



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**

# PUBLIC NOTICE

Applicant:  
Julio Bran  
Trans Americas Fiber US. LLC

Published: June 10, 2025  
Expires: July 11, 2025

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**Jacksonville District  
Permit Application No. SAJ-2024-00449**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: The Jacksonville District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has received an application for a Department of the Army permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. §1344) **and/or** Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. §403). The purpose of this public notice is to solicit comments from the public regarding the work described below:

If you are interested in receiving additional project drawings associated with this public notice, please send an e-mail to the project manager by electronic mail at [Catrina.N.Frey@usace.army.mil](mailto:Catrina.N.Frey@usace.army.mil).

**APPLICANT:** Julio Bran  
Trans Americas Fiber US. LLC  
1 AT&T Way  
Bedminster, FJ 07921

**WATERWAY AND LOCATION:** The project would affect aquatic resources associated with Magens Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. The project site location where the cable will make landfall is at Peterborg Estate, St Thomas, Virgin Islands 00802 (Latitude: 18.372139, Longitude: -64.928472). The Cable will extend out into Magens Bay the Atlantic approximately North Northeast past the Economic Exclusion Zone (EEZ) towards Vero Beach, Florida.

**EXISTING CONDITIONS:** The system in which the activity is proposed is a benthic marine environment. The benthic environment consists of several ecotypes from the sandy unconsolidated bottom, hardbottom, and coral reefs.

## **PROJECT PURPOSE:**

**Basic:** Communications Infrastructure

**Overall:** Installation of additional communication infrastructure to create more capacity for St. Thomas, Virgin Islands and provide redundancy for aging communication infrastructure.

**PROPOSED WORK:** The applicant requests authorization to install an armored telecommunication fiber cable to improve capacity and connectivity. The proposed project is part of a major Trans-Caribbean Fiber system. The submarine fiber optic cable is proposed to be laid on the seafloor from the west in deep water into shallow water at the Northside of St. Thomas. The cable route will span 23 km, meeting up with the main trunk, and terminated underwater at Northshore of Magens' Bay at a proposed manhole. Cable will be winched through an existing conduit previously installed by AT&T circa 1996.

**AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION:** The applicant has provided the following information in support of efforts to avoid and/or minimize impacts to the aquatic environment:

Benthic surveys of the proposed area were conducted for presence/absence of resources along the proposed route. Drop camera work found that the benthic community was a uniform fine sand/silt for the majority of the route. An ROV reviewed an approximately 0.5 km length of reef, by the east of the north end of Outer Brass Island in 70 feet deep water. Initial review found an existing cables with no observed disturbance of benthic habitats.

Where new infrastructure is needed, disruption of the shoreline and shallow water seafloor will be minimized by using the seafloor features that effectively function as a natural corridor for the cable route (e.g. optimizing use of flat sea bed, avoiding slopes, side-slopes and hard bottom areas where possible) as well as employing minimally impacting installation methods.

**COMPENSATORY MITIGATION:** The applicant offered the following compensatory mitigation plan to offset unavoidable functional loss to the aquatic environment:

Shoreline work will entail silt fencing to contain the small amount of manhole installation work. Installation of Turbidity curtains for shallow water cable installation which includes surface placement with small vessel and diver assist to reduce sediment plumes. Compliance with National Marine Fisheries Services (NMFS) requirement to prevent impact to marine life during install.

**CULTURAL RESOURCES:**

The Corps is evaluating the undertaking for effects to historic properties as required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. This public notice serves to inform the public of the proposed undertaking and invites comments including those from local, State, and Federal government Agencies with respect to historic resources. Our final determination relative to historic resource impacts may be subject to additional coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer, federally recognized tribes and other interested parties.

The District Engineer's final eligibility and effect determination will be based upon coordination with the SHPO and/or THPO, as appropriate and required, and with full consideration given to the proposed undertaking's potential direct and indirect effects on historic properties within the Corps-identified permit area.

**ENDANGERED SPECIES:** The Corps has determined the proposed project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the North Atlantic Right Whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*), Loggerhead Sea Turtle (*Caretta caretta*), Green Sea Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), Leatherback Sea Turtle (*Dermocelys coriacea*), Hawksbill Sea Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), Kemp's Ridely Sea Turtle (*Lepidochelys kempii*), Giant Manta Ray (*Mobula birostris*), Smalltooth Sawfish (*Pristis pectinata*), or its designated critical habitat. The Corps will request U.S. Fish and Wildlife/National Marine Fisheries Service concurrence with this determination pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

The Corps has determined the proposal may affect the Elkhorn Coral (*Acropora palmata*), Staghorn Coral (*Acropora cervicornis*), Boulder Star Coral (*Orbicella franksi*), Mountainous Star Coral (*Orbicella faveolata*), Lobed Star Coral (*Orbicella annularis*), Rough Cactus coral (*Mycetophyllia ferox*), Pillar Coral (*Dendrogyra cylindrus*), and the Queen Conch or its designated critical habitat. The Corps will request initiation of formal consultation National Marine Fisheries Service pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act by separate letter.

This notice serves as request to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service for any additional information on whether any listed or proposed to be listed endangered or threatened species or critical habitat may be present in the area which would be affected by the proposed activity.

**ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT:** Pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act 1996, the Corps reviewed the project area, examined information provided by the applicant, and consulted available species information.

This notice initiates the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Our initial determination is that the proposed action may adversely affect EFH and/or fisheries managed by Fishery Management Councils and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Implementation of the proposed project would directly impact approximately <0.1 acres of coral/hard bottom. The effects of the project are determined to be minimal and permanent. These habitat(s) are utilized by the following species and their various life stages:

<b><i>Species</i></b>	<b><i>Life Stage</i></b>
Blue Marlin	Adult
Spiny Lobster	Post-Egg/Larval, Larvae
Longbill spearfish	ALL
Swordfish	SpawningEggs, Larvae
Lemon Shark	Juvenile/Adult, Neonate

<b><i>Species</i></b>	<b><i>Life Stage</i></b>
Nurse Shark	Juvenile/Adult
Reef Fish	Post-egg/Larval, Larvae
Tiger Shark	Juvenile/Adult
Blacktip Shark	Neonate
Sailfish	Juvenile, Adult

Queen Conch	Post-egg/Larval, Larvae
White Marlin	Neonate, Juvenile, Adult
Oceanic Whitetip Shark	ALL

Caribbean Reef Shark	ALL
Corals	Larvae/Post-egg/Larval

Our final determination relative to project impacts and the need for mitigation measures is subject to review by and coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service.

**NAVIGATION:** The proposed structure or activity is not located in the vicinity of a federal navigation channel.

**SECTION 408:** The applicant will not require permission under Section 14 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 USC 408) because the activity, in whole or in part, would not alter, occupy, or use a Corps Civil Works project.

**WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION:** Water Quality Certification may be required from the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division.

**COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT CONSISTENCY:** In the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Division of Coastal Zone Management's permit constitutes compliance with the Coastal Zone Management Plan.

**NOTE:** This public notice is being issued based on information furnished by the applicant. This information has not been verified or evaluated to ensure compliance with laws and regulation governing the regulatory program. The geographic extent of aquatic resources within the proposed project area that either are, or are presumed to be, within the Corps jurisdiction has not been verified by Corps personnel.

**EVALUATION:** The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including cumulative impacts thereof; among these are conservation, economics, esthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historical properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food, and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership, and in general, the needs and welfare of the people. Evaluation of the impact of the activity on the public interest will also include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, EPA, under authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act or the criteria established under authority of Section 102(a) of the Marine Protection Research and Sanctuaries Act of 1972. The decision as to whether a permit will be issued will also be based on an evaluation of the impact of the proposed work on



navigation and national security. A permit will be granted unless its issuance is found to be contrary to the public interest.

**COMMENTS:** The Corps is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other Interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps to determine whether to issue, modify, condition, or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this determination, comments are used to assess impacts to endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

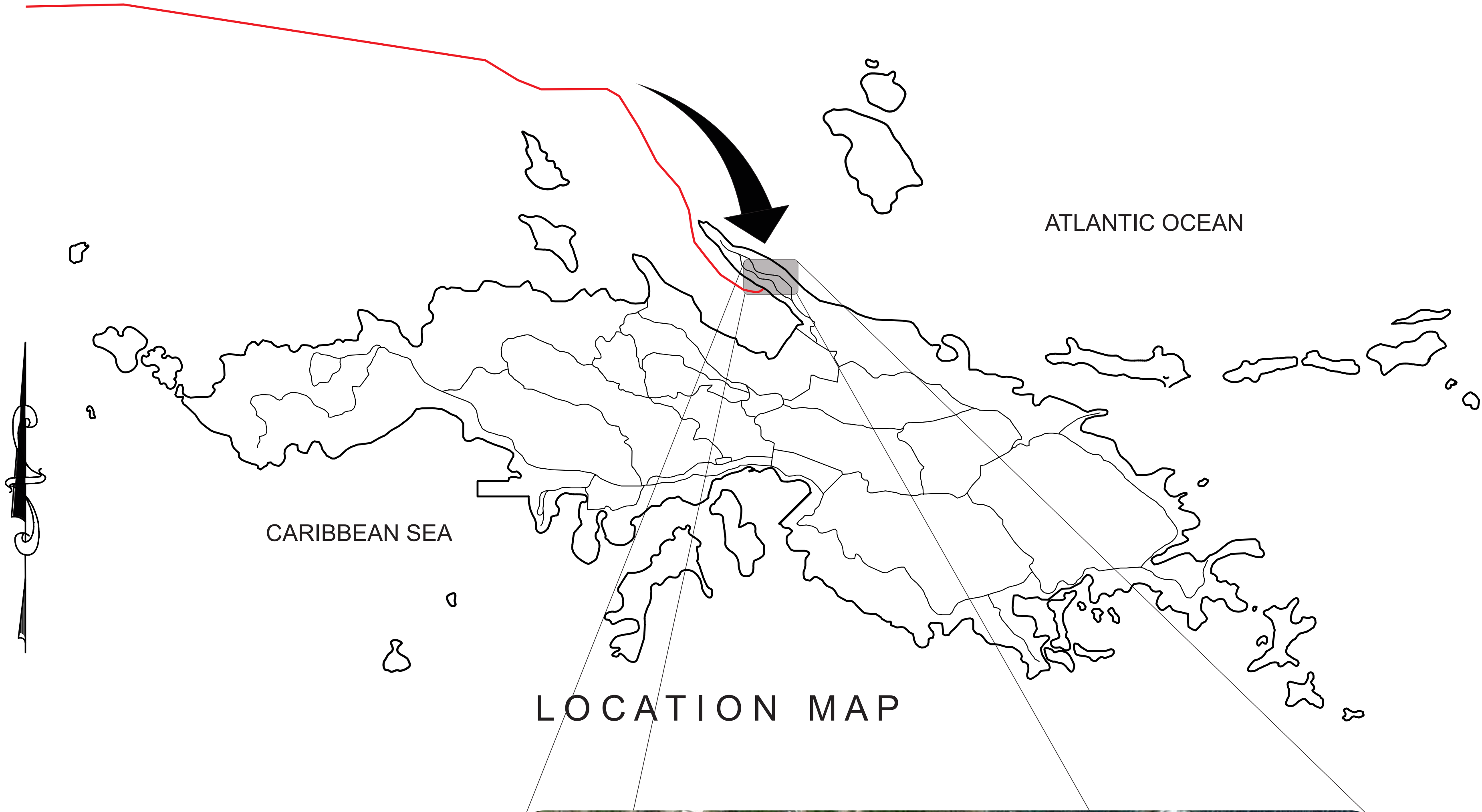
The Jacksonville District will receive written comments on the proposed work, as outlined above, until July 11, 2025. Comments should be submitted electronically via the Regulatory Request System (RRS) at <https://rrs.usace.army.mil/rrs> or to Catrina Frey at [catrina.n.frey@usace.army.mil](mailto:catrina.n.frey@usace.army.mil). Alternatively, you may submit comments in writing to the Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District, Attention: Catrina Frey, 4400 PGA Blvd Suite 500 Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410. Please refer to the permit application number in your comments.

Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider the application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing. Requests for a public hearing will be granted, unless the District Engineer determines that the issues raised are insubstantial or there is otherwise no valid interest to be served by a hearing.



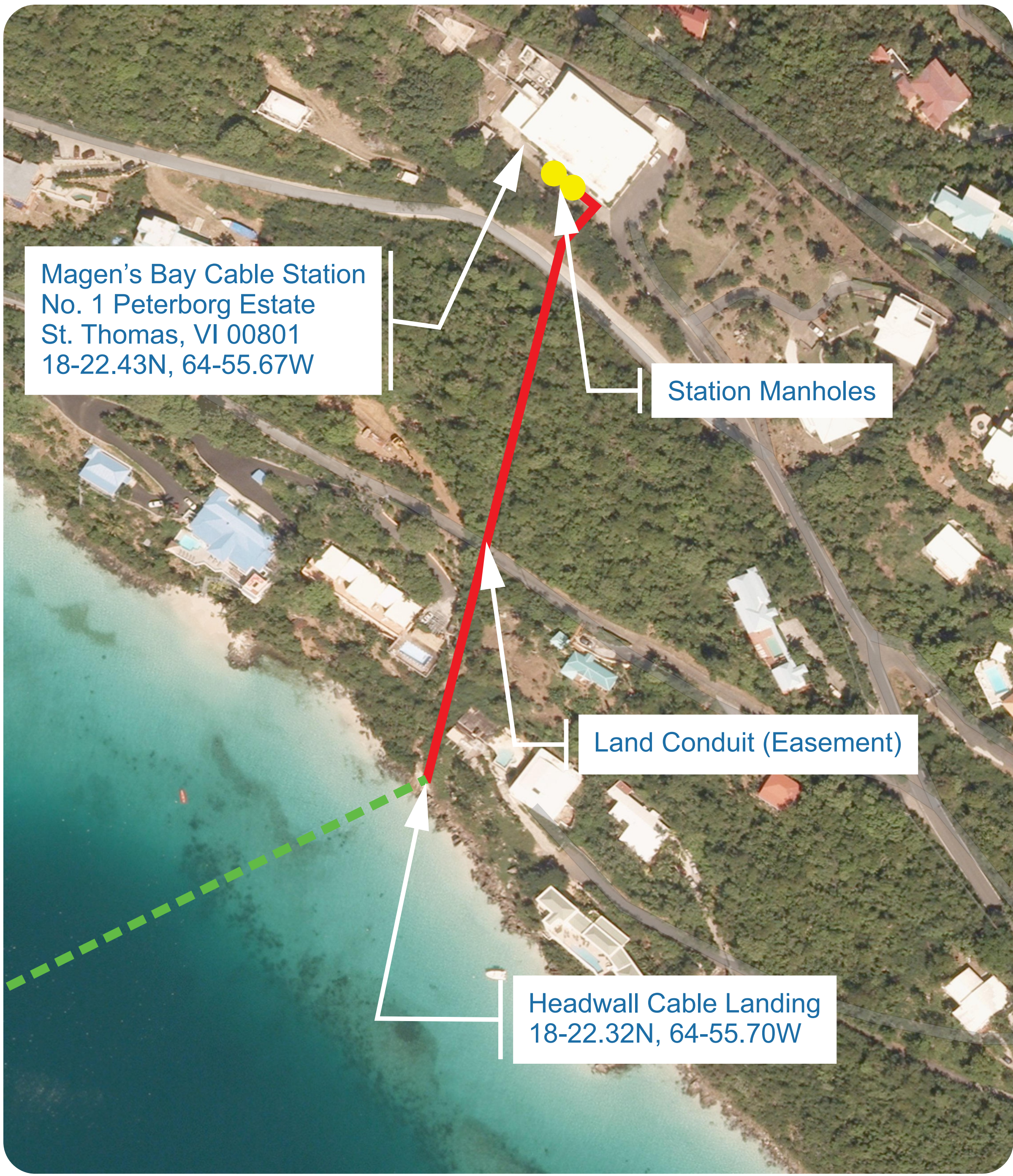
# TRANS-CARIBBEAN FIBER SYSTEM (TCFS) LANDING PROJECT

## MAGEN'S BAY, ST. THOMAS, USVI LANDING LOCATION



LOCATION MAP

GOOGLE EARTH MAPS

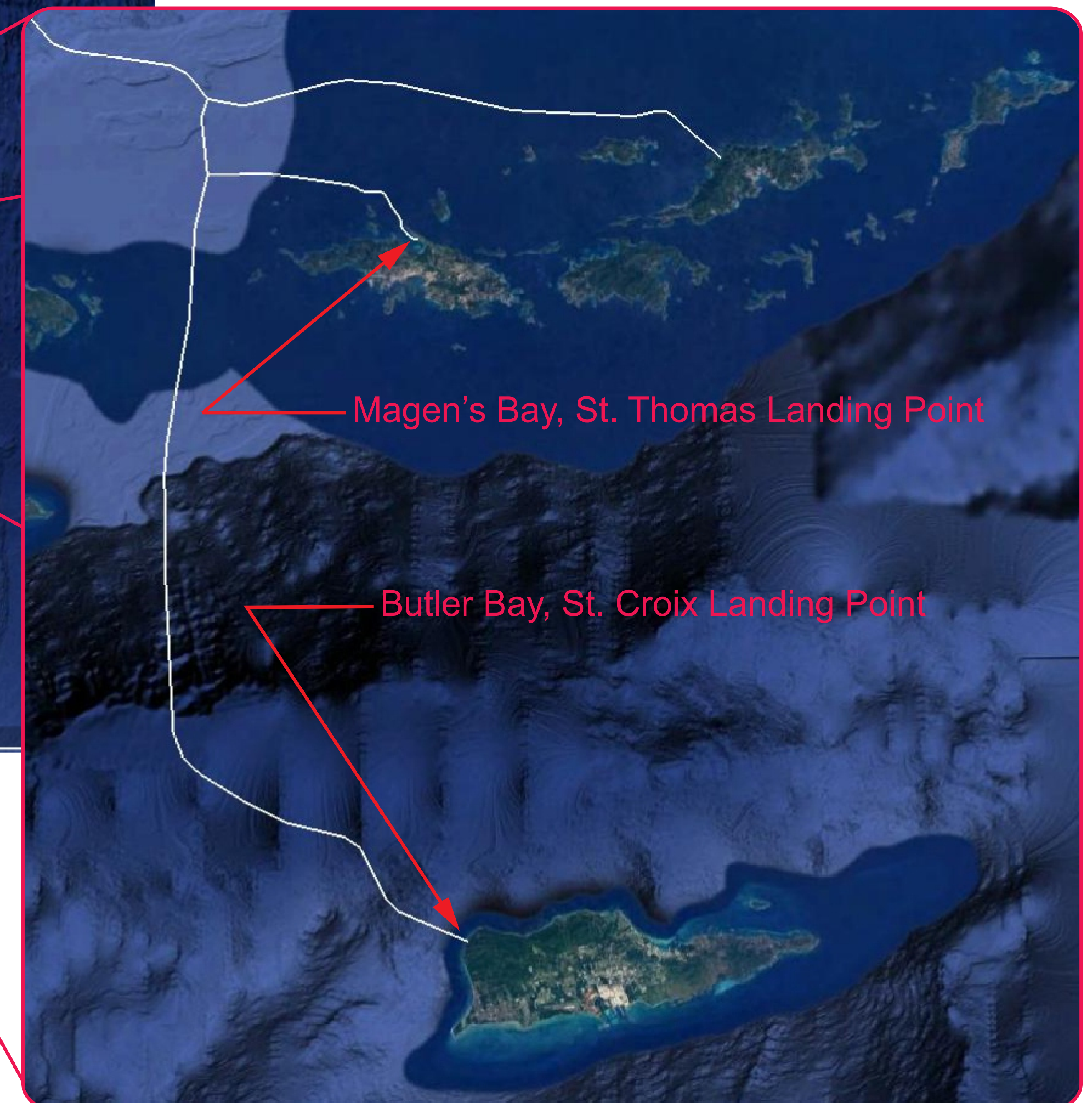
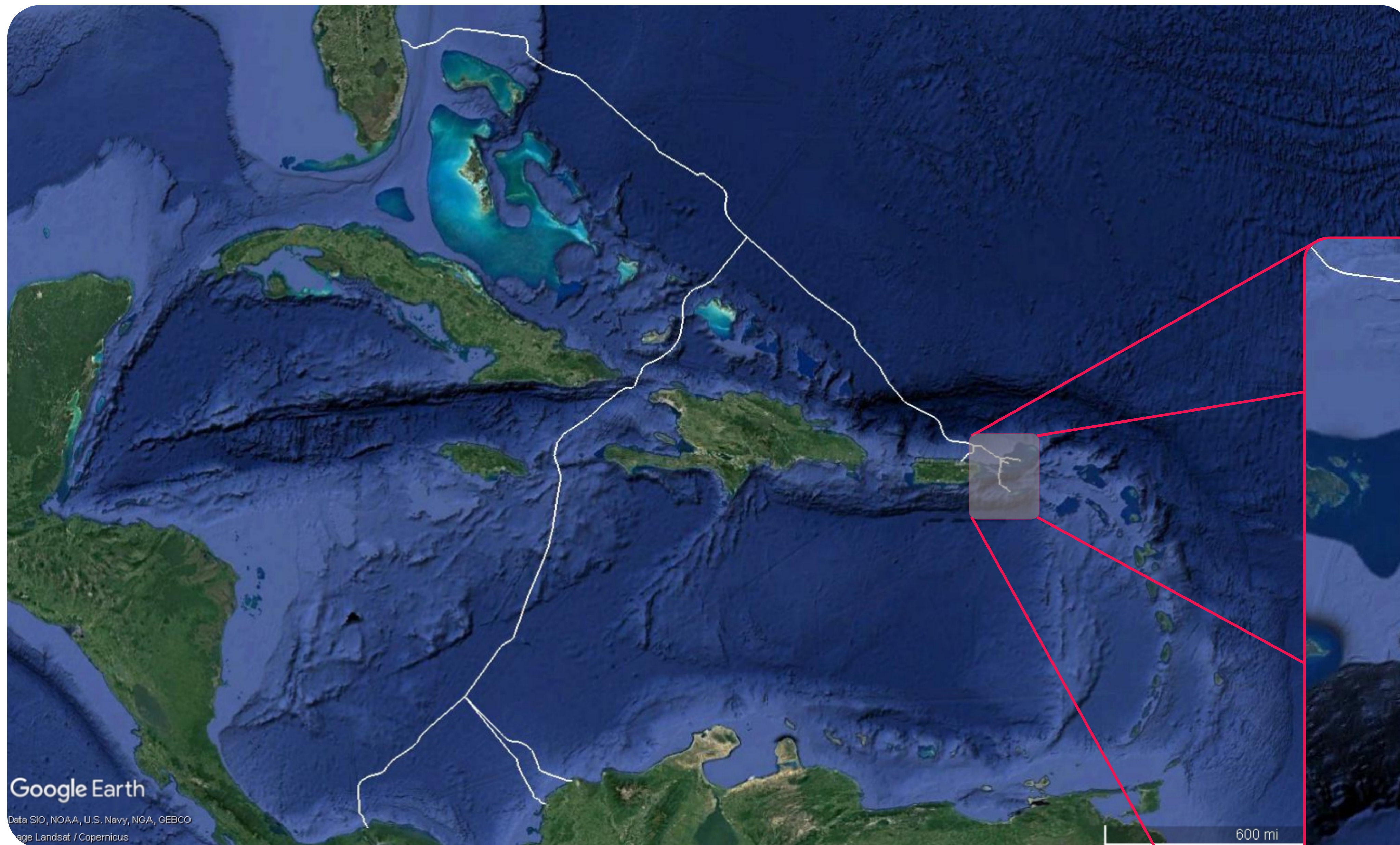


PROJECT MAP

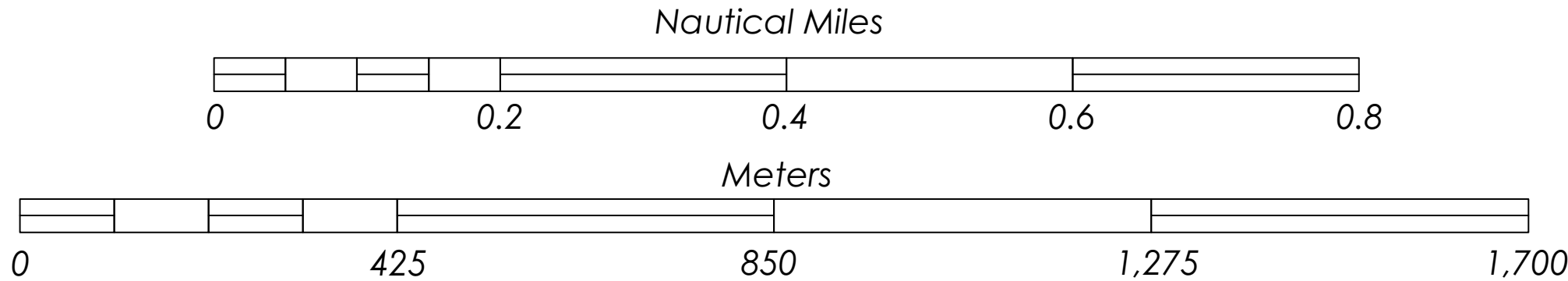
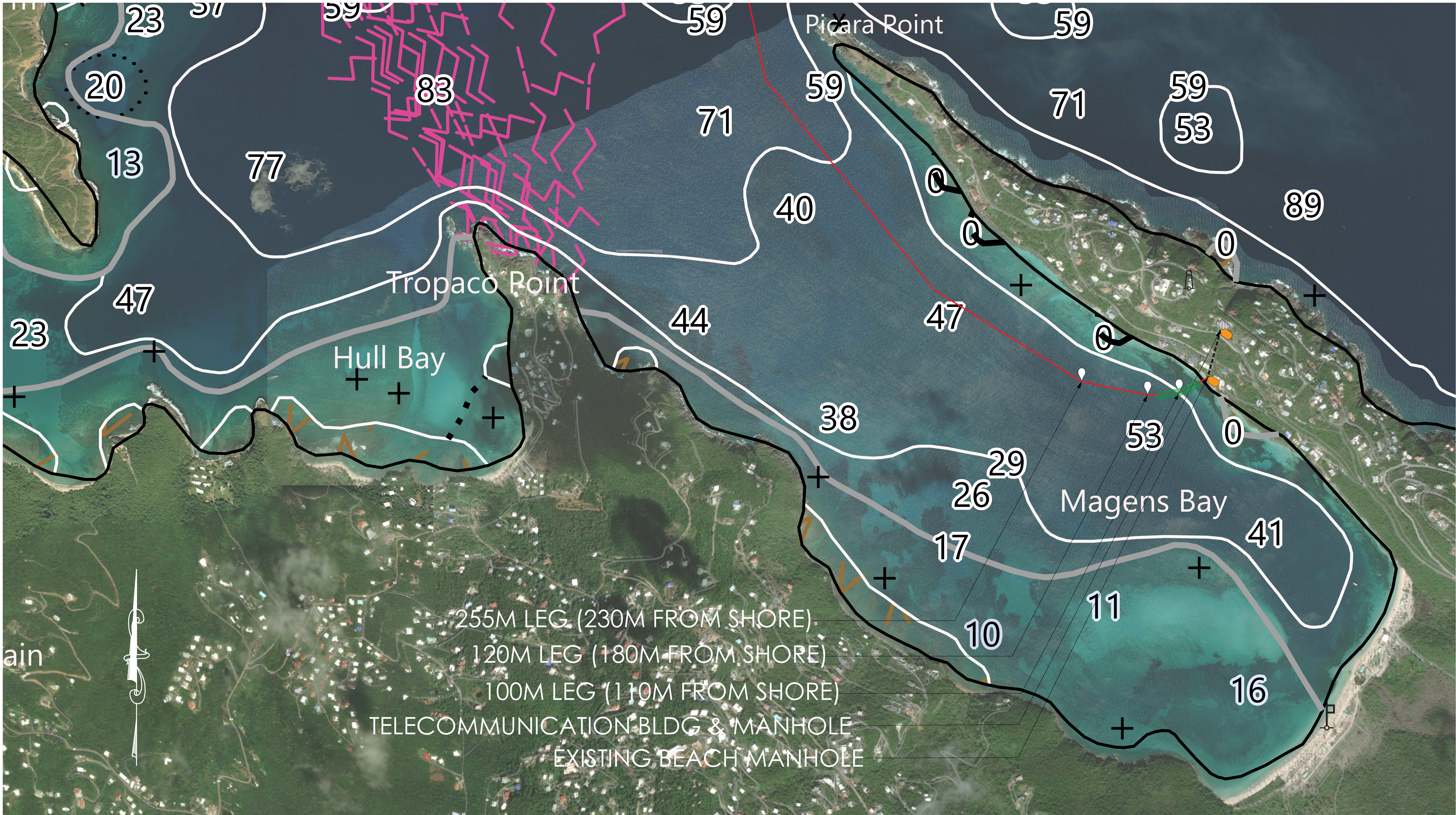
GOOGLE EARTH MAPS



# TRANS-CARIBBEAN FIBER SYSTEM (TCFS) USVI CABLE LANDING PROJECT







- KEY MARKER POINTS FOR NEW CABLE ROUTE
- EXISTING CABLES
- PROPOSED SHORE-SIDE MANHOLE LOCATION
- EXISTING SHORE-SIDE CONDUIT
- PROPOSED TCFS CABLE ROUTE
- CORAL REEF LOCATION

	BY	DATE
DESIGNED	B. KEULARTS	12/18/2023
DRAWN	B. KEULARTS	12/18/2023
CHECKED		
REVISED		

PROJECT NO.  
20210923-03

SCALE: AS NOTED

STAMP

NOTES  
*Bathymetry Overlay*  
WGS 1984 World Mercator (Calculated)  
SCALE 1:35000 at Lat. 18°25.29'  
GCS WGS 1984  
*Satellite Base Image*  
Esri Community Maps Contributors  
US Virgin Islands GIS Division, Esri, HERE,  
Garmin, Foursquare, SafeGraph,  
GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS,  
NPS, US Census Bureau

PROJECT:  
USVI  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
CABLE LANDING  
PROJECT

MAGEN'S BAY  
ST. THOMAS  
CABLE ROUTE



**Tysam Tech, LLC**  
9139 CASTLE COAKLEY  
BAY 7, SUITE 1  
CHRISTIANSTED, VI 00820

SHEET  
**D-3**