



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

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## National Park Service News Release

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### **Park Actions for National Parks at St. Croix, USVI for COVID-19**

**St. Croix, US Virgin Islands – CHRISTIANSTED NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** is announcing additional modifications to operations to support federal, territory, and local efforts to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

Beginning Tuesday, April 21, 2020, Buck Island Reef and National Monument will reopen its areas to anchoring, mooring and use of beaches and trails. These areas were temporarily closed on March 23, in order to protect the health of the public visiting the park, and to assure consistency with USVI Governor Albert Bryan Jr's order for the closure of all territorial beaches

On March 21st, 2020, Governor Bryan ordered all non-essential businesses to cease in-person operations until April 6<sup>th</sup> and to require those employees to stay at home. Bars are ordered closed and restaurants are allowed to provide take out service only. On March 30<sup>th</sup>, Governor Bryan extended those closures through April 30<sup>th</sup>. However, on Friday April 18<sup>th</sup>, the Governor announced plans to reopen the Territory's beaches on April 20<sup>th</sup>, and the park is making similar steps on opening some of our recreational services beginning April 21<sup>th</sup>.

"I know that this pandemic has caused hardship and tension to our community at all levels, and I understand that everyone misses the enjoyment of our beautiful beaches," said Park Superintendent Gregory Camacho. "I really hope everyone can once again enjoy the treasures of our blissful resources and remain responsible."

Specifically, the following modifications to services and operations in order to comply with the Government of the Virgin Island's orders, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and NPS guidance:

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## **Buck Island Reef NM**

- Buck Island Reef NM will reopen to visitation on April 21, 2020. The Park Superintendent is authorizing park concessionaires to operate but has limited boating operations to a 10-person maximum, including captain and crew, until further notice
- Buck Island Reef National Monument waters will remain open to boating activities in open waters
- Anchoring and mooring permits will be accepted
- Comfort stations at Buck Island are opened for use
- Parties, BBQ's and large gatherings are prohibited
- No alcoholic beverages and/or containers are allowed
- Guided hikes and other on-site public or educational programs remain cancelled
- The park will not issue special visitor use or business permits
- Trash is not being collected. When visiting Buck Island bring garbage bags so you can take your trash with you. Pack it in, pack it out!
- Boaters must make other arrangements for trash disposal. Do not leave trash on shore
- Maintain social distancing of six (6) feet.
- Maintain distance between vessels. Vessels should not be tied or "rafted" together.

The NPS encourages people who choose to visit Buck Island Reef National Monument during this pandemic to continue to adhere to guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) and Territorial and local public health authorities to protect visitors and employees. As services are limited, the NPS urges visitors to continue to practice Leave No Trace principles, including pack-in and pack-out, to keep outdoor spaces safe and healthy. Please maintain social distancing of at least six (6) feet while on beaches and trail and on boats. If you are sick, or have symptoms of COVID-19, please stay home.

The following Current Closures and Advisements remain in effect:

### **Christiansted NHS:**

- Fort Christiansvaern, parking lot and visitor restrooms remain closed to the public until further notice.
- Eastern National Bookstore at Scale House remains closed until further notice.
- All park events and permits remain cancelled until further notice.
- Park administration buildings remain closed to the public; please call park staff at the number provided for assistance with activities or questions related to park operations.
- Information on any updates on closures will be provided through all media outlets and posted as necessary.

### **Salt River Bay NHP & EP:**

- SARI Visitor Contact station remains closed from damage caused by hurricane Irma/Maria

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We thank everyone for their understanding and patience during this period of uncertainty, and we appreciate your cooperation. For questions please contact Supervisory Park Ranger Gabriel Laurencin, 340-277-6863, or Park Superintendent Gregory Camacho, 340-773-1460 Ext 222. And check our website, [www.nps.gov/chri](http://www.nps.gov/chri), and Facebook, [www.facebook.com/ChristianstedNPS/](https://www.facebook.com/ChristianstedNPS/), for additional information and updates. Updates about NPS operations are posted on [www.nps.gov/coronavirus](http://www.nps.gov/coronavirus).

*About the National Park Service. More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 419 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Learn more at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov), and on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#).*

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