

As the National Park stands today, control of livestock calls for immediate impoundment and return of livestock to owners, filling in of artificially constructed fresh waterholes, and encouragement and in some cases supplying material assistance to livestock owners living outside the National Park to build enclosures and fence grazing areas. These native people are not able financially to fence areas nor are their lands suitable for grazing purposes. Sociological and agricultural appraisal by U. S. agencies is indicated.

Livestock raising and breeding, dairy farming and agricultural pursuits on St. John Island have been economically feasible and profitable in the past because of good soils. Today the soils have been washed from the slopes and in many areas only rock soils remain. Hundreds of years will be required to replace these soils and the establishment of the original forest type cover which is prerequisite for the continuance of stabilized soils. Grass was grown and harvested on the lower slopes on a rotational system and a continual supply was available for feeding the livestock.

In the early history of the island, both the lower and upper slopes of the mountain were fired and grown to grass or other agricultural products. In the early 1900's, soil-floods from the ravines were more numerous than today--some reaching to the sea. This is correlated with heavy overgrazing and misuse of the land. It is probable that the Danish cultural and agricultural pursuits terminated as the result of exhausting the natural resources of soil and timber.

Goats and sheep: Goats and a few sheep utilize more area in the Virgin Islands National Park than any other kind of livestock and are the greatest offenders in overgrazing and loss of soil. In some areas, especially on ocean-bordering promontories, goats have completely consumed the vegetation.

The extirpation of sheep and goats from the National Park is not a major problem (although immediate action is required) and can best be accomplished