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Trust for Virgin Islands Lands Earns National Recognition

Strong Commitment to Public Trust and Conservation Excellence

Christiansted, VI August 19, 2021 – One thing that unites us as a nation is land: Americans strongly support saving the open spaces they love. Since 2006, the [Trust for Virgin Islands Lands](#) (TVIL) has been doing just that for the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Today the Trust for Virgin Islands Lands announced it has achieved national recognition – joining a network of over 450 accredited land trusts across the nation that have demonstrated their commitment to professional excellence and to maintaining the public’s trust in their work.

“Accreditation demonstrates TVIL’s commitment to permanent land conservation in the U.S. Virgin Islands,” said Carlos Tesitor, President of TVIL. “We are a stronger organization for having gone through the rigorous accreditation program. Our strength means special places – such as the 10 acres of our Spring Garden Preserve protecting a portion of Maroon Ridge on St. Croix – will be protected forever, making the U.S. Virgin Islands an even greater place for us and our children.”

The Trust for Virgin Islands Lands provided extensive documentation and was subject to a comprehensive third-party evaluation prior to achieving this distinction. The Land Trust Accreditation Commission awarded accreditation, signifying its confidence that lands under TVIL’s stewardship will be protected forever. Accredited land trusts steward almost 20 million acres of land – the size of Denali, Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, Glacier, Everglades and Yosemite National Parks combined.

TVIL has protected one hundred and seventy (170) acres of important land on the islands of St. Croix, St. Thomas and St. John through donations of land, donations of conservation easements or purchase of critical parcels for preservation.

TVIL most recently received the donation of Mingo Cay, an undeveloped forty-eight (48) acre island in the channel between St. Thomas and St. John important for nesting birds, the protection of nearshore water quality and coral reef health and for the historical use and presence of fisher people.

“It is exciting to recognize The Trust for Virgin Islands Lands with this national mark of distinction,” said Melissa Kalvestrand, executive director of the Commission. “Donors and partners can trust the more than 450 accredited land trusts across the country are united behind strong standards and have demonstrated sound finances, ethical conduct, responsible governance, and lasting stewardship.”

TVIL is one of 1,363 land trusts across the United States according to the Land Trust Alliance's most recent National Land Trust Census. A complete list of accredited land trusts and more information about the process and benefits can be found at www.landtrustaccreditation.org.

About the Trust for Virgin Islands Lands

The [Trust for Virgin Islands Lands](http://www.virginislandslandtrust.org) (TVIL) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization based in the U.S. Virgin Islands and governed by a volunteer board of trustees.

The mission of the Trust for Virgin Islands Lands (TVIL) is to conserve and steward tracts of agricultural and natural landscapes that are identified for their scenic beauty, ecological diversity, historical value and cultural significance.

Efforts to achieve this goal include:

1. Purchasing and holding threatened lands for transfer to conservation-minded ownership,
2. Providing assistance to landowners wanting to limit future development through conservation easements,
3. Advocating sound land use policy, and
4. Fostering increased appreciation and understanding of our territory's natural resources.

For more, visit www.virginislandslandtrust.org.

About the Land Trust Accreditation Commission

The [Land Trust Accreditation Commission](http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org) inspires excellence, promotes public trust and ensures permanence in the conservation of open lands by recognizing organizations that meet rigorous quality standards and strive for continuous improvement. The Commission, established in 2006 as an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, is governed by a volunteer board of diverse land conservation and nonprofit management experts. For more, visit www.landtrustaccreditation.org.

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