

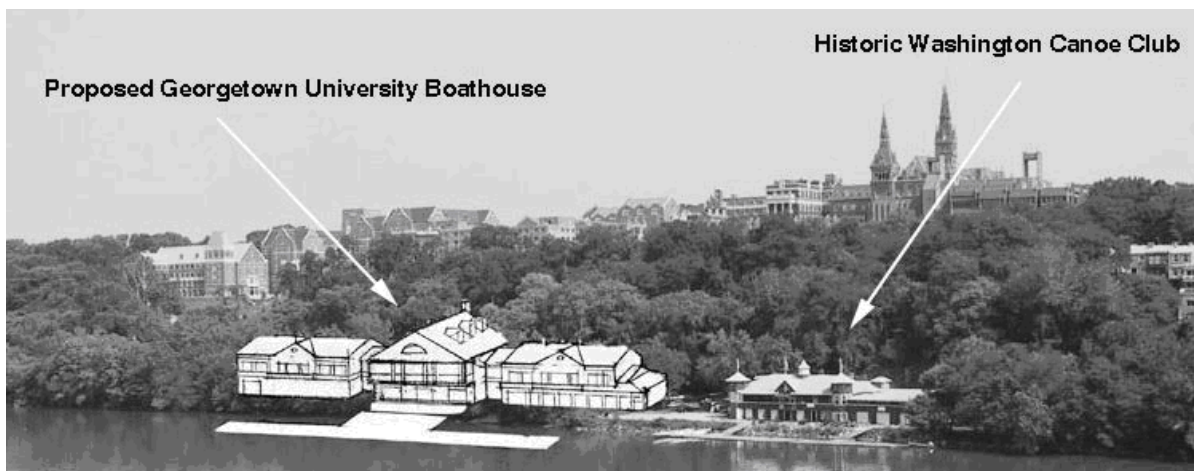
Massive private building threatens C&O Park and Potomac Gorge

The C&O Canal National Historical Park and Potomac Gorge are threatened with private development. If you value the park, we need your help!

The National Park Service plans to transfer waterfront parkland upstream of the Key Bridge, at the entrance to the Capital Crescent Trail, to Georgetown University for an exclusive private boathouse.

At nearly 20,000 square feet, the structure would extend the length of a football field, and set a precedent for future development in the park. The new building would destroy trees and habitat, and threaten the fragile riverbank, canal, and historic structures with erosion and flood damage. A 70-foot private dock would block the shoreline route of recreational boaters and alter the river flow. To access the site (a flood plain which contains wetlands), a new road would be built.

Yet the National Park Service claims "no significant impact!"



How you can help TODAY: Voice your opposition in emails to National Park Service Director Fran Mainella, at fran_mainella@nps.gov.

Demand that the Park Service:

- Preserve national parkland for public use, not develop it for private facilities.
- Build private boathouses outside of the C&O Canal National Historical Park.
- Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the boathouse proposal that considers alternative sites outside the national park.

How you can help LATER: Sign up to be notified when the National Park Service issues its draft Environmental Assessment for public comment, by emailing the National Park Service at NCR_Georgetownboathouse@nps.gov. Submit comments demanding a full EIS that considers alternatives. The law *requires* an EIS when the potential impacts are "significant."

How you can get UPDATES: Sign up to be independently notified of the EA public comment period by Defenders of Potomac River Parkland, c/o Sally Strain at seawalk@starpower.net. Defenders is a coalition of 20 citizen organizations opposed to the Park Service proposal, listed below. See www.savethecanal.org.

More BACKGROUND: In the 1980s, the National Park Service pledged to develop a plan for boathouses along the Georgetown waterfront that would accommodate both public and private interests. However, the current plan would transfer prime parkland to one private entity -- Georgetown University -- for its exclusive use.

This proposal offers no public benefit and would heavily impact recreational kayakers and canoeists, bicycle commuters, recreational bikers and hikers, anglers, and other park users.

The National Park Service has supported the private boathouse plan without considering alternatives and evaluating the impacts on the human and natural environment, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act. Public outcry and a lawsuit prompted the Park Service to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA), a minimal document. The 20 citizen organizations listed below believe the law requires the Park Service to prepare a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers alternative sizes and locations, such as locations downstream on previously developed waterfront, or on the Anacostia River. An EIS is required whenever the potential impacts are "significant."

Many letters and comments will be needed to defeat the current plan and force the Park Service to consider alternatives. Please voice your opinions and help save the C&O Park and Potomac Gorge!



Say No to GU Boathouse
www.savethecanal.org

The **Defenders of Potomac River Parkland** support preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement and building new private boathouses outside of the C&O national park. The Defenders are:

American Canoe Association
American Hiking Society
American Whitewater Association
Audubon Naturalist Society
Canoe Cruisers Association
Citizens Committee to Save Laurel Lakes
C&O Canal Association
Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail
Dupont Circle Conservancy
East Coast Greenway Alliance

Friends of the Earth
League of Women Voters of DC
Montgomery Sycamore Island Club
National Parks Conservation Association
Potomac Appalachian Trail Club
Potomac Conservancy
Potomac Heritage Trail Association
Potomac Pedalers Touring Club
Sierra Club, DC Chapter
Washington Canoe Club