

Summary: NPS Employees Improperly Disclosed Nonpublic Information to Contractor

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The OIG investigated allegations that National Park Service (NPS) employees improperly disclosed nonpublic procurement information to an NPS contractor. Specifically, we investigated whether an NPS project manager shared nonpublic information with the contractor in 2020 while the NPS was preparing to issue a request for quote for consulting work. During our investigation, we learned that an NPS official may have also improperly disclosed nonpublic information in 2018 to the same contractor months before the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) Interior Business Center (IBC) issued a request for proposal for consulting services.

We found that the official and the project manager both violated Federal regulations that prohibit employees from providing preferential treatment to any private organization and from disclosing nonpublic information to further the interest of another. Specifically, the official and the project manager both disclosed information to the contractor that could have provided it with an unfair advantage in successfully bidding on an NPS contract. The official communicated nonpublic information to the contractor about a potential contract in advance of the IBC's 2018 request for proposal, and the project manager communicated with the contractor by personal email about a potential 2020 consulting contract and solicited the contractor's input for the draft statement of work. We did not find that the official and the project manager knew of each other's actions or that the official's communications with the contractor in 2018 related to the project manager's communications in 2020.

The official left the DOI in 2020 to work at another Federal agency.

This is a summary of an investigative report we issued to the NPS Director.

