

Chapter 5

Application of NPS National Heritage Area Criteria





CRITERIA AND EVALUATION

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he National Park Service has developed 10 interim evaluation criteria that should be analyzed and documented in the feasibility study to demonstrate that the area qualifies as a national heritage area. The study team conducted an intensive review and provided documentation to address each of the listed criteria. As the sections below demonstrate, the potential St. Croix National Heritage Area meets each of the 10 interim evaluation criteria for designation, based on the National Park Service's "Draft National Heritage Area Feasibility Study Guidelines" (NPS 2003).

CRITERION 1:

An area has an assemblage of natural, historic, or cultural resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation, and continuing use. These resources are best managed through partnerships among public and private entities, and by combining diverse and sometimes noncontiguous resources and active communities.

St. Croix exhibits distinctive natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources that relate to the larger stories of American heritage. There is a rich collection of historic buildings and other cultural resources that illustrate a unique blending of European, American, and African heritage. St. Croix retains some of the best examples of historic structures

indicative of colonial life in the Caribbean, as well as archeological sites that represent an indigenous heritage that extends back as much as 4,000 years. St. Croix also has various natural areas that support a variety of terrestrial and marine ecosystems.

St. Croix has an extensive network of sites set aside to protect a variety of natural, historical, and cultural resources. This diverse heritage is currently managed by territorial and federal government entities, nonprofit organizations, foundations, and individuals that work together to preserve and interpret these resources to benefit the larger community and the American nation as a whole. These partnerships are well suited to the continued management and preservation of the distinct resources of St. Croix that relate to American heritage in the Caribbean.

The following provides a brief description of these protected sites, many of which are open to the public to learn about and experience the island's heritage. These protected sites and areas are important to the people of St. Croix, allowing them to pass on their natural, historical, and cultural heritage from one generation to the next. The study team has also assembled an inventory of sites (found in appendixes D and E) that were identified by the public as part of the St. Croix story; many of these sites are not open to the public or currently lack interpretation.



In Your Own Words: Apothecary Hall

"As a child, whenever I passed the Apothecary Hall or Merrill's Apothecary, I would close my eyes and hold my breath and even prayed.

This happened not only because the word, the name "apothecary" was totally foreign and unlike any other word I knew, but also because I was a Catholic child in a Catholic school and knew what "purgatory" was. And that was not a good place to walk carelessly. I imagined an arm would reach out, grab me and pull me inside to a place that precedes hell. To this day, the record of my mother purchasing medicines to give me when I contracted polio in 1945 are still there. This is cultural heritage that speaks to our attitudes, beliefs and values. This museum tells us who we were 75 years ago and what we used to cure our ills."

Olaf G. Hendricks, M.D



Natural, Cultural, Historic, and Scenic Resources

Apothecary Hall. The Apothecary Hall was restored by the St. Croix Landmarks Society and opened in 1996. This Danish colonial pharmacy is the only Danish pharmacy museum in the Western Hemisphere that exists in its original building. The pharmacy was located in this building from 1828 to 1970.

Buck Island Reef National Monument. The National Park Service manages Buck Island Reef National Monument. Buck Island Reef was established in 1961 to preserve "one of the finest marine gardens in the Caribbean Sea." The 176-acre island and surrounding coral reef ecosystem support a diversity of native flora and fauna, including several endangered and threatened species such as hawksbill turtles and brown pelicans. The elkhorn coral barrier reef that surrounds two-thirds of the island has extraordinary coral formations, deep grottoes, abundant reef fishes, sea fans, and gorgonians. The island also has exquisite white coral sand beaches. (NPS 2001.)

Christiansted National Historic Site. The National Park Service manages the Christiansted National Historic Site. The historic site consists of 7 acres centered on the Christiansted waterfront/wharf area. On the grounds are five historic structures — Fort Christiansvaern (1738), the Danish West India & Guinea Company Warehouse (1749), the Steeple Building (1753), the Danish Custom House (1844), and the Scale House (1856). The National Park Service uses these resources to interpret the drama and diversity of the human experience at Christiansted during Danish sovereignty — colonial administration, the military and naval establishment, international trade (including the slave trade), religious diversity, architecture, trades, and crime and punishment (NPS 2010). The Christiansted National Historic Site is part of the Christiansted National Historic District.





Christiansted National Historic District. Founded on the site of an earlier French settlement, Christiansted was laid out in a grid pattern with two market places. The Christiansted Historic District, which includes the Christiansted National Historic Site, illustrates a continuation of building activity since the Danish colonial era. Christiansted was laid out by Frederick Moth, later the first Danish governor of St. Croix. Moth planned streets, subdivided the town, built an eastern fort for protection, and established a series of building restrictions and codes. (National Register 2010.)

Estate Little Princess. The Nature Conservancy manages Estate Little Princess, established in 1749 as a sugar plantation. The property is now a 25-acre preserve and home to the Conservancy's headquarters for the Virgin Islands and Eastern Caribbean. This property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, the estate serves as a demonstration site, showcasing innovative green technologies such as gray water reuse, solar power, solar water heating, and constructed wetlands that are used for sewage treatment. The conservancy also manages other preserves on the island, including Herman Hill, Jack and Isaacs Bays, Long Point, and Estate Montpellier.

Estate Mt. Washington. This former sugar estate was discovered buried in the forest in 1984 by the property owners. The property, including gardens and ruins, has since been restored. The plantation greathouse is considered one of the most beautiful restorations on the island. The property around the building is a designated bird sanctuary. (Tyson, Buckingham, and Cissel n.d.)

In Your Own Words: Estate Mt. Washington

"My favorite place to take visitors and folks new to St. Croix is Estate Mt. Washington near Frederiksted. I am very grateful to the owners, the Ayers Family, for allowing visitors to come on their private property and enjoy the way they have restored it and preserved as much of it as possible. They even provide an information sheet about the history of the estate. The most interesting thing to me on the site is the (reconstructed, I think) cockpit mill where you can easily see one of the early ways that the cane was crushed. This is a gem in the crown of our beloved St. Croix."

Jayne Edwards



Page 82:
Fort
Christiansvaern.
NPS Photo.

Far Left:
Estate Whim.
NPS photo.

Left:
Fort Frederik.
NPS photo.



*In Your Own Words: Frederiksted Town
"Freedom City"*

*"I love Frederiksted. This charming and historic town is so full of promise, and I have to be a part of it. It's the ringing church bells in the morning. It's the locals flocking to beaches on Sunday afternoon. It's the children fishing off Frederiksted Pier. It's a quiet drive through the rainforest. It's saying "hello" and "good morning" to passersby. It's the quiet and the stillness of time. It's the stunning sunsets and front row seat to the Caribbean Sea. This is Frederiksted.
My home."*

Aesha Duval

"[T]he home of Abraham Markoe, Queen Mary, General Budhoe, Alexander Farrelly, Horace Clarke and many more men, and women who changed the island and the world. The place where slaves demanded their freedom and where sugar and rum built warehouses and townhomes of extraordinary character that still stand. Frederiksted has beautiful buildings that can serve as guesthouses/where we celebrate our music/our dance - St Gerard's Hall Friday night Quadrille/Sunset Jazz and Crucian Christmas Festival. Frederiksted is the birthplace of my father, his parents and grandparents. Crucian culture and tradition has been preserved and developed in Frederiksted!"

Franelle Gerard, ED



Estate Thomas Experimental Forest. The International Institute for Tropical Forestry, a division of the U.S. Forest Service, manages the Estate Thomas Experimental Forest on St. Croix. This 148-acre forest is in an urban green space in the most densely populated part of the island. The institute manages the area with an integrated approach that includes school education programs, field demonstrations, interpretation, and outdoor recreation, while also maintaining an emphasis on tropical forestry research. Both residents and visitors to St. Croix benefit from these innovative efforts to integrate research, recreation, and environmental education.

Estate Whim Plantation Museum. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Estate Whim was one of the most prosperous sugar plantations of the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. Records dating back to 1751 give the original owner as Patrick Donough. Christopher Mac Evoy, Jr., a Danish sugar planter who inherited the plantation from his Scottish father, enlarged the estate with the Whim Greathouse in 1794. After changing hands several times, Whim became the property of the Virgin Islands Government and is operated as a museum by the St. Croix Landmarks Society. The Whim Greathouse and adjacent structures stand as a superb example of Danish neo-classicism as adapted for use in the West Indies. The site of an old slave quarters lies just north of the T-shaped complex, and a working windmill stands as a monument to a vanished era of Caribbean history. (National Register 2010.)

Fort Frederik. A national historic landmark, Fort Frederik was built in the 1750s. In 1776, the first salute from foreign soil to the new nation of the United States of America was fired from the fort. It is from this fort that Governor Peter von Scholten emancipated the slaves on July 3rd, 1848. The fort now includes a museum and art gallery and is surrounded by a park that includes a bust of slave rebellion leader Buddhoe and a statue of a freedom fighter blowing a conch shell signalling emancipation. (Tyson, Buckingham, and Cissel n.d.)

Frederiksted National Historic District. The Frederiksted National Historic District, which includes Fort Frederik and the Customs House, is comprised of a collection of architectural styles (Danish Military, Neo-Classical, late Victorian, English gothic Revival, and Georgian). These many styles help tell the important stories of this town. The town was laid out by Jens M. Beck in 1751, and it is an important example of Danish town planning and settlement. Construction was controlled by a 1747 building code, which resulted in the low hipped roofs, masonry structures, and many arcaded walkways. (National Register 2010.)



In Your Own Words: Religious Toleration

Friedensthal and Other Missions. The Moravians arrived in St. Croix in 1734, and by the 1800s they had established two flourishing missions, one of which was Friedensthal (Valley of Peace) Mission. This mission served as an important center in Governor Peter Von Scholten's plans to educate St. Croix's slave population. Friederich Mott, founder of the Moravian mission in the Danish West Indies, intended the missions to be as self-sufficient as possible. By the 18th century, with a strong move to abolish slavery afoot in the Danish West Indies, the Moravian missions prepared the slaves for self-sufficiency by teaching them manual skills and religion. The parish house dates from 1830, and the present church building dates from 1852. (National Register 2010.)

Government House. Located in Christiansted, this building is an outstanding example of Danish colonial architecture and the sugar plantation era. Government House is in the Christiansted National Historic District. This building is one of the largest governor's residences in the Lesser Antilles. Inside are reproductions of the original furniture. These furnishings were a gift from the Danish government, who took the originals with them when they left in 1917. In 1871 the capital of the Danish West Indies was moved to Charlotte Amalie; however, Government House continued to serve as a government building and today it is the focal point of many government social and cultural events. The building was originally the site of a Danish merchant's home. This home was purchased and merged with another house to form the present government house. (Virgin Islands Vacation Guide and Community 2010.)

Green Cay National Wildlife Refuge. Green Cay was established in 1977 to protect a 14-acre island directly off the north coast of St. Croix. The refuge, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is designated to protect one of only two remaining natural populations of the endangered St. Croix ground lizard, which became extinct on the main island because of the introduction of the Indian mongoose. The island consists of dry, forested areas with cactus scrub and small rocky beaches. More than 30,000 conch shells buried under volcanic rock tell of almost 1,000 years of human occupancy, dating back as early as AD 1020.

"Religious toleration is one of the least recognized of Denmark's legacies on St. Croix. In 1734, when Denmark began its colonization of the island after its purchase from France, the Danish State Church (Lutheran) and the Dutch Reformed Church were the only two legally permitted denominations. Already, in 1732, Moravian (United Brethren) missionaries had first journeyed to St. Thomas to convert the African slaves, and were persecuted for undermining the established order. The settlement of St. Croix, however, would usher in many changes. In a futile attempt to deprive traditional enemies of another opportunity to extend their influence and power, the French stipulated that only Danes could settle on St. Croix. Efforts to encourage Danes to become farmers on their new possession were unsuccessful, so Danish colonial authorities had to cast a blind eye to the steady influx of planters and merchants—many wealthy and socially prominent—from neighboring Dutch and English islands. The Danes soon found themselves the minority in an ethnically diverse white population. In order to placate cultural sensitivities based on national origin, the Danish Crown proclaimed a remarkable degree of religious toleration in "the Danish Islands in America" in the mid-1750s. Within varying degrees of freedom, Moravian (United Brethren), Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Presbyterian congregations soon joined the Lutherans and Dutch Reformed, and remain active to this day. Although officially ignored, there was a Sephardic Jewish congregation in Christiansted in the 1760s. Today, St. Croix offers a wide variety of religious communities, including a Reformed synagogue, and a mosque for the island's Muslims. The architecture of historic churches often reflect the national origins of their respective denominations, and their furnishings bear loving witness to a commitment of faith by many generations. Whatever your preference, come worship with us and feel the spirit!"

William F. Cissel





In Your Own Words: Government House

"The most famous, impressive, meaningful and highly utilized building on St. Croix. This majestic building, in a sense, recapitulates Marie Antoinette's "let them eat cake" when compared to its fellow structures in downtown Christiansted. It has witnessed our emancipation; our Fireburn; and our political, social and economic transformations. It housed Danish, U.S. and Virgin Islands governors. It has accommodated the Municipal Council, various government offices and municipal and federal courts. It, along with the three forts, provide some of the most unique architectural styles under the U.S. flag. I am especially proud of the fact [that] my ancestors, the Sobotkers, owned what is now the West Wing on Queen Cross Street. It's also a pleasure when visitors from all over the globe, including St. Thomas, marvel at the beauty, formality and scale of the structure."

Olaf G. Hendricks, M.D.



Lawaetz Family Museum Estate at Little La Grange. Owned by the Lawaetz family since 1896, this West Indian greathouse museum contains old furnishings and heirlooms, providing a view of colonial life in the Danish West Indies in the early 1900s. The estate dates back to 1776. The property also features fruit and flower gardens.

Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve / Columbus Landing Site. Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve was established in 1992 to protect prehistoric and Colonial Era archeological sites and ruins within a dynamic, tropical ecosystem. The area also contains the Columbus Landing Site National Historic Landmark. The National Park Service and government of the U.S. Virgin Islands jointly manage this 1,015-acre park. The area protects some of the largest remaining mangrove forests in the Virgin Islands, as well as coral reefs and a deep undersea canyon (NOAA 2005).

This Salt River Bay site is the only known place where members of Columbus's expedition set foot on what is now U.S. territory, and it was the site of the first armed clash between Europeans and Amerindians. The area around the Salt River contains the remains of some 1500 years of Saladoid, Ostinoid, Taino, and probably Carib occupation. During the Taino occupation, the area served as the seat of a chiefdom, which contained an important religious structure and a ball and dance court. More than 100 years of archeological investigations have demonstrated that the Salt River area was the focus of the most extensive and intensive prehistoric occupation in the U.S. Virgin Islands. (National Register 2010.)

Sandy Point National Wildlife Refuge. Managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Sandy Point was established in 1984 to protect 2 miles of continuous sandy beach on the southwest end of St. Croix. The refuge's combination of sandy beach, near-shore deep water access, and lack of fringing reefs provide ideal conditions and nesting habitat for leatherback sea turtles. Inland, coastal woodlands and mangrove-fringed salt ponds provide habitat for a variety of migratory and tropical birds. Conch middens found in this 360-acre refuge, remind visitors of Sandy Point's important archeological history. The Aklis site, dating back to AD 400, is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Southgate Coastal Reserve. The St. Croix Environmental Association is responsible for managing the Southgate Coastal Reserve, located 3 miles east of Christiansted. The reserve totals 100 acres and encompasses a coastal salt pond, mangrove forest, beach, forest, and upland grassland. The pond and surrounding wetlands provide habitat for many resident and migrant birds, including several species classified as threatened or endangered. Three rare species of sea turtles also nest on the beach. The reserve has carefully



assessed the site's habitats and community support for development of the site for bird-watching, education, and recreational activities. The reserve also manages Estate Barren Spot and the beachfront of Estate Prosperity.

St. Croix Archeology Museum. Located in Christiansted, this small museum is operated by the St. Croix Archeological Society and the building's owner. The museum displays and interprets pre-Columbian artifacts found on St. Croix.

St. Croix East End Marine Park. The U.S. Virgin Islands, Department of Planning and Natural Resources, manages the St. Croix East End Marine Park, which encompasses about 60 square miles on the eastern end of St. Croix. The park is designated to protect and manage the natural and cultural resources of this area, extending from the high-tide line to 3 miles offshore (TNC 2002). The Department of Planning and Natural Resources also manages other protected areas on the island, including properties at Caledonia Gut, Creque Dam, Estate Great Pond, Long Point, Cotton Garden, Salt River Bay, and Spring Garden. (U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources 2005.)

St. George Village Botanical Garden / Estate St. George National Historic District. St. George Village Botanical Garden is on a 16-acre site just off the Queen Mary Highway. The botanical collections, including more than 1,500 native and exotic species and varieties, are in the Estate St. George National Historic District. The historic district represents a successful, late 18th-century sugar plantation. Owned by the Heyliger family during the era known as the "Golden Age of Sugar" (1770 to 1782), the estate continued to process sugar until 1916. After the closing of the largest sugar concern, Bethlehem Sugar Central in 1930, the estate became a cattle ranch. Currently used as a botanical park, the district includes factory ruins, a blacksmith shop, a two-story overseer's house, an early 19th-century slave/worker village, a lime kiln, cemetery, and a water system with wells and an aqueduct. (National Register 2010.)

Slob Historic District. The Slob Historic District began as a large sugar plantation in the mid-18th century. Owned by the Bodkin family until 1784, the estate boasted a factory building, a water mill tower, a greathouse constructed c.1750, and a slave village. Following the slave emancipation in 1848, the fortunes of the estate declined, and much of the rich land became grazing land for sheep and cattle. In 1878 workers agitated by the low wages permitted under a new labor law rioted and burned the plantation. Today, visitors can see the greathouse which has survived, although with some alterations. The district also includes five late-18th century and two early 19th century slave cottages in the slave village—the birthplace of Cyril King, the island's first native-born governor. Also surviving are the stables and a 1840s factory building.



In Your Own Words: Sandy Point

"Sandy Point National Wildlife Refuge is significant culturally, historically, and naturally. Culturally and historically Sandy Point National Wildlife Refuge is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Conch middens, bleached and hardened over thousands of years, remind us of an important part of Sandy Point's archeological history. The Akkis Site, dating back to 400 AD and occupied for 200 years, is on the National Register of Historical Places. Sandy Point is also significant because of the natural and marine resources. The Sandy Point National Wildlife Refuge is one of only 13 known significant leatherback turtle nesting sites worldwide. I have lots of personal recollection and experiences at Sandy Point."

Olasee Davis





In Your Own Words: The Von Scholten Schools

"The Von Scholten Schools in the former Danish West Indies are important landmarks in public education and the special history of the people of the Virgin Islands. They mark the establishment of the first, compulsory, free educational system for enslaved and free children in the New World.

Colonization ran up against the precepts of the Enlightenment sweeping Europe in the 18th and 19th century, which cast the role of government as one of responsible, even sacred, regard for the welfare and salvation of the people in their charge at home and abroad. Even though the Danish Government sold investors on the idea of slave-based profits, the obligations of duty led them to plan for the eventual and certain emancipation of the workers. The ill-planned emancipation in 1833 in the English Territories prompted Denmark to prepare for an orderly transition to freedom, which involved universal education.

In the 1830s King Frederik VI and his family personally planned and approved all the details of the program: the curriculum and teachers (the German Moravian missionaries), the language of instruction (English) and the design and architect for the schools [that] were to be on all the islands in the territory.

Their design was of the highest order in the Neo-classical style promoted by the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen. The "Hellenic" style referenced the democratic aspirations of the Enlightenment modeled after Greece and Rome and came to embody through its beauty and harmony the Enlightenment itself.

Some of these von Scholten Schools continued through the transfer of the territory from Denmark to the United States (1917), continuing as schools up until the 1960s with one on St. Croix still in use as a school today. In building the schools, the enslaved craftsmen were able to secure their freedom before emancipation, which occurred in 1848 some eight years after the start of the Von Scholten Schools.

The "Danish School" in Frederiksted was, and is now again, a sumptuously beautiful structure. This Palladian gem, specifically chosen by the King to be converted into a school, was intended to inspire its users by harmonious elements [and] to instill pride, dignity and seriousness of purpose.

The King and Royal Household monitored the work of the school.

I was able to interview some of its students, there in the 1960s, who felt special in being able to attend school there.

The recent restoration of the Von Scholten "Danish School" in Frederiksted, St. Croix was awarded the National Preservation Honor Award, the highest such award of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

History is very immediate here on St. Croix with 18th and 19th century buildings such a large part of daily life. Historic buildings remind people who they are, where they're from and are anchors for the future."

William Taylor, AIA





Von Scholten Schools. Between 1827 and 1848, Governor General of the Danish West Indies, Peter von Scholten, established eight schools on St. Croix. The schools were to prepare enslaved children for their eventual freedom. Diamond School, La Grande Princesse School, Peter's Rest School, and Kingshill School are used as educational or community centers. The ruins of Mt. Victory School can be seen from the Creque Creek Dam road. La Grande Princesse School and the Diamond School are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Other Private Preserves. There are numerous nonprofit organizations and individuals dedicated to preserving the island's rich natural heritage by acquiring properties and carefully managing them for the long-term preservation of their resources. For example, the St. Croix Landmarks Society has obtained a number of properties, including Estate Clairmont, Davis Bay, Estate Butler Bay, and Estate Little La Grange. The society is managing a portion of Butler Bay as a nature preserve, which includes almost a mile of waterfront, a 60-foot waterfall, and a rainforest. (U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources 2005.)

Based on the supporting information described above, the study team concluded that St. Croix meets this criterion.

CRITERION 2:

Reflects traditions, customs, beliefs, and folklife that are a valuable part of the national story.

The distinctive mix of traditions, customs, beliefs, and folklife of St. Croix reflect a long history of migration to the island. The island's first inhabitants are believed to have come from South and Central America. The later

Colonial Era brought Europeans and slaves taken from West Africa. Much later, Puerto Ricans from the island of Vieques came to St. Croix in search of agricultural jobs and a new home after U.S. military forced them to leave their homeland. This unique diversity of cultural traditions can be experienced through the island's traditional music, dance, food, and cultural events.

Since Columbus's first contact with St. Croix and its Amerindian inhabitants, seven flags have flown over the island. Before becoming part of the United States, Spain, Holland, France, England, the Knights of Malta, and Denmark have all claimed control of St. Croix. With each of these shifts in colonial occupation, new traditions grew out of ongoing interactions between Europeans, Amerindians, and Africans. These cultural traditions contribute to the stories of encounters, conflicts, and colonial beginnings.

Africans, who were brought to St. Croix to provide slave labor for the European colonies, showed their resilience and resourcefulness in the face of great adversity. As Africans and their descendants adapted and survived the harsh conditions of enslavement and discrimination, they contributed to the economic, social, and cultural development of St. Croix. Slavery was abolished on St. Croix in 1848 after a series of slave revolts, 15 years before the Emancipation Proclamation in the United States. Today, African heritage is found throughout the rich traditions, customs, beliefs, and folklife of the Crucian people.

The vibrant traditions, customs, beliefs, and folklife of St. Croix contribute to and expand the national stories of migration, colonial beginnings, and slavery and emancipation. Many of these cultural traditions are described below.



Local fruits.
Photo credit:
Nate Olive.



Local Foods. The cuisine of St. Croix brings together Amerindian, African, East Indian, and European cooking styles infused with tropical ingredients. The union of flavors, ingredients, and methods has forged a rich and vibrant contemporary cuisine that tells the stories of the island's history and natural environment.

The island's first inhabitants brought manioc seeds (also known as cassava, yucca, or tapioca) from South America to St. Croix, where they successfully cultivated this dietary staple. They also cultivated pumpkin, sweet potato, pineapple, and papaya. They used native seafood and spices, including red snapper, kingfish, snails, lobster, conch, crab, and squid. Contemporary foods such as sweet cassava bread trace their origins back to the island's first inhabitants (Bareuther 1994). One can see a griddle stone used to make cassava bread at the St. Croix Archeology Museum.

Much of St. Croix's cuisine can be traced to West Africa and the culinary resourcefulness of Africans living in slavery. The cuisine was limited by the meager rations, what they were able to grow in small gardens, and the native fruits and wild herbs they were able to collect. Their dietary staples included salted meats and fish, cassava, yam, potato, orange, wild plum, corn, cornmeal, and bacon. Despite the limitations, Africans living in slavery developed rich hearty soups, including maufe and kallaloo, and contemporary favorites such as fungi and salt fish. The Heritage Gardens at St. George Village Botanic Garden feature collections of plants that have been historically used in the Caribbean to supply basic human needs. (St. George Village Botanic Garden 2009.)

Other influences can be traced to the seven nations that once colonized St. Croix, in addition to the influence of other Caribbean islands. The Puerto Rican population living



Traditional music and dance.
Photo credit:
Nate Olive.

on the island has introduced dishes that may have distant links to Spain, such as sofrito. Popular East Indian foods like curry are also part of the local cuisine.

The island is home to Castle Nugent Farm, which is believed to be the largest and oldest ongoing cattle ranch in the West Indies. St. Croix is known for its red Senepol cattle, a cross of the African N'Dama (first brought to the island on slave ships) and English Red Poll cattle. Much of the beef is sold on the island and has influenced the local cuisine. Other agricultural products produced on the island are featured at roadside stands, the farmers market, and the Agricultural Experiment Station.

The events and festivals of St. Croix are a good opportunity to sample local foods. The

popular four-day Agricultural and Food Fair features foods such as kallaloo, roast goat, roast pork, maubi, benye, paté, crab and rice, and pumpkin fritters, in addition to candies and preserves like dundesla and gooseberry.

Music and Dance. Scratch music and quelbe songs date back to the days of slavery when the instruments were made from found objects and the lyrics communicated local news. St. Croix is known for its contemporary scratch bands that use new instrumentation such as the ukulele banjo, a conga drum played with a stick, squash, tailpipe, and the steel triangle. The traditional music has also been expanded to include other styles, such as calypso, pop music, and meringues. The music of scratch bands can be heard at festivals, local dances and fairs, church services, and on the radio.

In Your Own Words: Furniture Making



"Among the many unique aspects to St. Croix in the USVI is the very old tradition of the craft of furniture making. The West Indian style in antique furniture is well known, but St. Croix has its own distinct and robust presence within that style.

*Not only did St. Croix provide much of the timber, through export, that went into the finest furniture the world has ever known from the 18th Century Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore craftsmen, but St. Croix also found itself at the same time the focal point of African, English and Danish influences and skills. Combined with an abundant supply of native woods like mahogany (*Swietenia mahagoni*) or satinwood (*Zanthoxylum flavum* -- now nearly extinct on St. Croix) and the wealth that surrounded the early sugar trade, this confluence of tastes, talents, materials and money blossomed into a woodworking tradition that draws craftsmen, collectors and historians from all over the world to this very day.*

As a craftsman and scholar of West Indian furniture I have had wonderful opportunities to work with the Lawaetz Museum and Whim Museum. I have restored many pieces for both. Through the Lawaetz Museum I met Ib and Greta Strange who visited St. Croix from Denmark. Ib was a classically trained woodworker who first came to see the island out of historical interest.

He saw the Lawaetz Museum and its furniture, and within a year he booked a return trip with his family and set about donating his expertise and talents working to restore the museum collection and teaching me much in the bargain. In fact, Ib passed away on the Frederiksted beach while watching the sunset with his wife after a day of fine woodworking. He is just one example of the many people who cherish St. Croix for its heritage, its traditions and its diversity and who commit with single-minded determination to preserve them."

Richard K. Starr

St. Croix takes great pride in cariso songs, which employ African melodic styles and were used traditionally to communicate local news and opinions and to tell local history. The call-and-response music is often performed by groups of women. The performances can be seen at educational and holiday events. Other folk traditions that can also be experienced on St. Croix include the songs and dance of the African-style bamboula and the dramatic tea meetings and masquerade jigs that likely came to the island from other Caribbean islands.

The St. Croix Heritage Dancers led by Bradley Christian perform traditional Virgin Island folk dances such as the quadrille. St. Croix has maintained quadrille folk dance. Quadrille dance performances can be seen at St. Gerard's Hall, at festivals, on holidays, and at schools.

Contemporary music and dance on St. Croix are alive with calypso, meringue, jazz, salsa, pop music, and reggae.

Architecture, Urban Design, and Place Names. The history of St. Croix is evident in patterns of development, the architecture of the structures, and the stories of the people who lived in them. Many of these structures are still in use, although the type of use has changed over time.

The influence of the Danish lives on in the architecture, urban design, and place names. St. Croix continues to use the estates (old plantation names) to identify neighborhoods and areas of the islands. The Danish designed the Frederiksted and Christiansted street grids, street widths, and setbacks that are still visible today. The design of these urban centers reflects trends in 18th-century Danish urban planning and architectural design that grew out of the Italian Renaissance and Baroque traditions of the late 15th through 17th centuries. Fort Christiansvaern and Fort Frederik are outstanding examples of Danish fortifications, but also tell the story of the slave trade. Other examples include the Von Scholten Schools scattered throughout the island and the Christiansted Government House. The two- and three-story townhouses and the two-story shop-residences lining the streets of Christiansted were used as warehouses and businesses with residences above. Today, these buildings house restaurants or shops with offices above.

The wood frame folk cottages on the outskirts of Christiansted and Frederiksted formerly housed free people of color and emancipated slaves. These one- to two-story



clustered structures opening to communal courtyards had their origins in both Africa and Europe. (Jackson 2008.)

A complete list of sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places can be found in appendix C.

Folk Medicine and Beliefs. The practice of herbal medicine by West Indian Weed Women developed among African slaves during the plantation era. This tradition continues on in modern-day St. Croix, although Weed Women are sometimes identified as herbalists or bush doctors. A St. Croix Weed Woman collects, prepares, sells, and prescribes the use of medicinal plant remedies. Medicinal plants are collected from gardens, fields, and woods upon a client’s request. Medicinal plants are commonly administered in teas and used for healing baths. Weed Women commonly provide the patient with the plant species and the part of plant used, in addition to detailed directions on preparation and dosages. Much of the knowledge that has been handed down from generation to generation is being lost. The Medicinal Herb Garden at St. George Village Botanic Garden features more than 50 medicinal plants used by St. Croix Weed Women. (Morris and Oakes 1958, St. George Village Botanic Garden 2009.)

Art and Handicrafts. The people of St. Croix make instruments, masks, headdresses, baskets, mahogany furniture, rugs, chair caning, and needlework in the island’s craft traditions. The popularity of these craft traditions is fading, and it is difficult to locate handmade, locally produced traditional handicrafts for sale on the island. However, the handmade traditional instruments and masks can often be seen at the Island’s many cultural events. Contemporary handicrafts produced on the island include jewelry, hats, clothing, and bowls.



Folk medicine.
Photo credit:
Nate Olive.



In Your Own Words: Folk Medicine

"From the smell of balsam or lemongrass tea in the morning, to a cup of soursap tea to put you to sleep, the children of St. Croix have fond memories of "bush tea" and the grandmas that used to serve them to make life just a little bit better. As adults, we still look for painkiller bush to ease that back pain or drink some kind of aloe based drink to help clear the cold off the chest. We are closer to our environment than our modern trappings would indicate and along with doctor's prescriptions and sometimes in lieu of them, we seek the comfort of nature's medicine chest."

Monique Clendiner-Watson





Cultural Events. St. Croix observes U.S. and territorial holidays in addition to countless other cultural events during the year. Celebrations are known to start a day or two before and extend a day beyond a given holiday. The multitude of cultural events reflects the island's many cultural influences and festive spirit. The following is a list of some of the many holidays, parades, festivals, and cultural events and activities that take place on St. Croix.

The territorial holidays observed on St. Croix include Virgin Islands/Puerto Rico Friendship Day, David Hamilton Jackson Memorial Day, Emancipation Day, and Virgin Islands Transfer Day. The Virgin Islands/Puerto Rico Friendship Day celebrates the connections to Puerto Rico resulting from large waves of migration during the 1930s to 1950s. The holiday is celebrated throughout the island with Hispanic and Virgin Island culture, music, dance, crafts, and foods. The Eastern Caribbean Friendship Week is also celebrated on the island. Transfer Day marks the transfer of St. Croix from the Danish to the United States. Transfer Day ceremonies are performed at the Lawaetz Family Museum at Little La Grange. Emancipation Day commemorates the day that about 30,000 enslaved Africans, led by Moses Gottlieb and Admiral Martin King, marched into Frederiksted to successfully demand their freedom. The holiday is celebrated throughout the island with a tea party, music, dance, old-time tea meetings, reenactments, donkey races, and food.

The parades held during Crucian Christmas Festival, Three King's Day, St. Patrick's Day, and Mardi Croix continue the tradition of masquerading, where men and women dress up in assorted costumes and move about town with musical accompaniment.

The Crucian Christmas Festival is celebrated from late December to early January. The festival brings together the people of St. Croix with contests, music, food, dance, parades, mocko jumbie performers, and donkey rides. The five-day Virgin Island's Agricultural and Food Fair festival on St. Croix showcases agricultural products, livestock, foods, dance, and music of the islands.

Other festivals include Jump-up (a nighttime festival held in Christiansted) and Sunset Jazz (a monthly event held on the Frederiksted waterfront).

Other events and cultural activities identified by the people of St. Croix as being significant to their heritage include open air church meetings, funeral traditions, and conch shell blowing.

Based on the supporting information described above, the study team concluded that St. Croix meets this criterion.

CRITERION 3:

Provides outstanding opportunities to conserve natural, cultural, historic, and/or scenic features.

St. Croix provides outstanding opportunities to conserve, natural, cultural, historic, and scenic features that are fundamental to the island's heritage. Many of these features are in an extensive network of publicly and privately managed areas. These areas are described in detail in criterion 1 and include terrestrial and marine reserves, colonial sugar plantations and mills, sustainable farms, and historic buildings and forts. There are also efforts to conserve the less tangible features of St. Croix's heritage, such as preserving and promoting local festivals and events.



Although current efforts to conserve these features of St. Croix's heritage are substantial, oftentimes resources, funding, and coordination are limited to adequately conserve these resources for the future. A heritage area designation could enhance these and other types of public outreach efforts to improve the conservation of the island's heritage resources. This could be accomplished by improving planning, communication, and coordination between groups with similar efforts, and by providing a more effective framework for developing partnerships between various levels of government and the private sector. In turn, these partnerships would be able to more effectively develop new programs designed to conserve heritage resources of the island.

The following describes a few organizations on the island that are working to conserve natural, cultural, historic, and/or scenic resources on St. Croix. There is also a wide range of local business on the island that are tied to nature-based tourism, such as charter boat operators who offer snorkeling, diving, and fishing trips. These types of businesses provide visitors with a variety of first-hand opportunities to experience the island's diverse heritage resources. Furthermore, many of the agencies and organizations described in criterion 1 that manage protected sites and areas on St. Croix also provide various conservation activities in those areas.

Caribbean Museum Center for the Arts (CMCArts, Inc.). Located in a historic building on the Frederiksted waterfront, CMCArts, Inc. was founded in 1994 to: collect, preserve, and exhibit the visual arts of the Caribbean community; provide an interactive environment that encourages children, youth and adults to explore and learn positive forms of expression; and offer

creative learning experiences that foster an understanding of the rich cultural and artistic traditions of the Caribbean.

Crucian Alliance for the Safeguarding of our Heritage and Ancestry.

This alliance was founded to identify, safeguard, protect, retain, and promote all political, cultural, legal, and demographic documents that rightfully belong to the people of St. Croix because these are the foundations of our definition as a people.

Crucian Heritage and Nature Tourism (CHANT).

CHANT is a nonpolitical, community based coalition committed to the advancement of Crucian heritage and nature tourism as a vehicle for sustainable community development on St. Croix. This group works with tourism providers and other public interest groups on the island to promote heritage and nature tourism and to support the expansion of resources and infrastructure that will benefit all members of the tourism industry.

Farmers in Action. Farmers in Action is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the redevelopment of a viable agricultural industry on St. Croix. Farmers in Action is also working to refurbish the site of the Bethlehem sugar factory.

Our Town Frederiksted. Our Town Frederiksted is dedicated to the promotion of the revitalization of the Frederiksted Historic District's economic, social, and physical structure. The historic district of the town of Frederiksted is one that is very important to the U.S. Virgin Islands. The organization is dedicated to maintaining the unique culture and heritage of Frederiksted.



St. Croix Environmental Association.

This association is a nonprofit, grassroots organization with a mission to promote the conservation of natural resources, provide education, and advocate for environmentally responsible actions that benefit St. Croix. The organization provides innovative environmental education programs for children and adults that promote a healthy and sustainable environment on the island. The association is a member of the Virgin Island Conservation Society, which in turn is an affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation.

St. Croix Life Environmental Arts Project (LEAP). Located in the forested area north of Frederiksted, LEAP harvests wood from fallen trees (island mahogany, tibet, and saman) to create furniture and other artisan crafted products.

St. Croix Landmarks Society. The St. Croix Landmarks Society is a nonprofit organization with a mission to advance the understanding and appreciation of the unique historical and cultural legacy of St. Croix through preservation, research, and education. The society was instrumental in developing the St. Croix Heritage Trail, in partnership with the Virgin Islands Department of Tourism. The heritage trail is a driving tour that traverses the entire 28-mile length of St. Croix, linking the historic towns of Frederiksted and Christiansted with the fertile central plain, the mountainous north, and the arid east end of the island. The route offers a cross section of the island's history, culture, landscapes, and outdoor activities. The organization also manages several historic estates and a nature preserve. In addition, the organization has an extensive library and archives and educational outreach program.

St. Croix United for Community, Culture, Environment, and Economic Development (SUCCEED). SUCCEED is a local umbrella organization that assists with strategic

planning and partnership building. The organization represents a coalition of the following heritage-based organizations on St. Croix:

- CHANT
- History, Culture, and Tradition Foundation
- Missionaries of the Soil
- The Nature Conservancy
- Per Ankh Institute
- St. Croix Environmental Association
- U.S. Virgin Islands Coalition for Sustainable Economic Development

Virgin Islands Council on the Arts. The Council's mission is to enrich the cultural life of the Virgin Islanders through leadership that preserves, supports, and strengthens excellence in the arts.

Virgin Islands Farmer's Cooperative. The mission of the Virgin Island's Farmer's Cooperative is to assist member farmers in the production and marketing of locally grown fresh produce. The produce of the members (meats, fruits, vegetables and herbs, etc.) helps satisfy the demand for locally grown fresh produce in the territory.

Virgin Islands Humanities Council. The Virgin Islands Humanities Council provides opportunities for the diverse population of the Virgin Islanders to participate in humanities programs that promote a love of learning, encourage dialogue, enhance understanding, and broaden people's judgment.

Virgin Islands Sustainable Farm Institute. The mission of this institute is to provide a working educational farm enterprise that integrates sustainability in education, environment, and community through quality instruction in agro-ecology and related fields. Located on more than 100 acres in the lush highlands of St. Croix, the institute provides



experiential learning, outdoor lectures, field laboratories, personal and group research projects, leadership development, and local environmental awareness.

These are just a few of the many organizations working to conserve St. Croix's heritage resources.

Based on the supporting information described above, the study team concluded that St. Croix meets this criterion.

CRITERION 4:

Provides outstanding recreational and educational opportunities.

St. Croix provides a wide range of outstanding recreational and educational opportunities for island residents and visitors to experience and appreciate the remarkable heritage of the Crucian people. These opportunities, which include snorkeling at coral reefs to touring colonial sugar plantations to attending a Crucian festival, are described in detail in criteria 1 and 2. Each opportunity allows visitors to engage in a distinct aspect of the island's heritage and become more closely connected to the island's culture.

St. Croix's extensive network of protected natural areas provides opportunities for the public to learn about and experience firsthand the island's ecological diversity. These areas include various inland, coastal, and marine protected areas that preserve tropical rainforests, coastal woodlands, sandy beaches, coral reefs, off-shore islands, mangrove swamps, and various other unique Caribbean island environments. Outdoor recreational opportunities include both adventurous and leisurely pursuits, such as diving, snorkeling, fishing, swimming, hiking, biking, and driving and walking tours. Many local agencies, organizations, and private businesses integrate educational components into their tours and programs, providing opportunities for

the public to gain a deeper appreciation for St. Croix's natural environment and how it influenced the history of the island and its people.

St. Croix's heritage is equally rooted in its long-lasting agricultural traditions, and today small family farms, orchards, and cattle ranches are prevalent throughout the island. A variety of opportunities exist for visitors to learn about local farming practices and customs, such as the annual Agricultural and Food Fair — a four-day festival of locally produced agricultural products, livestock, arts, crafts, and native cuisine. The Virgin Islands Sustainable Farm Institute is also on the island, which underscores the value of agriculture to the Crucian people. The institute is a working educational farm enterprise that promotes the development of agro-ecology, an innovative field that combines agricultural productivity with resource conservation by using ecological and local management techniques.

The island once boasted more than 200 active sugar plantations during colonial times. Many of these plantation ruins are on private estates that offer recreational and educational opportunities for the public. The most visited of these is the Whim Estate, a restored plantation with a Danish greathouse and windmill for grinding sugar cane. This estate is managed by the St. Croix Landmarks Society. This local organization also manages Estate Butler Bay as a nature preserve, Estate Mount Washington as a bird sanctuary, and a number of other plantation ruins on the island. Estate Little Princess is another example. Estate Little Princess is now managed by The Nature Conservancy as a preserve and demonstration site for sustainable green technologies. The estate also serves as the conservancy's Virgin Islands and Eastern Caribbean headquarters. St. George Village Botanical Gardens, which offers a unique blend of botanical, historical, and cultural heritage programs to visitors, is also on a former Danish sugar plantation.



St. Croix offers several festivals, museums, and cultural attractions that provide recreational and educational opportunities for visitors and residents to experience Crucian culture. The celebrations for U.S. Virgin Islands / Puerto Rico Friendship Day, Emancipation Day, Crucian Christmas Festival, and many other holidays/festivals/ events proudly showcase the food, music, dance, crafts, and traditions (mocko jumbies, masquerading, tea parties, donkey races, etc.) of St. Croix. Several island museums provide opportunities to learn about the Island's history, including the St. Croix Archeological Society Museum, Lawaetz Family Museum at Little La Grange, and the Apothecary Hall. Other important attractions include the Christiansted National Historic Site, St. George Village Botanical Garden, and the Island's many historic churches.

These recreational and educational opportunities contribute significantly to the quality of life on the island and are major attractions for visitors from around the world. Although the number and types of opportunities abound on St. Croix, there is great potential for enhancing heritage tourism on the island and instilling a greater appreciation for the island's heritage with local youth. In fact, many of the youth eventually leave the island to seek better opportunities on the mainland of the United States — further diminishing the connection between younger generations and their rich Crucian heritage.

A national heritage area designation would likely create many new opportunities to improve and maintain heritage-based educational programs for students, adults, and visitors. It would also enhance collaborative efforts between local organizations and businesses to provide

heritage and nature-based recreational and educational opportunities. Through partnerships and grants, these groups would be able to develop new interpretive materials, exhibits, and programs, as well as maintain, improve, and expand existing recreational areas and educational facilities on the island.

Based on the supporting information described above, the study team concluded that St. Croix meets this criterion.

CRITERION 5:

The resources important to the identified theme or themes of the area retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation.

The resources important to the identified themes of the area are extensive, and many retain a high degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation. These themes capture the essence of St. Croix and reflect the events and movements that are important to the history of the United States. There are widespread, well preserved, and accessible heritage resources on St. Croix that represent the five themes. In this section, each theme is briefly described and a few of the resources that retain a high degree of integrity and currently support interpretation are identified.

Additional heritage resources identified by the public listed in appendixes D and E are also important to the themes of the area. These resources present opportunities to further develop interpretation. The potential and number of these sites is now being realized. Through the creation of a St. Croix National Heritage Area, and the associated funding and support, the opportunities to tell the stories of St. Croix would grow.



Theme 1 — Early Cultures. The people living on the island before the arrival of the Europeans left a rich record of their lives as seen in archeological evidence. People have lived on St. Croix from possibly as long as 4,000 years ago. The many periods of cultural occupation of the region tell the stories of migration, settlement, trade, and cultural exchange and contact. The early inhabitants of St. Croix migrated to the islands from South and Central America. They adapted and developed a society with a complex social structure and economy that made use of the island's natural resources.

Although there are several sites scattered across the island, many of them are on private land or are too sensitive to allow for public access. Interpretation of this theme would primarily occur at Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve and the St. Croix Archeological Museum.

Theme 2 — Slavery and Emancipation. Africans, who were brought to St. Croix to provide slave labor for the European colonies, showed the resilience and resourcefulness of people facing great adversity. As Africans and their descendants survived the conditions of enslavement and discrimination, they also contributed to the economic, social, and cultural development of St. Croix. African heritage is found in the traditions and landscapes of the island.

The resources on St. Croix tell a complete story of the experience of Africans as slaves and free people on St. Croix. The marketplace where slaves were auctioned is interpreted by the National Park Service at the Christiansted National Historic Site. The conditions, experience, and community of slaves working on sugar plantations is interpreted on the grounds of the Whim Plantation Museum,

St. George Village Botanical Garden/Estate St. George National Historic District, and the Slob Historic District. A section of Christiansted, known today as Free Gut, was set aside for freed slaves to build their homes. Traces of the early architecture are still evident in this area today. The mountainous northwest quadrant of the island, where runaway slaves (Maroons) sought refuge in the cliffs and caves from the harsh conditions of slavery, is protected as a scenic and preservation easement, and guided tours interpreting the experience of the Maroons are available. The remaining six Von Scholten schools, where slave and nonslave children were given an education, are destinations on the St. Croix Heritage Trail. The stories of slave uprisings and emancipation are interpreted at Fort Frederik and the Frederiksted National Historic District.

Theme 3 — The Seven Flags of St. Croix. The people of St. Croix have developed a distinct Crucian culture that includes evidence of the European powers that sought to benefit from the abundant resources of the island. St. Croix was subject to shifting colonial power struggles as European nations sought economic gain and strategic positions in the Caribbean. In the colonial period, new traditions grew out of ongoing interaction between Europeans, Amerindians, and Africans, creating new institutions, values, and technologies.

The resources on St. Croix illustrate the colonial influence and experience on St. Croix, especially the influence of Denmark. The Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve interprets the site of the first recorded armed conflict between native Amerindian peoples and Europeans. The Christiansted National Historic Site/Christiansted National Historic District



provides guided and self-guided tours of the historic structures and grounds that interpret the Danish economy and way of life there from 1733 to 1917. Interpretation of Danish colonial plantations is available at the Whim Plantation Museum, Estate Little Princess, Estate Mt. Washington, Lawaetz Family Museum Estate at Little La Grange, and St. George Village Botanical Garden/ Estate St. George National Historic District. The Apothecary Hall displays pharmaceutical bottles and paraphernalia in the original setting used to serve the Danish military garrison and local residents.

Theme 4 — Geography and the Natural Environment — Crossroads of the Caribbean. St. Croix lies at a geographic crossroads — connecting the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean currents, the prevailing westerly and easterly trade winds, and tropical island landscapes and seascapes. These unique attributes foster an exceptional diversity of terrestrial and marine environments that have attracted and sustained people for thousands of years.

The marine and terrestrial resources that support this theme are extensive. Buck Island Reef National Monument is a 176-acre island and surrounding coral reef ecosystem that supports a large variety of native flora and fauna, including the hawksbill turtle and brown pelican. Opportunities at Buck Island Reef National Monument include hiking, snorkeling, boating (by permit), and swimming. Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve protects and interprets a submarine canyon, extensive mangroves, and coral reefs. Opportunities at Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve include kayaking,

snorkeling, scuba, and hiking. Sandy Point National Wildlife Refuge hosts the largest nesting population of leatherback sea turtles under United States jurisdiction. Opportunities at Sandy Point National Wildlife Refuge include hiking, nature photography, and wildlife photography.

Theme 5 — Modern-Day St. Croix — Cultures in Contact. The population of St. Croix reflects a long tradition of migration that has brought together West African, European, Caribbean, and American traditions. Influences can also be traced to South America and Asia. Modern-day migration continues to bring new stories and traditions, which contribute to the dynamic and vibrant island culture. This long-standing exchange of stories, ideas, and traditions on St. Croix makes the island what it is today — a colorful collage of the world.

Much of the support for this theme can be found in the less tangible aspects of St. Croix's culture, which are discussed in Criterion 2. However, the opportunities for interpretation of this theme still abound. These opportunities include the exhibits, classes, and performances at the Caribbean Museum of the Arts; the locally harvested and/or produced foods available at the Agricultural Station and La Reine Market; the events, programs, and exhibits at the St. George Village Botanic Garden; and the collection of building styles that document the many cultural influences and periods of St. Croix in Frederiksted.

Based on the existing integrity of many resources, the study team concluded that St. Croix meets this criterion.



CRITERION 6:

Includes residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and local and state governments who are involved in the planning, have developed a conceptual financial plan that outlines the roles for all participants, including the federal government, and have demonstrated support for the concept of a national heritage area.

There is significant support among the residents, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and government for the designation of a St. Croix National Heritage Area. This area would provide a mix of strategies to strengthen the local economy through the protection and promotion of the island's heritage resources. The designation of a St. Croix National Heritage Area could also invigorate connections between the people of St. Croix and their heritage and bring together community-based organizations working for similar heritage goals. The approach to heritage tourism development on St. Croix includes (1) developing small, locally owned businesses, and (2) engaging both visitors and hosts in learning about St. Croix. These improvements could have a positive impact on overall visitation and tourist experiences on St. Croix, while also positively impacting the communities of St. Croix.

The public demonstrated overwhelming support for the designation of a St. Croix National Heritage Area in the many public scoping meetings and comments sent to the planning team. Participants at the public scoping meetings included representatives from government, nonprofit organizations, and local businesses, in addition to architects,

philanthropists, academics, artists, writers, musicians, teachers, students, and residents. Heritage goals expressed by participants in the planning process include strengthening the island's identity; promoting a sense of cultural pride in the island's youth; sustaining the island ways of life on St. Croix; improving the economy and quality of life of St. Croix residents; sharing St. Croix's story with the world; and preserving, protecting, and promoting heritage resources (including natural resources, historical architecture, arts and crafts, written and oral traditions, agrotourism, local foods, music, and dance).

The planning team received letters of support for the designation of a St. Croix National Heritage Area from eight members of the 28th Legislature of the Virgin Islands and 24 government agencies and nonprofit organizations (included in appendix B).

The proposed coordinating entity developed the following three-year conceptual financial plan based on current economic conditions. The plan seeks to match anticipated NPS funds for the development of a management plan with money raised from a combination of government, private, corporate, foundation, membership, and earned income sources in addition to volunteer and in-kind contributions. The overhead expenses are estimated to be about 18% of the anticipated budget, which is competitive with other nonprofit organizations.

Based on the supporting information described above, the study team concluded that the proposed coordinating entity meets this criterion.

TABLE 7: CONCEPTUAL FINANCIAL PLAN FROM PROPOSED COORDINATING ENTITY

FUNDING SOURCE	ANTICIPATED AMOUNT		
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
NPS Grant	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
U.S.V.I. Government: Executive and Legislative branches	90,000	95,000	100,000
Private Support: Nonresident Virgin Islanders	2,500	4,000	6,000
Business and Corporate Support	15,000	25,000	30,000
Grants: Federal and Private Foundations	35,000	35,000	45,000
Membership	1,000	1,500	2,000
Earned income (education programs, trademark merchandise)	1,000	2,000	3,000
Program support (conference/symposia sponsorship, "buy a brick" type campaign, and social events)	10,000	15,000	20,000
Value of in-kind and volunteer (non-cash)	25,000	30,000	30,000
TOTAL	\$329,500	\$357,500	\$386,000

TABLE 8: CONCEPTUAL EXPENSES FROM PROPOSED COORDINATING ENTITY

EXPENSE	ANTICIPATED AMOUNT		
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Management plan (contracted services)	\$130,000	\$110,000	110,000
Salaries and wages			
Executive Director @ 10%	8,000	8,560	9,159
Development Director@ 30%	18,000	19,260	20,608
Administrative Assistant/Clerical@ 40% yr 1; 60%yr 2 and 3	12,000	25,680	27,478
NHA Program Coordinator 100%	50,000	53,500	57,245
Contracted Services (bookkeeping)	10,000	15,000	15,000
Travel	2,000	4,000	2,500
Insurance	2,000	4,000	4,000
Office rental @ 60%	4,800	8,640	10,080
Office operations (equipment, supplies, furniture)	10,000	2,500	2,500
Advertising (print and electronic media)	3,000	4,000	4,000
Collaterals (pens, mouse pads, banners, etc.)	2,500	3,500	4,000
DVD documentation, updates, duplication	13,000	15,000	15,000
Program expenses (events, materials, etc.)	28,000	38,000	40,000
Employee costs (18% of salaries and wages)	15,840	19,260	20,608
Utilities @ 60% (telephone, internet, electricity, water, etc.)	7,000	9,500	10,500
TOTAL	316,140	340,400	352,678



CRITERION 7:

The proposed coordinating entity and units of government supporting the designation are willing to commit to working in partnership to develop the heritage area.

Significant support for the proposed coordinating entity and the designation of a St. Croix National Heritage Area has been demonstrated by units of government who have attended public meetings, written letters of support, or served on the local planning team.

In summer 2008, a local planning team was assembled to work in partnership to develop the *St. Croix National Heritage Area Feasibility Study*. Active members of the team included representatives from the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Education, U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources, U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Tourism, Office of Congresswoman Donna M. Christensen, the National Park Service, and the University of the Virgin Islands Cooperative Extension Service. Local team members served in a technical advisory capacity and spearheaded outreach efforts — including public service announcements, local radio and TV talk programs, public meetings and workshops, and the provision of informational materials at the Agricultural and Food Fair. The units of government represented on the local planning team are committed to working in partnership with the proposed coordinating entity.

Representatives from the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Tourism attended public meetings and expressed support for the designation. National heritage area designation is consistent with the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Tourism's strategic plan for St. Croix.

Several members of the 28th Legislature of the Virgin Islands sent letters of support for the proposed coordinating entity and the designation of St. Croix as a national heritage area. Letters (included in appendix B) were sent by Craig W. Barshinger, Senator (Chairman of the Committee on Economic Development, Energy and Technology); Adlah Donastorg, Senator; Wayne A. G. James, Senator (Chairman of the Committee on Education, Youth, and Culture); Shawn-Michael Malone, Senator (Chairman of the Committee on Planning and Environmental Protection); Terrence Nelson, Senator; Nereida Rivera-O'Reilly, Senator; Patrick Simeon Sprauve, Senator (Chairman of the Committee on Health, Hospitals, and Human Services); and Alvin L. Williams, Jr., Senator (Chairman of the Committee on Education, Youth, and Culture). A resolution in support of the designation of a St. Croix National Heritage Area was passed on December 21, 2009. The resolution was signed on January 8, 2010. A copy of the resolution can be found in appendix B.

Letters of support from the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Labor, University of the Virgin Islands Cooperative Extension Service, Virgin Islands Council on the Arts, and many 501(c)3 organizations (such as the U.S. Virgin Islands Coalition for Sustainable Economic Development, Virgin Islands Council on the Arts, Crucian Heritage and Nature Tourism, The Trust for Virgin Islands Lands, St. Croix Environmental Association, The St. Croix Landmarks Society, Per Ankh, Inc., and the Virgin Islands Social History Associates) have committed to working in partnership with the proposed coordinating entity.

Based on the supporting information described above, the study team concluded that St. Croix meets this criterion.



CRITERION 8:

The proposal is consistent with continued economic activity in the area.

St. Croix has the highest rate of unemployment among the U.S. Virgin Islands. The median per capita income (1999) for St. Croix was \$21,401, less than half the U.S. average (U.S. Census 2000). This is compounded by the relatively higher cost of living on the Virgin Islands (U.S. Virgin Islands Bureau of Economic Research 2008c). The tourism industry on St. Croix is not as developed as the other U.S. Virgin Islands, partly because of local resistance to mainstream or commercial tourism. Recent efforts to promote heritage tourism on St. Croix have resonated with the people of St. Croix who believe in the mutually beneficial economic, preservation, and educational opportunities in heritage tourism.

A national heritage area designation based on the natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources of St. Croix could attract heritage tourists to the island. Numerous studies have shown that heritage tourists stay longer and spend more than other tourists. One of the purposes of national heritage areas is to support and diversify tourism-related economies. The national heritage area coordinating entity would work with local businesses and organizations to build their capacity and develop a common marketing approach. Overall, economic activity in the tourism sector would likely experience a positive impact.

In addition to tourism, the major industries of St. Croix include petroleum refining and

manufacturing (watches and rum). These industries, which are an important source of jobs on the island, would unlikely be affected by the designation of a St. Croix National Heritage Area.

Based on the supporting information described above, the study team concluded that St. Croix meets this criterion.

CRITERION 9:

A conceptual boundary map is supported by the public.

The study area boundary (the whole island) to be used as the conceptual boundary for the potential St. Croix National Heritage Area is supported by the public. During a series of public meetings that were held on the island in 2008, local citizens identified more than 100 unique sites that relate to the major heritage themes of the island. These places are scattered across the island and tell the stories of Columbus landing, colonialism, and slavery and emancipation, and they showcase the island's diverse natural environment and modern-day culture. Maps that show the locations of these heritage sites can be found in chapter 1. The identification of so many heritage resources on St. Croix, including its offshore marine environments, provides a strong basis for using the entire island for the proposed national heritage area.

Based on the supporting information described above, the study team concluded that St. Croix meets this criterion.



CRITERION 10:

The coordinating entity proposed to plan and implement the project is described.

SUCCEED is a local umbrella organization that represents agriculture, business, culture, nature and the environment, archeology and history, education and training, tourism, architecture, cuisine and culinary arts, urban planning and community development, and youth interests. A seat on the board of directors is currently allotted for each of these interests. As an umbrella organization, SUCCEED currently has several member organizations. As the coordinating entity, SUCCEED would reach out to additional nonprofit organizations, educational institutions and groups, and units of government to build the membership base of support for the national heritage area. Members could serve on committees, including community planning, education and research, history and research, and public policy.

As the coordinating entity, the staff would include an executive director, development director, national heritage area program coordinator, and administrative assistant.

The staff would report to the executive director, and the executive director would report to the board of directors. SUCCEED anticipates dedicating approximately 60% of the organization's time and resources to the national heritage area. Adjustments to the time and resource allocation would be made periodically to reflect the funding and program needs. The organization has enacted a policy under which they will not compete with member organizations for on-island sources of funding.

SUCCEED would work to garner support from and to give support to the nonprofit organizations, local businesses, and units of government working towards heritage-related goals. As the coordinating entity, SUCCEED will work to build the capacity of member groups, pool diverse community resources and facilitate partnership relationships, coordinate and promote existing heritage programs and activities, develop demonstration projects, and support scholarship on St. Croix heritage-related topics.

Based on the supporting information described above, the study team concluded that St. Croix meets this criterion.





OVERALL CONCLUSION

The feasibility study team concludes that St. Croix meets each of the 10 interim evaluation criteria for designation as a national heritage area, based on the National Park Service’s “Draft National Heritage Area Feasibility Study Guidelines” (NPS 2003). As described throughout this study, St. Croix contributes in substantial ways to our country’s national heritage. It also contains many natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources that

make up a nationally distinctive landscape. The rich and varied stories about St. Croix lend themselves to an intriguing set of themes that connect people to the various heritage resources of the island. Furthermore, the designation of St. Croix as a national heritage area has strong public support and there is a local capacity and commitment to undertake the responsibilities of a future national heritage area.