

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Bryan to Enforce Law Providing Government With Half of 4,000 Acres of Land in Annaly Bay; Development of 'Maroon Sanctuary Park' Planned

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Large tract of untouched land in Annaly Bay marked in red currently on the market for \$17.5 million.

Government House announced Wednesday that in a continuing effort to implement long-dormant or overlooked provisions of law, Governor Albert Bryan has sent a letter to the owner currently trying to sell a large tract of untouched land in Annaly Bay, giving notice that the Government of the Virgin Islands will preserve the rights of the People of the Virgin Islands by enforcing Act No. 4881. The Act, which was passed in 1983, preserved

half of the original 4,000-acre property for conservation and open space, according to the administration. The property is [currently on the market for \\$17.5 million](#).

The Act also mandates a conservation easement of 1,000 acres be granted to the GVI, which Governor Bryan intends to use for the development of a "Maroon Sanctuary Park", Government House said.

Maroons were enslaved Africans throughout the Caribbean who fled from the plantations and moved into remote, inaccessible areas and established temporary encampments and long-term settlements to escape slavery. For more than a century, Crucian maroons sustained an incessant struggle for freedom in the northwest quarter of St. Croix that culminated with general emancipation in 1848.

Act 4881 was enacted on December 27, 1983, but the law sat dormant for decades. According to GovernmentHouse, Governor Bryan has notified the current landowners, who are actively trying to sell the land, that he intends to enforce the mandates of the Act on behalf of the people of the territory.

"Specifically, you are given notice that the GVI asserts and seeks to enforce the provisions of Section 3 of the Act that provides that not less than 50% of the total affected acreage under the Act (4,140 US acres) would remain "open space" as defined in the Title 29 V.I.C Sections 225 and 226, including the previously sold acreage and the currently owned acreage," Mr. Bryan wrote in the letter to the property owners. "Further, the GVI asserts and seeks to have designated and a perpetual conservation easement executed for not less than 1,000 acres of the same area under the control of the present owner."

The letter states that the GVI is in the process of preparing a proposed Conservation Easement for the property owners' review, and the governor said he hopes execution of the Conservation Easement can be completed as soon as possible.