

Trump Rips Out Presidents' Historic Trees for New Ballroom

Story by Josh Fiallo

Not even historic trees are safe from President Donald Trump's path of [destruction at the White House](#).

Satellite imagery shows that six trees, including southern magnolias commemorating presidents Warren G. Harding and Franklin D. Roosevelt, were axed or removed from the White House grounds this week as Trump abruptly demolished the East Wing.



└ Magnolia trees commemorating the U.S. presidents Warren G. Harding, left, and Franklin D. Roosevelt, right, were demolished at the White House this week. / National Park Service

First lady Florence Harding planted the tree that would later be commemorated in her husband's honor on March 29, 1922, during a photographed ceremony.



— First Lady Florence's Harding holds a small shovel at the 1922 planting ceremony. / National Park Service

Also gone from the White House grounds is the magnolia honoring Roosevelt, the architect behind the New Deal and U.S. president for much of World War II.



The destruction of the East Wing and its surrounding trees is visible from space. / Photo Illustration by Elizabeth Brockway/The Daily Beast/Planet Labs PBC

Roosevelt's magnolia, planted in 1942, is no longer visible in satellite images or in photographs of the flattened East Wing.



A historical marker designates where a southern magnolia tree honoring President Franklin D. Roosevelt that once stood on the White House grounds. / National Park Service

Also missing is a Yoshino cherry tree that first lady Jill Biden and the former first lady of Japan, Kishida Yuko, planted in 2023.



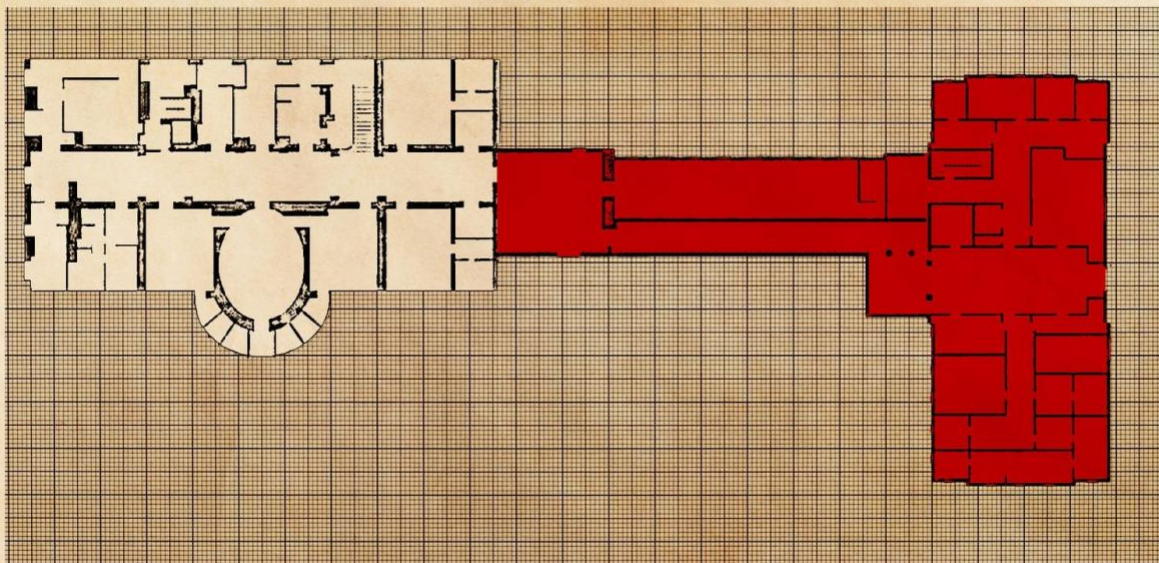
└ Jill Biden's Yoshino cherry tree, right, in bloom earlier this year. / National park Service

At least three other trees [and the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden](#)—the late first lady's *other* iconic garden on the White House grounds to be [defiled by Trump](#)—appear to have faced the same fate as the rest of the East Wing.



└ The iconic Jacqueline Kennedy Garden, also known as the East Garden or First Lady's Garden, is among the casualties of President Donald Trump's ballroom construction. / National Park Service

The rapid demolition has resulted in the [White House losing](#) at least six trees, a garden, the family theater, the Office of the First Lady, the East Colonnade, the East Garden Room, and the White House's eastern entrance.



The East Wing is where public tours of the White House began and where celebrities, dignitaries, and foreign leaders entered to attend state dinners and other receptions.



└ Jacqueline Kennedy's garden was an oasis of greenery on the White House grounds for decades. It is now a sea of mud. / Getty Images

[ABC News](#) reports that trees outside the East Wing were chopped down or relocated about a month before this week's demolition of the building. The White House has not said what has become of the trees.

It removed the famed "Jackson Magnolia" earlier this year—the oldest tree on the grounds, which had become a safety issue—and replaced it with a sapling of the historic tree in the same place.



└ The East Wing, including its iconic colonnade that connected it to the Executive Residence, has been turned to rubble. / Eric Lee / Getty Images

Trump, who promised this summer that he would *not* touch the existing White House to build his pet project, has said little about what will become of the space known as the East Wing since 1902.

An administration official said the East Wing will be “modernized and rebuilt,” but there is no timeline—or renderings—to show when that will be accomplished or what the space’s MAGA facelift will look like.