



October 8, 2010

Mr. Thomas F. Nevin
General Manager
Trump National Golf Club
20391 Lowes Island Blvd.
Potomac Falls, Virginia 20165

Mr. Nevin,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to Trump National's restoration of the riparian buffer along the Potomac River. From Harpers Ferry to the capitol beltway, there is only one section of the shoreline that has an extensive expanse of tree-less buffer, and that is at Trump National Golf Club. Potomac Conservancy is eager to see the Club cultivate, using native species, an exceptional, forested riparian buffer along the Potomac.

As you are already aware, vegetated buffers along waterways serve many important functions, including nutrient and pesticide uptake, and sediment filtration, among many other benefits. These water quality effects are critically important along the Potomac River, which supplies drinking water to 80% of D.C. residents, plus many other communities, and has valuable economic uses such as fishing, boating and tourism.

You can well imagine that the vegetation selected has a significant impact on a buffer's success. Different types of vegetation serve different purposes. Grasses help prevent channelization of runoff, and are helpful for sediment and nutrient filtering. Shrubs and trees tend to develop deeper roots, which offer improved denitrification at lower soil depths, and for more months of the year. Trees infiltrate and absorb more runoff than grass. Trees have a greater biomass and less turnover, and therefore sequester more nutrients per square foot. Hardy tree roots also better resist erosion of stream banks during heavy flows.

Because of the varying benefits of these vegetation types, the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) recommends a gradient of grasses, shrubs and trees to form a fully functioning buffer between actively managed lands and waterways. The NRCS model establishes three zones in a buffer:

- Zone 1: trees closest to the water to hold the bank in place,
- Zone 2: a mix of trees and shrubs higher along the bank, and
- Zone 3: grasses and forbs at the top and above the bank.

I can provide numerous references describing this model in more detail, if you request.

The NRCS model would work well at Trump National. Zones 1 and 2 can be planted with small saplings without the need for heavy equipment operating in the lower bank. The desire to maintain a view of the Potomac River is least inhibited by trees planted along the lower portion of the bank. The grasses already planted will provide immediate stabilization while the other plantings take hold, and the grassed upper portion of the bank would form Zone 3. We strongly recommend that only native species be used, as they are best adapted to flourish in this climate, and are most useful for wildlife habitat.

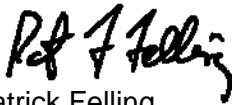
Now is the perfect time to conduct your tree planting in the buffer. Delaying could risk the stability of the shoreline and the health of the Potomac River. While the existing stumps have live roots now (and therefore help hold the bank against coming high flows), those roots will die before long. Planting this fall allows time for the saplings to establish their root systems before the old tree roots cease to function in the buffer.

In summary, Potomac Conservancy recommends Trump National begin immediately to plant trees closest to the river to replace those that were recently cut down. A mix of trees and shrubs should be planted adjacent to that, and grasses and forbs (all natives, of course) should form a barrier between active golf course areas and the rest of the buffer.

The Potomac River is a valuable resource for Trump National, and for the entire region. Clean water is important to us all, and riparian buffers are a key tool to protect the river from excess pollution. It is up to Trump National to restore the buffer in order to ensure the activities on the golf course do not negatively impact the Potomac River.

I would be happy to elaborate on any aspect of our recommendations. I will call you the week of October 18th to discuss the status of your work on the buffer. Feel free to contact me at any time prior to that.

Sincerely,



Patrick Felling
Virginia Policy Director

C: Hedrick Belin, Potomac Conservancy
Alex Blackburn, Kevin Hale and Dana Malone; Loudoun County
Joe Coleman, Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy
Gem Bingol, Piedmont Environmental Council
Stella Koch, Audubon Naturalist Society