



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Western Incident Management Team

Contact:
Denise Germann / 307.690.1752

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 20, 2017

Parks of the Caribbean Media Release

Stabilization Work Continues at National Parks of the Caribbean

San Juan, Puerto Rico — The Caribbean Parks of the National Park Service are quickly and safely moving forward with stabilization efforts and offering a variety of public access and visitor services.

National Parks of the Caribbean Superintendent Randy Lavasseur said, “We are working hard to open the beautiful parks of the Caribbean, and provide for a safe and enjoyable visitor experience. The stabilization and recovery efforts are ongoing and we are beginning to open areas of the parks as conditions allow.”

The National Park Service Western Incident Management Team, comprised of primarily National Park Service specialists, as well as other Federal employees, is assisting the parks with stabilization efforts. The team is currently stationed at San Juan National Historic Site, although most of the team will soon transition to St. John.

Each of the six National Park Service units in the Caribbean has a branch unit working under the direction of the Western Incident Management Team. The branch units include a variety of supporting positions and expertise.

Other National Park Service specialists are assisting the Caribbean parks as well. A facility assessment team is assessing all park structures and infrastructure, and a Caribbean Hurricane Emergency Rehabilitation Team will arrive this weekend. The rehabilitation team will help develop:

- Objectives to move parks out of the stabilization phase,
- Objectives that will transition the parks into recovery,
- Strategic plan for the recovery with the overarching mission to reopen the parks, and
- Financial plan for each phase.

The Caribbean Parks include:

- San Juan National Historic Site,
- Virgin Islands National Park,
- Virgin Islands Coral Reef National Monument,
- Christiansted National Historic Site,
- Buck Island Reef National Monument, and
- Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve.

Several areas of the San Juan National Historic Site are being stabilized and the park is positioned to open once sustainable power is achieved.

The Virgin Islands National Park, Coral Reef National Monument, and the Salt River Bay National Historic Park and Ecological Preserve sustained significant damage and in some areas, total loss. These areas are considered unstable and stabilization work is being conducted. The stabilization objectives for these sites are:

- Safe housing for park employees,
- Safe access for employees,
- Safe work environment for employees,
- Debris removal, and
- Submerged structure and shipwreck assessments.

Recovery efforts at Christiansted National Historic Site and Buck Island Reef National Monument are continuing and anticipated to be completed soon. The parks do not have sustainable power, but are planned to partially open next week.

The visitor center at Salt River Bay National Historic Park has been significantly damaged, but stable, with recovery efforts underway. Public access to the visitor center is anticipated to be available in a few weeks.

Please visit the parks websites and social media platforms for information regarding public access and services.