

The Virgin Islands Consortium

National Park Service Announces Availability of Engineering Evaluation, Cost Analysis Report Addendum, Updated Administrative Record and Public Meetings For Caneel Bay Resort Site

Community Center / **Published On September 13, 2022 06:41 AM /**

Staff Consortium **September 13, 2022**



Caneel Bay in St. John before Hurricane Irma struck. By. GETTY IMAGES

The National Park Service (NPS) announces the availability for public review of documents comprising the updated Administrative Record File, now including the Engineering Evaluation and Cost Analysis (EE/CA) Report Addendum for the Caneel Bay Resort Site (Site), located on St. John. Pursuant to its delegated response authority under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act

(CERCLA), 42 U.S.C. §§ 9601, et seq. and Executive Order 12580, as amended, and in accordance with the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP), 40 C.F.R. Part 300, the NPS conducted additional investigation to address data gaps identified in the EE/CA Report for Areas 1, 2, and 3 of the Caneel Bay Resort Site, which the NPS issued in September 2021. The purpose of the EE/CA Addendum investigation was to fully characterize the nature and extent of contamination at the Site and to evaluate removal action alternatives to protect human health and welfare and the environment from risks associated with contamination.

The Caneel Bay Resort (Resort) is located in Virgin Islands National Park on land owned by the United States and under the jurisdiction of the NPS. The Caneel Bay Resort is operated by CBI Acquisitions, LLC and EHI Acquisitions, LLC pursuant to a Retained Use Estate, but has been closed since September 2017 when Hurricanes Irma and Maria severely damaged many of the Resort buildings. The EE/CA Addendum investigation addressed several issues identified as data gaps in the September 2021 EE/CA Report including:

- Potential asbestos-containing material (ACM) in damaged buildings, debris from the 2017 hurricanes, and piping material;
- Potential lead-based paint on exposed building materials;
- Possible presence of an underground storage tank near Cottage 7 and evaluation of possible related contamination;
- Residual contamination from a diesel release in the engineering, landscaping, and maintenance area (identified as Area 2 in the September 2021 EE/CA Report);
- Closure of a monitoring well that was likely functioning as a conduit to the subsurface rather than a groundwater monitoring well;
- Characterization of unidentified buried items near the catchment basin and evaluation of possible related releases of hazardous substances;
- Verification of an appropriate background/reference concentration for arsenic; and
- Possible migration of hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants via groundwater near the landfill located immediately east of Honeymoon Beach.

Field work associated with the EE/CA Addendum investigation took place on November 11-19, 2021 and January 12-13, 2022. Field work included the sampling of potential ACM and lead-based paint, a geophysical investigation of possible asbestos-containing pipes, surface and subsurface soil investigations, and a groundwater investigation.

The EE/CA Report Addendum concludes that a CERCLA response action is appropriate for some, but not all, of the ACM observed at the Site. Specifically, the EE/CA Report Addendum concludes that a CERCLA response action is needed to address ACM that is subject to CERCLA but not other regulatory mechanisms such as the Clean Air Act National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) program. This includes ACM in the hurricane debris and segments of piping that are no longer connected to any buildings or facilities or are not being used for their intended purpose. The EE/CA Report Addendum evaluates the following alternatives to address ACM for which a response action is proposed:

- Alternative 1: No action

- Alternative 2: Removal and off-site disposal

The recommended alternative, Alternative 2, includes removal and off-site disposal of hurricane debris and piping materials that are subject to CERCLA and unlikely to be addressed under any other regulatory mechanisms. A final remedy selection will be made after the public comment period, considering any significant comments that are received.

With the exception of a removal action to address the ACM discussed above, the NPS has determined that the items, areas, and issues investigated as part of the EE/CA Addendum do not pose unacceptable risks to human health or welfare or the environment and therefore no additional removal actions are necessary.

Review and Comment Period: The 30-day public comment period begins on Tuesday, September 13, 2022, and ends on Wednesday, October 12, 2022. Upon receipt of a timely request, the comment period will be extended an additional 15 days.

Providing Your Comments: Comments on the EE/CA Report Addendum can be submitted via the project website at: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/CaneelBayAssessment>. To be considered, comments must be received or postmarked no later than 5:00 PM on Wednesday, October 12, 2022.

All comments received from the public will be placed in the Administrative Record File for the Site. As part of the administrative record, comments will be made available for inspection by the general public who may be provided copies of the comments. If you submit a comment that includes personal identifying information, you may request in your comment that we withhold this information from public review. However, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

NPS will hold two public meetings to provide information to the public and to solicit comments on the EE/CA Report Addendum.

- A Community Learning Session on Thursday, September 14, 2022 at 5:30pm AST at which NPS officials will provide attendees an overview of the draft report and findings, and
- A NPS Listening Session on Tuesday, September 27, 2022 at 5:30pm AST where the public will have an opportunity to provide comments on the draft report.

Additional information regarding access to the public meetings will be provided in a separate announcement from NPS. After public review, NPS will respond to significant comments and will issue an Action Memorandum to identify the selected removal action.

The EE/CA Report Addendum and Administrative Record File are available for review at:

Virgin Islands National Park Visitor Center

1300 Cruz Bay Creek

St. John, VI 00830

Contact: Nigel Fields

Phone: (340) 626-2806

E-mail: viis_interpretation@nps.gov

Hours: Monday through Friday

9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Tunick Building

1336 Beltjen Road, Suite 101

St. Thomas, VI 00802

Hours: By appointment only

by contacting viis_interpretation@nps.gov

The EE/CA Report Addendum and Administrative Record File are also available online at:

<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/CaneelBayAssessment>