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Establishment of two Marine Managed Areas (The Narrows Marine Reserve and The Narrows Fishing Priority Area) in St. Kitts and Nevis”

The Nevis Historical and Conservation Society (NHCS), in conjunction with the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis through the Department of Marine Resources (DMR), is pleased to announce the commencement of implementation of the Project **“Establishment of two Marine Managed Areas (The Narrows Marine Reserve and The Narrows Fishing Priority Area) in St. Kitts and Nevis”**. This Project is part of a regional programme to assist six participating OECS countries with financial resources and expertise to improve the capacity for creating new MMAs and better managing the existing ones, as well as to meet the countries national and international commitments. The initiative falls under the **Climate Resilient Eastern Caribbean Marine Managed Areas Network (ECMMAN) project**, led by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and funded by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB). The programme is administered by the UNEP-CEP Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife programme and its Regional Activity Center (SPAW-RAC) and the Caribbean Marine Protected Areas Management Network (CaMPAM).

The CaMPAM-ECMMAN Small Grant Programme has made available €155,950 for each participating OECS country to implement projects over a four year period in two phases. To assist with the establishment of The Narrows Marine Reserve and The Narrows Fishing Priority Area, the NHCS requested, and was awarded, €82,385.25 under the first call for proposals. The funding will support activities to ensure that existing fisheries regulations are effectively enforced in The Narrows to help protect marine biodiversity and commercially important marine species, and ensure that livelihoods associated with fisheries in The Narrows are improved and sustainable. Specifically, the funding will be used to undertake the development and implementation of a public awareness strategy about the NMMA, prepare for the gazetting of the NMA and NFPA, install buoys for demarcation of the NMR and NFPA and development of a management plan and management framework for the Fishing Priority Area

Establishing the **Narrows Marine Reserve** is a critical measure to afford special protection to the flora and fauna within the area and to help ensure that the natural breeding grounds and habitats of the Narrows will be protected and preserved to allow for the natural regeneration of aquatic life, including the replenishment of commercially important marine species such as Lobster (*Panulirus argus*), Queen Conch (*Strombus gigas*) and a variety of herbivorous fish. Effective enforcement of fisheries regulations in the NMR, which up to now has been almost nonexistent, will allow for the protection of marine species and allow for key juvenile species to mature and reproduce so that there is adequate restocking of target species. Establishing the **Narrows Fishing Priority Area** will delineate an area for the implementation of special measures to ensure that authorized fishing is not impeded or otherwise interfered with. The Department of Marine Resources will focus efforts to establish Fish Aggregating Devices

(FADs) and other measures to enhance fishing efforts within the NFPA. Additionally, it is intended that the establishment of the NFPA will help to reduce fishing pressures in the NMR and enhance fishing efforts and livelihoods in a sustainable way. The FAD placement would assist in stimulating the spillover effect that the reserve would create.

The NHCS, DMR, TNC and CaMPAM-ECMMAN Small Grant Programme administrators look forward to the successful implementation of this project. The NHCS is appreciative to the aforementioned agencies for their generous assistance that will facilitate the sustainable management of The Narrows Marine Area.

Visit the Nevis Historical and Conservation Society website at www.nevisheritage.org for more information on the project or other details on the nature and work of the organization.