HERD STRANDING OF ATLANTIC SPOTTED DOLPHINS (*Stenella frontalis*) IN ST. JOHN, UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

Marta A., Rodríguez-López¹, Antonio A. Mignucci-Giannoni¹, Rafe H. Boulon² and Ernest H. Williams, Jr.³

¹Red Caribeña de Varamientos – Caribbean Stranding Network, P.O. Box 38030, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00937-1030

²Division of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Planning and Natural Resources, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, 00802

³Department of Marine Sciences, University of Puerto Rico, P.O. Box 908, Lajas, Puerto Rico 00667-0908

On 22 October 1994, six Atlantic Spotted Dolphins (*Stenella frontalis*) stranded in Caneel Bay, St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands. Two juveniles, which were in good condition, were released by local rescuers. Government officials found two dolphins dead on the beach and attempted to resuscitate two more, but the latter soon died. The carcasses of three of these males were flown to the Caribbean Stranding Network in Puerto Rico for post-mortem examination. They were sub-adult specimens with not readily apparent cause of death as all appeared to have previously been in good health. *Stenella frontalis* are commonly found stranded in this area, but herd strandings of cetaceans are rare. Only *Globicephala macrorhynchus* and *Ziphius cavirostris* had previously been found to strand in herds. This represented the second multiple-animal stranding of *S. frontalis*. The first was of four animals, which stranded alive in Sandy Bay, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, 2 September 1970.