



CORAL BAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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Coral Bay, St. John, USVI

Five-Year Coral Bay Watershed Management Plan Released!

The Coral Bay Community Council (CBCC) is pleased to announce the release of the 2021 Coral Bay Watershed Management Plan, a detailed 330- page action plan for the next 5 years published electronically and available on our website

It is accompanied by a shorter version, a “Community Handbook” that is available on-line and shortly in hard copy for free distribution. Both are available on the Coral Bay Community Council website at: [Coral Bay 5 Year Watershed Management Plan - Coral Bay Community Council](#)

The scope of the plan is much broader than many watershed plans due to the unusual characteristics of the remote Coral Bay watershed and the individual responsibilities for stormwater management and clean drinking water and effective wastewater management. EPA, USDA, NOAA, the VI government, private foundations and, of course, residents have participated and funded aspects of the planning since its inception in 2008 – with a total value after 14 years of over \$4 Million in direct expenditures.

The Plan is the result of over two years of work by Watershed Consulting Associates, LLC, CBCC and collaboration with residents and VI government agencies.

Sharon Coldren, CBCC Volunteer Executive Director, remarked in announcing the Plan: “Thanks to all who participated in shaping this important work through the years. Our community, with the Coral Bay Community Council’s facilitation, started this Planning and Action Process in 2008. In its role as the local watershed management agency, CBCC works to be “the glue or the grease” to help make effective cooperation happen.”

This is the third five-year plan for Coral Bay. It is subtitled: **Phase 3 - Our Future Based on Balancing Environmental Protection & Development: Local Actions to Improve Water Quality and Protect Coral Reef Habitats from Destructive Byproducts of Development.**

Stormwater runoff, exposed trash, and failing wastewater treatment systems are the main sources of pollution in the watershed. These potential byproducts of development can be regulated, reversed, or diminished with the active efforts of property owners, residents, business owners, and the government.

“The goal is to prevent the negative impacts of new development and reduce pollution caused by previous development while helping the local economy to thrive. As we collectively learn more and take advantage of new methods and available technologies to manage water resources, Coral Bay will become a healthier community and environment for all,” said Rachel McKinley, Environmental Projects Manager at CBCC.

This publication and the underlying work are also responsive to the resilience and recovery initiatives after the 2017 hurricanes and incorporates current and future projects and cooperative partnerships, and

recognizes that Coral Bay is a remote, low population area.

This work was funded by under a US Department of Interior grant of \$99,000 and a VI Department of Planning and Natural Resources Coastal Zone Management grant of \$18,000, coupled with \$30,000 of CBCC funds from the 400 members of CBCC through their dues and donations, and over \$100,000 in volunteer professional time. It is an important undertaking to shape the work to protect our environment over the next five years and beyond, in cooperation with local and federal government agencies and property owners and residents in the community.

More detailed summary:

The 2021 Coral Bay Watershed Management Plan (WMP or the “Plan”) is an update of the 2014 Plan and articulates the range of Watershed Management Actions that are recommended for the next five years and beyond. In the wake of the destruction caused by Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, and the disarray of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the community and watershed will benefit from this Plan that incorporates professional analysis and stakeholder input to create a shared vision for the future work needed to address threats to water quality in and around Coral Bay.

Coral Bay’s future as a desirable community to live in is dependent on balancing environmental protection and development through insightful planning processes, effective and targeted regulation, and access to expertise and resources to accomplish the best projects and establish good maintenance practices to benefit both people and the surrounding environment. This watershed plan and the companion publications are steps in this process – providing an agenda of highlighted issues and solutions and a timeline for accomplishing solutions by residents, government agencies, businesses, nonprofits, and the Coral Bay Community Council (CBCC), which acts as the local watershed management agency. Each project to improve or maintain the environment takes expertise, funds, and cooperation – the three key elements to any project’s success.

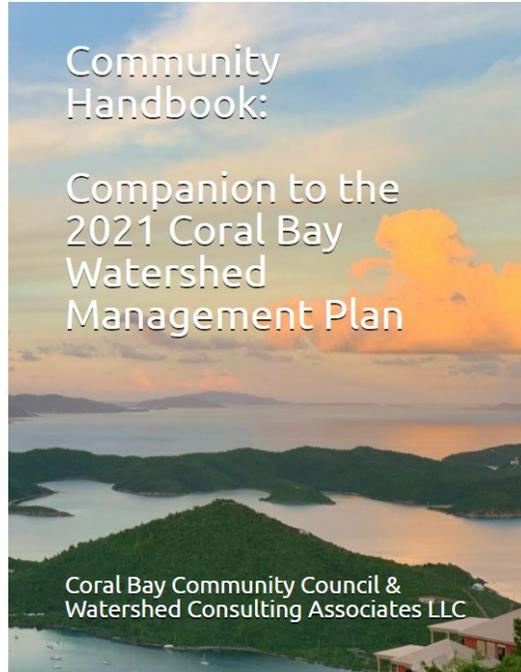
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To do this, the WMP focuses on key threats identified by the community: pollution caused by sediment, bacteria and other contaminants, such as solid waste, and the critical need for community facilities, including roads, to replace and upgrade those lost in the 2017 hurricanes, while reducing pollution potential.

Improving the overall water quality in the Coral Bay Watershed will help preserve the Bay’s threatened marine ecosystems and also protect human health by improving residents’ access to safe, clean freshwater for domestic use and clean ocean waters for recreation and fishing. These are the overarching goals of the Plan.

The Plan sets an agenda of actions community members (residents, homeowners, vacation homeowners, business owners and vacant landowners) can take on their own and with their neighbors to protect the waters of Coral Bay. This can be accomplished principally by reducing sediment laden stormwater runoff on properties and roads, installing and maintaining healthy drinking water and wastewater systems at

homes and businesses, properly disposing of waste and participating in collective actions, organizations and cleanups to improve and protect our Coral Bay community and natural environment, including our plentiful coral reef ecosystems along our shorelines.



Both documents can be viewed or downloaded at [Coral Bay 5 Year Watershed Management Plan - Coral Bay Community Council](#)

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