

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Interior Provides \$3 Million In Hurricane Supplemental Funding To Create Office Of Disaster Recovery In U.S. Virgin Islands

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Doug Domenech, U.S. Department of the Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs, announced on Tuesday \$3 million in fiscal year 2018 Hurricane Supplemental Funding for the U.S. Virgin Islands to create and fund an Office of Disaster Recovery in support of a priority request from the territory.

“The Virgin Islands government needs emergency financial management assistance related to the consequences of the two Category 5 hurricanes, Irma and Maria, that hit the territory in 2017,” Mr. Domenech said. “Secretary Ryan Zinke and I are pleased that

the U.S. Congress has provided this assistance to help ensure that funding provided to address hurricane impacts is spent correctly and efficiently for the benefit of those who are impacted.”

The Virgin Islands Office of Disaster Recovery in the USVI Department of Finance will provide critical financial management coordination across each agency and organization receiving disaster recovery funds, according to the release.

The territory will be receiving several billions of dollars in disaster assistance funding as a result of impacts and damage caused in 2017. The Office of Disaster Recovery will monitor expenditures of all federal disaster assistance programs, and transmit collected data through an electronic system and publication on a website to be updated monthly for transparency and awareness. The budget includes costs for personnel, contractors, equipment, software, website maintenance, and overhead costs for approximately the next two years. The USVI government and FEMA will provide a combined in-kind match of \$818,289.

The Assistant Secretary, Insular and International Affairs, and the Office of Insular Affairs carry out the Secretary of the Interior’s responsibilities for the U.S. territories of Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Additionally, OIA administers and oversees Federal assistance under the Compacts of Free Association to the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. OIA supports the Secretary’s mission of Fulfilling Trust and Insular Responsibilities through balancing efforts and limited resources towards stronger economic and health capacities, and fiscal accountability in the U.S. insular areas.