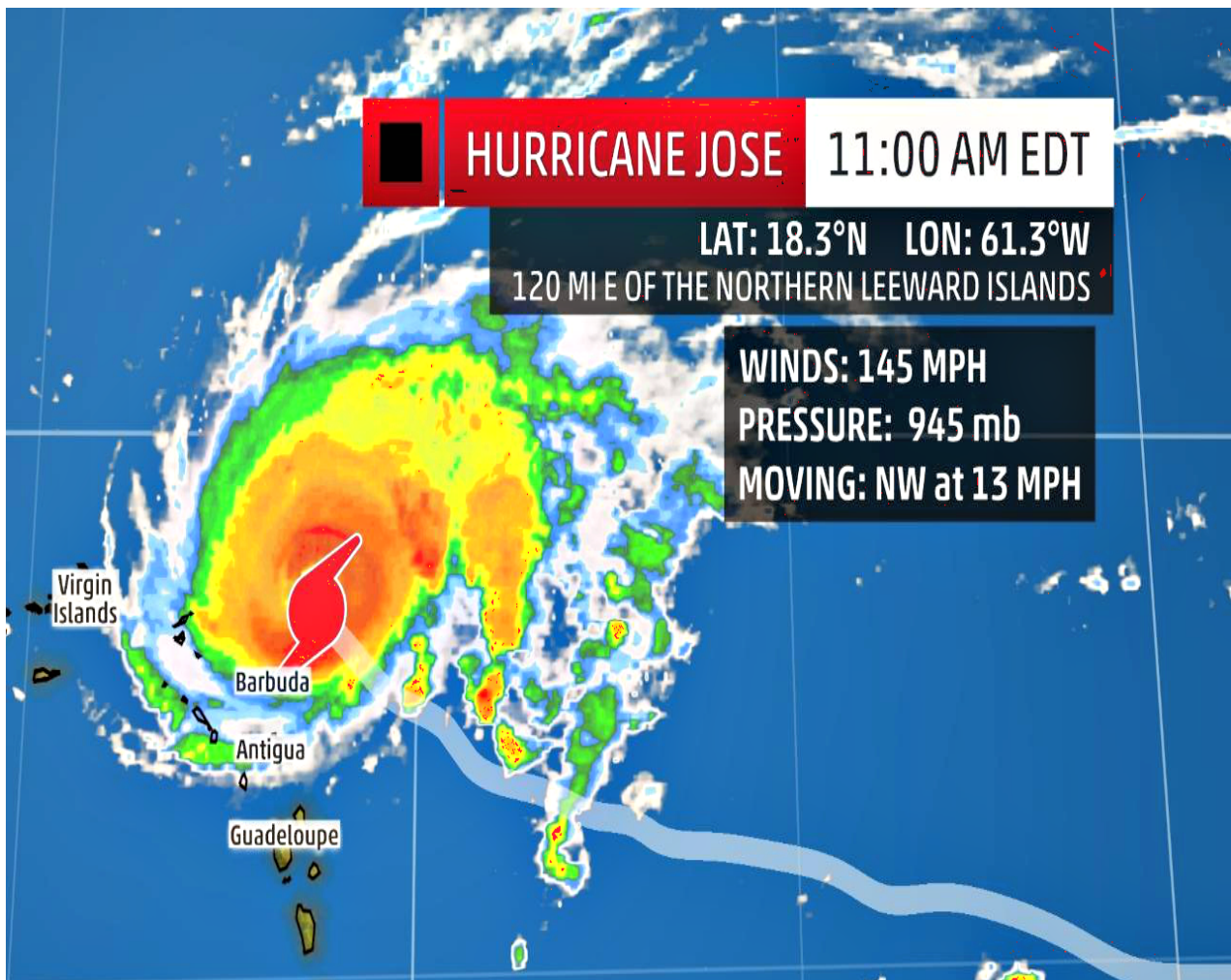


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Tropical Storm Watch Discontinued For USVI As Jose Bends Right

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The U.S. Virgin Islands and a number of other northern Leeward Islands were spared the wrath of category 4 Hurricane Jose, after the storm made a turn to the right and farther away from the U.S. Virgin Islands and British Virgin Islands, even as it continues on its northwest trajectory.

The change will be greeted with a sigh of relief by the northern Leeward Islands, which were preparing (in the USVI's case, St. Thomas and St. John) to be affected by tropical storm-force winds today.

But that's not to say that Leeward Islands' citizens should not take precaution, as the islands may still be affected with some rainfall. However, the storm itself is veering over 70 miles away from the islands.

According to N.H.C.'s 11:00 a.m. advisory, the center of Hurricane Jose was located near latitude 18.3 North, longitude 61.3 West. Jose is moving toward the northwest near 13 mph (20 km/h). A continued northwest motion is expected during the next couple of days. On the forecast track, the core of Jose will pass just north of the northern Leeward Islands later today.

Maximum sustained winds are near 145 mph (230 km/h) with higher gusts. Jose is a category 4 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale. Gradual weakening is expected to occur over the next couple of days.

Hurricane-force winds extend outward up to 35 miles (55 km) from the center and tropical-storm-force winds extend outward up to 140 miles (220 km). The latest minimum central pressure reported by an Air Force Reserve reconnaissance aircraft is 945 mb (27.91 inches).