

South Eleutheran Residents' Views of Hotel and Resort Development
in South Eleuthera

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I. Introduction and History

The history of Eleuthera Island, one of the beautiful Out Islands of the Bahamian archipelago, is characterized by a cycle of alternating prosperity and depression. This boom and bust pattern is now most evident in relation to tourism, but finds its roots in the turbulent past of the island. Before Europeans reached the island, a thriving population of Lucayans inhabited Eleuthera, living peacefully and simply.¹ After the arrival of the Spanish, however, the local Lucayans nearly entirely died out.² The island entered another period of prosperity a few hundred years later, when Puritans settled a colony in the late 17th century, importing African slaves for labor.³ But sure enough, the agricultural industries they established had fallen into decline by the end of the 19th century, and the population had fallen 30% by 1921.⁴

Eleuthera experienced a period of prosperous tourism from 1950 to 1980, during which the population of the island reached upwards of 16,000 at its height. When the Bahamas gained independence from Great Britain in 1973, however, foreign ownership policies changed dramatically to favor Bahamian interests over those of foreign investors and businesses.⁵ As a result, most major businesses and agricultural operations slumped or were simply abandoned, including some of the world's most famous and exclusive resorts like Club Med, Cotton Bay, Cape Eleuthera, several small "boutique" hotels, and Windermere Island, the spot Lady Diana and Prince Charles chose for their honeymoon.

Since the early 1980s, the once bustling resorts of Eleuthera have been left to nature, with various abandoned hotels, homes, and villas scattered across the island. Residents have struggled for over 20 years, many forced to live off the land or off government assistance. Based on the most recent data from the 2000 census, there are now only 8,000 people living in Eleuthera. The island is populated by a black majority (85 percent nationwide)⁶, the descendants of African slaves, with a small minority of white Bahamians and foreign homeowners. Only 41 percent of Eleutherans reported having any form of employment in 2000. Of those who were employed, 15.5 percent worked in "construction," 15.0 percent in "hotels and restaurants," and 13.7 percent in "wholesale, retail trade, and repair."⁷

Today, Eleuthera remains the tropical paradise it always was, and appears to be entering another period of prosperous tourism. Numerous developers, both foreign and Bahamian, are looking for ways to exploit the island's beauty and seclusion, building or planning to build many homes and resorts. According the developers, this renewed interest is due to "lots of undeveloped, cheap land, with bluer water and whiter sand...and an enthusiastic government."⁸ Additionally, the

¹ Michael Craton and Gail Saunders. *Islanders in the Stream: A History of the Bahamian People*. (Vol. 1). Athens, GA: U. Georgia Press. 1992: 18.

² *Ibid.*, 54-5.

³ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 151-2.

⁵ Denny Lee. "The Flip Side of the Bahamas." *The New York Times*. 19 Feb. 2006. <[www](#)>.

⁶ CIA. *The World Factbook*. 26 June 2009. <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/BF.html>>.

⁷ Government of the Bahamas. *The 2000 Census of Population and Housing Report: Eleuthera*. 6 Feb 2008.

⁸ Cheryl Blackerby. "Bahamas Building Boom." *Palm Beach Post*. 15 Oct. 2006. <<http://www.palmbeachpost.com/>

Bahamas attracts developers and homeowners because of its tax situation – the only major taxes are on imports, while residents live free of income and sales taxes.⁹

Many of these new developments are being built on the sites of resorts that thrived during the heyday of Eleutheran tourism. One of the most prominent projects is a 300 million dollar project to develop a resort community at Cotton Bay, just down the road from the old Cotton Bay. Another smaller development at Powell Point is under way on the clear-cut site of the original Cape Eleuthera resort. A new resort under construction on the north end of Windermere Island will include 50 private residences and a 50-cottage hotel. The French Leave will occupy the old Club Med site, one of the most beautiful beaches on Eleuthera Island.

While all of these resorts are in various stages of development, several other projects are in the design stages. On January 8, 2008, the Bahamian government approved two projects proposed by the Meritage Corporation of Lansing, Michigan. The developments will be located in Rock Sound Bay and Northside Harbor, and will be “residential resort communities.”¹⁰ Meritage CEO Robert Schermer also mentioned plans for another planned development on an 884 acre plot of land at Lighthouse Beach on the southern tip of the Island.¹¹ The number of boat slips is expected to double in this next wave of Bahamian development, an important figure since marina building is one of the most environmentally destructive forms of construction. Marinas are in various stages of completion all throughout Eleuthera, most prominently at Powell Pointe. On an even more prospective level, Poseidon Undersea Resorts has proposed the world’s first large scale underwater resort off the coast of Eleuthera.

The renewed interest in developing Eleuthera raises many issues, both on a local and international scale. Eleuthera is being referred to as “the new Florida,” a state bursting at the seams with resorts and hotels. Since the state has little room for further development, the close proximity and relative emptiness of the Bahamas make it a logical extension of the Florida style of development.¹² Many outsiders have expressed strong anti-development sentiments, claiming that the island is too beautiful as it is, that any more tourists or tourist attractions would take away from its seclusion and destroy the environment and community. An example is the proposed Meritage Development for Lighthouse Point, perhaps the most beautiful beach on Eleuthera. One particular blog, written out of Gregory Town, harped on the environmental impacts that increased tourism development on the Island might have. “Eleuthera is a *special place*,” rants the blogger, “that is being *exploited* by many people in the name of making \$money\$ with no thought to the environment and natural beauty that drew them here in the first place! As an underdeveloped island, there is much interest because of the good shape of the environment, so the irony is not lost on people who care.”¹²

The remote Out Islands of the Bahamas, including Eleuthera, have been identified by developers as prime candidates for ecotourism or sustainable tourism, alternatives to mass tourism that have

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⁹ Glorious Bahamas. “Bahamas Taxes.” 2006. <<http://www.gloriousbahamas.com/taxes.html>>.

¹⁰ Marketwire. “Meritage Hospitality Receives Government Approval on Two Oceanfront Development Sites.” 9 Jan. 2008. <<http://www.marketwire.com/mw/release.do?id=808815>>

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Keep Eleuthera Green (2008). <http://www.keepeleutheragreen.com>.

become trendy since the 1980s. These forms of ‘alternative tourism’ claim to minimize the negative effects that traditional tourism has on the environment and cultural integrity of the host location. Many of the pending developments mentioned above have tried to integrate green features or practices in an attempt to attract ecotourists. However, the ability of ecotourism to truly benefit the tourist destination is a subject of contention.

While concerns over the environment and increased strain on resources color the opinions of prominent foreign residents, including Tom and Anne Maxsey, Bobbie Hallig and several employees of the Island School in Cape Eleuthera, the opinions of those most directly affected by development – the local residents – have been largely unheard. It is possible the downsides to increased tourism that outsiders point to so readily are not even on the radar for South Eleutherans. Thus, it would be unwise and unfair to look at development without taking into consideration the perspectives of the local residents or giving them a chance to weigh in on the possibilities. In this study, we explore the opinions and views of the Eleutheran natives concerning development within the larger context of tourism theory.

II. Eleuthera today

Eleuthera is commonly divided into three sections: North, Central, and South. North Eleuthera is characterized by spectacular bluffs and cliffs overlooking the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea on either side. Central Eleuthera is the narrowest section of the island, where the terrain is hilly but well-suited to the cultivation of Eleuthera’s famous pineapples and tomatoes. Finally, South Eleuthera is flatter and greener, with charming villages and a beautiful cape.¹³ Each subdivision has its own airport, where flights to and from Florida average an hour and a half.¹⁴

As of 2002, tourism and related industries accounted for 60 percent of employment and 50 percent of the GDP of the Bahamas, though this proportion is likely smaller for Eleuthera by itself.¹⁵ The island received 327,046 visitors in 2007, just 7.1 percent of total visitors to the Bahamas.¹⁶ Furthermore, around 300,000 of these visitors (91.7%) were cruise landed and were confined to Princess Cay, an isolated settlement built by Princess Cruise Line with very little connection to the Eleutheran economy. The country as a whole receives a greater portion of its tourists by air (32%) than Eleuthera, with sea travel accounting for only 68 percent of tourist arrivals to the Bahamas. The large majority of visitors in 2008 were Americans (80.5%), with Europeans (7.9%) and Canadians (6.4%) rounding out the top three. Eleutheran hotels tend to be much smaller than those typical of the Bahamas. As of 2008, the country as a whole had 287 hotel units with an average of 57 rooms per unit, whereas Eleuthera had 44 hotel units (15% of the country’s total) with an average of 13.75 rooms per unit.¹⁷

Eleuthera was once known as the "breadbasket" of the Bahamas, providing the world with delicious pineapples and the local region with tomatoes and other agricultural products. Canning

¹³ CARIBSAVE. “Eleuthera Profile.” <<http://www.caribsave.org/index.php?id=3>>.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ “The Development of Sustainable” Apostolopoulos & Gayle, 36-7.

¹⁶ CARIBSAVE. “Eleuthera Profile.”

¹⁷ Ibid.

factories set up in Rock Sound allowed produce to be shipped long distances.¹⁸ But poor farming practices depleted the soil of the island by the 1890s, making the continuation of mass cultivation impossible.¹⁹ After this boom and bust in agriculture came the 20th century boom and bust in tourism, which left the majority of the islanders unemployed and detached from agriculture. As of today, Eleuthera imports most of its food products from afar, putting it in an unfavorable position of total dependency. The Bahamas can manage its food needs for only 6 days by itself.

The past 100 years has also seen huge changes in population distribution in the Bahamas. At the turn of the 20th century, the majority of the population lived in the Out Islands. However, the metropolitan effect caused many Bahamians to migrate to the capital city of Nassau on New Providence island, mostly in search of employment. By the 1970s, two-thirds of the population lived in Nassau/New Providence.²⁰ Nineteen percent of the Bahamian population lived in Eleuthera in 1891; this had fallen to 4% by 1990.²¹

IV. Theory and Literature

Tourism is an important area of research for a number of reasons. For many developing nations, including Eleuthera, tourism income can comprise a large portion of the gross domestic product. Furthermore, it is one of the fastest growing industries and its impacts will become increasingly significant. The effect of tourism on the economy, the culture and the environment can be positive or negative. Uncontrolled tourism can negatively influence all these sectors. For instance, it can lead to overdevelopment that destroys the natural features and culture that initially attracted tourists, a phenomenon known as “self-destruct tourism.”²² Similarly, too much tourism in small islands or towns can overwhelm the native people and destroy the sense of community.²³ And while tourists spend money during their vacations, a high proportion of this money usually leaks out of the country back to foreign hotel and resort owners. Tourism brings in money, but does not necessarily lead to a higher quality of life for the residents of tourist destinations. However, a carefully regulated and ecologically sensitive tourist industry has the potential to bring genuine benefits to local communities.

The Economic Impacts of Tourism

During the 1990s the Bahamas enjoyed stable and robust economic growth; continuous contractions in unemployment, and steadily declining deficit balances and debt statistics. However, a series of debilitating shocks (e.g., a massive fire in downtown Nassau, the September 11th terrorist attacks, Hurricane Floyd, the global economic downturn) has made the outlook for the Bahamas seem less favorable and more uncertain. With tourism as the main employer in the

¹⁸ Craton & Saunders. *Islanders* (Vol. 1), 151.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 151.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 176.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 180.

²² Holder, 1987

²³ Tourism Penetration Index, McElroy 2002

Bahamas, this section will explore how tourism can possibly encourage or further impede development in Eleuthera.

In many developing countries like the Bahamas, tourism is seen as an opportunity to boost employment, generate foreign exchange, and escape underdevelopment.²⁴ However, countries oftentimes concentrate on the positive economic benefits of tourism and neglect the negative impacts. Here we look at both sides of tourism and provide some suggestions for possibly diminishing the negative impacts.

One phenomenon that often prevents developing countries from reaping the benefits of tourism is the large-scale transfer of tourism revenue out of the host country. In most developing countries, multinational corporations and large foreign businesses are the only forces that possess the capital necessary to invest in tourism infrastructure and facilities. Export leakages can thus occur when foreign investors bring their profits back to their country of origin. Import leakages also take place when tourists demand certain standards in equipment, food, and other products that the host country cannot supply. Because local products are not up to the expectations of the tourist, these products must often be imported using the income generated by tourism. This reliance on imports means that only about 15 percent of every dollar spent in the Bahamas remains in the country.²⁵

Outcomes associated with all-inclusive vacation packages may further impede economic progress. All-inclusive vacations account for the largest amount of tourism revenue but their impact on the economy of the host country is smaller per dollar of revenue than other forms of tourism. Because the needs of the tourist are being provided for by only the resort, not much opportunity is left for local people to profit. All-inclusive vacation packages also import more goods and employ less people per dollar of revenue, leading to more leakages. Developing countries also often use tourism as their comparative advantage when they are unable to compete in the global markets of other commodities. In this case, they may use their unique land (such as Eleuthera's Lighthouse Beach) and culture as a source of revenue that can be competitive on the global scale. As a consequence, many countries come to rely on the success of tourism for their economic survival. Recessions, the impacts of natural disasters, and changes in tourism patterns can then devastate the economy. An example can be found in the huge economic impact the September 11th terrorist attacks had on the Bahamas. During this period when many Americans refrained from traveling, the Bahamian economy suffered a major blow.

Tourism contains many hidden costs for the host country. For example, developers may want the government to improve the airport, roads and other types of infrastructure, and possibly provide tax breaks and other financial advantages, activities that are costly for the state. This may lead to less money being invested in other social services such as education, housing, and so on. **On the** other hand, increased revenue from tourism can cause the government to pay more attention to previously overlooked areas, possible investing in crucial infrastructure to encourage further development.

²⁴ Mowforth & Munt, 1.

²⁵ "Development of Sustainable," 37.

There are, of course, a number of positive economic benefits of tourism. The most notable of these benefits is the increase in employment. In the Bahamas, for example, tourism is the major employer not only for persons in the hotel sector but also in the many spin-off industries and sectors that it feeds into, including retail and wholesale trade, construction, light manufacturing, cottage industry, restaurants and entertainment, maintenance and repair services, agriculture, fishing and various other food services; and has significantly influenced employment in various professional services, which can provide high-end employment. However, most jobs created by developments in the tourism industry are low-level, unskilled and badly paid, leaving ownership and management in the hands of wealthy, educated foreigners.²⁶

The Social and Cultural Impacts of Tourism

The economic argument for tourism in an island like Eleuthera is simply that it may bring jobs and foreign exchange into the country. Because economics often takes the forefront in poorer countries, the societal and cultural implications may not be immediately obvious or the first to be considered in decisions about development. Tourism is sometimes lauded as a force for peace in that exposing different cultures to each other may increase understanding of different cultures. However, a large body of tourism literature covers the substantial and disruptive impact on local communities. Much of it centers on the repercussions of exposing a pristine, relatively static, traditional community to the modern capitalist world.

In a 1989 article entitled “Culture by the pound,” Davydd Greenwood discusses the adverse effects of cultural commoditization. He argues that marketing culture as a commodity, one of the cornerstone strategies of the tourism industry, destroys the meaning of many traditions. Greenwood cites the Spanish Alard of Fuenterrabía, a ritual reenactment of a historical event which became a commodity after it was advertised as a tourist attraction. As the tourist audience grew, confusion spread amongst locals and soon the reason behind the enactment was forgotten and participants had to be paid to participate. Essentially, Greenwood argues that attaching a price to the event gives it a different motivation and thus erases the meaning. For example, the annual Junkanoo celebration in the Bahamas could suffer a similar fate to Trinidad & Tobago’s Carnival, which has been commoditized into an industry with the rise of tourism.

Another common criticism of tourism is that it is merely a disguised form of neocolonialism, which Martin Mowforth and Ian Munt define as “the retention of former colonies in a state of perpetual subordination to the First World, in spite of formal political independence.”²⁷ They suggest that the interests of wealthy foreign investors often take the forefront in policies guiding tourism development rather than the welfare of the host country.²⁸ The industry then transforms the local people into what Ian Munt describes as a “helpful, smiling, and servile tourism class, serving the interests and economic preferences of business and political elites.”²⁹ According to Munt, the ‘service’ this class provides is the equivalent of servitude, allowing the structures of the tourism industry to carry on the racial and class stratification that is deeply entrenched in the

²⁶ M&M 48

²⁷ 50.

²⁸ Ibid., 317.

²⁹ Munt 54.

culture of former colonies like the Bahamas.³⁰ As mentioned in the previous section, foreign ownership can be very hurtful to local communities. Although beach front property in Eleuthera is public land by law, tourism tends to segment and exclude the population from areas of this supposedly communal land (e.g. Princess Keys, Lighthouse Beach). Tourism development also increases demand for resources like water and electricity; in the resulting struggle between tourist and locals, the population often loses.

Standardization is another danger of tourism development. Tourists often come to a vacation spot expecting facilities somewhat similar to their home country, and many developments are designed to satisfy this anticipation. Resorts are built with enormous swimming pools, buildings typically rise above the surrounding landscape, and beach front property becomes inaccessible by land, erasing the preexisting topography and leaving many tourism destinations with a starkly similar appearance. The increasing popularity of enclave tourism, where tourists are completely cut off from the local population and the realities of the host country, has undertones of both standardization and neocolonialism. A classic example in Eleuthera is Princess Keys, a section of the island isolated from the local people and transformed into a deserted island experience for passing Princess Line cruise ships.

The link between crime and tourism growth is yet an additional concern. Scheibler et al (1996)³¹ and Crotts (1996)³² have proposed two theories for the link between crime and tourism. The first is termed Routine Theory, which cites the increased number of potential victims (tourists) as the reason for increased crime. The theory also contends that tourists make themselves into easy victims by behaving carelessly. An alternate model is called the “hot spot” theory. Tourism brings about nests such as casinos, bars, and night clubs which are ideal places for crimes to occur. Pelfrey (1998)³³ argues that social disorganization as a result of increased population density leads to more crime. While there is a clear association between crime and tourism there is no significant empirical link found in the above pieces.

The Environmental Impacts of Tourism

Conventional tourism has had damaging effects on the environment of tourist destinations. This is especially true in small undeveloped nations and in ecologically sensitive areas, such as coastal regions, where the pressure of visitors on the environment and natural resources are substantial. The most visible impact is the transformation of the natural landscape to incorporate hotel and resort complexes. Resort construction destroys or fragments natural habitats on land and can cause erosion and sedimentation that is harmful to marine ecosystems. Marina construction has also been found to have significantly detrimental effects on coral reefs and the delicate ecosystems they support.³⁴ The aesthetic impacts of hotels and resorts are significant as well. Conventional tourism developments are often oversized in comparison to indigenous

³⁰ Ibid., 54.

³¹ Scheibler et al (1996)

³² Crotts (1996)

³³ Pelfrey (1998)

³⁴ Sealey 2004

development and architecturally incongruous with local buildings. Further, many are located in the most scenic locations, permanently compromising the natural beauty of the area.

For small island nations, fresh drinking water is often scarce, yet resorts use vast amounts of fresh water, not only for drinking and cooking but for swimming pools and golf courses, which are usually watered daily.³⁵ Golf courses in Thailand have been found to use as much water as 60,000 rural villages consume in one day.³⁶ As climate change begins to affect the Bahamas, water become even less secure and the construction of desalinization plants will be necessary.³⁷

The increase in the number of visitors to tourist destinations puts pressure on other natural resources as well. The trampling of vegetation and overuse of trails damages ecologically sensitive areas. Increased electricity production means burning of more fossil fuels and more air pollution as does the higher number of cars on the road. Cruise ships powered by diesel fuel also pollute the air. Sewage from hotels and cruise ships can pollute groundwater or coastal waters if their septic systems have insufficient capacity or are sited too close to wells or the shoreline. The generation of more solid waste, which is incinerated on Eleuthera, is another substantial source of air pollution. It has been found that cruise ships in the Caribbean region, which carry on average 1400 passengers and 600 crew members, generate 82,000 tons of garbage each year, which they often dump in the open ocean.³⁸

Ecotourism as a solution

Eco-tourism is a concept that emerged in the 1980s as a result of both the sustainable development movement and the declining appeal of mass tourism. It essentially aims to minimize many of the negative impacts of tourism discussed above and to appeal to tourists who seek authentic environments and cultures. However, the fact that it does not have a fixed definition that is universally agreed upon has resulted in some controversy.

Fundamentally, ecotourism applies principles of sustainable development to tourism in order to protect the host community. According to David Fennell and Ross Dowling, it promotes ecological, cultural and social, and economic sustainability, which address all three categories of impacts mentioned above.³⁹ The achievement of these three types of sustainability will ensure that tourism development maintains biodiversity, ecological processes, and other biological resources; strengthens the identity and culture of the community and people's control over their own lives; and manages resources for the needs of future generations.⁴⁰

Ecotourism has become a major business in many countries, including Costa Rica and Madagascar, and is the fastest growing sector in the tourism industry.⁴¹ However, critics claim

³⁵ UNEP 2002

³⁶ UNEP 2002.

³⁷ UN Small Islands report

³⁸ UNEP 2002

³⁹ F&D 13.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 13-14.

⁴¹ Kamuro 2007

that many ecotourism businesses exploit the concept for marketing purposes while continuing to operate their businesses in an environmentally unsound manner, a practice known as greenwashing. Even when emphasis *is* placed on environmental sustainability, concerns about the environment often overshadow concern for the cultural and economic impacts of tourism development. A 1980 World Tourism Organization (WTO) study of 1600 supposedly ‘sustainable’ tourism policy plans found that one-third were never implemented, few included specific conditions for environmental protection, and few incorporated provisions for socioeconomic development.⁴² While the use of sustainable materials in the construction and maintenance of resorts (in the form of local materials, renewable energy, and so on) is an important component of ecotourism, it is commonly mistaken for the *only* component. Resorts marketing themselves as ecotourism destinations will often achieve energy efficiency or be carbon neutral but fall short in most other areas of sustainability.

Ecotourism has not escaped the labeled of ‘neocolonialism,’ either. Critics argue that the Western world, through economic and political domination, imposes its environmental values on developing nations by advocating for environmental protection. In reality, they seek to preserve the natural beauty of developing nations for their personal enjoyment as tourists. In other words, they are sustaining the environment in order to sustain tourism.⁴³ Munt observes that increasingly popular “flexibly packaged, individually oriented tourisms are now of increasing significance, catering for a more ‘authentic’ experience and characteristically claiming environmental and cultural sensitivity.”⁴⁴ These ecotourism vacations are a shift away from traditional mass-tourism and “have become important commodities through which the new middle classes are able to proclaim their worldly status,”⁴⁵ according to Munt, who stresses the “colonial emphasis on discovery and expropriation” which characterizes these trips.⁴⁶ The primary commodities to the ecotourist are the unspoiled environment, wildlife, and native peoples.⁴⁷ Munt goes as far as to argue that to these Western tourists, “wildlife and natives are synonymous. Passive, they are to be discovered, sighted, viewed and, ultimately, ‘shot.’”⁴⁸

However, the concept of eco-colonialism does not always include the appreciation of the local culture. In some cases, Westerners value pristine nature without humans. Obviously, this is incompatible with the situation of the poor in developing nations, many of whom depend on nature for subsistence. Regardless, some foreign environmentalists have been known to place the well-being of nature, often endangered species, over the well-being of the people of developing countries. This phenomenon is best illustrated in Africa, where local populations have been displaced and often impoverished to create national parks for wildlife and safaris.⁴⁹

Conflicts commonly arise between the many interest groups involved in ecotourism: the local people seeking economic development; the foreign investors seeking profit; the foreign tourists seeking a pristine and authentic travel experience; and the foreign environmentalists seeking

⁴² F&D 11

⁴³ McMinn 140

⁴⁴ Munt 49-50

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 50

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 53.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 53.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 56

⁴⁹ Nelson, 2003

conservation and sustainability. It is often the case that the citizens of a developing country consider environmental concerns secondary to the achievement of economic growth. They are willing to compromise their beaches and views for a chance at better jobs and more comfortable lives. In the words of Stuart McMinn, “the decision in this case becomes a political one pitting immediate social and economic needs against longer-term environmental factors.”⁵⁰ Unfortunately, Western forces can take advantage of the desperate situations of these local people. These forces do not only include developers but also foreign governments and international financial institutes (e.g., the World Bank), who can exert a heavy influence on tourism policies in developing nations.

V. Marketing of Eleuthera

In recent years, Eleuthera has been identified as an ideal ecotourism destination by the government and by foreign organizations. The Caribbean Community Centre for Climate Change (CCCCC) and the University of Oxford formed a partnership December 2008 to “address the impacts and challenges surrounding climate change, the environment, tourism and related sectors throughout the Caribbean region.”⁵¹ The project was named CARIBSAVE and it is funded by multiple donors, including the UK Department for International Development (DFID). According to their website, one of the partnership’s seven main objectives is “to support the transition of the Caribbean region’s Tourism Sector to become the world’s first ‘Carbon Neutral’ tourism region, using three nations as pilot countries in this regard (e.g. the Bahamas, Turks and Caicos and Belize).”

In March 2009, CARIBSAVE announced that it would be conducting a six-month pilot study of two locations, one of which is Eleuthera. The study will forecast Eleuthera’s changing climate through 2100 and the physical and socioeconomic impacts of these changes, largely as they relate to tourism.⁵² According to Bahamian Director of Sustainable Tourism Earl McPhee, the objectives of this project are “to assist in contributing to the region’s efforts to achieve greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction and energy efficiency” and “to review appropriate adaptation measures to reduce vulnerability to climate change” in an effort to transform the Bahamas into a carbon-neutral destination for tourists⁵³. CARIBSAVE held a two-day symposium on climate change, carbon emissions, and tourism at Oxford University in July 2009.⁵⁴

Methodology: Survey of South Eleutheran Residents

We formalized the goal of our study into the following written statement:

⁵⁰ McMinn 137

⁵¹ CARICOM. “CARICOM and Oxford University launch CARIBSAVE project.” CARICOM Press Release. 17 Dec. 2008. <<http://www.caribsave.org/index.php?id=6>>.

⁵² Dr. Murray Simpson. “Caribbean islands test \$35m carbon neutral project –The race is on.” CARIBSAVE. 24 March 2009. <<http://www.caribsave.org/index.php?id=6>>.

⁵³ Earl McPhee, email, 26 March 2009.

⁵⁴ <http://www.travelmole.com/stories/1137250.php>

There are some new resorts planned and under construction in South Eleuthera. We are seeking the opinions of Eleutheran residents about this kind of development. We seek to learn whether local residents support hotel and resort development and why or why not? If development is supported, what type do they want in South Eleuthera? And if they do not support development of the tourist industry, what, if any, sort of economic development do they support?

With this goal in mind, we developed a survey to be conducted as semi-structured interviews that would address all of these key issues in a timely and effective manner. In writing the survey, special attention was paid to keeping the questions as unbiased as possible, while at the same time designing them to yield tangible and comparable results, often in the form of yes/no and multiple choice questions. We also left several questions open-ended in order to gauge more general trends we might have missed with our pointed questions. We addressed the issue of cultural sensitivity by consulting Bahamian employees of The Island School, in order to assure that our questions would not cross any unforeseen boundaries. The survey is appended to this report (Appendix I).

We then traveled to several South Eleutheran towns, including Rock Sound, Deep Creek and Wemyss Bight, and randomly surveyed people in public places, either in the streets, in establishments, or in their places of work. We did not go door to door or interview people on their own property. We performed this survey on 56 individuals, randomly selected from a sample that was not entirely random, since we only interviewed people in public and only people who agreed to take the survey. The breakdown of our survey sample is as follows:

Residency:	Gender:
54 residents	38 male
2 non-residents	18 female
Location of interview:	Age:
24 Rock Sound	2: <19
13 Wemyss Bight	24: 20-39
10 Deep Creek	20: 40-59
3 Island School	10: >60
3 Powell Pointe	
2 Tarpum Bay	
1 Hatchet Bay	

III. Data Analysis

Demographics

All but one of our 56 completed surveys was taken in S. Eleuthera, with the one exception being Surfer's Haven in Gregory Town. From this sample, almost half (42.9%) were conducted in

Rock Sound, with the settlements of Wemyss Bight and Deep Creek rounding out the clear majority (23.2% and 17.9%, respectively). This trifecta holds in the given residences of those surveyed, with Deep Creek, Rock Sound, and Wemyss Bight holding nearly equal proportions (27.3%, 27.3%, and 20.0%) (Fig. 1). Fifty-four of the 56 people interviewed were residents of Eleuthera, so any distinction between foreign and local opinions (for example, a higher emphasis on the environment, or a correlation with specific development type) could not be properly analyzed. Almost all people surveyed (95%) are in favor of development with high statistical significance ($X^2=44.64286$, $df=1$, $p<.005$).

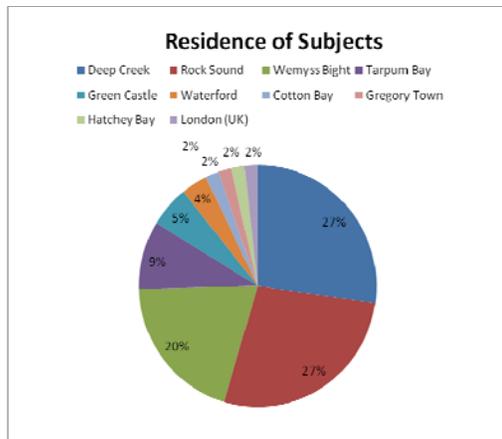


Figure 1

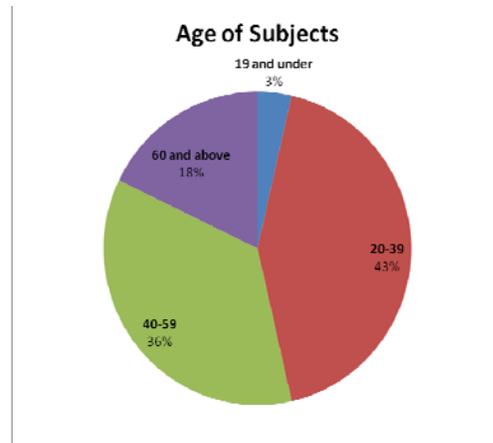


Figure 2

Data was grouped into four age categories: under 19, with two teenagers sampled; 20-39, with 24 sampled; 40-59, with 20 sampled; and 60 and above, with 10 sampled (Fig. 2). The intention was to isolate different generations of Eleutherans in keeping with the historical track of the island's boom and bust tourism industry. Distribution of those who favor and disfavor across age is not statistically relevant ($X^2=5.7056$, $df=3$, $.25>p>.10$). Thus, age does not influence what those surveyed thought about development. Location where the survey was conducted is not statistically relevant to whether or not people support development ($X^2=6.1987$, $df=6$, $.250<p<.500$). Subjects' town of residence is also not statistically relevant to whether they favor or disfavor development ($X^2=10.3419$, $df=9$, $.250<p<.500$). In other words, no individual settlements are opposed to development.

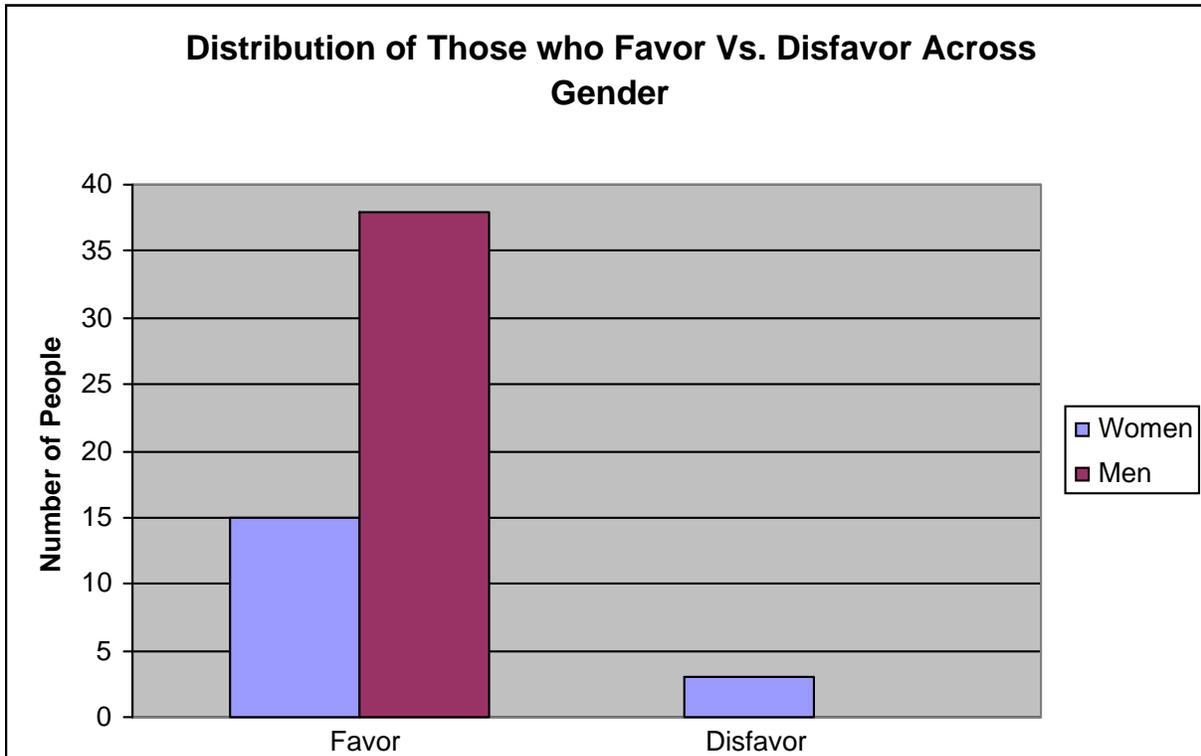
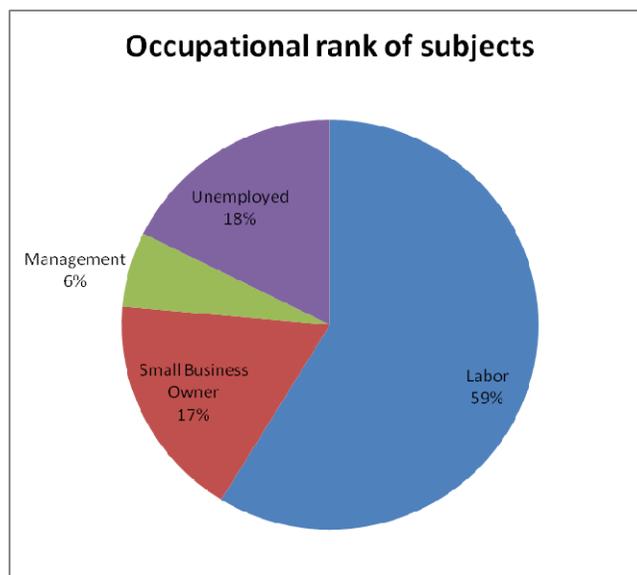


Figure 3

Two-thirds of those interviewed were male, while the remaining third was female. The gender differences between those who favor development vs. those who disfavor development are statistically relevant ($X^2=6.6918$, $df=1$, $.005 < p < .01$) and indicate that women favor development less often than men. It is important to note, however, that two of the three women surveyed did not understand the question posed, as reported by the surveyors. When this is factored in, the differences are not statistically relevant.

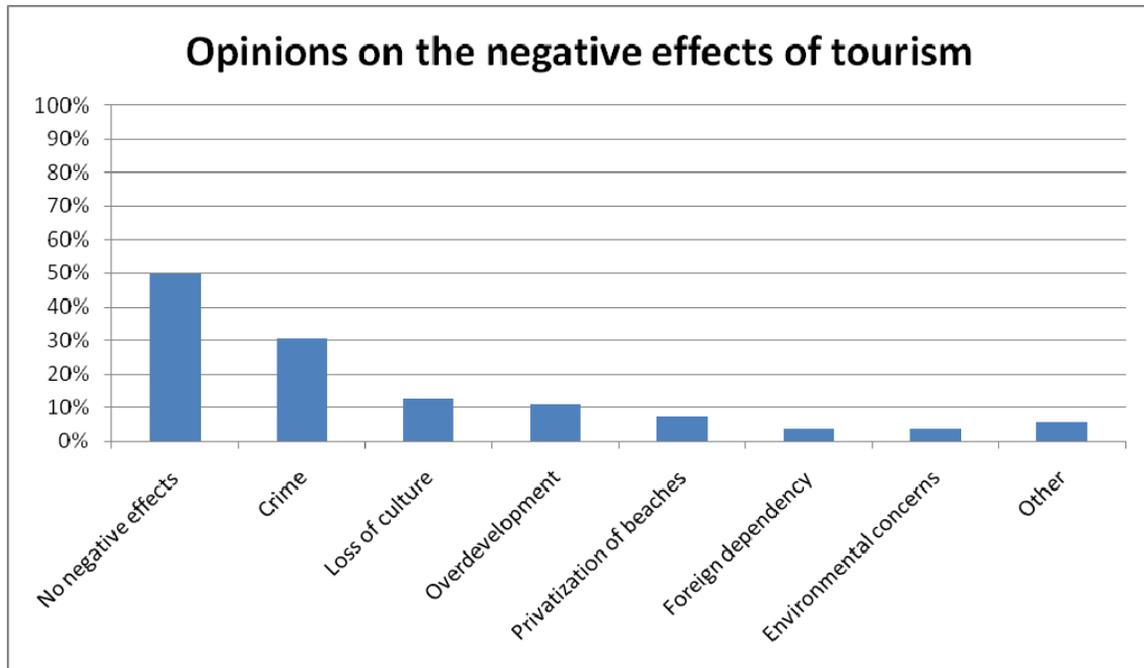


The majority of those interviewed (58.8%) worked were laborers, a category that includes construction, gardening, agriculture, retail and clerical work. Management positions accounted for 5.9% of participants' jobs. A surprising amount of people (17.7%) were heads of their own economic ventures, as owners of businesses that ranged from restaurants to car rental services. Those not working (including retirees, students, and the unemployed) held 17.7%. The high number of retail workers (21.6%) was likely a product of our choices of interview location. Many gave a laundry list of jobs, indicating (i) a high degree of versatility possessed by many Eleutherans; (ii) a higher number of unemployed persons than the two who openly disclosed it, as these individuals likely moved between jobs with great frequency; and/or (iii) a need to take on multiple jobs for sufficient income. Distribution across occupational rank is not statistically relevant ($X^2=5.2417$, $df=3$, $.100 < p < .250$). Thus, occupation does not affect South Eleutherans' desire for development.

Hotel and Resort Development

Our most significant finding was the overwhelming support of hotel and resort development on the part of the Eleutherans. Fifty-three of the 56 people interviewed (95%) were in favor of this sort of development. Their motivation was just as uniform: 85.7 percent pointed to the creation of jobs and the general strengthening of the economy as benefits. As summarized by one participant, "Development leads to job opportunities at resorts, the opening of more restaurants, and eventually a stimulated economy for the people of Eleuthera." Eleutherans also emphasized renewed vibrancy (a return to the bustling age of old) and the attraction of government interest to the island, which is currently neglected in the way of federal funding. In their minds, the tourist influx renewed, income generated, and entrepreneurial opportunities created would spur reinvestment in local decayed infrastructure and other projects. Said one individual, "With the resorts, the government takes more interest in South Eleuthera's infrastructure, specifically roads and improving the water supply." Others indicated that increasing tourism on Eleuthera could potentially promote government intervention in other areas, such as improving education and offering greater assistance to young parents and single mothers.

Exactly half of participants asserted that there were no downsides to hotel and resort development at all. This is in keeping with the near-unanimous support of the tourism industry. There is no statistical difference between the number of people who see drawbacks vs. those who do not ($X^2=0.1765$, $df=1$, $.50 < P < .750$); thus the number of people in each group is statistically the same. Distribution of those who see drawbacks and those who do not across occupational rank is not statistically relevant ($X^2=4.2605$, $df=3$, $.100 < p < .250$). Distribution across age groups is also not statistically relevant ($X^2=2.7667$, $df=3$, $.250 < p < .500$). Thus, whichever occupational or age group participants were from, they were equally likely to see or not see drawbacks.



Of those who mentioned drawbacks, by far the most prevalent answer was crime (30%). This was somewhat surprising considering Eleuthera’s reputation as a safe and peaceful island, yet it shows a desire to maintain certain aspects of the traditional lifestyle. (Conversely, two subjects mentioned that crime would disappear with hotels.) The second most commonly cited drawback (with 25%) was the loss of Eleutheran culture—one characterized by friendliness, rake-n-scrape music, distinctive food, and a quiet atmosphere. Residents worry that “development might destroy culture. Everybody waves to each other, which doesn’t happen in Nassau...Overdevelopment could lead to us losing who we are as a culture—friendliness, music, dress, speech social interactions—South Eleuthera is a small community, not like anywhere else in the world.” Next was a similar category, overdevelopment (21.4%), followed by the privatization of beaches and concern with public access to them (14.3%), and increased dependency on foreigners for revenue (7.1%). Others (10.7%) included income disparity, profits not benefitting locals, and exploitation. Very few people (7.1%) were vocal about environmental concerns. It is unclear whether Eleutherans are unaware of the possible environmental repercussions of increased tourism or if they are aware but unconcerned.

Tourism Development Styles

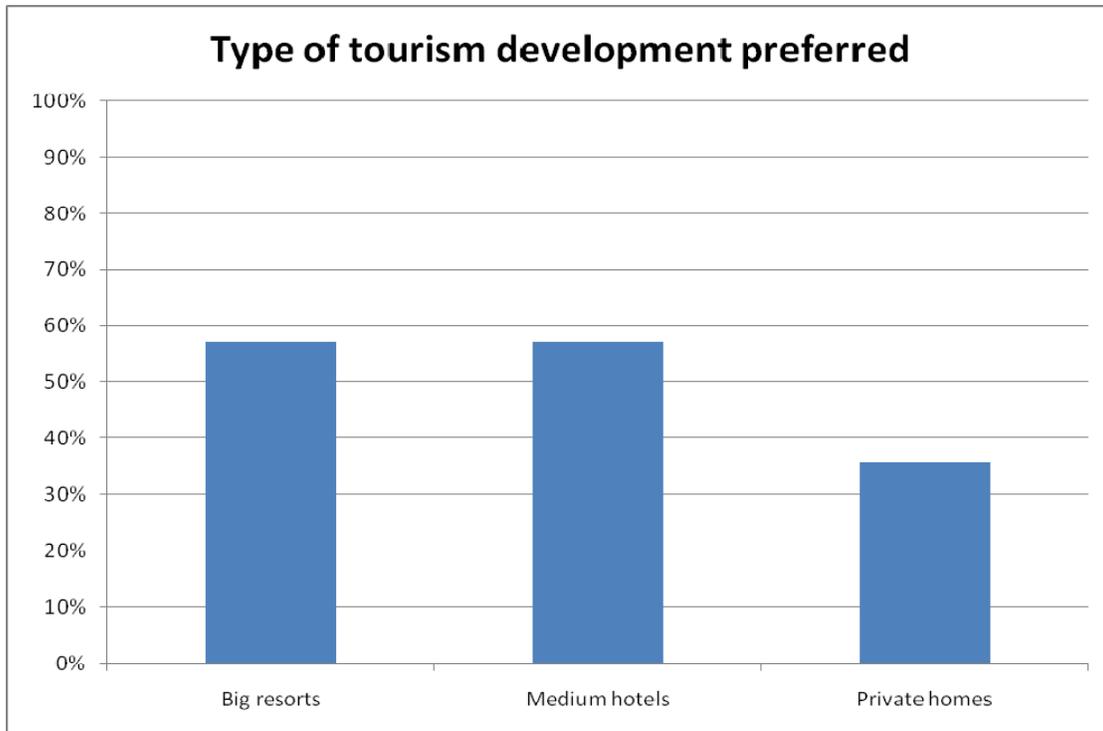
While they are clearly ready for development, Eleutherans do not necessarily want to sacrifice what makes their island distinct. When asked whether they wanted their island to be more like Nassau—a highly developed metropolis, with comparatively giant streams of income as well as sensational resorts—77.7 percent said “No.” Participants cited congestion and crime as undesirable traits possessed by Nassau, noting that “Nassau is too impersonal” and “We should stay as far away from Nassau as possible.” Differences between number of people who want the island to become like Nassau and those who do not are statistically highly significant ($X^2=14.29412$, $df=1$, $p<.005$). Distribution of those who want the island to become more like Nassau and those who do no across occupational ranks is not statistically relevant ($X^2=3.8831$,

df=3, $.250 < p < .5$). Desire for the Eleuthera to become like Nassau increased as age decreased ($X^2=7.28634$, df=3, $.05 < p < .100$); the differences are close to but do not reach statistical significance.

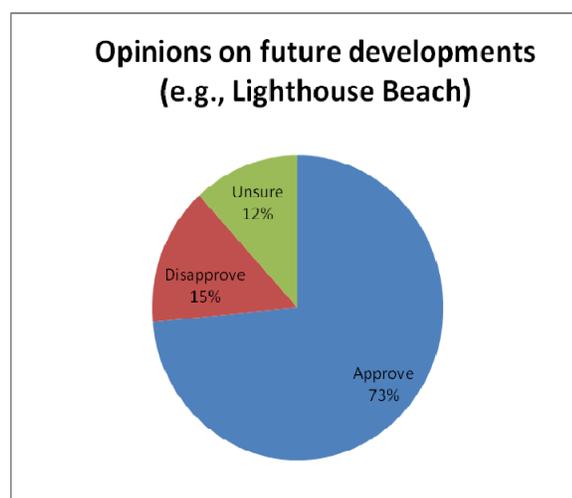
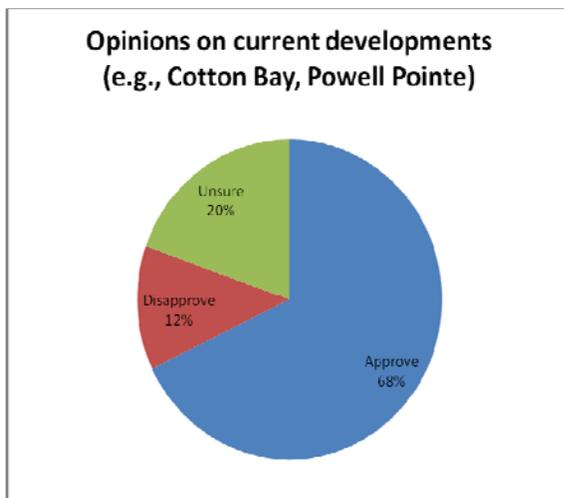
Many residents expressed that a concern with crime contributed to their wariness of large scale resort developments. One resident revealed that she “left Nassau because it was too dangerous.” Eleutheran residents often felt that resort developments did not just alter the local culture, but did so adversely by bringing too many undesirable outsiders into the community. Women were more likely to cite crime as a downside of Nassau than men, with statistical relevance ($X^2=4.8412$, df=1, $p < .050$). A brief but non-definitive test (in the interest of time) of age and class distribution concerning crime does not show statistical differences.

Rather than making the shift to a resort destination, many residents favored developing tourism in a way that would allow Eleuthera to maintain its local qualities. Said one man, “Eleuthera is one of the ‘Family Islands’. The island is a whole lot different from the city, and we need to keep it that way. We can offer the authentic Bahamas experience.” Still more expressed concern that changing Eleuthera would detract from its allure as a unique destination: “There are people that [*sic*] have been coming here for many years, and they like it the way it is. They come for its uniqueness – quiet, small, not a lot of traffic. We need to maintain the island’s identity while attracting a higher paying customer.”

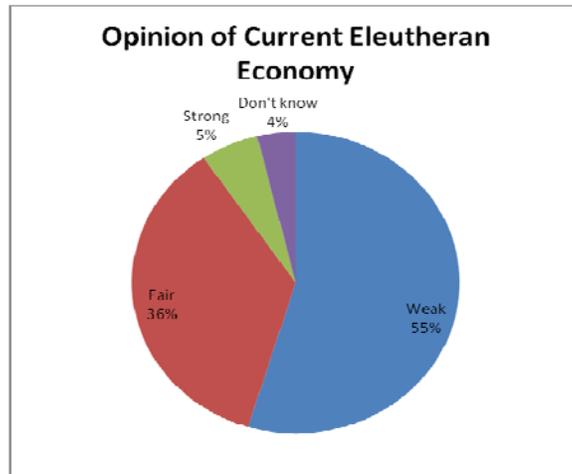
Residents also expressed a desire for greater local and national government involvement in protecting the natural resources of Eleuthera. Many Eleutherans recognized that development would increase privatization of land, and curtail their access to certain areas that were formerly open to the public. To help prevent land-access limitations, Eleutherans generally support laws that would require developers to keep beaches public. As one woman explained, “Getting in to beaches will be a big problem, as people in Eleuthera won’t have access anymore. Provisions should be made to keep beaches open.” Likewise, one man explained, “[My fear is] the loss of public beaches. Bahamians in Nassau can barely get to their own beaches.”



Given the option between big resorts (like Atlantis), medium-sized hotels (like Marriott or Hyatt), and private residences, the former two were clearly preferred, each listed by 57.1% of the respondents. Private homes were sometimes criticized for providing less financial benefit to the local economy, and thus generated a lower 35.7%. One participant expressed that such “anchor properties” and timeshares tend to “keep the money away from the people of Eleuthera and concentrate it in the hands of wealthy foreigners.” With this in mind, the most recent developments on the south end of the island—Powell Pointe and Cotton Bay in particular—drew about two-thirds approval and one-third disapproval. Taking advantage of the Hotel Encouragement Act, these resorts are based on a model of home ownership and rental arrangement.

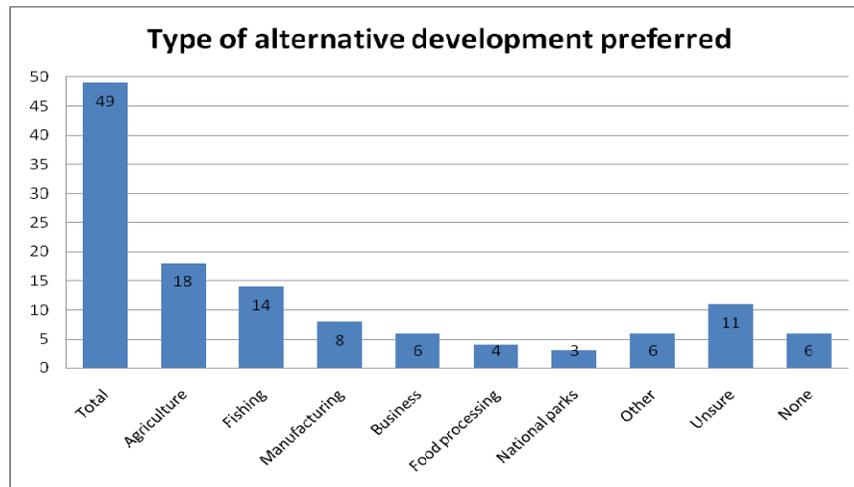


Of those familiar with future developments like Lighthouse Beach near Bannerman Town, 73.5 percent thought that they were a good idea, with 14.7 percent opposed—much higher than the 3.6 percent who opposed hotel and resort development in general. There appeared to be a fair amount of hesitation surrounding opinions on these projects, with uncertainty about whether the developments will actually go through in the face of disputed land, costs, and foreign investment concerns. Several participants articulated that they would support the development of Lighthouse Beach only if public access to the beach was maintained. “The area is so beautiful and it would be perfect to develop, but I’m concerned that it will affect other tourists’ and locals’ ability to experience the beauty,” notes one resident. Another participant stated simply, “The beaches belong to the country.”



Economy and Other Development

Out of all respondents who answered, a majority of 29 (54.7%) felt the current economy of Eleuthera was weak. Nineteen (35.8%) felt the economy was fair. Only 3 (5.7%) rated the economy as strong, and 2 (3.8%) had no opinion. One response summarized widespread opinion: “The economy is weak because of the failure of resorts in the past. We are depending on tourism to pick up and provide us with economic growth.”



When asked about whether they would support other forms of economic development aside from tourism, a vast majority of 49 (89.1%) stated they would. An unexpected minority of 6 (10.9%) said they would not support other forms of development, perhaps indicating strong historical ties to the tourism industry and/or the immediate (if not lasting) benefits new resorts bring to the Eleutheran economy. Of those who would support other forms of economic development besides tourism, 18 (36.7%) mentioned agriculture, 14 (28.6%) mentioned fishing, 8 (16.3%) mentioned manufacturing (including light and heavy industry), 6 (12.2%) mentioned business (including clothing stores, restaurants, and entrepreneurship), 4 (8.2%) mentioned food processing (including food canning and packing), 3 (6.1%) mentioned national park development, 6 (12.2%) mentioned other forms (including banking, education, boating, and horse-drawn carriages), and 11 (22.5%) did not cite any specific form. Correlation of age group vs. wanting agriculture or fishing as an alternative is not statistically relevant ($X^2=2.7667$, $df=3$, $.75 > p > .100$)

Conclusions and Recommendations

The aim of this survey was to help gauge the feelings of local Eleutherans towards development in southern Eleuthera. With an eye specifically towards tourism, the survey took particular interest in how local individuals felt regarding development in Eleuthera in terms of scale, implementation, its external benefits and drawbacks, and the effect it would have on the southern end of the island as a whole. The survey also hoped to gain perspective on the concerns that locals had in terms of the environmental effects of development, and investigate whether environmental concerns were even a consideration in the eyes of many Eleutherans.

The survey results show near-universal support for increased tourism development in Southern Eleuthera. Eleutherans indicated that they favored tourism largely because of its positive economic impact on the island, and also indicated that attracting more visitors to this portion of the island would increase its vibrancy and attract greater government attention and support. Yet residents also expressed in large numbers that development would also increase crime, and to a lesser extent indicated that loss of local culture, overdevelopment, privatization of beaches, tourism dependency and adverse environmental effects were significant drawbacks to developing Southern Eleuthera. Most locals feel that the economic status of the southern portion of the island is either 'fair' or 'poor', and there is strong support both for current tourism development plans on the island and economic development in many additional sectors such as agriculture, fishing, manufacturing, business, food processing, and national parks.

Given the strong support of development in southern Eleuthera, we have assembled a series of trends that emerged throughout our conversations with Eleutherans, and coupled these with recommendations that would aim to respect their desires while promoting responsible development on Eleuthera. The focus areas that we have highlighted with regards to supporting tourism development are Tourism Development, Government, Local Agriculture and Environment, and Safety and Crime. These realms have no distinct boundaries, and we recognize that the successful management of any one area will only be achieved in conjunction and with support from the others, yet our aim is to provide an outline of the considerations that will allow considered development in Eleuthera to be successful. By following a conscientious development strategy on southern Eleuthera Island, tourism and other development will be more likely achieved in a way that respects the cultural, social and physical environment of Eleuthera, allowing it to remain location that can be valued by local residents and visitors alike.

Local Culture and Society

There is overwhelming local support for developing tourism on South Eleuthera, and many locals expressed a desire to see more tourists in the area regardless of the type of accommodations that they would be staying. Over the course of our interviews, the trend emerged that younger residents were more likely to support a course of development like that of Nassau and Paradise Island, which are populated with large resort-type destinations. Older residents were more hesitant to support this type of development, and more often supported more moderately sized hotels and cottage or 'boutique' hotels.

To promote development but do so in a way that allows local settlements to retain their culture, we recommend promoting small- to moderate-sized hotel development that would appeal to the ‘boutique’ market. We also propose creating powerful incentives for Bahamian owned resorts, allowing more of the benefits of tourism to stay within the country. Developing hotels in this manner would limit the number of visitors to tourist developments, but would allow these developments, and the local surroundings, to capture large economic potential of travelers looking for authentic, personalized, high-quality vacations. Such developments would also require specialized training for workers, which is likely to bring hospitality schools to Eleuthera, providing further economic benefits.

Crime

The association between crime and tourism makes it difficult to deny that there may be negative cultural and societal effects because of development. Tourism development should therefore proceed carefully and avoid the creation of ‘hot spots’. In the process of developing, policy makers should aim to prevent the excessive creation of institutions like casinos, bars, and dance clubs. It is also advisable that tourism take place on a limited scale so as to not promote excessive crowding; increased population density tends to be characteristic of places with high criminal activity. Developing on a smaller scale may promote local employment as opposed to large scale resorts that would draw workers from other locations such as Nassau, with the dual benefit of increasing employment and helping to retain young Eleutherans who otherwise would go to other islands or the United States to find employment.

Government Involvement

Eleutheran residents expressed frustration with the level of support that the Island receives from the national government. Many residents equated government attention and support with the relative economic power of the Island, feeling that when tourism was stronger, such as in the 1970s, the government showed more interest in promoting and offering assistance to Eleuthera. Residents expressed hope that tourism development in South Eleuthera would be cause for more government attention.

To help promote both physical and social infrastructure in South Eleuthera, we recommend local or national government intervention that would place certain requirements on new developments on the island. We recommend requirements that would mandate developers to build and maintain their own infrastructure, such as roads, as a means of increasing access to portions of the island, helping their own business, and creating external benefits for the people of Eleuthera.

Natural Resources and Parks

There are 25 national parks in the Bahamas, covering over 700, 000 protected marine and terrestrial acres.⁵⁵ Most of the major islands in the Bahamas have at least one national park and Eleuthera is one of the few that does not have one. This is a shame because Eleuthera is blessed with exquisite beaches such as the Lighthouse Beach among others.

⁵⁵ Bahamas National Trust, [www. Bahamasnationaltrust.org](http://www.Bahamasnationaltrust.org).

To help maintain public land access, we recommend that the government ensure that beaches related to private developments be legally treated as public land. We also propose that developers be required to set aside certain amounts of land for conservation, which would become undeveloped, public parkland. Other options, which are generally cite specific, include making certain lands, including Lighthouse Beach, national parks, but allowing certain developments around these areas.

Agricultural Development

Sustainable agriculture can help Eleutherans to reduce their dependency and increase their standards of living and provide other economic benefits. The government provides exemptions from customs duty on all machinery and material imported for the construction and improvement of agricultural factories, but arid and meager soil of Eleuthera has already proved to be inappropriate for monocultures and mass production. The only feasible method of agriculture is small and sustainable farms, which do not require big machinery and construction. Thus, a government policy directed to encourage small farms will most likely give more incentives to farm on Eleuthera.

Promoting canning and food processing factories will prevent the loss of vegetables and fish from rotting and increase the capacity of the island, while at the same time alleviating some of its dependence on imported food. Eleuthera will probably never again be the breadbasket of the Bahamas, but farming in small quantities does happen and has the potential to provide Eleuthera with essentials and a source of income.

Fishing Development

Sustainable fishing could also be used as a means to bolster the economy of Eleuthera against recessions in the tourism industry. Fishing is the third highest sector in the Bahamas besides banking and tourism, contributing about 1.4% to 2.5% to its total GDP. There are several government programs and incentives to encourage and maintain its success, such as guaranteed loan programs and exemptions from custom duties for equipments and boats. There are also laws against non-Bahamians engaging in commercial fishing in order to encourage and lower competition in the market place for Bahamians.⁵⁶

However, there is the danger of over fishing, especially of conch and the spiny lobster. Already, there is a noticeable difference in the supply of conch to local fishermen who have to go into deeper water to find conch when previously, they were in abundance in the shallower waters and more juveniles are being caught. Several people have commented that a lot of fish that are caught spoil because they cannot be processed or stored. Therefore, either along with or in place of increasing commercial fishing to boost the economy, the government might consider placing a higher emphasis on developing fish processing plants for Eleuthera to take advantage of the surplus fish already being caught by locals that in some cases might go to waste if not processed. The processing plants will provide an additional economy boost, as well as provide more jobs and a steady source of employment for a certain percentage of people. This might also help

⁵⁶ V.K.W Deleveaux & G. Bethel

reduce Eleutheran dependency of the importation of food, as it will be able to provide itself fish, a staple of the diet, in a more efficient way.

Appendix I

Survey Form

South Eleutheran Residents Views of Hotel and Resort Development in South Eleuthera

Surveyor's Introductory Statement

We are college students conducting a survey of Eleutheran residents. There are some hotels and resorts planned and under construction in South Eleuthera and we want to learn your opinion about this tourism development. We'd be grateful if you'd be willing to take our survey. It takes about 5 minutes. Please know that your answers will be anonymous.

Questions

1. Are you in favor of hotel and resort development in South Eleuthera?
2. Do you see any benefits to tourism development? If so, what?
3. Do you see any negative effects of tourism development? If so, what?
4. Do you want this island to become more like Nassau or do you want it to stay the way it is?
5. If tourism development is going to happen here, what type would you like to see?
 - Big resort (e.g. Atlantis)
 - Hotel (e.g. Marriot, Hyatt)

- Homes (e.g. Old Cotton Bay)
6. What do you think of the developments that are under construction? (Cotton Bay, Powell Pointe)
7. Have you heard about any other development plans for S. Eleuthera? (eg: Lighthouse Beach)?
If yes, what have you heard?
8. If yes, do you think it's a good idea? Why or why not?
9. In your opinion, how is the economy of S. Eleuthera?
 - Strong -Fair -Weak -Don't know
10. Are you in favor of any other sort of economic development for South Eleuthera? If yes, what?
11. Is there anything else you'd like to add?
12. Are you a resident of Eleuthera?
13. If yes, what settlement?
14. What do you do for a living? (Optional, depending on rapport)

Gender: ____

Age (approx) ____

Location of Interview: _____

Appendix II

Comments from open-ended survey questions

1. Are you in favor of hotel and resort development in Southern Eleuthera?

1. gives the young people something to do and it gives me work
2. We should start today, young people need somewhere to work! I wish this place was more like New York!
3. Jobs; People who leave school need to go away to find work. Need to keep young people on the island by giving them work.
4. Jobs; right now things are slow
5. People are biased towards colored people who live on Eleuthera and therefore the island does not develop as much or as quickly as many other places.
6. In years past, it [Eleuthera] used to be the “thing”; out of school, I caught about 2-3 years of the tourism industry, then it went dead. Tourism and hotels are something our people prefer to do; it’s in our blood.
7. Development is down. Kids need money to go to school. Work benefits us.
8. It helped the economy in the 60s and 70s, and Eleuthera was the 2nd biggest economy in the Bahamas (surpassing Freeport). They had factories and everything here!
9. Lots of plans, but people are slow to mobilize construction of the resorts...We’re ready to start working.
10. Boost the economy
11. It depends on the scale...my greatest fear is overdevelopment
12. Yes, but depending on the size. I would like to see small, boutique-y hotels and resorts.
13. We like new people. Eleuthera has nice people. People in Nassau bug you. I’ve been hear 37 years.
14. Only on a limited scale; in favor of eco-friendly resorts and Bahamian-owned resorts; we have to have [tourism development] here—its what drives the economy.
15. I am very much in favor of development.
16. It was one of my first jobs.
17. More employment! Also, boosting the economy will boost our friendliness.

2. Benefits to tourism development

1. Jobs; as a taxi driver I would benefit from tourism
2. Jobs; young people don’t have to leave the island to find work
3. Gives young people work so they stay on the island. If people have something to do, there’s less crime.
4. Jobs
5. Jobs
6. It brings money to the island
7. It would give more people their livelihood
8. Hotel development will help women a lot; men can do construction work, but women, especially single mothers, and young people need the job opportunities offered by hotels.
9. Jobs. With the resorts, the government takes more interest in South Eleuthera’s infrastructure, specifically roads and improving the water supply.
10. It benefits everyone

11. It will allow us to learn the culture of tourists
12. The community depends on tourism
13. The economy goes up with tourism...people live on it so they want it.
14. Jobs and profits
15. Not much; the economy is very poor. People leave Eleuthera because it's so poor.
16. I don't really know...I'm from Haiti. I've lived here for ten years.
17. Tourism will bring more money and income.
18. I'm looking for work and I'm ready for new resorts.
19. More jobs which will keep us out of trouble
20. Jobs
21. Jobs
22. Boost the economy
23. Employment and help economy
24. Jobs and economy boost
25. Investment in the area would improve everyone's lives
26. Jobs
27. Jobs for natives. Also, more people will come here to fish.
28. Economic growth/ relief, jobs, education (knowledge transfer; skilled workers come in to educate locals), wealth creation
29. Jobs; entrepreneurial opportunities like restaurants, harbors, fisheries, etc, and an expanded market
30. Jobs; we want to keep attracting people to the Bahamas and to have neighboring countries recognize the Bahamas.
31. More money and more people will come to the island
32. Jobs
33. It will bring more people, and make the native people happier and nicer.
34. Development leads to job opportunities at resorts, the opening of more restaurants, and eventually a stimulated economy for the people of Eleuthera.
35. It would only benefit people if salaries were higher. But also, with tourism comes government interest, and the government might tap in then.
36. The economy is very poor. People leave because its so poor.
37. Financial
38. Jobs
39. Everyone benefits, even those who are not directly related to tourism. Farmers can sell more products, etc...
40. We have a nice island with nice people who are nice with foreigners.
41. Jobs
42. Jobs
43. Jobs; There are a lot of aspects that haven't been exploited yet, like surf tourism, kite boarding, and more diversified tourism overall. This can become a big destination for sports.
44. More opportunities, especially as a good start for young people
45. Jobs, more visitors
46. Jobs, money
47. Financial benefits
48. It helps the economy and is a quick way of bring in money (unlike agriculture which can be

slow to start).

49. Increased employment, especially in South Eleuthera
50. Tourism is one of our major sources of income. People need a job—there is nothing for people to do around here. Even the kids—their new favorite word is “bored”.
51. Employment. Also, boosting the economy will boost our friendliness.

3. Negative effects to tourism development

1. It might become too crowded, but the economic development is needed.
2. Crime
3. Disparity between the rich and the poor will develop when the island becomes more developed. The rich will become richer while the poor become poorer.
4. No direct drawbacks, but there shouldn't be so much tourism development that it drives out farming. Since Eleuthera imports almost all of its goods, it is especially important not to drive out what is left; somewhat worried about increased crime with development but people are always going to get caught on an island this size.
5. No, but “environment people” might feel differently.
6. There are environmental concerns for some people, but the resorts that are coming in are so interested in eco-tourism and environmental branding that it won't really be a problem.
7. Tourism development brings in crime. Foreign workers with criminal background seek employment, which is asking for trouble. Tourism also destroys the land. I want our kids to have the tranquility that we have now, with little crime and drugs. Kids are brought up by their grandparents. Doors are unlocked. Our neighbors are one another's keeper.
8. The boom and bust cycle of construction
9. Officials are not screening. A lot of people not from here come to work and get paid at a cheap rate. With these people, we have more stealing, fighting and crime.
10. Development often destroys the things that tourists come here for...like when roads are built leading directly to beaches.
11. Crime
12. Crime
13. Crime
14. When people see money, they get jealous and crime goes up. Also, a lot of money from tourism doesn't go to the island or even the Bahamas at all. Instead, people rent out their home to their friends from the States, and then the money goes straight to them instead.
15. Crime
16. Crime
17. When the hotels leave, then everyone loses their job.
18. Development might destroy the local culture; Everyone waves to each other, which doesn't happen in Nassau. You have to hail everybody because you know everybody. Overdevelopment could lead to us losing who we are as a culture—friendliness, music, dress, speech, social interactions—South Eleuthera is a small community, not like anywhere else in the world.
19. If it goes to a larger scale, we're really in trouble with things like crime and lost identity, but at this scale, there are not negative effects.
20. Crime
21. Resorts often fall through—people get new jobs and then lose them.

22. Crime
23. Overdevelopment poses the greatest threat...the island doesn't have the infrastructure to support large resorts. These types of developments can begin promisingly, but eventually fail, and people lose their jobs again.
24. There's no money here for the natives. Employers also don't pay the employees well, and the owner has no respect for his staff.
25. Boom and bust cycle of construction
26. The workers may have to come from other islands, and they might have cultural differences. We don't have the infrastructure to support a lot more people.
27. Loss of public access to beaches—Bahamians in Nassau can barely get to their own beaches.
28. Crime
29. Getting in to beaches will be a big problem, as people in Eleuthera won't have access any\ more. Provisions should be made to keep beaches open.
30. You have to take the good with the bad. Hopefully crime won't materialize to too much of a degree.
31. The government supports development a lot, but it could be supporting it for the wrong reasons.
32. It could become too congested. We might lose the closeness of the people here; everybody knows one another. It might also bring crime

4. Do you want the island to become more like Nassau or stay the same?

1. I don't want the congestion of Nassau, but I would like to see changes
2. No because there is too much crime.
3. Too much crime and crowding in Nassau.
4. We should develop moderately to become midway towards being Nassau.
5. The more like Nassau, the better.
6. No, not at all like Nassau. Eleuthera is one of the "Family Islands". The island is a whole lot different from the city, and we need to keep it that way. We can offer the authentic Bahamas experience.
7. We should develop while still maintaining the atmosphere that we're used to.
8. Although tourism brings crime, it also brings money. With time and more money, it becomes easier to deal with crime.
9. I don't want too many more people. I like the simple life here.
10. I don't want it to be more like Nassau—I don't even like to stay there!
11. This is my home. It is why I stay here. I'd never live anywhere else.
12. It should be like Nassau—we need a casino!
13. There are people that have been coming here for many years, and they like it the way it is. They come for its uniqueness—quiet, small, not a lot of traffic. We need to maintain the island's identity while attracting a higher paying customer.
14. I left Nassau because it was too dangerous...now I stay with my mother and two children here where I grew up. Nassau is such a dangerous place...a dangerous area.
15. I don't want it to change too fast...it should stay a place where we can be relaxed.
16. We should stay as far away from Nassau as possible. Nassau is about to sink.
17. The island should slowly become more like Nassau.
18. We need to change, but SLOWLY (unlike what Nassau did)
20. Nassau is too congested. I like that we wave to each other on the roads. Nassau is too

impersonal and there's a lot of crime there.

5. What kinds of tourism development would you like to see?

1. I would like to see small homes.
2. All development on the island is good.
3. All development on the island is good.
4. I'm very against anchor properties and timeshares because they keep the money away from the people of Eleuthera and concentrate it in the hands of wealthy foreigners. I would like small to mid-sized hotels.
5. Eleuthera should have private homes, which have been maintained over the years, while mid sized hotels closed. More boutique hotels should also be built (not large).
6. I would like to see more Cotton Bays.
7. Large hotels bring the most people and business.
8. A big resort will bring the most jobs.
9. I would like to see one or two major hotels constructed on a beach somewhere outside of the community. Tourists would come for a couple weeks and sample the Eleutheran lifestyle without impacting the local community and culture.
10. Big hotels bring casinos which bring criminals.
11. I would like to see one large resort or several smaller hotels. I don't want it to be like Harbor Island, which is like one of the Florida Keys that broke off and loaded down here. People should come to the Bahamas for this atmosphere, not for a resort island atmosphere
12. Bigger is better!
13. I want hotels like Powell Point...Big resorts like Atlantis would turn it into a city.
14. Small resorts are more personalized. Also, Eleuthera cannot sustain big resorts.
15. Big resorts give more people a chance to see the island.
16. Hotels give the most jobs for the least amount of theft.
17. Home building isn't bringing in the jobs—I used to work at Atlantis before I came here.
18. We should start with small hotels, we don't want anything too quickly. We can gradually work our way up to bigger hotels and resorts. Eleuthera right now can't handle a big resort.
19. If we have a medium hotel in every town, it will take care of all of Eleuthera! With big resorts, crime goes up and you have to bring in too many outsiders from Nassau to do all the work. Smaller developments just help Eleutherans.
20. Private homes require maids and gardeners.
21. I don't want anything too big. With a big resort, the whole workforce has to come from other places.
22. Smaller places are good, like this [Surfer's Haven]. The Caribbean in general could cater more to the hostel market.
23. Bannerman Town could become the next Atlantis.

6. What do you think of the developments that are under construction?

1. The more the better!
2. I wish they would hurry up and finish them
3. Jobs
4. Good investment

5. They're happening very slowly... they must build up more and faster.
6. I'm happy that foreigners have chosen to develop here, but the new resorts are still *anchor properties*; there's not gain for the Eleutherans besides the economy as a whole.
7. With the homeownership model of development at Powell Point, there's not that much benefit for the ladies. At Cotton Bay, if they do what they say they do, it will benefit everyone.
8. Development things are green.
9. Try to be positive. Every day is a new challenge. Government in place feels like it's possible.
10. I'm indifferent because projects get started and don't get finished.
11. These developments are good because they bring more jobs. But it's hard to say, because they keep starting and stopping. Sometimes you don't know how long a job will last.
12. I want to see how far the resorts go before I form an opinion.
13. They grew slow, but they should be successful.
14. They're all good, but the problem is that they all wait for each other to do something first... Seashells will drown out Powell Point, but Powell Point is waiting for Seashells to do something before they do.
15. Development done right—we know it will boost our economy. But these come and go and you never really know what is happening.
16. These developments are generally a good idea, but Cotton Bay is at a standstill. If you were to buy a plot of land at Cotton Bay, you would be living on a building site for far too long!
17. [Cotton Bay and Powell Point] are good examples of the types of development we should be doing.
18. If they continue, they'll help.
19. It's all a bunch of shit until we see some tourists.
20. If it was a hotel, it would be better.
21. Money talks.
22. It doesn't seem like they are moving as expected.
23. Cotton Bay and Powell Point are good because they're small and are providing money.
24. I think Cotton Bay will pick up and be fine, but I'm still afraid that it will go under.

7/8. What have you heard about other development plans (Lighthouse Beach)? Do you think it's a good idea, and why/why not?

1. Good idea—more jobs
2. Not much in general, but things should be finished faster!
3. Some development involving a Ritz Carleton Hotel...
4. I would support hotels and condos at Lighthouse Beach.
5. I hope it happens, I'm just not sure whether it will actually go through.
6. I've heard many different stories about Bannermantown (cruise ship dock? Resort?)
7. As long as the ALLOW ACCESS...the area is so beautiful and it would be perfect to develop, but I'm concerned that it will affect other tourists'/locals' ability to experience [the beauty].
8. I'll wait and see before I form my opinion...the government slows the development process.
9. Perfect idea
10. SEE INTERVIEW SHEET

11. A marina would be perfect in that location.
 12. It would be good as long as it is controlled, and only a few things are done that do not change the atmosphere.
 13. If there are plans, then they are good. We just need more jobs, and visitors will boost the area.
 14. I trust my government enough that if they agree [to a plan with developers], they do so in the best interest of South Eleutherans. Nevertheless, the government should have had a referendum and involved the South Eleutherans. It's as if someone came into your house without knocking.
- Lighthouse has always been regarded as a national trust...the only part of here that money couldn't buy. It should not be developed, but instead turned into a national park, but at the very least a place that maintains public access for the locals. As everybody's home, the community is against it.
15. Good idea, but access must be provided to the locals...the beaches belong to the country.
 16. More hotels mean more crime in general, but in this case it will be years before the crime starts because it will be the first hotel in the area.
 17. I think that the natural beauty of Lighthouse Beach would be nice to preserve.
 18. Lighthouse beach is the key. If they let that go, then they cut off a valuable tourist attraction—the number one beach in Eleuthera. How can they look at a place like that and picture a hotel???
 19. Tourists always ask about Lighthouse Beach when they come to Eleuthera, so it should be developed to be another attraction for them.
 20. It depends on how fast they develop. If they get too big too fast, they'll go under. They must adjust development with the people coming.
 21. The project is still in baby stages, but it's great. There's a good beach and location right on deep water.
 22. I think there should be development in the area, but it shouldn't extend all the way to Lighthouse. I think a park should be there so that tourists will continue to come.
 23. New development is good...they should try to preserve the natural beauty of the place...they should try to preserve the environment...they should have some rules and guidelines...perhaps a small restaurant instead of a big hotel.

9. How is the economy of Southern Eleuthera?

1. I am a taxi driver and in this current state of business I have been out of business.
2. The economy is weak because of the failure of resorts in the past. We are depending on tourism to pick up and provide us with economic growth.
3. Poor but it will hopefully pick up because of the hotels.
4. It's kind of slowed down in the past couple of months.
5. Stable but slow.
6. Needs to get stronger. We need people to trust younger guys. It's hard for colored people to get jobs for white people. Some people are homeless.
7. Getting there
8. I don't want to say weak because a few years ago it was really really weak...but weak.

9. With the Cotton Bay work, its getting better.
10. Poor people have to live off the land and the ocean.
11. I came here from Haiti because there are many more jobs here. There is work here for someone like me.
12. It used to be so much better.
13. 20 years ago, we were in the same position we are in today. It has recently slowed, but overall we're getting better.
14. The economy is between fair and weak because while I see production, I would like to see more outside investment and more low cost homes and help from the government. The government's not doing what it's supposed to do...it needs to support more young people like in the US.
15. The cost of living is so high, especially transportation.
16. Before, when we had more construction projects, it was much better.
17. Once the ongoing projects are done, the economy should become strong.
18. It's not as strong as it was last year, but I have faith that it will pick up.
19. The economy could be better. It is stable, but we could do with more opportunities to give people a place to work.
20. Everything is at a standstill. There is no hiring going on right now.

10. What other sorts of economic development would you be in favor of?

1. The only sort of development would be a factory but I don't think that is feasible.
2. Everything brings money to the island.
3. Anything that will bring work for the people around here would be good.
4. Clothing stores and shopping; right now there are too many restaurants and not enough clothing stores.
5. Farming and fishing.
6. Small businesses on the island.
7. Farming and fishing.
8. Definitely fishing is Eleuthera's big thing and a lot of money should be invested in it. With regards to agriculture, there are probably only 4-6 legitimate farmers in Eleuthera, which is definitely not the way it used to be. I think we have the capacity for large scale processing plants and tomato bottling to ship to Nassau.
9. Farming, fishing.
10. Banking, family, fishing.
11. Parks, which come along with tourism development.
12. More schools, maybe a factory.
13. We need more agriculture. It's good for people, because they can do it by themselves. We also need to upsize the fishing, centralize and regulate it so people can use it as a reliable way to make a living.
14. SEE INTERVIEW.
15. Sports center.
16. Textile factory.
17. More processing factories.
18. We need more tomato canning factories and fish processing factories. Lots of tomatoes and fish are present, but a lot of them spoil quickly and so should be canned and sold

commercially.

19. I would like to see more business development, as well as more agriculture and fishing.
20. Fishing and farming.
21. Tourism is number one. It will bring other development when it comes.
22. We have the infrastructure for agriculture such as tomatoes and pineapple, and you can make a very good living. My generation is lazy [in regards to agriculture]. We don't learn from our parents, we don't want to work in the sun, we want a job in an office with air conditioning.
23. We need fishing and agriculture, but from a conservation point of view. Farmers haven't been encouraged the way they should, and we need to prevent another wipeout like has occurred with the conch.
24. More schools and education because families can't support sending their kids to Nassau to study.
25. Farming and fishing, like at Hatchett Bay.
26. Activities for children, casinos, agriculture... There used to be a market at Hatchett Bay where people would sell their tomatoes that they grew on Eleuthera.
27. Bahamians need to start to be their own boss and start independent ventures like it used to be a long time ago.
28. We need a canning factory: our farmers farm a lot, but a lot of it goes to waste and at the same time we have to import canned products. If we had our own canning factory, farmers could make a living by exporting their products.
29. Construction, boating.
30. We should put up a factory for canning or bottling to help our farmers.
31. National Parks! Eleuthera is the only major Bahamian island without a national park. It's the perfect balance because it protects the land while still attracting tourists. Also, farming. Eleuthera used to be the breadbasket of the Bahamas. With the right plan, agriculture could be huge again. The only problem is that Bahamians aren't too into doing the labor. All the farm work is done by Haitians. We also used to have a lot of local plants that are now shut down, like one for rum.
32. Fishing and farming should be commercialized.
33. Farming and support of local business.
34. Farming, fishing.
35. Factories; we have lots of farms, so we should can the food produced (hurricanes put food imports from US at risk)

11. Additional Comments

1. The past government was fair, but there hasn't been enough time in office to gauge the new government.
2. I don't want people to think that I'm selfish by disliking big developments because I have a job.
3. I'm Haitian and have been here for seven or eight years. My family is in Haiti—they can't come visit me. I would like to see more help for people like me (immigrants).
5. We really need to make some changes. Before the elections, everyone was talking about all these new ideas and changes that were going to happen, but since then...nothing.
6. I love tourism and I love the Island School. It exposes local children to the outside world.
7. The government doesn't care about the out islands...the people have to do it themselves.

8. We need some more women!!
9. The government can do a better job and they should.
10. Twenty-three of the richest people in the world lived at Cotton Bay...I dined with them...I dined with President Nixon.
11. The government concentrates on Freeport and Nassau too much

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