

Bobber

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Nicholas Marritz filed this request with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers of the United States of America.

Tracking #	FP-22-004070	
Submitted	Nov. 16, 2021	
Due	Dec. 23, 2021	
Est. Completion	None	Edit

STATUSEdit

Awaiting Response

TAGSEdit

No tags. Add some!

Filter communicationsCollapse All

From: Nicholas Marritz

11/16/2021

Email

Subject: Freedom of Information Act Request: Bobber

Dear Army Corps of Engineers:

This is a request for records under the Freedom of Information Act.

RECORDS REQUESTED

All records related to USACE's water safety mascot, Bobber. These would include (but are not limited to) (1) all records related to the conception and development of the "Bobber" costume or character; (2) any guidelines or guidance related to the use of the Bobber costume or character; (3) any Bobber-related contracts; (4) any records featuring or mentioning Bobber; and (5) any communications or correspondence related to Bobber.

REQUEST FOR FEE WAIVER

The requested documents will be made available to the general public online for free via [muckrock.com](#), a FOIA journalism site. This request is part of the Federal Agency Mascot Project. This request is not being made for commercial purposes. Therefore, I respectfully request that any fees associated with this request please be waived.

FORM OF PRODUCTION

I would prefer that responsive records be produced to me electronically, by e-mail attachment if available or by CD-ROM if not.

CONCLUSION

Thank you very much, and I look forward to your response within 20 business days.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Marritz

From: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

11/17/2021

Email

Subject: Nicholas Marritz FOIA Request - Receipt Acknowledged

Dear Mr. Marritz,

Thank you for your FOIA request dated November 16, 2021. We will be back in touch soon with a formal acknowledgement, and will provide you with a FOIA tracking number at that time.

Best regards,

Mary Alice Smith

Paralegal Specialist

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

HECSA - Office of Counsel

7701 Telegraph Road

Alexandria, VA 22315

703-428-8160 (office)

703-428-7221 (fax)

Mary.A.Smith@usace.army.mil

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From: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

01/20/2022



Subject: Nicholas Marritz FOIA Request - FP-22-004070 - Request for Additional Information (Bobber)

Email

Dear Mr. Marritz,

This is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated November 16, 2021 for all records related to USACE's water safety mascot, Bobber, including but not limited to: (1) all records related to the conception and development of the "Bobber" costume or character; (2) any guidelines or guidance related to the use of the Bobber costume or character; (3) any Bobber-related contracts; (4) any records featuring or mentioning Bobber; and (5) any communications or correspondence related to Bobber. Your request has been assigned tracking number FP-22-004070.

Please be advised this office is not a repository for documents. Therefore, we must determine where the information you have requested would be located and request a document search be conducted by the relevant records custodians.

We are unable to process your request at this time. Please be advised that your request, as submitted, is not perfected. It does not reasonably describe the records sought, as required by 5 U.S.C. § 552. Please note that, pursuant to 32 C.F.R. § 286.5, FOIA requests must describe the documents requested in sufficient detail to allow the FOIA Office to locate them with a reasonable amount of effort. Additionally, the FOIA does not require agencies to create records in response to FOIA requests.

We reached out to our National Water Safety Program Manager, who will need additional information in order to search for documents. Please note that Bobber has been the USACE National Water Safety Mascot for several years and is used agency-wide, so it would be impossible to provide the number of times Bobber has been mentioned and/or featured in USACE materials.

More specificity would be helpful. (1) Are you willing to narrow the scope of your request to include specific USACE districts or locations? (2) You provide a very broad list of categories for the types of documents and records you seek; however, what documents or records are most relevant to the information you need for your specific purpose? (3) Please provide a specific timeframe?

Please reply to this message by narrowing the scope of your request to more reasonably describe the records you seek. Any details you can provide will be helpful.

Your request file will remain open for 10 business days while we await your response. If no response is received by February 2, 2022, we will assume you are no longer interested and will close your request.

Best regards,

Mary Alice Smith

Paralegal Specialist

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

HECSA - Office of Counsel

7701 Telegraph Road

Alexandria, VA 22315

703-428-8160 (office)

703-428-7221 (fax)

Mary.A.Smith@usace.army.mil

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or by email at Mary.A.Smith@usace.army.mil. Thank you.

From: Nicholas Marritz

01/28/2022

Subject: RE: Freedom of Information Act Request: Bobber

Mail

Dear Ms. Smith:

Thank you for your response. I am happy to narrow the scope of this request. I am seeking records sufficient to answer the following questions:

(1) Whose idea was it to have a water safety mascot in the first place, and what was the thought process behind that?

(2) Who designed the mascot, and what was the design process like (e.g. were there multiple design concepts submitted? Was the design of the character contracted out? (If so, kindly produce the contract).

(3) When and how were the other characters in what I'm going to call the "Bobber Extended Universe" created? (e.g. Ranger Buck, Ranger Jane, Ranger Toro, Tackle, Jacques Catsto, Corkey, Sinker)

(4) Were any Bobber-related promotional items or tchotchkes created (e.g trading cards, coloring books)? If so, please produce them.

(5) Were there any life-size Bobber costumes created? If so, please produce records related to the design of the costume (contracts, sketches, etc.) and any guidelines regarding the use of or care for the costume.

(6) Did anyone in Congress ever object to USCA's use of a mascot? I understand that there have been periodic attempts by lawmakers (e.g. former Oklahoma senator Tom Coburn) to rein in agency spending on mascots. If so, please produce all records related to that.

Please let me know if this is sufficient information to enable your search.

With best regards,

Nicholas Marritz

Nicholas Marritz

Jan. 28, 2022

Notes are visible to you and other editors of this request.

Contact information overridden:

email

Mary.A.Smith@usae.army.mil

From: Nicholas Marritz

06/02/2022

Subject: RE: Freedom of Information Act Request: Bobber

Mail

Dear USACE:

I want to follow up on the status of my FOIA request FP-22-004070. Could you please give me an update?

Thank you very much,

Nicholas Marritz

From: Nicholas Marritz

08/11/2022

Subject: RE: Freedom of Information Act Request: Bobber

Email

Dear USACE:

I am writing to follow up on the status of my FOIA request FP-22-004070. In January of this year you asked me to narrow the scope of my request, and I did so. I haven't heard anything from you since that time. Could you please give me an update?

Thank you very much,

Nicholas Marritz

Nicholas Marritz

Aug. 11, 2022

Notes are visible to you and other editors of this request.

Contact information overridden:

email

foia@usace.army.mil

From: Nicholas Marritz

08/11/2022

Email

Subject: RE: Freedom of Information Act Request: Bobber

Dear USACE:

I am writing to follow up on the status of my FOIA request FP-22-004070. In January of this year you asked me to narrow the scope of my request, and I did so. I haven't heard anything from you since that time. Could you please give me an update?

Thank you very much,

Nicholas Marritz

Nicholas Marritz

Aug. 11, 2022

Notes are visible to you and other editors of this request.

Contact information overridden:

email

foia@usace.army.mil

From: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

08/11/2022

Email

Subject: MAS ACK - Nicholas Marritz Status Inquiry Re Bobber - FP-22-004070

Dear Mr. Marritz,

Receipt acknowledged.

Best regards,

Mary Alice Smith

Paralegal Specialist

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

HECSA - Office of Counsel

7701 Telegraph Road

Alexandria, VA 22315

703-428-8160 (office)

703-428-7221 (fax)

Mary.A.Smith@usace.army.mil

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or by email at Mary.A.Smith@usace.army.mil. Thank you.

From: Nicholas Marritz

11/20/2022

Subject: RE: Freedom of Information Act Request #FP-22-004070

Mail

Re: FOIA Request FP-22-004070

Dear Mr. Whittaker:

In November 2021, I submitted a FOIA request seeking records relating to USACE's water safety mascot, Bobber. Over a year has passed, and I have yet to receive any records. At USACE's request, I gave more information about the specific records I am seeking. But since that time, I have gotten no updates on the status of my request. I have requested updates several times—USACE acknowledges my message but gives no substantive response. So I thought I would turn to you, the FOIA Liaison.

Are you able to give me any update about the status of this request? Thanks very much for your time.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Marritz

Nicholas Marritz

Nov. 20, 2022

Notes are visible to you and other editors of this request.

Contact information overridden:

email

foia-liaison@usace.army.mil

From: Nicholas Marritz

12/10/2022

Subject: RE: Freedom of Information Act Request #FP-22-004070

Email

Dear OGIS:

I am seeking mediation services related to a FOIA request I filed with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. I filed the request on 16 November 2021, and it was assigned the tracking number FP-22-004070. The request seeks records related to USACE's water safety mascot "Bobber." Over a year has passed since I filed the request, and all that USACE has done was ask me to narrow the scope of my request in January 2022. I did so and have heard nothing from USACE since that time. I reached out to their FOIA Liaison last month but have received no response. Thus, I respectfully request mediation services from OGIS. My entire correspondence with USACE can be found here, as I filed this request via the FOIA-and-journalism website [MuckRock.com: https://www.muckrock.com/foi/united-states-of-america-10/bobber-121319/#comms](https://www.muckrock.com/foi/united-states-of-america-10/bobber-121319/#comms). Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Marritz

Nicholas Marritz

Dec. 10, 2022

Notes are visible to you and other editors of this request.

Contact information overridden:

email

ogis@nara.gov

From:

12/10/2022

Subject: Re: RE: Freedom of Information Act Request #FP-22-004070

Email

Thank you for contacting the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS). This is an auto reply message.

Please note that we are currently in the process of transitioning to a new case management system. This may cause slight delays in our responses for a short period of time. Rest assured that we review all incoming emails as soon as possible and will respond as appropriate. We apologize for any delays in our response and look forward to assisting you.

If you seek OGIS’s assistance with a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) dispute and have not done so already, please email us:

- A copy of your FOIA request

- The agency’s response to your request

- Your appeal letter (if you filed an appeal)

- The agency's response to your appeal (if you received a response)

We encourage you to transmit documents as PDF attachments via email, rather than through postal mail, which may cause delays in our response.

Sincerely,
The OGIS Staff

From: Nicholas Marritz

02/28/2023

Email


Subject: RE: Freedom of Information Act Request #FP-22-004070

Dear OGIS:

I've attached a copy of my correspondence with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding this request. I have heard nothing from USACE since August 2022 despite narrowing the scope of my request as asked. Please let me know when I can expect FOIA mediation assistance from you.

Many thanks,

Nicholas Marritz



Bobber_-_Correspondence_with_USACE.pdf

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From: Nicholas Marritz

03/10/2023

Mail

Subject: RE: Freedom of Information Act Request #FP-22-004070

Dear Ms. Smith:

I filed FOIA request FP-22-004070 in November 2021. In January 2022, you asked me to narrow the scope of the request, which I did that same month. It is now March 2023, and I have had no update on the status of this FOIA request for over a year. I reached out to USACE's FOIA Liaison in November 2022 and got no reply. Please update me on the status of this request as soon as possible. I would prefer not to have to use the remedies provided by the FOIA.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Marritz

Nicholas Marritz

March 10, 2023

Notes are visible to you and other editors of this request.

Contact information overridden:

email

Mary.A.Smith@usace.army.mil

From: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

03/20/2023


Email

Subject: Re: Freedom of Information Act Request #FP-22-004070

Dear Nicholas Marritz,

Please see OGIS's response to this submission (00020737), attached to this email.

Sincerely,
The OGIS Staff



00020737 Marritz Response

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From: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

03/28/2023

Good Morning,

Please find attached the response to your FOIA request.

Thank you,

Catharine DeBelle

Assistant Center Counsel

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Humphreys Engineer Support Activity

7701 Telegraph Road

Alexandria, VA 22315

703-428-6479 (office)

703-428-7221 (fax)

Catharine.DeBelle@usace.army.mil<mailto:Catharine.DeBelle@usace.army.mil>

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Nicholas Marritz Release Letter - FP-22-004070

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Bobber the Water Safety Dog Costume Care and Use Guidelines

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From: Nicholas Marritz

04/03/2023



Subject: RE: Freedom of Information Act Request #FP-22-004070

Email

Dear Ms. DeBelle:

Thank you very much for your response. I know that the FOIA doesn't require agencies to answer questions, so the fact that you answered them anyway was much appreciated. Thank you also for sending the guidelines for the Bobber costume. Also, I discovered that the creator of Bobber was Toby Isbell, Visual Information Specialist with USACE's Little Rock District. (See attached USACE newsletter). Would it be possible to query Mr. Isbell or the Little Rock District to see if additional responsive records exist? Also, Mr. Isbel indicates that at the time he created Bobber, USACE already had several mascots including Freddy Fish, Buddy Beaver, and others. If I wanted to request records related to those characters, should I send a new FOIA request, or can it be appended to this one?

My sincerest thanks,

Nick Marritz



ourmiss_summer17_lowres.pdf

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Nicholas Marritz

April 3, 2023

Notes are visible to you and other editors of this request.

Contact information overridden:

email

From: Nicholas Marritz

05/04/2023

Subject: RE: Freedom of Information Act Request #FP-22-004070

Email

Dear Ms. Debelle:

I just wanted to follow up on the questions from my last email: Would it be possible to query Mr. Isbell or the Little Rock District to see if additional responsive records exist? Also, Mr. Isbel indicates that at the time he created Bobber, USACE already had several mascots including Freddy Fish, Buddy Beaver, and others. If I wanted to request records related to those characters, should I send a new FOIA request, or can it be appended to this one?

With best regards,

Nicholas Marritz

From: Nicholas Marritz

06/26/2023

Subject: RE: Freedom of Information Act Request #FP-22-004070

Mail

Dear USACE FOIA Liaison:

For several months I've been trying to follow up with Ms. Catharine Debelle about my FOIA Request #FP-22-004070. Here's what happened: shortly after USACE produced some records responsive to my request, I discovered that additional records responsive may exist. I am trying to figure out whether I need to file a new FOIA request for these records or if USACE can just search for and produce them as part of my existing request. Any clarification from USACE would be helpful.

With thanks,

Nicholas Marritz

Nicholas Marritz

June 26, 2023

Notes are visible to you and other editors of this request.

Contact information overridden:

email

foia-liaison@usace.army.mil

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