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\$51 Million Needed to Expand Anguilla Landfill, VIFHA Says; Project Necessary to Buy Time for New Facility to be Identified and Built

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An aerial shot of the Anguilla Landfill on St. Croix By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

It will cost over \$50 million to expand the Anguilla Landfill so that it is able to continue receiving public waste.

That's what officials from the V.I. Housing Finance Authority told lawmakers when they appeared before a hearing of the Senate Committee on Disaster Recovery, Infrastructure and Planning this week.

VIHFA estimates that it will take approximately \$51 million to expand the landfill's southwest region. The project will give the facility an extended lifespan of several additional years, during which time it is expected that a new landfill would be identified and constructed.

Funding for the expansion project will come from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG - DR) program.

VIHFA Director of Programs Ann Hanley, who has responsibility for infrastructure, told committee members that much of the project's cost is associated with materials that need to be purchased. "That is a very expensive cost," said Ms. Hanley. "There is a lot of work associated with this particular project and as well as bringing that particular area, as it relates to expansion, into compliance."

She said the V.I. Waste Management Authority is proposing to close sections of the landfill and do an expansion on the southeast corners "so that they would have approximately seven years of air space remaining."

The Anguilla Landfill, which sits on property owned by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), is located on land in south-central St. Croix and has been in operation since 1967. Calls for the landfill's closure have been coming for years from many corners, the most vocal being the FAA. An ongoing concern is the danger the site's close proximity to the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport poses to air traffic, as the landfill often attracts birds deemed hazardous to aircraft.

The Anguilla Landfill is scheduled to begin the first of six shutdown phases planned for the existing 35-acre site in October 2023. The project, Ms. Hanley told lawmakers, is currently in the application development stage, as its sub-recipient, the V.I. Waste Management Authority, continues to address issues with the partial consent decree with the FAA, including gaining control of the site.

"Once that process is complete and we receive the necessary documentation, the application will be approved and environmental review will begin," she shared.

Ms. Hanley, the VIHFA director of programs, was unable to tell committee members where the new landfill site would be and deferred Senator Kenneth Gittens's question on the matter to WMA.