schools, businesses, residents and marinas in the territory improve their impact on the environment. According to the release, VI Clean Coasts consists of four initiatives: Stormwater Resilience and Outreach; Eco-Certification; Refill Bottles, Not Dumpsters; and Clear Waters.

The program states that it has installed more than 30 water filling stations across the territory, and that over 100 local businesses participate in the VI Clean Coasts Eco-Certification program, with a commitment to eliminate polystyrene, or Styrofoam.

Eco-Schools USVI, another component highlighted in the release, is described as a program that reaches young people through in-school programming, field trips and Eco-Clubs, helping youth develop solutions and best practices that reduce individual and school ecological impacts while building understanding of the natural world and STEM careers. The release states that instruction in climate change, marine debris, water quality and habitat protection is intended to foster stewardship and resilient habits for a healthier planet.

The program is also working to green schoolyards by supporting school gardens and arboretums that promote physical and emotional wellness. In 2025, according to the release, VICS' Eco-Schools USVI program and the Virgin Islands Department of Education signed a five-year Memorandum of Understanding.

The Virgin Islands Conservation Society describes itself as a 501(c)(3) organization that promotes conservation and restoration of island ecosystems, sustainable island development and awareness of conservation issues. The organization said it has been active in the U.S. Virgin Islands since 1968, with programs focused on conservation, education, sustainability and advocacy. It also said it works with partners at local, national and international levels under its mission of "Working together for a sustainable and resilient future in the US Virgin Islands."

Nationally, VICS is the National Wildlife Federation affiliate for the Virgin Islands. It also maintains membership with the Foundation for Environmental Education to implement the internationally recognized Blue Flag and Eco-Schools programs in the territory.