



## **Community Connect Awards – Virgin Islands**

### **2002 Grant Awards:**

**Ocean Store, LLC Coral Bay, Virgin Islands;**

**Grant Amount: \$1,119,500**

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**County: Island of St. John**

Ocean Store, LLC will use RUS grant funds to deploy a wireless system for the provision of broadband service to the town of Coral Bay on the island of St. John, Virgin Islands. Coral Bay, population 649, is considered to be rather remote, located in a valley occupying the eastern side of the island. The system will utilize non-line-of-sight technology operating on the 2.3GHz WCS licensed spectrum and will enable data rates of

1.5 Mbps downstream and 1.2 Mbps upstream. A total of 1,200 users within a 15-mile radius from the base station will be able to connect to the Internet which will also benefit boaters who frequent the area. In addition, a community center will be located inside Guy Benjamin Elementary School that will offer high-speed Internet access to students and residents of Coral Bay. Access to both training and scholastic courses for the benefit of community residents and students will be available through the use of this center. Among the offerings will be courses in basic Microsoft software, basic Web design for business and personal use, how to establish a business online, and using the Internet for research. In particular, the system will enable access to continuing education for firemen belonging to the Coral Bay Fire Station, as well as allowing this critical community facility to locate a wider variety of suppliers. Broadband availability would also make the community more attractive to second home buyers who would be able to telecommute to offices on the U.S. mainland, thereby providing an economic boost to the local economy.