

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Contact:**

Sarah Kirkby  
Barefoot Marketing  
(242) 352 – 4578  
[barefootsk@coralwave.com](mailto:barefootsk@coralwave.com)

Fred Smith  
Callenders & Co.  
(242) 352-7458  
[FSmith@callenders.net](mailto:FSmith@callenders.net)

Erin Noyes  
Save Guana Cay Reef  
(242) 365-5122  
[guanabeachhouse@yahoo.com](mailto:guanabeachhouse@yahoo.com)

### **Guana Cay Residents to Demonstrate in Nassau**

*Save Guana Cay Reef campaigners take their battle to the capitol on Tuesday, March 15<sup>th</sup>*

The leaders and the supporters of the Save Guana Cay Reef (SGCR) group will take their battle to the capitol on Tuesday, March 15th. Led by Troy Albury, Erin Noyes and Fredrick Smith, concerned residents of Guana Cay will be peacefully demonstrating against the proposed Guana Cay development outside Parliament and are asking for fellow Bahamians to join them in their cause.

Their determination to go on after the heads of agreement which was signed by the Government last week, shows that their fortitude to protect their country, their island and the environment has not swayed. “This type of large scale development is inappropriate if the Abaco Cays. Abaco’s small scale development has proven to be the most sustainable tourism economy in The Bahamas, and has been recognized by Prime Minister Christie as a model to be repeated on other islands across The Bahamas. So, we beg you Mr. Christie, do not drown the ambiance of a tourism economy which is working, by bringing in a large golf resort, the likes of which have failed repeatedly across The Bahamas. We do not want another Cotton Bay, another Cape Eleuthra, let us learn from our mistakes!” said Bahamian Guana resident Aubrey Clarke.

In a recent Tribune article, the Ministry of Tourism planning team, led by Mr. Earlston MacPhee, outlined the importance of protecting our coral reefs, wetlands, and coastal zones for the sustainable development of our tourism economy. Guana residents are asking that the Prime Minister listen to his

Ministry's recommendations and make decisions to develop The Bahamas for the benefit of Bahamians for the long term.

Guana Cay, a small island off the east coast of the Abaco mainland, is seven miles long and home to 150 Bahamian residents. The proposed development by Discovery Land Company, a San Francisco based land company will encompass a 240-slip marina, an 18 hole golf course, a 75 room villa with 350 proposed second homes. This would more than double the island's population. The developers have been granted government land at almost a third of the island in an area called "Joe's Creek". "I am so tired of our government giving away Crown Land to foreign developers, in hopes that they will 'provide jobs' for Bahamians. Crown Land is for Bahamians to develop, the government should provide incentives for Bahamians to build businesses on these properties, so that ownership stays here, and profits remain in the country. This is our birth right!" said Troy Albury, co-chairman of SGCR.

"Joe's Creek is a fragile wetland and mangrove area, one that we know as Bahamians is essential to the livelihood of our environment and especially our fishing business," added Mr. Albury. "We have hired a leading marine biologist who has reviewed the Environmental Impact Assessment for the project and documented the impact of this development and we plan to pass their findings on to the BEST Commission, The Minister of Health (who is responsible for the environment), The Ambassador to the Environment and the Prime Minister. This assessment shows that the existing EIA for the project is seriously deficient and that much of the developer's plan means certain death to the surrounding marine ecosystems. The report states, 'The marina will be a cesspool.' It is our hope they will live up to their promises to protect their 'pristine environment of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas' so that we remain Clean, Green and Pristine. "

The group plan to travel to Nassau on Tuesday, March 15th and are asking all Bahamians young and old to come and join them in their cause. "This is our Clifton Cay, but we are but a few voices, we are hopeful that our fellow brothers

and sisters will help us stop the abuse to our quaint and beautiful island, for this is not a onetime case, unfortunately it is the same story repeated across The Bahamas” said Albury, co-chair of SGCR. For more information about the SGCR campaign interested persons can go to their website at [www.saveguanacayreef.com](http://www.saveguanacayreef.com) <<http://www.saveguanacayreef.com/>> and are asked to pass on this site and the date of the demonstration to concerned Bahamians everywhere.

The demonstration will start at 10am at Parliament Square and “Save Guana Cay Reef” t-shirts will be on sale to help the group pay for publicity and legal costs for court proceedings to try and stop the brutal over -development of this little cay. Summarizing the groups main cause was a fifth generation Guanian resident, Ebony Albury, who stated “...we see this as nothingness than protecting our heritage. If we give it all away and destroy the environment, what is going to be left for our children?”

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