

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 16, 2026

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Jessica Bowron
Acting Director
National Park Service
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Burgum and Acting Director Bowron:

We write regarding the Interior Department's plan to turn East Potomac Park, a public course on federal land, into a private trophy for Donald Trump. The Department has committed at least two new federal contracts worth up to \$50 million and construction-related activity at the East Potomac Park Golf Course, the latest in Donald Trump's collection of vanity projects. It has done so without notifying Congress, while cutting down trees in the middle of active litigation, and while a court is still deciding whether the project is lawful.

In November 2025, Tom Fazio—the architect of several private golf courses in President Trump's portfolio—toured East Potomac Park under an alias.¹ It's now clear what Mr. Fazio was hiding. Recent reports confirm that the Trump administration has reached an agreement with Fazio Design and a mix of undisclosed private and public partners to start major construction at East Potomac Park.² The President proudly boasted that his goal was to remake the public course into a major championship or Ryder Cup venue.³ To this end, the Trump administration muscled its way onto East Potomac Park.⁴

True to the vanity project playbook, the National Park Service (NPS) has rushed out contracts to initiate work. On September 10, 2026, NPS awarded a \$389,355 contract to Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. to support compliance activities, including compliance under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) at East Potomac Park Golf Course.⁵ NPS also posted a forecasted construction contract worth up to \$49 million for the East Potomac Park Golf Course with a projected solicitation date of January 31,

¹ Joel Beall, *Trump administration strikes deal to renovate East Potomac, keeping National Links Trust in charge of D.C. public courses*, GOLF DIGEST (May 11, 2026) <https://www.golfdigest.com/story/trump-admin-national-links-trust-east-potomac-deal-2026>

² Alan Bastiable, *Inside President Trump's D.C. muni plan — from the guy who's building it*, GOLF.COM (May 21, 2026), <https://golf.com/news/plan-president-trump-dc-muni-fazio/?srsltid=AU7gw4WowK6c8N6Kr5SqFLrdIS97ozTa8hXrUf1bP7PIZGr0PTkG3SzP>.

³ Gary Feilds, *A Golf Course for 'the people' faces a presidential makeover*, INDEPENDENT (Sept. 5, 2026) <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/donald-trump-washington-hispanic-washington-monument-congress-b3045205.html>

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ U.S. Gen. Servs. Admin., System for Award Management, *Contract Opportunity (Opportunity ID 60552B435DFA4B798200DFF41DC21703)* <https://sam.gov/workspace/contract/opp/60552b435dfa4b798200dff41dc21703/view> (last visited Sep. 15, 2026),

2027.⁶ In addition, the President's fundraiser, Meredith O'Rourke, appears to have solicited foreign donations for the National Garden of American Heroes Foundation, a nonprofit established to raise private funds for President Trump's desired redevelopment of the East Potomac Golf Course into a Trump-style golf course, which has been bundled with a proposed sculpture garden.⁷

For years the Department has treated the East Potomac Park seawall as a low priority, even as it crumbled; but that changed when President Trump set his sights on a new golf course. In August 2026, the NPS opened the procurement process for the seawall project, inviting construction firms to an industry presentation and site visit. NPS then revised the funding documents for the Tidal Basin and West Potomac Park to include additional portions of the Potomac Park's seawalls.⁸ The seawall desperately needs repair. It has needed repair for a decade. But the question is why a project the Department never prioritized has suddenly become urgent at the precise moment separate contracts for Donald Trump's makeover are going out. The answer is clear to anyone who witnessed the shocking demolition of the East Wing of the White House and announcements for the construction of a 250-foot arch in Memorial Circle in front of the Arlington National Cemetery. The East Potomac Golf Course is Donald Trump's latest vanity project target.

Meanwhile, multiple eyewitness accounts and news reports have documented the cutting of more than sixty trees—including mature, historically valued specimens—alongside the staging of heavy equipment and surveying activity around the golf course.⁹ Executed in small pieces, the President's plans for the course appear designed to evade accountability at the expense of the American taxpayer.

These actions have understandably alarmed community members who depend on the park for recreation, public access, and cultural enjoyment. They also echo previously unanswered concerns about the broader East Potomac Park redevelopment, a historic public resource whose golf courses, trails, and cherry trees carry deep recreational, cultural, and environmental significance.¹⁰ Any substantial changes must comply with environmental and

⁶ U.S. Gen. Servs. Admin., Acquisition Gateway, *Construction- East Potomac Park Rehab (Golf Course)* <https://acquisitiongateway.gov/forecast/resources/50379?nid=50379> (last visited Sep. 15, 2026).

⁷ See DEMOCRATIC STAFF OF THE H. COMM. ON NATURAL RESOURCES, FROM VANITY TO INSANITY: HOW THE WHITE HOUSE CHEATED THE AMERICAN PEOPLE OUT OF THEIR 250TH BIRTHDAY, at 28 (July 2, 2026), https://democrats-naturalresources.house.gov/imo/media/doc/freedom250_oversight_report1.pdf.

⁸ See Rick Maese, *Park Service works to fortify sea wall key to East Potomac golf project*, WASH. POST (September 12, 2026) <https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/2026/09/12/park-service-works-fortify-sea-wall-key-east-potomac-golf-project/>; U.S. Dep't of the Interior, Nat'l Park Serv., *National Park Service Legacy and FY24 Project Data Sheets* (May 2025), <https://www.doi.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2025-05/fy21-fy25-nps-gaoa-lrf-pdss-508.pdf>.

⁹ Notice of Factual Developments, DC Preservation League et al. v. Department of the Interior, No. 1:26-cv-00477 (D.D.C. Sep. 3, 2026), ECF No. 69, <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/72278895/69/dc-preservation-league-v-department-of-interior>.

¹⁰ Letter from Hon. Jamie Raskin, Hon. Donald S. Beyer, Jr., Hon. Eleanor Holmes, Hon. Glenn F. Ivey, Members of Congress, to Hon. Doug Burgum, Sec'y, U.S. Dep't of the Interior, and Jessica Bowron, Acting Director, Nat'l

historic-preservation laws, maintain public-access benefits, and include transparent communication with the public.

East Potomac Park does not belong to Donald Trump. It belongs to the American people, and it has for more than a century. In 1897, Congress set this ground aside to be “forever held and used as a park for the recreation and pleasure of the people.”¹¹ In 1941, three Black golfers—J. Asa Williams, George Williams, and Cecil R. Shamwell—played all eighteen holes here under police escort while a crowd jeered at their backs, and the next day Interior Secretary Harold Ickes opened every federal course in Washington to all Americans.¹² That is the historical inheritance Donald Trump seeks to pave over. Today, East Potomac Park continues to serve both the local Washington community and any American who travels from across our country to visit their capital city. We refuse to let this grotesque desecration of public land and waste of American tax dollars go unaccounted for.

To better understand the Department’s plans, how it intends to address these concerns, and to inform legislative reforms, we request the following information as soon as possible but no later than 5:00 pm on September 30, 2026:

1. All documents and communications, from January 20, 2025, to September 16, 2026, referring or relating to plans for the East Potomac Park Golf Course, including designs, cost estimates, funding sources, and timelines;
2. All documents and communications, from January 20, 2025, to September 16, 2026, referring or relating to assessments, scopes of work, and cost analyses for the forecasted \$20 to \$49 million construction contract;
3. All communications since January 20, 2025, to September 16, 2026, referring or relating to the East Potomac Golf Course, between the Department of the Interior or the National Park Service and:
 - a. Fazio Golf Designers, Inc., including any officer, director, employee, agent, or representative thereof;
 - b. Meredith O’Rourke of Forward Strategies, Inc., or any person or entity acting on her behalf or at her direction;

Park Serv. (July 30, 2026) https://raskin.house.gov/_cache/files/c/7/c78e4a41-0788-4305-8dbe-2a6be07c107e/FA5038965426867F1A215F6901B4CEFA76BF080A15492C826DFE0B14B8A82AD1.2026-07-30-raskin-beyer-norton-ivey-re-east-potomac-golf-course-redevelopment.pdf.

¹¹ Act of Mar. 3, 1897, ch. 375, 29 Stat. 624.

¹² Petula Dvorak, *The Real History of East Potomac Park*, CITY CAST DC (Sep. 2, 2026), <https://dc.citycast.fm/history-archive/east-potomac-park-history>.

- c. Abby Matthis of Forward Strategies, Inc., or any person or entity acting on her behalf or at her direction;
 - d. National Garden of American Heroes Foundation including any officer, director, employee, agent, or representative thereof;
 - e. The White House including any component of the Executive Office of the President;
 - f. The Trump Organization, Inc., including any officer, director, employee, agent, or representative thereof;
 - g. Trump Golf Management, LLC, including any officer, director, employee, agent, or representative thereof; or
 - h. Any member of President Donald Trump's family;
- 4. All documents and communications, from January 20, 2025, to September 16, 2026, referring or relating to the expansion or acceleration of the seawall project, including its relationship to the golf course renovation;
 - 5. All documents and communications since January 20, 2025, to September 16, 2026, referring or relating to the cost estimate for Phase III of the Potomac seawall project; and
 - 6. All documents and communications since January 20, 2025, to September 16, 2026, referring or relating to the tree removal at East Potomac Park; and
 - 7. All documents and communications, from January 20, 2025, to September 16, 2026, referring or relating to NEPA or NHPA compliance at the East Potomac Golf Course or Phase III of the Potomac seawall project; and
 - 8. All documents and communications, from January 20, 2025, to September 16, 2026, referring or relating to any actual, proposed, contemplated, or negotiated conveyance of East Potomac Park, or any portion thereof, to any party, including The Trump Organization, Inc., Trump Golf Management, LLC, or any other entity affiliated with President Donald Trump.

Hon. Doug Burgum
Hon. Jessica Bowron
September 16, 2026
Page 5

Sincerely,



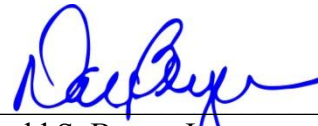
Jared Huffman
Ranking Member
House Committee on Natural Resources



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer, Jr.
Member of Congress



Glenn F. Ivey
Member of Congress