

The Virgin Islands Consortium

D.P.N.R. To Deploy Fish Aggregating Devices Throughout Territory

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ST. CROIX -- Department of Planning and Natural Resources Commissioner Dawn Henry announced on Friday that D.P.N.R.'s Division of Fish and Wildlife (D.F.W.) was set to deploy a total of 6 fish aggregating devices (F.A.D.s) around each district this year. A total of 22 locations are permitted for F.A.D. deployment in the St. Croix district and 19 locations in the St. Thomas-St. John district.

Deployment of the F.A.D.s will benefit the territory by shifting fishing pressure from heavily fished inshore areas to offshore areas with more abundant populations of pelagic sport fish species such as tuna, dolphin, and wahoo, according to D.P.N.R., which made the announcement via press release. The F.A.D. program will also provide enhanced and

improve fishing opportunities to recreational anglers in the U.S. Virgin Islands, it added.

During the week of February 15 - 19, 2016, D.F.W. will position the first of 2 new submerged fish aggregating devices south of St. Croix. The F.A.D.s will be placed 4 nautical miles southeast of Long Point and 3 nautical miles south of Sandy Point, St. Croix. The GPS coordinates will be publicly announced once the F.A.D.s are deployed.

Additionally, 2 new submerged F.A.D.s will be deployed north of St. Thomas in the following weeks. These devices will be installed 11 nautical miles northwest of Cockroach Cay and 13 nautical miles north of Outer Brass Island. The GPS coordinates of these F.A.D.s will also be announced after deployment.

Ms. Henry reminded the fishing community that mooring to the buoys is not permitted.

This project is completely funded by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Sport Fish Restoration funds.

For more information, contact D.F.W. at (340) 775-6762 on St. Thomas or (340) 773-1082 on St. Croix.