



USVI's First Community Chipping Program Designated a Clinton Global Initiative "Commitment to Action"

Island Green Hosts Training Session for WMA & VITEMA

St. John, USVI – February 27, 2020 – [Island Green Living Association's](#) groundbreaking *USVI Zero Waste Composting Pilot Program* was among the distinguished projects introduced as a Clinton Global Initiative "Commitment to Action" during the CGI Action Network in Puerto Rico last week. The first large-scale initiative of its kind, it was recognized for its excellence in finding a sustainable solution to handling everyday green and brown debris as well as its value in disaster relief following future storms. The collaborative St. John program got its start yesterday with a dynamic training session with representatives from [Vermeer](#) on hand to provide classroom and hands-on training on the powerful BCXL1800 Brush Chipper to Island Green and personnel from Waste Management and VITEMA. Not only will the chipper keep vegetative debris on island in the form of mulch rather than being pushed over the gut or barged to St. Thomas to already overflowing landfills, but it will also be critical in handling vegetative debris removal, clearing our roads following future storms. ***(Link to photo below.)***

Funded through a grant from [Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands](#) and private donations, Island Green's *Zero Waste* program will provide valuable mulch to the community, allowing this carbon source to remain on island to help regenerate the land, while providing educational opportunities for students. The Iowa State University EARTH Program at Giffit Hill, managed by Dr. David Minner, used an ISU Capstone class to develop a comprehensive wood chipping and composting plan for St. John which served as the basis for the Island Green IGLA grant with the Community Foundation VICF. Dr. Minner who also serves on the Island Green board and , is a key player in making this venture a reality. Future plans include expanding to composting as well.

"This is the first large scale, collaborative chipping effort in the USVI and it is our goal that the program be replicated on St. Thomas and St. Croix," said Harith Wickrema, Island Green Board President. "The program will reduce waste, provide valuable mulch to the community, and offer educational opportunities for students, all while reducing the island's carbon footprint. This is RESOURCE management at its finest."

In a unique public/private collaboration, the Island Green program partners include the ISU EARTH Program, Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands, VIWMA, Vermeer, Crowley Maritime Corporation and Boyson Inc. Vegetative debris will be staged at the Susannaberg Transfer Station for processing by Island Green. The resulting material will be made available to the community.

Established in 2004, Island Green Living Association is a registered 501 (c)(3) not for profit organization on St. John dedicated to sustainability throughout the USVI.

www.islandgreenliving.org.

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Image available: https://www.dropbox.com/s/lc5qpr45woqu9hl/Feb26ChippingTrainingIMG_1903.JPG?dl=0

Left to right: David DiGiacomo, IGL board member; Harith Wickrema; Kelly Lawson, IGL Exec Director; Dr. David Minner, ISU EARTH Program; Ryan Erger, Vermeer; Sheena Evinson, WMA; Julian Doran; Elvis Pemberton, WMA; Bill Dennis, St. John Repair Shop; Matt Moody, Love City Strong; Steve DeBlasio; Anthony Novelli, IGL Operations Manager

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