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DPNR Acquires 140 Acres Above Perseverance Bay for Territorial Parks System

DPNR says the newly acquired 140-acre property above Perseverance Bay on St. Thomas has been added to the Territorial Parks System, preserving a major cultural & ecological landscape for public access, recreation, education, and environmental stewardship.

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Aerial map showing the newly acquired 140-acre property above Perseverance Bay on St. Thomas, now added to the Territorial Parks System. By. DPNR.

A prominent stretch of land above Perseverance Bay on St. Thomas — described as one of the first sights many Virgin Islanders see when flying home — has now been purchased by the Department of Planning and Natural Resources and formally added to the Territorial Parks

System, marking what officials say is a major step in preserving an important cultural and ecological landscape for the people of the Virgin Islands.

DPNR announced Thursday that the 140-acre property has been incorporated into the Territorial Parks System as part of the government's broader effort to protect lands viewed as central to the territory's identity, environmental future, and public access to protected spaces.

"This acquisition marks an important milestone for the Virgin Islands," said Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol. "It demonstrates our unwavering commitment to safeguarding the lands that shape our identity. With the support of Governor Bryan and his administration, we continue to advance key initiatives that protect our natural heritage for future generations."

The Division of Territorial Parks & Protected Areas is also framing the acquisition as a significant advancement in its work to manage and protect public lands while keeping them accessible to Virgin Islanders.

"As we continue work under the Climate Resilience Regional Challenge Award, we are grateful for our ongoing partnership with the Trust for Virgin Islands Lands," said Kristina "Kitty" Edwards, director of TPPA. "Their collaboration has been invaluable, and together we will engage community members to ensure our parks and trails remain safe, welcoming, and cherished spaces."

Edwards said the newly acquired land holds value not only as open space, but also as a place for recreation, education, and environmental study.

"Perseverance Bay offers a remarkable natural setting for hikers, explorers, students, and researchers alike. It stands as both an outdoor classroom and a vital environmental resource. We look forward to continued collaboration with community partners to keep Perseverance Bay—and all protected areas across the territory—vibrant contributors to Virgin Islands history."

According to DPNR, the purchase was supported through funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that was awarded in 2024.

The release identifies the property as a major cultural and ecological landscape and places the acquisition within the territory's broader efforts to preserve protected areas for future generations while encouraging community involvement in stewardship and access.