Shallow-Water Benthic Habitat Maps for St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands

Example of a Successful Partnership in Marine Benthic Mapping

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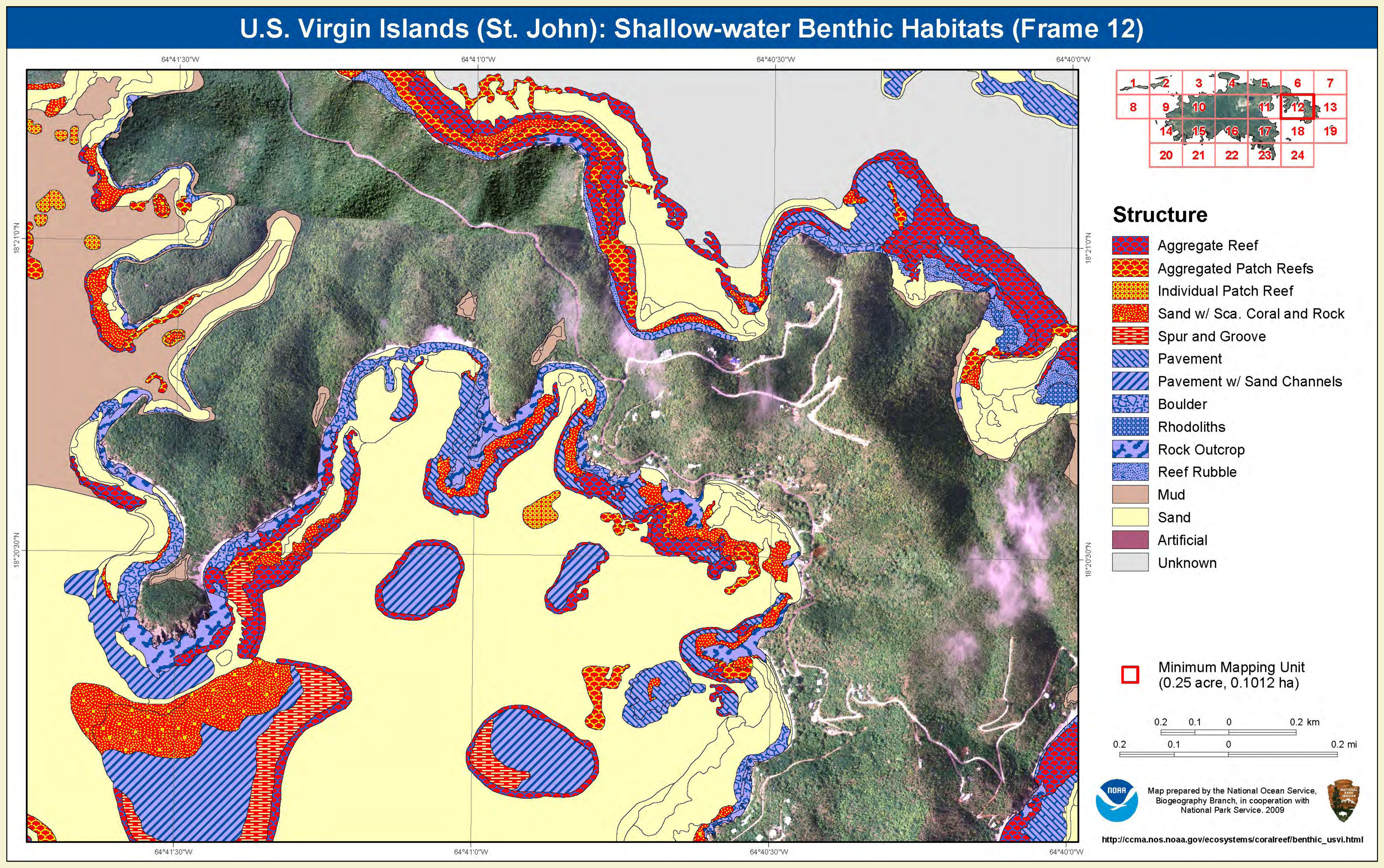
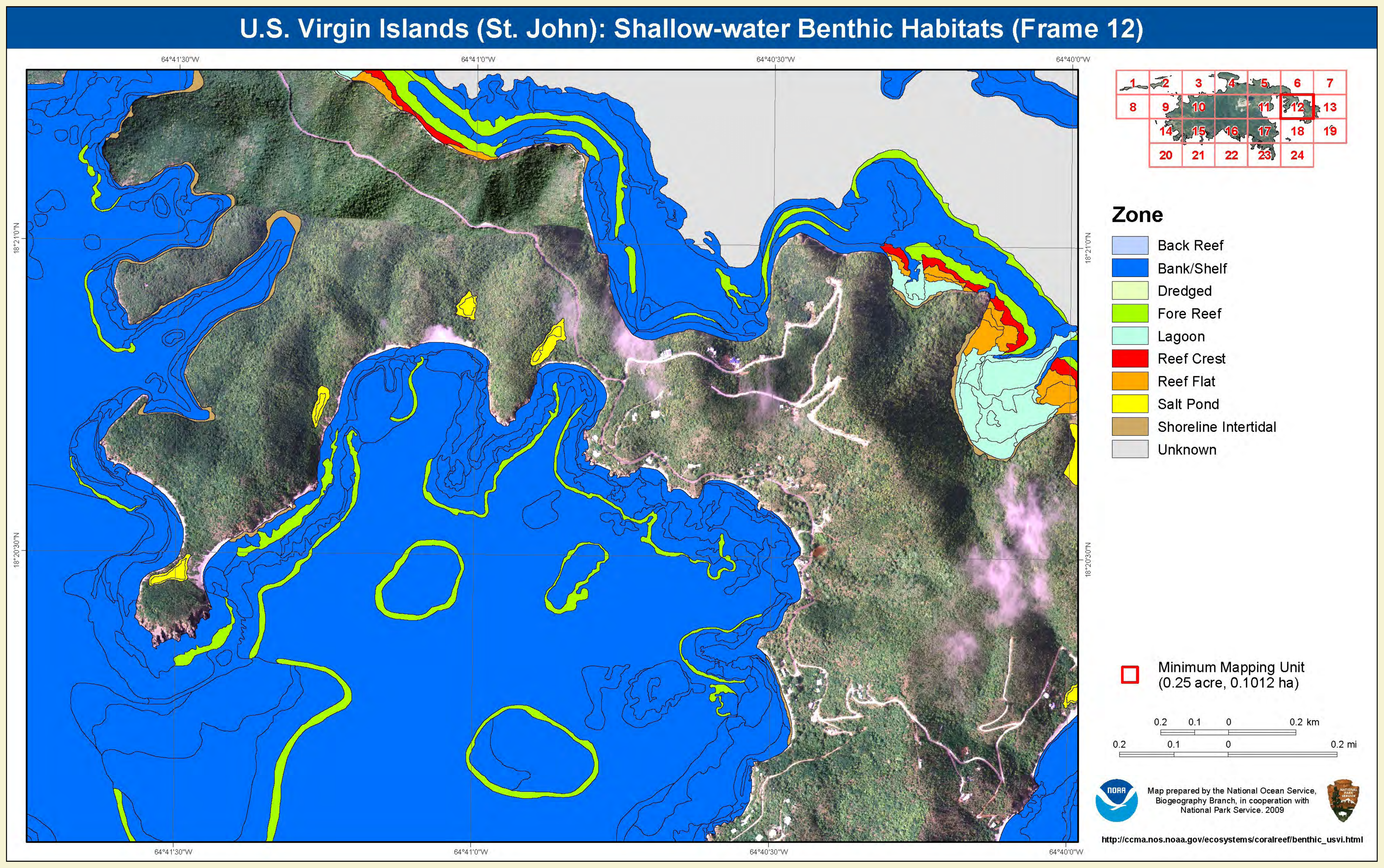
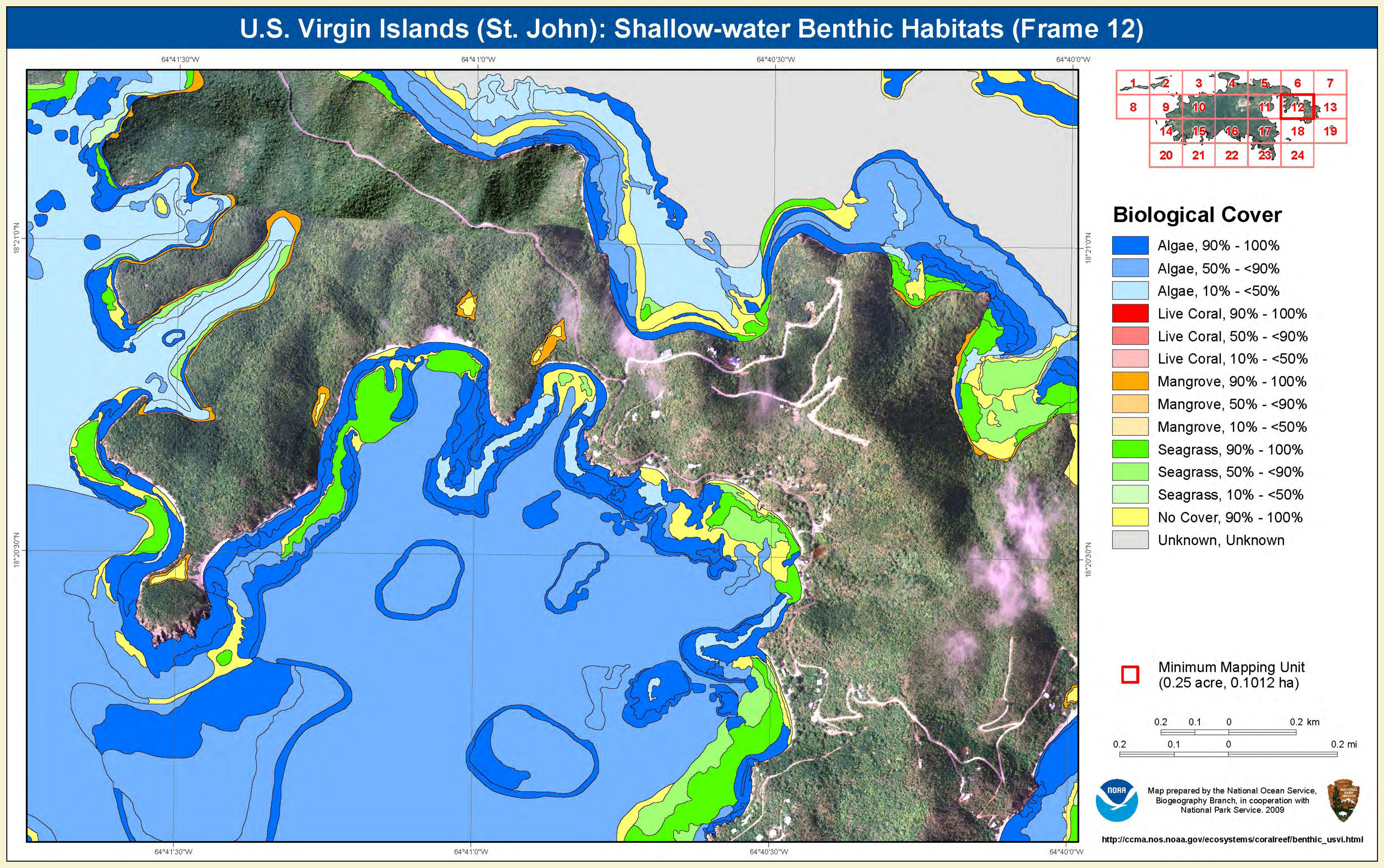
Samples From The Shallow-Water Benthic Habitat Mapping Project For Virgin Islands National Park & Virgin Island Coral Reef National Monument



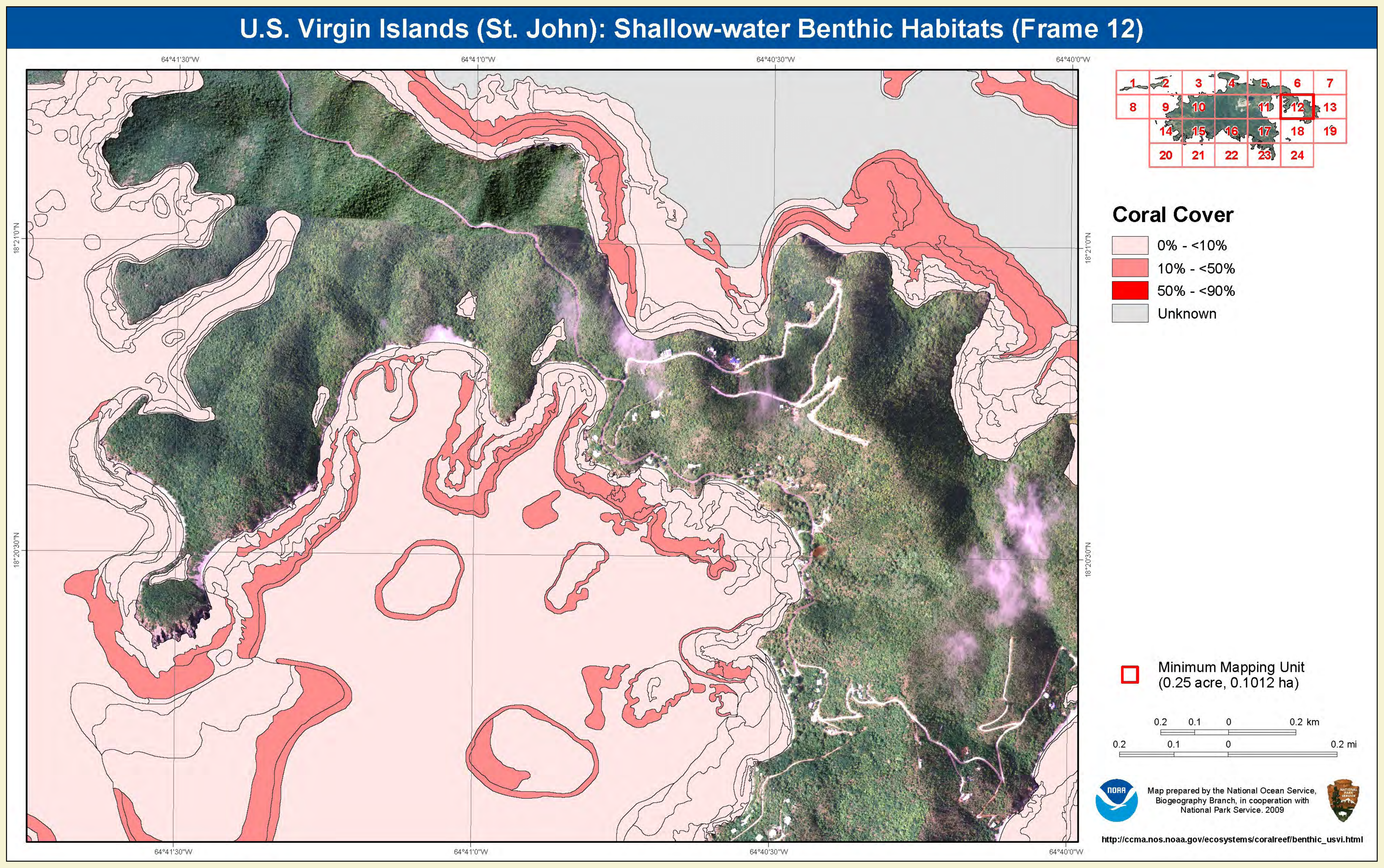
Geomorphological Structure



Geographic Zone



Major Biological Cover



Per Cent Coral Cover

Summary

Benthic habitat mapping results for the shallow (< 30 m) waters of St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands were published in 2009. The classification scheme utilized in these maps defined benthic communities on the basis of four primary coral reef ecosystem attributes: 1) broad geographic zone, 2) geomorphological structure type, 3) dominant biological cover, and 4) degree of live coral cover. The maps were generated by visual interpretation of satellite and airborne imagery. A separate partnership project that mapped the moderate depth (30 - 60 m) benthic habitats of St. John, using different methods, was also published in 2009. This poster shows samples of the St. John Shallow-Water Benthic Habitat maps and is presented as an example of an NPS partnership in marine benthic mapping.

Partnership

This benthic habitat map series for St. John resulted from a collaborative pilot project between the National Park Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The Biogeography Branch of NOAA's Center for Coastal Monitoring and Assessment conducted the field work and produced the data, maps and project report. They also produced a web site, where data from both the Shallow-Water and the Moderate Depth benthic mapping projects of St. John can be explored: http://ccma.nos.noaa.gov/gv_stjohn/stjohn_biomapper.html. The data, maps and reports for both projects are also available on the NPS Natural Resource Information Portal: http://nrinfo.nps.gov/Reference.mvc/Profile?Code=2165922.

About the author

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