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DPNR Acquires 4.77 Acres at Mt. Welcome to Expand Altona Lagoon Access

DPNR acquired 4.77 acres of shoreline at Parcel 59 Mt. Welcome beside Altona Lagoon, expanding public access to the Christiansted site through NOAA funding; the department did not disclose the purchase price or financial terms in its Friday announcement.

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Aerial view of the 4.77-acre Parcel 59 Mt. Welcome, outlined in yellow beside Altona Lagoon. DPNR acquired the shoreline property to expand public access and support conservation. By. DPNR.

ST. CROIX — The V.I. Department of Planning and Natural Resources has acquired 4.77 acres of shoreline property at Parcel 59 Mt. Welcome to expand public access to Altona Lagoon, though

the department did not disclose the purchase price or other financial terms of the acquisition.

The property, located beside the Altona Lagoon community park in Christiansted, was purchased with funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Climate and Resilience Regional Challenge program. It will be accessible through the lagoon's primary entrance off Mt. Welcome Road.

DPNR Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol said the acquisition will preserve public access to an area used for several outdoor, cultural and recreational activities.

"Altona Lagoon is a cherished destination where residents and visitors alike can enjoy the outdoors through hiking, walking, swimming, fishing, and other cultural and recreational activities," said Commissioner Oriol. "This acquisition ensures that future generations will continue to have access to this special place, and we are grateful to Governor Bryan and his administration for their continued support of land conservation efforts throughout the territory."

The acquisition was completed by DPNR's Division of Territorial Parks and Protected Areas.

Kristina "Kitty" Edwards, director of the division, credited the Territorial Parks and Protected Areas team for completing the process and said the funding initiative had created additional opportunities for land protection.

"The NOAA Climate and Resilience Regional Challenge award has created meaningful opportunities to protect lands of ecological and cultural significance across the Virgin Islands," Edwards said. "We are proud of the progress made through this initiative and look forward to adding more important properties to the Territorial Parks System for the benefit of our communities."

Funding for the acquisition was provided through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Climate and Resilience Regional Challenge program.

The program awarded funding to the Virgin Islands in 2024 to support conservation, resilience and public-access projects.