



## New Fund Established to Help Hurricane-ravaged Barbuda

*Waitt Institute Sets up Emergency Relief Fund for Humanitarian Aid*

***"Barbuda is barely habitable."*** – Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua & Barbuda

### NEWS RELEASE

Friday, 8 September 2017

**San Diego/California** – In response to the devastation wrought by Hurricane Irma on Barbuda, a partner community of the San Diego-based Waitt Institute, the Institute has established the "[Barbuda Restoration & Conservation Trust](#)." With an initial grant of \$100,000 USD from the *Waitt Foundation*, The Trust is set up through the *International Community Foundation* to accept US tax-deductible donations from grantmakers and the public.

Contributions can be made at [www.waittinstitute.org/barbuda-hurricane-relief](http://www.waittinstitute.org/barbuda-hurricane-relief). 100% of monies donated will go directly to Barbuda and its people.

On Tuesday September 5, 2017, Hurricane Irma devastated the Caribbean island of Barbuda, when 185 mph winds destroyed upwards of 95% of homes and buildings, killing at least one person, a child. The island's airport and runway are severely damaged, the Petrol station no longer works, and rough seas make it challenging to evacuate people and bring much needed supplies to the island. Antigua & Barbuda's Minister of Education, Hon. Michael Browne told local ABS news, ***"Flying over the island was as if a nuclear bomb or something was let off."***

First relief efforts are underway. The Government of Antigua & Barbuda is in the process of sending water, food, blankets, medicine and other emergency supplies to Barbuda. Unfortunately, given the near immediate onset of the next storm, Hurricane Jose, urgent evacuation measures are also in progress in order to bring Barbudans to Antigua for short-term shelter.

***"As the first community to partner with the Waitt Institute to achieve our shared goal of blue prosperity, Barbuda and its wonderful people hold a special place in my heart,"*** said Ted Waitt, Founder & Chairman of The Institute. According to Waitt, 'Blue Prosperity' is an approach which recognizes that people and oceans can thrive sustainably together, and achieve a symbiotic healthy economy and environment while also fostering resilience to climate change.

The *Waitt Institute* is among many organizations that have offered support to the people of Barbuda and is working, as much as possible, with the Government of Antigua & Barbuda, the Barbuda Council, multi-lateral aid agencies, and Barbudan community leaders. The Institute is also coordinating with fellow private sector actors with similar relief efforts such as *Paradise Found, Coco Point, Scuba Montserrat, Aqua Montserrat*, and others.

***"We have worked with the people of Barbuda through the Blue Halo Initiative since 2013. Our hearts go out to our friends and partners. We know that the people of Barbuda are strong and resilient, so they will bounce back. However, they need help now,"*** said Dr. Kathryn Mengerink, Executive Director of the *Waitt Institute*. ***"We are in close touch with the Office of the Prime Minister and stand ready to get to work with relief and recovery,"*** she added.

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**How to donate:**

[www.waittinstitute.org/barbuda-hurricane-relief](http://www.waittinstitute.org/barbuda-hurricane-relief)

**Attachments:**

**1\_Codrington in Barbuda after Hurricane Irma:** Estimates suggest that 95% of houses and buildings were damaged during Hurricane Irma (c) Simply Antigua and Barbuda

**2\_Destroyed Housing on Barbuda:** Given the level of destruction, it is a miracle that more people were not hurt. (c) Simply Antigua and Barbuda

**3\_Barbuda Village Meeting:** Barbuda Council, works to organize relief effort on the ground in Barbuda (above the crowd, Council Members Knacynta Nedd, Asha Frank, Rabbie Burton, and Kendra Beazer) (c) Simply Antigua and Barbuda

**4\_Evacuating Barbuda:** With hurricane Jose approaching, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda urges Barbuda residents to evacuate the island. (c) Simply Antigua and Barbuda

**5\_Destroyed Infrastructure on Barbuda:** Barbuda lost power and telecommunication during Hurricane Irma. (c) Simply Antigua and Barbuda

***The Waitt Institute is working with local journalists and project partners to produce new footage from Barbuda. Additional information and resources will be distributed and are available here:***

Facebook: [facebook.com/BlueHaloBarbuda/](https://facebook.com/BlueHaloBarbuda/) [facebook.com/waittinstitute](https://facebook.com/waittinstitute)

Twitter: [@waittinstitute](https://twitter.com/waittinstitute)

Instagram: [@waittinstitute](https://instagram.com/waittinstitute)

YouTube: [youtube.com/waittinstitute](https://youtube.com/waittinstitute)

**For more information or to set up interviews, please contact:**

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**Waitt Institute:**

The [Waitt Institute](http://waittinstitute.org) endeavors to ensure ecologically, economically, and culturally sustainable use of ocean resources. The Institute partners with governments committed to developing and implementing comprehensive, science-based, community-driven solutions for sustainable ocean management. Our goal is to benefit coastal communities while restoring fish populations and habitats. Our approach is to engage stakeholders, provide the tools needed to design locally appropriate policies, facilitate the policymaking process, and build capacity for effective implementation and long-term success.