



IN REPLY REFER TO:

## United States Department of the Interior



National Park Service  
Christiansted National Historic Site  
Buck Island Reef National Monument  
Salt River Bay Historical Park and Ecological Preserve  
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### MEMORANDUM OF INTENT

To: Regional Director, Southeast Regional Office

From: Superintendent, Christiansted National Historic Site, Buck Island Reef National Monument, Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve

Subject: Memo of Intent between Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve and the Joint Institute for Caribbean Marine Studies

Date: January 25, 2009

The Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve (SARI or hereafter referred to as the "Park") and the Joint Institute for Caribbean Marine Studies (JICMS) have agreed to establish a partnership to develop a Marine Research Education Center (MREC) at SARI in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the NPS *Partnership Construction Process* and Director's Order #21 on Donations and Fundraising. This project is described in PMIS statement #154788 (see attachment).

The JICMS is a consortium of four universities: the University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW); the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI); Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey (RU); and the University of South Carolina (USC).

The partners are working together with staff from NPS SERO and the WASO national partnerships office to draft the documents and complete the tasks required in the *Partnership Construction Process*. Upon the review and approval of the Development Advisory Board (DAB), the JICMS will develop a fundraising feasibility study, fundraising plan and donor vetting process, draft the partnership and fundraising agreements required by NPS, begin to raise funds for the design, construction and operation of the MREC. The National Park Service will construct the facility and the JICMS will provide input into the design and construction in coordination with Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve.

## ***PROJECT HISTORY***

St. Croix, U. S. Virgin Islands (USVI) provides a rich environment for tropical marine research, especially on coral reef ecosystems. Marine research activities began on St. Croix in the late 1960s, providing some of the oldest available data on coral reefs. Some of the world's leading marine researchers gathered these data at two former marine laboratories on St. Croix: Fairleigh Dickinson University's West Indies Laboratory (WIL) on the northeast end of St. Croix and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Undersea Research Program's habitats, first the "Hydrolab" and then the "Aquarius," which operated at Salt River Bay for more than 10 years.

The scientific records generated by the investigators at these two facilities are rare for their duration, quality and documentation of reef conditions prior to the massive changes that occurred in this ecosystem beginning in the 1980s. Under a cooperative agreement with NPS, WIL produced the first marine research and assessments at Buck Island Reef National Monument (BUIS), established in 1961. Through this agreement, WIL mapped, inventoried and investigated the ecology, function, status and trends of BUIS marine resources, including its coral geology, reef fisheries, marine invertebrates, sea turtles, oceanography, and coral reef habitats. Over time, BUIS became one of the best documented and studied marine ecosystems in the Caribbean and a premiere field school for hundreds of WIL students each year.

Collectively these historic data provide an unparalleled record to guide, and against which to measure, present and future management actions. For example, WIL's documentation of the degradation of St. Croix's marine resources beginning in the 1980s was used in 2001 to support BUIS expansion and designation as a marine protected area. The data are also invaluable in guiding the recovery of the *acroporid* corals, with the Virgin Islands designated as critical habitat. These examples illustrate just some of the significant ways in which NPS and the park units on St. Croix have benefited from the capacity to conduct marine research on the island.

The closure of both facilities following Hurricane Hugo reduced the park's capacity to conduct marine research in the park and terminated some of the long-term marine resource condition assessments on St. Croix. Restoring this capacity will support the study and management of St. Croix's critical marine protected areas; serve NPS inventory, monitoring and research needs, and support science-based park management in St. Croix.

In the wake of the closure of the WIL and NOAA facilities, the Department of the Interior (DOI), with staff from NPS Christiansted National Historic Site (CHRI), Buck Island Reef NM (BUIS), and Salt River Bay NHP & EP (SARI), NOAA, and representatives of educational institutions that were engaged in research at WIL, recognized the need to restore St. Croix's marine research capability.

In 1999, the Department of the Interior (DOI) and NOAA entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the JICMS to: (1) aid in the understanding of the marine environment, including coral reef ecosystems; (2) promote marine education and public awareness; and (3) assist in the development of appropriate public policy within the Caribbean.

Through the MOU, the partners agreed to accomplish these goals by:

- Fostering collaborative research programs to understand and sustain management the coral reef ecosystems of the Caribbean;
- Providing support for marine education programs for school children and adults in the U.S. Virgin Islands;
- Fostering cooperation with other government, institutional and private organizations to better understand marine issues in the Caribbean; and
- Enriching the learning experiences and opportunities for the University of Virgin Islands and other university students.

The MOU documented the JICMS's desire to establish "a marine research and educational facility within the USVI, including research laboratories, classrooms, a lecture hall, teaching aquarium, boats and diving equipment, distance learning equipment, and housing for students, scientists and visitors." The facility would serve undergraduate and graduate students in a variety of marine education and research programs supported by the JICMS universities.

The MOU stated that it would be the JICMS's responsibility to obtain operating and capital funds for the MREC. The participation of DOI and NOAA would be subject to the availability of funds appropriated for the MREC. The MOU stated that DOI and NOAA would pursue funding through private sector partnerships. The document did not represent a financial commitment from any of the signatories.

Initial efforts to develop the MREC focused on re-establishing a facility at the former WIL site on what is now private property. When that effort failed in 2000, other potential sites were explored, but land prices and the need for appropriate ocean access precluded acquisition.

In 2001, NPS acquired 73 acres within the Salt River Bay NHP & EP. Also that year, Buck Island Reef National Monument (BUIS) was expanded from 880 to 19,045 acres and became one of the first fully protected ("no-take") marine protected areas (MPA) managed by NPS. These acquisitions further underscored the park's need for increased science-based marine resource management.

Given the combination of global and local threats to coral reefs and NPS's new management responsibilities, NPS approached the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) and JICMS about partnering to build the MREC on the newly-acquired parkland at Salt River Bay. Subsequent to these discussions, NPS SE Regional Director appointed SARI Superintendent Joel Tutein as the NPS representative to the JICMS.

SARI itself was established in 1992 to preserve, protect and interpret nationally-significant natural, cultural and historical resources. Salt River Bay is a site of extensive cultural significance and is an important archaeological area for the indigenous Tainos, with remains of two pre-historic villages and a ball court established more than 2,000 years ago. On November 14, 1493, Christopher Columbus's party came ashore at Salt River Bay. It is the only site now in U.S. territory visited by Columbus's party during either voyage.

SARI is one of the few NPS units that are co-managed; NPS shares the management responsibilities with the Government of the Virgin Islands, an arrangement that includes oversight of more than 600 acres of mangrove estuarine bay, coral reefs, and a submarine canyon.

In 2003, St. Croix East End Marine Park was established as the Virgin Islands' first territorial marine park. It encompasses 60 square miles, including five square miles of no-take areas, and abuts the south side of BUIS. Combined with the NPS units, these marine park areas protect one of the largest coral reef ecosystems in the Caribbean.

With the listing of elkhorn and staghorn coral as threatened species in 2006, BUIS now provides more than 5,000 acres of critical habitat for these species, as well as critical foraging area and nesting beaches for the four species of sea turtle, including one of the few recovering hawksbill sea turtle nesting populations in the world.

The location and capabilities of the MREC at SARI make it an important site from which to support research and monitoring in the parks. Moreover, new marine research findings will provide a rare opportunity to compare current ecosystem trends with the historic baselines of the coral reef research undertaken between the late 1960s and late 1980s.

Researchers at the MREC will provide the existing park units, plus the proposed NPS units (Estate Castle Nugent, with four to five miles of shoreline on the south coast of St. Croix and Hamilton Grange and Associated Sites) and GVI's St. Croix East End Marine Park, with the capacity to study and respond to climate change, sea level rise, ocean acidification, coral diseases and other threats, and guide them in the recovery of threatened coral reef resources. The facility also will enable SARI to fulfill its mission to provide public educational opportunities in the marine environment and engage the local community in this effort.

In 2004, recognizing the many benefits of the marine laboratory and the value of locating it in the park, OIA provided a \$200,000 grant from its Coral Reef Program to conduct a Feasibility Study of sites around Salt River Bay that could support the MREC concept. The study, completed in 2006, found that the 73-acre site on the east side of the bay was the most feasible for this project. OIA subsequently awarded NPS an additional \$120,000 to conduct an Environmental Assessment of the preferred alternative, a document that was completed in June 2008, with a FONSI signed in February 2009.

In 2008, OIA provided NPS with \$350,000 to develop design concepts for the MREC. Following completion of the OIA- and NPS-funded assessment of the feasibility of the MREC from the park standpoint, the JICMS has undertaken the development of a Strategic Business Plan. Through this plan, the JICMS is defining and refining the potential operations and programs of the MREC and is working with NPS on all aspects of the project through the *Partnership Construction Process*.

In 2009, OIA provided \$1.25 million to NPS and the JICMS to support the MREC project. This funding, as augmented by the JICMS, will continue to support the project through concept definition, pre-design and into the design phase, including NPS DAB review and concept approval to construction.

In addition to the review of all of the building, site and programming elements, the MREC concept has been refined through public scoping with teachers, students and professionals (including the Virgin Islands Network of Environmental Educators, or VINE) so that the MREC may increase the capacity for local educational programs to provide hands-on experience and formal education within the marine and coastal ecosystems for students in kindergarten through college. The MREC will provide the opportunity to expand and strengthen UVI's undergraduate and graduate marine studies programs by providing research and internship experiences for students that are not available currently on St. Croix. All of the educational programming at the MREC would help to support the training of the next generation of park staff and Virgin Islands resource conservation managers.

## ***PROJECT DESCRIPTION***

The MREC will be a world-class green facility constructed to LEED Platinum standards, accessible to people with disabilities, relying on renewable energy resources such as wind and solar power and designed to minimize impacts to the surrounding view shed, sensitive coastal habitats, cultural resources and adjacent marine areas, under guidelines set by the Sustainable Sites Initiative. The MREC will serve as a green energy and design demonstration project to encourage the use of these technologies in the USVI and Caribbean basin.

The MREC will occupy five to seven acres of the 73-acre NPS parcel on the east side of SARI along the north central coast of St. Croix. This parcel of land was extensively altered during the late 1960s to support a proposed hotel resort project that failed; the MREC concept seeks to minimize the amount of land developed for the MREC and to restore the remaining land area to more natural conditions while protecting archeological resources. A two- to eight-meter deep man-made lagoon is central to the site and includes a shallow boat channel that opens into the Salt River Bay that is about 300 meters from the primary bay inlet, coral reef shelf, and the open ocean.

In addition to the functions described above, the MREC will provide for student education, support science-based management for the marine parks on St. Croix, promote public awareness of the economic and cultural heritage of the tropical oceans, provide economic development opportunities for the USVI, and allow for long-term applied marine research in support of the parks.

The MREC will enable the JICMS, as a non-profit research institution, to expand the long-term monitoring of marine physical, biological, geological, chemical and meteorological variables that are important to the understanding of coupled atmospheric-oceanic processes that influence biological dynamics. The location of the facility and its capabilities are expected to make it a major site to monitor the Caribbean region and provide data to support conservation and resource management.

The MREC concept includes several buildings in two general clusters. A concept plan developed during the Feasibility Study shows the potential location and arrangement of buildings that would be refined during the design phase of the project.

One cluster includes the main buildings of the MREC, including a *Research and Administration building* where JICMS researchers will be based; an *Education building* that will include an auditorium for the park, the JICMS and the public as well as public exhibit space and facilities for NPS operations;

a *Dormitory complex* including housing for staff and researchers; and a *Maintenance building* supporting the complex.

The second cluster includes a *Marine operations building and wet laboratory facility* at the lagoon. The 15,000-square foot building will contain wet laboratories, open air amphitheater, classrooms (supporting research studies), administrative and meeting area, and space for storage and building operations.

This cluster includes several accessory structures that will be located outdoors: a reverse osmosis water system, a seawater intake system that will enable researchers to have direct use of seawater (linked to the main MREC cluster), water tanks and pumps, a recompression chamber (re-establishing this capacity on St. Croix and a facility that could be used by the local hospital and medical personnel), outdoor wet tables, freshwater cisterns, dive and research vessels, a boat dock, boat launch, backup generator and HAZMAT bunker.

The wet lab facilities will be constructed at the lagoon level along an access road that will be constructed by NPS and GVI. The buildings are intended to blend into the natural surroundings to preserve the view of the site from the bay. All buildings will be hurricane resistant.

The site also will support the development of a 3,500-square foot NPS *Museum Collection Storage Facility* (CHRI PMIS #119182) to house more than 400,000 objects, both natural and cultural, including pre-historic relics, militaria, wet specimens, flora, insects, and geological, colonial, archeological, herpetological and archival materials. The museum facility could be co-located with a potential archeological field school (SARI PMIS #141648) supported by NPS's Southeast Archeological Center (SEAC) and thus provide unique archeological, archival and curatorial training in the Caribbean. The JICMS is exploring the relationship of the MREC to this field school as an opportunity to expand Caribbean studies programs on St. Croix.

The estimated cost for the facilities described above is \$54 million.

In addition to filling NPS and JICMS needs, the MREC could support several NOAA programs, including the National Ocean Service's (NOS) Center for Coastal Monitoring and Assessment biogeography team, which has worked since 1999 with BUIS, SARI and the St. Croix East End Marine Park to conduct extensive coral shallow and deep water mapping, as well as reef fish and coral habitat assessments and monitoring.

The MREC could serve as the operational base for NOAA's Integrated Coral Observing Network (ICON) station, which has operated at Salt River Canyon since 2002 but has been supported from a site in Christiansted five miles away. The station's data, hourly meteorological and oceanographic information, would be available to MREC researchers and the station would benefit from support space at the MREC.

The MREC could serve as a future Coral Reef Institute and expand the region's research capacity in partnership with the NOAA-sponsored Caribbean Coral Reef Institute (CCRI) at the University of Puerto Rico – Mayagüez (UPRM).

In addition to marine research and operations, the MREC could support an on-site facility for native wildlife veterinarian rehabilitation and training, thereby creating the opportunity for veterinary research on normal healthy marine vertebrates, including four species of marine turtle, pelagic and migratory birds, and marine mammals. The MREC could support a facility where professional veterinarians that consult with local and federal agencies on wildlife stranding and rehabilitation could operate.

NPS will also explore designation of the MREC as a Learning Center. If designated, it would be the first Learning Center with a focus on coastal and ocean park issues in the Southeast Region and move NPS forward as ocean stewards under the Ocean Action Plan (2009).

Because the Park and GVI's Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) co-manage SARI, the MREC field and laboratory facilities are ideally suited to support natural resource and law enforcement operations along the north shore of St. Croix. Other potential Federal partners, including the U.S. Forest Service, have been identified through the Strategic Business Plan process and may be brought into the project during the partnership phase.

### ***INTERESTS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES***

SARI and JICMS have identified and discussed the following mutual interests, roles, and responsibilities for the MREC:

#### **Mutual Interests**

- SARI and the JICMS have a deep and longstanding interest in developing the MREC to restore St. Croix's marine research capacity that was lost when NOAA's Undersea Research Program station and Fairleigh Dickinson University's West Indies Laboratory were damaged by Hurricane Hugo in 1989; and not rebuilt.
- The MREC will provide NPS, GVI and the JICMS with a facility to provide and support marine education programs for local students (in kindergarten through grade 12), provide a facility that could support the development of a four-year undergraduate degree program on St. Croix (such a program does not currently exist on the island), and enable NPS to lead public environmental education and outreach programs and contribute to the training of resource specialists who could work for NPS, DPNR, and/or other public agencies in the Virgin Islands.
- The MREC will support research that addresses threats from climate change, sea level rise, and increased tropical storm intensity and frequency, tsunamis, ocean acidification, and coral diseases resulting in the rapidly-declining health of coral reef ecosystems throughout the Caribbean.
- The MREC's research programs will draw upon and extend existing marine research databases and provide the research capacity to guide the management of BUIS, SARI and the St. Croix East End Marine Park.
- NPS SFC Network Inventory and Monitoring Program has identified 62 critical vital signs for research and monitoring, such as air and water quality, reef fisheries, coral reef decline, and climate change for six national parks with related natural resources (EVER, BISC, BICY, DRTO, BUIS/SARI, VIIS/VICR). These vital signs will provide ample opportunity for JICMS research to support the Park's research and monitoring needs.

- The MREC will provide the opportunity for long-term evaluation of marine resource management and conservation practices, such as impact of no-take policies in marine protected areas, providing data on recovery of local area fisheries.

### Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve (SARI)

SARI's primary interest in this project is to establish and utilize, through partnership, a world-class marine research and education facility to serve the needs of NPS, the JICMS, and the United States Virgin Islands generally, and to assist the visiting public in understanding the need for and value of ocean stewardship in the 21st century.

SARI's secondary interest in this project is to provide NPS's park units on St. Croix, as well as the territorial marine park system, with the scientific capability to conduct successful research, conservation, resource monitoring and restoration activities.

In addition:

- The MREC will support many of the critical issues identified in:
  - SARI's 1992 enabling legislation (Public Law 102-247) (to provide for visitor education, long-term scientific research of terrestrial and marine and archeological resources);
  - Salt River Bay Area of Particular Concern and Area of Preservation and Restoration-Draft Management Plan, 1993;
  - Management Recommendations for watershed protection from Management Objectives Workshop, 1994 (to preserve, protect and interpret resources);
  - Land Protection Plan, 1995 (to facilitate scientific research within the park to increase knowledge about unique resources and provide for training for the Territorial Park System);
  - GVI's Salt River Bay Marine Reserve and Wildlife Sanctuary, 2001, Draft Regulations (to preserve marine resource for recreation, science, education and aesthetic resources/enhance public awareness and understanding and appreciation and wise use of the marine environment);
  - Virgin Islands Multi-Park Museum Collection Management Facility, CHRI PMIS #119182, Value Analysis Study 2006-14 (to support education and research); and
  - NPS, Natural Resource Program Center, South Florida/Caribbean Network Vital Signs Monitoring Plan, 2008;
  - NPS Southeast Region Coastal and Ocean Park Strategy (2008) and Action Plan, 2008-2009;
  - National Policy for the Oceans, Our Coasts, and the Great Lakes, June 2009
  - SARI Cooperative Agreement, 2009 (to support the co-management of the park to preserve, protect, and interpret resources).
- The MREC will enable SARI to fulfill its responsibilities for resource protection, preservation, and serve to raise public awareness of critical ocean issues and provide education and research opportunities for marine and terrestrial resources.
- The MREC will help support critical research, monitoring and education needs identified by the NPS's South Florida Caribbean Network Inventory and Monitoring Program through its Vital Signs

Program. This program addresses the coastal and ocean resources, climate change, and health of coral reef ecosystems in SARI, BUIS, Virgin Islands National Park (VIIS) and Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument (VICR) and is applicable throughout the eastern Caribbean.

- The MREC will include a new NPS Education Center (part of the MREC's proposed education building) that would vastly improve SARI's visitor use and education capacity and supplement the facilities provided at the SARI Visitor Contact Station on the west side of Salt River Bay.
- The MREC will provide facilities for the park's natural, cultural and historic resources collections currently stored in overcrowded facilities on St. Croix or located off-island, as well as a facility for new collections generated by MREC research. Co-location with the MREC would enhance this research facility and provide for local access to park collections and training opportunities for students in curation and collections management not available elsewhere in the eastern Caribbean..
- SARI will develop a Donor Recognition Plan to recognize donors to the MREC as well as donations to SARI generally.
- SARI will develop an operations plan to identify responsibilities of each of the operational partners at the MREC.
- NPS and GVI will collaborate to implement the Cooperative Management Agreement (signed in 2009) to co-manage SARI, and carry out projects such as natural area restoration, infrastructure improvements, and education and training programs.
- SARI will identify and complete NEPA, NHPA, and other federal and territorial compliance and permitting requirements for development of the MREC.

#### Joint Institute for Caribbean Marine Studies (JICMS)

- The JICMS will lead the effort to raise \$54 million to support the design and construction of the MREC. The JICMS also will raise funds to operate and maintain the MREC and establish an entity such as a 501(c)(3) educational foundation that would operate the marine lab portion of the facility. Depending upon successful fundraising, 2016 has been identified as a potential year for the opening of the entire facility.
- The JICMS will develop a Fundraising Feasibility Study to assess the organization's ability to raise funds of this scope.
- The JICMS will develop a Fundraising Plan outlining the process to raise funds for the MREC.
- The JICMS will develop a process for appropriate donor vetting.
- The JICMS will develop a Donor Recognition Plan and work with SARI to make sure that it integrates with SARI's Donor Recognition Plan.
- The JICMS will work in coordination with SARI to support the design, construction and operation of the MREC.
- The JICMS intends to provide support for the MREC's operations by funding staff support, providing faculty to lead research and education programs, and recruiting students and researchers to the facility. Lab, tuition and equipment rental fees will help support facility operations. Details on this are being developed as part of the Strategic Business Plan.
- The JICMS will operate the MREC Administrative Building and buildings associated with the marine lab functions and will support facility maintenance through tuition and use fees.

It is the intention of the partners that NPS be the owner of the partnership-constructed facilities to ensure that facility operations meet NPS and other Federal standards and requirements.

## ***PARK AND PARTNER ASSESSMENT***

### Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve (SARI)

#### ***Park Management Team***

The SARI management team is led by Superintendent Joel A. Tutein, with Chief of Resource Management and Research Zandy Hillis-Starr, Chief of Law Enforcement Lorena Harris, and Administrative Officer Elizabeth Centeno. Superintendent Tutein and Chief RM Hillis-Starr have been involved in this project since 1999 and have been instrumental in defining and communicating to the JICMS the park's potential roles in the MREC and how the facility, researchers, staff and students can support the marine research programs of SARI and BUIS, as well as the training of future park and resource management personnel.

The park management team is responsible for three national park units on St. Croix: CHRI, BUIS and SARI. These units are the focus of NPS visitor experience on St. Croix and attract 225,000 visitors annually.

The park management team has performed and supported marine research operations, including a range of field and laboratory research to meet park needs, for combined total of more than 50 years. The team has extensive experience in collaborating with partners on a variety of resource management, research, inventorying and monitoring projects. These partners include NPS's South Florida and Caribbean (SFC) Inventory and Monitoring Program; U. S. Geological Service Caribbean Field Station at St. John, Virgin Islands, Southeastern Archeological Center (SEAC); the NOAA Biogeography Program; and universities functioning as NPS Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units (CESU), including Texas A&M University; Nova Southeastern University; the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science (RSMAS); the Florida Institute of Technology; the University of Rhode Island; Oberlin College; the University of Puerto Rico; and UVI; in addition to as many as 12 visiting researchers each year.

The park management team has collaborated with partners to fund and support joint projects, ranging from the translocation of globally endangered St. Croix ground lizard to the U. S. Coral Reef Task Force's 1999 meetings, the NOAA Biogeography program's Reef Fish/Coral Reef Habitat Survey (1999-present), NOAA's R/V Nancy Foster Deep water mapping (2004-2006). These projects have been conducted with park funds, project funds, other federal agency in-kind contributions, and partner donations. In addition, the park has hosted many large events as well as several annual community-based events like the St. Croix Ironman Triathlon (with 600-800 participants) and Buck Island Coral Reef Swim.

The park management team provided staff support and input into the Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment for the MREC to ensure that the authors considered all aspects of park resources and that park issues and needs were adequately addressed in the documents. The park team

has continued to play a vital role in providing NPS input into the JICMS's Strategic Business Plan and coordinating the park's role in the *Partnership Construction Process*.

### ***MREC as a SARI Priority Project***

According to the 2011 SARI Projects priority list for funding, the MREC is the number one priority at Salt River Bay. Park staff is in the process of finalizing all of the Project Management Information System (PMIS) documentation and work orders associated with the MREC facility, as part of the concept development stage of the *Partnership Construction Process*. The estimated cost for all of the facilities identified in this MOI, including the Education Center and Museum Collections Facility, is \$54 million.

### ***Need for a General Management Plan***

In 2009, SARI and GVI's Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) signed a Cooperative Agreement to officially begin co-management of the park. According to the agreement, NPS will "provide funding and overall direction for the development of the General Management Plan" for SARI. The GMP would enable SARI to identify and address park management need of which the MREC and its operations are only a part. The GMP process also will assist the park in understanding how the management of SARI affects and overlaps with management and operational issues at the other existing and potential NPS units on St. Croix.

To fund the GMP, SARI has submitted a PMIS project statement. Because of the complexity of a co-managed park with significant resources, it is anticipated that the GMP will cost about \$900,000. SARI is seeking funding to begin the GMP process in 2012, with the goal of completing the plan by 2016, a potential target date for the opening of the MREC.

Other park planning documents that address the MREC's mission are referenced above.

### ***Staffing Need and Requirements***

The park management team has extensive local knowledge and experience in design and construction in the tropical environment, as well as the use of hurricane-resistant materials. Combined with its background in marine research, SARI staff can contribute substantially to the design and construction of the MREC. However, the establishment of the MREC will increase the complexity of the St. Croix group of national parks and require additional staff, especially in the area of facility management.

Because of the MREC's complexity, facility staff must be able to ensure that the complex will operate efficiently, safely, and within technical parameters to meet LEED standards.

SARI will revise the park's organizational staffing plan to address the needs of the MREC. Additional NPS personnel most likely needed for the St. Croix National Park Group of park units would include resource management/research, compliance and coordination, interpretation and education, as well as law enforcement (park rangers) and administrative/IT support. It is anticipated that the park's Facility Management Chief position will be re-classified at the GS12 level and several new facility staff would

be added, including two Work Leaders (WG9), one Maintenance Mechanic (WG7), and two Maintenance Workers (WG5). These new positions will require experience with advanced mechanical systems for solar, wind, sea water filtration, motor boats, and electronics as required by the marine lab.

SARI will submit OFS funds requests to increase park capacity for these facility and operations requirements, including staffing, equipment, supplies and operational needs. SARI and the JICMS are reviewing the park's needs as part of the Strategic Business Plan and a number of these positions may be folded into the MREC's operations and supported by the JICMS.

As an interim step, JICMS and NPS are working with OIA to designate a project manager to facilitate the next steps in the Partnership Construction process and take the lead in project scheduling, compliance, coordination of the pre-design and design tasks, communication, as well as fulfilling other NPS requirements.

SARI will require construction project management oversight for the MREC from the start of site preparation through the construction phase, including technical contract management services, designation of a Contracting Officer's Technical Representative, and Title III Services. SARI will seek a contractor to provide these services and to interface with NPS Facility Manager and Resource Management/Compliance team. NPS will utilize OIA project funding and seek additional funds from NPS to support this contract.

### ***Compliance***

SARI completed NEPA and NHPA compliance to site the MREC in the park as of June 2008, and received FONSI in February 2009. The preferred alternative will have some short-term adverse effects on natural resources; however, the long-term, beneficial impacts of the project far outweigh the anticipated adverse impacts, the majority of which are minor and short-term. Overall, there would be no impairment to park resources from the development of the MREC.

### ***Appropriateness for Partnership***

This MREC provides an exceptional opportunity to execute and leverage the benefits of a partnership between NPS and four major research universities. NPS would contribute the land, location and access to natural and historic resources, while the JICMS would contribute world-class science capabilities to investigate these resources and provide sound science to guide park resource management. NPS and the universities would directly benefit as institutions by this partnership but, more importantly, benefits would accrue directly to the youth who are educated at the MREC and become the next generation of resource managers and scientists. By working together, NPS, JICMS and the other partners will create a unique facility that would provide significant benefits to the St. Croix park units, assist in their resource management, and create a capacity to expand research and education in the Virgin Islands in the long-term, generating benefits that can be measured in the future as jobs and educational opportunities that do not exist in the Virgin Islands today.

Together the partners have the capacity to raise federal and private funds for the construction of the MREC and the resources and ability to operate the facility. The universities have expertise in marine

research and marine research facilities; NPS can provide well established education and interpretive skills to bring research to park visitors and enhance public understanding of park resources. Therefore, given the long-term partnership of DOI, NPS, JICMS and NOAA to develop this facility and the significant investment put into the concept to date, all parties would benefit by moving this project forward into the design phase and beyond.

### Joint Institute for Caribbean Marine Studies (JICMS)

The four public state and territorial universities that make up the JICMS have, combined, nearly 100,000 undergraduate and graduate students as of 2009 and function as world leaders in marine research and education, investing millions of dollars each year into new and expanded research facilities. The JICMS has a broad capacity to bring research, teaching, and service programs to bear on Caribbean research priorities, resource management, and science education.

The JICMS is prepared to lead the effort to raise \$54 million for the project. The *research building, dormitories, maintenance building, and marine operations building and wet lab facility* would function as the marine research and education facility, built with money raised by the JICMS. The JICMS's fundraising activities would focus on these facilities, both in construction and for ongoing support of the operations after the MREC is built.

The *museum collections storage facility* is an NPS project proposed to be co-located with the MREC at SARI. The *archeological field school* would be accessory to the marine collections storage facility and also would be an NPS project, although the JICMS's non-marine educational components (and other potential partners) could support the NPS activities at this facility.

The *education building* is envisioned as an NPS project, built with NPS funds; the relationship of this facility to the primary marine research and education facilities will be examined in detail during a later phase of the *Partnership Construction Process*. It is possible that, depending upon the outcome of the JICMS's fundraising efforts, that the JICMS may be able to provide funding to construct at least a portion of the education building.

The JICMS's Fundraising Plan, to be prepared in the next phase of the *Partnership Construction Process*, will describe potential sources for these funds. At this point, the JICMS envisions that this money would consist of some combination of: (1) *federal grants and funds*, (2) *non-federal (public) grants and funds*, and (3) *private funds*.

Potential federal grant sources include the Commerce Department's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), which annually provides competitive grants for research laboratories. UNCW received one of these grants in 2009 to construct a \$30 million biotechnology laboratory on its Wilmington campus. Other opportunities for federal, other public and private funds will be identified in the JICMS's fundraising documents produced during the next phase of the *Partnership Construction Process*.

The operating relationship between the JICMS, NPS and the other partners will be detailed in the Strategic Business Plan, a draft of which will be completed in early 2010.

## *University of North Carolina Wilmington*

During the past 10 years, UNCW has planned and constructed seven research facilities (total net square feet, approximately 250,000) with a current value of more than \$112 million, including the state-of-the-art Center for Marine Science and aquaculture facility. UNCW has an endowment of more than \$50 million, expends an average of \$20 million annually on research contracts and grants, and has a professional fundraising and contract and grant team of more than 40 individuals.

Researchers from the University of North Carolina Wilmington have taken the lead on developing the MREC since its inception. UNCW's strength in the natural sciences, especially biology and marine biology, chemistry and other disciplines that form the core of its internationally respected niche in the marine sciences, is the result of decades of institutional focus and investment. UNCW offers bachelor's degrees in 52 majors, 35 master's degrees, and a Ph.D. in marine biology, one of only three such degrees offered on the East Coast.

UNCW seeks "to create people who are educated for the 21st century and who have a sense of civic responsibility and leadership," by providing "a unique academic focus that connects student learning in and out of the classroom across four broad themes: regional engagement, natural environment, information technology and internationalization."

Faculty, staff and students at UNCW's Center for Marine Science (CMS) and its state-of-the-art facility on the Intracoastal Waterway in the southern suburbs of Wilmington, N.C., are engaged in a variety of basic and applied research, service and education. These activities have implications for economic development, including marine biotechnology and "pharmaceuticals from the sea," which have led to active agreements with pharmaceutical companies.

CMS is one of the most technologically advanced coastal ocean science research facilities along the eastern seaboard. It supports research in oceanography, coastal and wetland studies, coral reef ecology, marine biomedical and environmental physiology, marine biotechnology and aquaculture, and marine geology with faculty members from the departments of biology and marine biology, chemistry and biochemistry, physics and physical oceanography and geography and geology. The center fosters research programs of the highest quality and thereby enhances the educational experience provided by UNCW for all students in marine science.

UNCW long has partnered with NOAA, hosting NOAA's largest Undersea Research Program (NURP) at CMS and maintaining a field station and research program based in Key Largo, Florida. The UNCW program is one of NOAA's seven regional centers of undersea expertise and technology. NURC/UNCW was one of the original NURP regional centers, established in 1981, based on a peer-reviewed competition with other institutions around the Southeast.

NURC is housed at CMS and the center leases and manages the National Undersea Research Center in Key Largo, Florida. Shore facilities at NURC-Key Largo include: dockage for at least six support vessels, office space to support administrative activities, two labs and work space to support operations

and science-related activities, and housing for visiting scientists (up to 16 at one time) and NURC support staff. The base is close to Conch Reef, the deployment site of the Aquarius Reef Base.

Aquarius, formerly in Salt River Bay, is now operated by UNCW/NURC. It is still the nation's only undersea laboratory and has undergone a high-tech overhaul since it was moored off St. Croix, enabling it to better study coral reef habitats and transmits video and other data from the ocean floor. Since 1993, the Aquarius undersea lab has supported more than 90 missions, producing approximately 300 peer-reviewed scientific publications along with numerous popular science articles, educational programs, and television spots.

### *University of the Virgin Islands*

The University of the Virgin Islands was chartered as a not-for-profit educational institution in 1962, opening its first campus on St. Thomas in 1963 and a second on St. Croix in 1964. UVI has a combined enrollment of approximately 2,500 full-time, part-time and graduate students.

In addition to the St. Thomas Wellness Center, which is under construction, the UVI Office of Capital Projects has successfully managed more than \$14 million in new construction and major renovation projects on both campuses during the last four years.

The University of the Virgin Islands is a public liberal arts-based university, a Historically Black College and University, a Land-Grant institution and the only institution of higher learning in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The university's objective is to be recognized as the leading American institution of higher learning in the Caribbean.

UVI's Center for Marine and Environmental Studies (CMES) is a multidisciplinary center that includes two historically important research facilities: the MacLean Marine Science Center (MMSC) on St. Thomas and the Virgin Islands Environmental Resources Station (VIERS) on St. John.

CMES is well positioned to help establish the MREC as a premier research center in the Caribbean. The Center provides logistical support to researchers from UVI and from many off-island institutions and agencies, including the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, University of Miami, University of Rhode Island, Auburn University, Nova Southeastern University, University of Hawaii, as well as NOAA and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). CMES provides educational services on St. Croix through the Virgin Islands Marine Advisory Services (VIMAS), which is funded by the Puerto Rico Sea Grant agency. CMES supports and is committed to collaborate with its JICMS partners at all levels.

In 2007, UVI established the Masters in Marine and Environmental Science program on St. Thomas. CMES has been instrumental in providing intellectual and infrastructure resources for the graduate students to successfully conduct their research. UVI envisions that expansion of the masters program, including exploring the feasibility of establishing a doctoral program in marine sciences, cannot occur without expanding research facilities as proposed for the MREC.

Any major research infrastructure developed in the USVI requires the support of the Virgin Islands Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (VI-EPSCoR), which is funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF).

The VI-EPSCoR Governing Committee has recommended that CMES should continue to focus its efforts to: (1) continue to develop CMES as a center of excellence in marine and environmental science by further developing CMES research facilities, recruiting new faculty, and strengthening research collaborations; (2) further strengthen UVI research competitiveness in marine and environmental science by reducing barriers to research participation and strengthening UVI researchers' capacity; (3) strengthen linkages between researchers and decision makers to address critical environmental challenges facing the territory; (4) further develop linkages with UVI and the Department of Education to strengthen the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) pipeline in education to recruit researchers; and (5) support the efforts of the Government of the Virgin Islands to strengthen the role of science and technology in economic development. All of these recommendations are in line with the goals and objectives of the MREC.

### ***Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey***

Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey (all campuses) has total annual research and development expenditures of \$300 million and an endowment of \$500 million. More than 200 professionals oversee fundraising, grants and contracts. Since 2000, Rutgers-New Brunswick has planned and constructed 11 research facilities (total net square feet, approximately 405,000) with a current value of more than \$250 million. These facilities include a state-of-the-art Biomedical Engineering building (2007) and Life Sciences complex (2005) and the planned New Jersey Institute of Food, Nutrition and Health (2011).

The faculty and staff at the Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences (IMCS) at Rutgers University have a number of interests and abilities that can contribute to the research goals of the MREC. Chartered in 1766, Rutgers has a unique history as a colonial college, a land-grant institution, and a state university. With more than 50,000 students, including 12,000 graduate students and 2,645 faculty, Rutgers is one of the nation's major public institutions of higher education and has one of the most diverse student bodies in the country.

The university's 27 degree-granting units offer majors in more than 100 fields, with thousands of courses covering the full range of human experience. More than 100 bachelors, 100 masters, and 80 doctoral and professional degree programs are offered across 10 undergraduate colleges and schools, 11 graduate schools, and six schools which offer both undergraduate and graduate programs.

Research and education at IMCS is conducted by about 50 faculty and 60 technical staff members who reside in 19 research groups. Members of the Coastal Ocean Observation Laboratory conduct research and technology development across a range of topics such as mapping global ocean provinces, developing smart exploration networks, ocean cyberinfrastructure, bio-optical models and ocean forecasting.

Rutgers operates one of the nation's 27 National Estuarine Research Reserves (NERRs), the Jacques Cousteau NERR, which aims to improve the management of coastal environments through science, education and public outreach.

The MREC would draw upon a pool of post-doctoral researchers and graduate students at the IMCS. A strong pool of postdocs conducts research on environmental biophysics and molecular ecology, physical oceanography, remote sensing, ocean modeling, marine biogeochemistry, and paleoceanography, and nutrient biogeochemistry. Rutgers has more than 20 postdocs in this program.

### *University of South Carolina*

The University of South Carolina (all campuses) has total annual research and development expenditures of \$185 million and an endowment of \$400 million. In 2007, USC completed the Horizon Research Facility, which added 125,000 square feet of engineering and basic science research space to the campus and, in 2008; the Discovery Research Facility was constructed as another 110,000-square foot health sciences research facility.

These USC facilities were constructed for the Centers of Economic Excellence Endowed Chairs program to advance university research in support of knowledge-economy jobs. USC focuses its research in the areas of nanoscience, future fuels, health sciences, and environmental science. USC also is developing the Innovista Research campus in conjunction with local governments and private enterprise to create a live, work, learn environment in an urban campus setting.

The University of South Carolina (USC), chartered in 1801, is the flagship comprehensive research university in South Carolina. The university's eight campuses have a student population of 41,518 (undergraduate and graduate). More than 350 programs lead to baccalaureate, masters, professional, and doctoral degrees. The talent, resources and opportunity in the dynamic research environment have resulted in research support of \$206 million (June 30, 2008). Collaborations with other research institutions and organizations and private partners leverage existing resources to promote discoveries and innovation.

The Belle W. Baruch Institute for Marine & Coastal Sciences (Baruch Institute) at USC is a national leader in research on coastal and estuarine systems and is recognized internationally for long-term research and unique monitoring data. The institute's mission is to conduct research and support education that will improve the management of marine and coastal resources and advance basic science for the well-being of people and their environment.

Headquartered on the Columbia campus of USC, the Baruch Institute operates a modern coastal field laboratory located on the essentially pristine North Inlet Estuary. The dual locations provide expansion of research through interaction with other research and academic units of the university, bringing together researchers in the sciences and in disciplines such as geography, economics, environmental health, policy, and statistics. Collaborative research efforts bring together scientists whose perspectives and expertise enable a more complete approach to wise use and sustainability.

North Inlet Estuary, the Baruch Institute's primary research site, provides the increasingly rare opportunity for comparative studies with more developed estuaries, enabling assessment of impacts associated with human activities. The long-term monitoring of this site, begun in the late 1970s and early 1980s, has resulted in datasets of approximately 100 regularly measured biotic and abiotic components. These datasets support research on environmental processes spanning the molecular to the landscape level, and serving as a barometer of climate change. Studies from this site are providing resource managers with information critical to establishing a healthy balance between maintaining the ecological integrity of systems and satisfying economic interests.

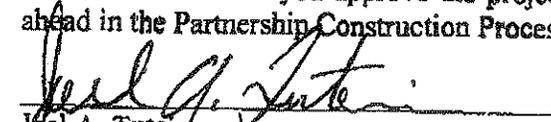
**Summary**

We have discussed our capabilities to successfully raise funds for the project and to sustain it long-term.

We have discussed and understand Director's Order #21 on Donations and Fundraising and the need to follow the policies. We understand the NPS's *Partnership Construction Process* and key responsibilities for both the NPS and the partners at key stages in this process. We understand that this memo does not constitute a commitment on the part of the National Park Service or on the part of the Joint Institute for Caribbean Marine Studies to execute the project described herein.

**RECOMMENDATION**

We recommend that you approve the project and identify it as a Regional Priority so that it can move ahead in the Partnership Construction Process.

  
Joel A. Tutein  
CHRI/BUIS/SARI, Supcrintendent

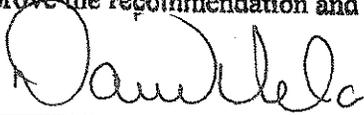
  
Robert I. Wicklund  
JICMS, Chairman of the Board

Date

Date

**APPROVAL**

I approve the recommendation and have established it as a regional priority.

  
David Vela  
Regional Director, Southeast Region

3-8-10  
Date

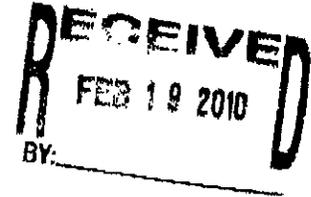


IN REPLY REFER TO:

# United States Department of the Interior

## OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR

Southeast Regional Office  
 Richard B. Russell Federal Building  
 75 Spring Street, S.W.  
 Atlanta, Georgia 30303  
 February 5, 2010



NPS.SE. 2729  
 G-01927  
 LG-13 and  
 NPS.SE. 1130  
 K-01408  
 CP-3

### MEMORANDUM

TO: Assistant Regional Director, Partnerships, Southeast Region

FROM: Regional Solicitor, Southeast Region

SUBJECT: Partnership Project among Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve (SARI) and Joint Institute for Caribbean Marine Studies (JICMS) to develop a Marine Research and Education Center (MREC)

You have requested that this office review a Memorandum of Intent (MOI) among SARI and JICMS, a consortium of universities, setting forth the intent of the parties to develop, construct, and jointly operate a Marine Research and Education Center within SARI. In connection with this request you have asked us to review the legal authorities that might exist to allow the contemplated partnership. The details of this partnership project are set forth in greater detail in the Service briefing statement attached to this Memorandum as Exhibit A. A list of the authorities examined is set forth in Exhibit B to this Memorandum.

The MOI that you have asked us to review sets forth in general, non-binding terms the intent of the parties to work together to raise funds for the construction of the MREC in SARI and to jointly operate the center once constructed. The MOI is well written and comprehensive in its details and is acceptable to this office, particularly given the fact that it commits no party to any particular obligation other than to work together to achieve the goal of developing, constructing and operating the MERC to the degree the authorities and funding of the parties permit. It obligates no funds or resources.

We believe that the statutes listed in Exhibit B provide adequate authority for SARI to enter into the MOI and will provide adequate authority for the partnership activities contemplated under the MOI. The only caveat to this statement is that as each stage of the project progresses and documents are entered into, these activities and documents will have to be individually scrutinized to determine if the authorities are broad enough to permit the particular activities contemplated in the manner proposed. Consequently, we request that each substantive document produced along the path of developing, fundraising for, constructing, and operating the MERC be forwarded to this office for individual review.

If you have any questions about this matter, please contact, Holly Deal of my staff at 404-331-4447, extension 231.

Horace Clark  
Regional Solicitor



## OVERVIEW

### **SALT RIVER BAY MARINE SCIENCE AND EDUCATION CENTER**

**A Partnership Between the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service and the Office of Insular Affairs, and the Joint Institute for Caribbean Marine Studies**

#### **Introduction**

Concerns about the state of coral reef ecosystems in the Caribbean and elsewhere in the world oceans has prompted the formation of a partnership between the U.S. Department of the Interior through the National Park Service and the Office of Insular Affairs and the Joint Institute for Caribbean Marine Studies (JICMS), a university-based organization consisting of four members including the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, the University of the Virgin Islands, Rutgers the State University of New Jersey, and the University of South Carolina.

The partnership recognizes that coral reefs and associated tropical and subtropical marine communities are among the most biologically complex and diverse ecosystems in the world. These systems are inextricably linked to the economic base of the U.S. tropical coastal regions. Evidence is overwhelming that these coral reef ecosystems are deteriorating at a rapid rate throughout the world.

Unless the causes of this degradation are understood and that policy makers and the general public become actively involved in reversing this trend, we stand to lose a critical portion of our rich natural heritage and to experience a decline in an important economic base.

#### **Mission**

*The mission of the partnership is to establish the Salt River Bay Marine Science and Education Center (Center) on St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands dedicated to research on the health and sustainability of coral reefs and other tropical marine systems, student education, and public awareness of the economic and cultural heritage associated with coral reefs and other tropical marine systems.*

#### **Selection of St. Croix for the Center**

A 1999 study conducted by the University of South Carolina and the Woods Hole Institute recognized St. Croix as an important site to establish such a Center. Considering that coral reef systems are linked Caribbean wide, St. Croix's central location and close proximity to many nations within the region makes it a perfect site for the Center. Additionally, the island has a rich coral reef research history between 1970 and 1989 that will be useful for comparative purposes. Logistical support in terms of transportation, labor, and housing offered by the Island is paramount to successful operations of a research and educational center. The St. Croix campus of UVI only about twelve minutes drive from Salt River Bay, can provide dormitory and some food services.

## **Facility**

The fortuitous purchase of property around Salt River Bay including a partially constructed building by the National Park Service is a perfect setting for the proposed Center. The building could provide about 20,000 square feet of laboratory space, research aquaria, office space, equipment facility, maintenance section, dive locker, classrooms, lecture halls and a visitor's interactive section. A dock and small fleet of boats from 14 to 45 feet long would be only a few feet away in a protected lagoon and only about 3 to 4 minutes from the open ocean. The short distance to the St. Croix campus would remove the necessity of building dormitories on site and would only require a small shuttle service, at least for the short term.

## **Responsibilities of the Partnership**

As the owner of the facilities and property, the park will exercise oversight of the Program and will participate in all of its elements, mainly its educational segment. JICMS will provide operational services including direct research projects and logistical support for research projects, classes for credit, diving services, administrative services, and logistics. Maintenance could be shared by the two partners. The Office of Insular Affairs could participate in some oversight as well as contributing to developing research and educational projects.

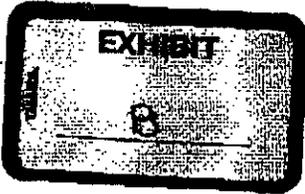
## **Infrastructure**

The problem presented by a number of universities working as one unit needs to be resolved early in the development of the Program, especially when more institutions are added. Although less complicated, the working relationship between the JICMS and the park also needs to be described. Although JICMS has been together for several years, the recent actions of the Department of the Interior, including the Office of Insular Affairs \$200,000 contract to develop a feasibility study, make it necessary to formalize the relationships quickly.

It is proposed that the Institute select a spokesperson to interact with the National Park Service as the feasibility study and the program progresses. It is also necessary for the original members of JICMS, in consultation with the National Park Service and the Office of Insular Affairs, to develop a five-year strategic plan for the Program and facilities. The feasibility study would facilitate the development of this plan.

## **Personnel**

In the first year of operation, it is estimated that the Center would employ seven people. This would include a Director who would have a background in marine science, assistant or office manager, dive officer, boat operator and maintenance, two facilities maintenance and grounds personnel and an educational director. This number would increase to approximately twelve by the fourth year. The Center would add a resident marine scientist, assistant dive personnel, and several resident teaching faculty members.



## Potential Authorities for the MREC

May 18, 2009

### Authorities for Research Facility on NPS Land

**Agreements Concerning Cooperative Research and Training on NPS Resources (16 U.S.C. § 1a-2(j)):** The Secretary may enter into agreements with public or private educational institutions, States and their political subdivisions, for the purpose of developing adequate, coordinated, cooperative research and training programs concerning the resources of the National Park System, and pursuant to such agreements, to accept from and make available to the cooperator such technical and support staff, financial assistance for mutually agreed upon research projects, supplies and equipment, facilities, and administrative services relating to cooperative research units as the Secretary deems appropriate.

**Agreements with Educational Institutions to Study National Park System Resources and Non-Park Service Resources (16 U.S.C. § 5933):** The Secretary is authorized and directed to enter into cooperative agreements with colleges and universities in partnership with other Federal and State agencies, to establish cooperative study units to conduct multi-disciplinary research and develop integrated information products on the resources of the National Park System or the larger region of which parks are a part.

### Authorities for Collaborating with Consortium of Universities and Virgin Islands Government to Manage Research Facility

**Authority to Vest Title to Tangible Personal Property for Research (31 U.S.C. § 6306):** When a federal agency provides funds to a nonprofit institution of higher education or a nonprofit organization whose primary purpose is conducting scientific research, and does so under contracts, grant agreements, and cooperative agreements for the purpose of conducting basic or applied research, this act authorizes the agency to vest title to tangible personal property acquired with the federal funds in such institution or organization.

**Salt River Bay National Historic Park & Ecological Preserve – 16 U.S.C. § 410** authorizes the Secretary to enter into cooperative agreements with the Virgin Islands or any political subdivision thereof, for the management of the park and for other purposes.

**General Authority to Take Actions That Promote and Regulate Units of the National Park System (16 U.S.C. § 1):** The NPS Organic Act directs the Secretary to promote and regulate National Park System lands by such means and measures as to conform to the fundamental purpose of such lands, namely, conservation of the scenery and the natural and historic objects and wildlife therein, and to provide for the enjoyment of these resources in a manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.

**Grants for Research (42 U.S.C. § 1900):** This law is often referred to as the Research Grants Act. The Act authorizes the Secretary to enter into contracts with educational institutions, public or private agencies or organizations, or persons, to conduct scientific or technological research "into any aspect of the problems related to the programs of the Department of the Interior , are authorized by statute."

**Leases of Buildings and Associated Property (16 U.S.C. § 1a-2(k)):** The Secretary may enter into a lease with any person or governmental entity for the use of buildings and associated property administered by the Secretary as part of the National Park System, provided that (1) the lease does not authorize the lessee to engage in activities that are subject to authorization under a concessions contract, commercial use authorization, or similar instrument; and (2) use of the building and associated property shall not be (a) inconsistent with the law establishing the Park System unit in which the building or associated property is located, (b) shall not result in depreciation of the purposes and values of the unit, and (c) shall be compatible with National Park Service programs. For leases of historic structures see the description of 16 U.S.C. § 470h-3 below.

**Authorities for Consortium of Universities and Department of the Interior to Help Fund the Research Facility**

**Acceptance of Contributions to Prosecute Cooperative Projects (43 U.S.C. § 1473a):** This law provides authority for the Secretary to accept land, buildings, equipment and other contributions and fees, and to use them to prosecute projects in cooperation with other federal, State, or private agencies.

**General Authority for NPS to Accept Donations (16 U.S.C. § 6):** The Secretary is authorized to accept patented lands, rights-of-way over patented lands or others lands, buildings, or other property within the various national parks and national monuments, and moneys , may be donated for the purposes of the national park and monument system.