GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

# PRESS RELEASE

**Tel:** (284)468-2730
**Official Government Website:**
https://gov.vg

# Initiative To Replant 100 Seagrape Trees At Long Bay Continues

**Release Date:** 17 March, 2025



On Saturday, 15th March, family members of 22 honourees proudly gathered at Long Bay, Beef Island to plant seagrape trees in honour of their ancestor's legacy and contributions to building The Virgin Islands' community. The spirited community event marked the continuation of the initiative to replant and name 100 seagrape trees as part of the Long Bay, Beef Island Beach Management Plan.

The Seagrape Tree Replanting Initiative aims to restore the historic seagrape treeline, which was heavily impacted by Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017. The Initiative is being spearheaded by the Ministry of the Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change with funding by Unite BVI and partnership from the H. Lavity Stoutt Community College Centre for Applied Marine Studies.

The seagrape trees are being named in honour of deceased Virgin Islanders from the Seventh and Eighth Districts who made significant contributions to community development, particularly in environmental protection, history and culture, education, farming, fishing, boat building, and other key aspects of socio-economic development. This Initiative seeks to celebrate and memorialise their invaluable legacy.

The replanting effort began with the first 20 trees being planted at the launch event on Saturday 8th June 2024. The names of the first 58 trees have already been announced, and the public is now invited to submit nominations for the remaining 42 trees. Nominations should be made by Friday 21st March by completing an online form at bvi.gov.vg/environment or by contacting the Ministry at 468-2147.

The late former legislator and Commissioner of Police, Mr. Vernon Malone, QPM, LLB, CPA who hailed from Long Look was one of the honourees after whom a seagrape tree was planted on Saturday. His wife, Mrs. Icis Malone, and son Mr. Malcolm Malone, participated in the planting and were delighted with the initiative. Mrs. Malone stated, "The planting of trees in honour of those from the East End / Long Look area who have made great contributions to the country and who have passed on is a powerful symbolisation of faith, courage and a strong sense of Virgin Islands pride…What greater appreciation can there be than by putting their memories of great courage and sacrifice at the frontline of these islands where

their memories and presence are firmly rooted in the sand of our great shores.”

Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of the Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change, Dr. Ronald Smith-Berkeley, highlighted the importance of the seagrape trees for both environmental and cultural reasons. “Seagrape trees are vital for protecting our beaches from future erosion caused by hurricanes and swells, providing important nesting habitat for sea turtles, and offering shade for beachgoers,” Dr. Smith-Berkeley explained. “In addition to their environmental benefits, seagrape trees hold deep cultural significance, and we encourage the public to join us in this meaningful Initiative.”

The seagrape tree plantings will continue in similar fashion on Sunday 23rd March and Saturday 29th March 2025. Family members of honourees, local residents, and the general public are invited to participate in the planting sessions. High school students in 11th and 12th grades are also encouraged to volunteer for community service hours, with up to 20 students allowed to register for each planting. Registration can be completed at bvi.gov.vg/environment. Plantings will begin at 8:00 a.m. and conclude by 10:00 a.m., with participants asked to gather at the roundabout area at the centre of the beach by 7:45 a.m. Attendees are encouraged to bring water in reusable bottles and wear long sleeves, closed shoes, and gloves to ensure a safe and comfortable experience.

The Ministry of the Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change is dedicated to protecting the Virgin Islands' environment, promoting sustainable practices, and preserving the Territory's natural resources for future generations. Through this and other initiatives, the Ministry works to address the challenges of climate change while fostering environmental stewardship and community resilience.

*Names of persons honoured by seagrape trees planted on Saturday 15th March, 2025*

1. Glanville Chalwell
2. Kenneth Chalwell
3. Iva Chalwell

4. Estelle Dawson & Alexander Dawson
5. Vernon, Carol, and Julien Dawson
6. Christopher Flemming
7. Helen Malone Frett
8. Watkin Frett and Hilda Frett (aka Ms. Baby)
9. Antwin George
10. Malcolm Luther George and Izeta Rosena Pickering George
11. Agusta Jennings
12. Ilva Fahie Lettsome
13. Ivan Lettsome
14. Terrence B. Lettsome
15. Vernon Malone, QPM, LLB, CPA
16. Basil Penn, Jr.
17. Robelteen Smith (aka Ms Teen)
18. Mosses Stevens
19. Dena Thomas (aka Denacris)
20. Leonard Thomas
21. Ophelia Tomau (aka Feeley)
22. Alton Turnbull

---

## Gallery



