



OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

VIA EMAIL

July 6, 2021

Jimmy Tobias
MuckRock News
DEPT MR 112936
411A Highland Ave
Somerville, MA 02144-2516

Re: OIG-2021-00184

Dear Jimmy Tobias:

This is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated June 16, 2021, which was received by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) on the same date. You requested the following information under the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552:

- Any and all complaints and/or referral packages surrounding the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's handling of the Eastern Collier Property Owners (ECPO) development project and Incidental Take Permit application (i.e., the Eastern Collier Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan, permit application, or Environmental Impact Statement). This request also seeks to obtain the total number of complaints received by OIG relating to FWS' handling of the ECPO project, the total number that are being investigated by OIG, and the total number that are being referred back to FWS or other agencies.

Your request has been assigned FOIA Control Number OIG-2021-00184. Please refer to this number in any future communications with our office regarding your request.

Under 43 C.F.R. § 2.15, the OIG is required to categorize each FOIA request based on the amount of time needed to process it. The five categories are: 1) Simple (1 -5 workdays); 2) Normal (6-20 workdays); 3) Complex (21-60 workdays); 4) Extraordinary (60+ workdays); and 5) Expedited (requests that have been granted expedited processing). Within each track, requests are processed on a first-in, first-out basis. Your request has been placed in the normal track. Please note that the OIG has a backlog of requests. Please be assured, however, that your request is being handled as equitably as possible and that all documents that can be released will be made available at the earliest date possible.

The FOIA provides for three levels of fees which may be assessed in response to FOIA requests according to categories of FOIA requesters. If records are requested for commercial use, requestors may be charged for document search, duplication, and review. 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(4)(A)(ii)(I). If records are not requested for commercial use, and the request is made by an educational or noncommercial scientific institution, whose purpose is scholarly or scientific

research, or a representative of the news media, the requester is charged only duplication fees, with the first 100 page provided free. 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(4)(A)(ii)(II). All other requesters are charged reasonable charges for search and duplication with two hours of search time and 100 pages of duplication provided free. See 5 U.S.C. § 552 (a)(4)(A)(iv)(I); see also Uniform Freedom of Information Act Fee Schedule and Guidelines, 52 Fed. Reg. 10,012, 10018 (Mar. 27, 1987).

For purposes of this request, you have been categorized as a representative of the news. Pursuant to DOI regulations, as such you may be charged for some duplication costs but will not be charged for our search or review costs and are entitled to up to 100 pages of photocopies (or an equivalent volume) for free. See 43 C.F.R. § 2.39. Please note that documents will be provided electronically. You have not requested paper copies, however, if you require photocopy duplication, the charge will be \$0.15 per page with the first 100 pages free.

If, after taking into consideration your fee category entitlements, our processing costs are less than \$50.00, we will not bill you because the cost of collection would be greater than the fee collected. See 43 C.F.R. § 2.37(g).

Should you have any questions or need to contact us, I can be reached at 202-208-6523, and the email is foia@doioig.gov.

Sincerely,

Sheri Meyers
Sheri Meyers

Government Information Specialist