



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Aztec Ruins National Monument
Chaco Culture National Historical Park
725 Ruins Road
Aztec, NM 87410-9715
505 334-6174

National Park Service - News Release

Release Date: **Immediate**
Contact: Nathan Hatfield
Phone: 505 334-6174 ext. 228
Date: September 1, 2018



Aztec Ruins Lecture Series hosts Ranger in a Tropical Land: Insights into Hurricane Maria Recovery

The idea of the Virgin Islands as a tropical Caribbean paradise of white sand, coral reefs, and lush landscapes is a common image. The US territory contains 87 National Register of Historic Places sites, this includes historic districts and buildings along with prehistoric archaeological sites, along with national parks, monuments, and wildlife refuges. It was an engaging utopia for residents and visitors until disaster struck in September of 2017 in the form of Hurricane Maria.

In February and March of 2018, our speaker, archeological technician Steve Matt, was selected to be part of a Federal Disaster Recovery Coordination team to be sent to the U.S Virgin Islands, St. Croix, for the Hurricane Maria Natural and Cultural Resource Recovery Support Function (NCR RSF) FEMA Mission assignment. His duties entailed providing damage assessments along with recommended mitigation and cost estimates to the prehistoric and historic cultural resources listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) located throughout St. Croix.

The teams engaged in a full approach to federal project assessments and planning. Not only were they conducting fieldwork in extreme conditions, they were initiating meetings between nonprofit organizations, museums, and private landowners (the Nature Conservancy for example). This along with completing the required documentation the State Historic Preservation Office and US Virgin Island's government requests offered a very different adventure than most have experienced.

On Friday, September 21, at 7:00 pm, Aztec Ruins hosts this lecture in the Visitor Center, with gates opening at 6:45. Admission is free. Come join Steve Matt as he shares his insight from a federal and archeological view and the recovery quest from his immersive journey into the aftermath of Hurricane Maria.

For more information on this and other events, call Aztec Ruins Visitor Center at 505.334.6174, see the website link <https://www.nps.gov/azru/planyourvisit/calendar.htm>, or find us at www.facebook.com/AztecRuinsNM/.

www.nps.gov

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

About the National Park Service. More than 20,000 National Park Service employees who care for America's 417 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities.

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.