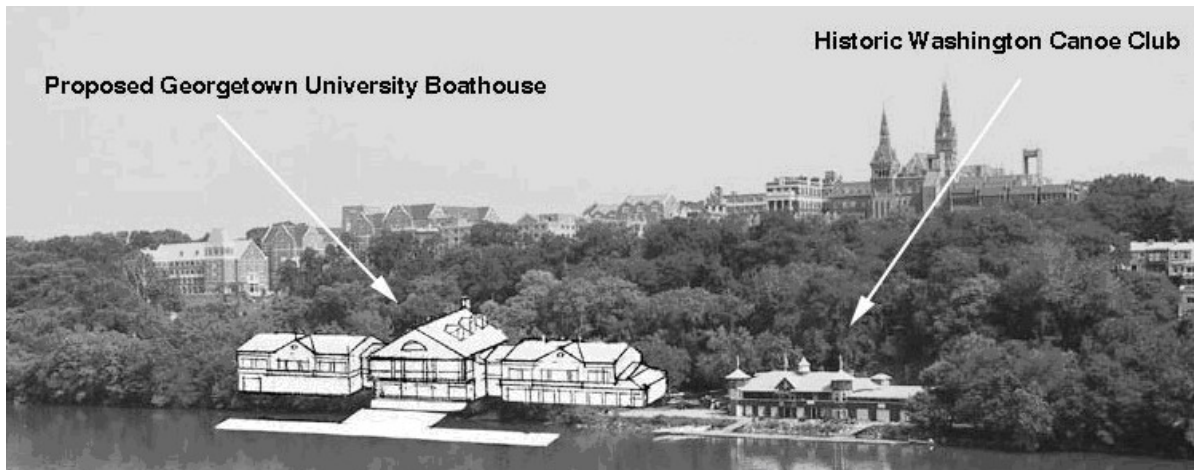


# Private development threatens C&O Canal National Historical Park! *Canal, bike trail at risk*

The National Park Service (NPS) is considering a plan to transfer national historical parkland on the Potomac River (upstream from the Key Bridge, next to the Capital Crescent Trail, within the Potomac Gorge and three historic areas) for private development. The NPS is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that may pave the way for Georgetown University to build an extremely large boathouse on a site within the C&O Canal National Historical Park.

If approved, this plan would set an alarming precedent for private development in national historical parks and loss of urban wooded areas. The building would extend almost the length of a football field, destroying trees and wildlife habitat and threatening the fragile riverbank and canal with erosion and flood damage. A massive private dock, 75 feet long, would block the route of shoreline boaters. Motorized vehicles and sixty-foot boat trailers would tangle with hikers, bikers and other trail users at the gateway to the C&O Canal National Historical Park.



(Note: The NPS “preferred alternative” boathouse design proposed in an Environmental Assessment for the facility in 2006 would be slightly lower in height than the original one shown above, but with the same massive footprint: 18,600 sq. ft.)

**How you can HELP:** Voice your opposition by sending a letter to Dan Wenk, Acting Director, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

In your letter, demand that the NPS:

- Preserve historical national parkland for public use, not trade it for private development.
- Keep this private boathouse outside of C&O Canal National Historical Park.
- Identify and analyze acceptable alternatives outside the C&O Canal National Historical Park in the preparation of an EIS for this proposal.

**How you can get BACKGROUND:** See the independent website [www.savethecanal.org](http://www.savethecanal.org) for information, sample letters, and suggested comments on the impacts of the proposal.

**How you can get email UPDATES:** Contact Defenders of Potomac River Parkland, c/o Sally Strain at [seawalk@starpower.net](mailto:seawalk@starpower.net) (see below for a list of member organizations).

**Here are the ISSUES:**

- Contrary to the NPS mission, historical public parkland would be traded to a private entity for their exclusive use.
- Until now, NPS has refused to adequately consider alternative locations outside the park, despite public demands for more accessible, safer, less environmentally sensitive locations downstream on K Street, on previously developed waterfront, and at other locations.
- It took five years of public outcry to force NPS to prepare an EIS, expected this year for public comment, even though an EIS is required by law when impacts to an area are considered to be “significant.”
- A boathouse outside the C&O Canal National Historical Park would have technical, environmental and practical advantages for everyone, while protecting the C&O Canal National Historical Park from private development.

**Why we need YOU:** Many letters and comments are needed to defeat the current plan and force the NPS to seriously consider alternatives. Please voice your opinion, spread the word and help save the C&O Canal National Historical Park and Potomac Gorge from private development!

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The **Defenders of Potomac River Parkland** support preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement that will seriously consider alternatives. The Defenders are individuals and these organizations:

American Canoe Association  
American Hiking Society  
American Whitewater Association  
Appalachian Mountain Club  
Audubon Naturalist Society  
Canoe Cruisers Association  
Citizens Committee to Save Laurel Lakes  
Clean Water Action  
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  
National Parks Conservation Association  
Potomac Appalachian Trail Club  
Potomac Conservancy  
Potomac Heritage Trail Association  
Potomac Pedalers Touring Club  
Quantico Orienteering Club  
Rails to Trails Conservancy  
Sierra Club, DC Chapter  
Washington Area Roadskaters  
Washington Canoe Club  
Western Lands Project