

The Virgin Islands Consortium

EPA Provides U.S. Virgin Islands \$100,000 To Protect And Improve Water Quality

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The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) with \$100,000 to give it the tools and flexibility to support communities of the U.S. Virgin Islands that depend on clean water resources, the EPA announced Tuesday.

“EPA has been working hand in hand with U.S. Virgin Islands officials to respond to the tremendous challenges of recovering from Hurricanes Irma and Maria,” said EPA Regional Administrator Pete Lopez. “This grant provides urgently needed help for the U.S. Virgin Islands to plan for, and be in a better position to withstand, future storm events.”

The funds will support the government of the U.S. Virgin Islands' water quality planning programs while increasing public awareness of, and engagement on, the need for water quality protection and improvement. The funds will be used to assess water quality, identify and protect sensitive, impaired or threatened water bodies and will help ensure better storm water management practices in the future.

The federal funds are an additional allotment to an existing grant of \$100,000 awarded to the U.S. Virgin Islands DPNR in 2015. EPA also awarded \$100,000 in 2016 and this year's additional \$100,000 brings the EPA funding total under this grant to \$300,000.

Water bodies serve as drinking water supplies, provide flood control to protect life and property, and support recreation, tourism and agriculture. These water bodies also provide habitat for aquatic plant and animal life. When the water in our rivers, lakes, and oceans become polluted, it can endanger wildlife, make our drinking water unsafe and threaten the waters in which we swim and fish. EPA supports these efforts under the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act.