

Applicant: Trans Americas Fiber (TAF) U.S., LLC.

Project: Butler Bay, St. Croix USVI Telecommunication Cable Installation Project
(TAM-1 Submarine Cable)

Written Testimony

Good afternoon, Committee Chairman, Senators and members of the board, thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of the Trans Americas Fiber (TAF) U.S., LLC.

Telecommunication Cable Installation Project for Butler Bay, St. Croix USVI.

Existing telecommunication cables routing through the Americas and the Caribbean are aging and nearing the end of service life and capacity. These older cables lack the bandwidth and reliability to support the growing digital needs of our territory, with improved technology and demand for faster and more reliable communication channels. As part of a larger initiative to improve global communication channels, TAF U.S. proposes to install the TAM-1 submarine fiber optic cable system between the Americas and the Caribbean. This modern cable system will bring the improved bandwidth, reliability and clarity needed to connect the U.S. Virgin Islands with Florida, Puerto Rico, and more than ten other nations across the Caribbean and Latin America.

This project positions the USVI to connect to the mainland at Vero Beach, Florida, and as a potential hub for future expansion in the greater Caribbean area. The proposed landing site for the St. Croix connection point is located within 4A Estate Northside, at the Butler Bay Cable Station, an existing telecommunications building. This location allows us to make use of existing shoreline infrastructure and pipeline conduit already installed, reducing environmental impact and construction time.

The installation method is environmentally conscious. It avoids shoreline disruption by using existing infrastructure and carefully navigates the marine environment to avoid sensitive habitats. No drilling, dredging, or land disturbance is needed, and smaller vessels can float the cable into place with the use of support divers and land-side team.

As part of a commitment to ensuring improved services within the USVI as part of this larger project, the developer has committed to providing free bandwidth to the Government of the Virgin Islands through VINGN. That means our public services, such as schools, hospitals, emergency services stand to directly benefit from faster, more reliable internet access at no cost. Improved communication infrastructure will also mean improved resiliency during and after major hurricanes or other extreme weather events.

This project is a strategic upgrade that will serve the USVI and its Caribbean partners for decades. It enhances digital access, supports economic development, and ensures that the USVI remain competitive, connected, and resilient in the global digital economy.

I respectfully urge your support of this project and your favorable ruling to ratify the CZM permit. Thank you.