



# United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
Washington D.C. 20240



November 1, 2022

Nicholas Marritz  
MuckRock News DEPT  
Huntington Ave  
Boston, MA 02115

129323-44864322@requests.muckrock.com

REF: DOI-FWS-2022-004066

Dear Mr. Marritz,

This is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request regarding:

I am requesting records related to FWS's mascot, Puddles the Blue Goose. Specifically, I am requesting records sufficient to answer the following questions:

## RECORDS REQUESTED:

(A) All records related to the process of designing the Puddles the Blue Goose mascot (contracts, sketches, etc.)

(B) Records sufficient to answer the following questions:

- (1) Whose idea was it to create a FWS mascot in the first place, and why?
- (2) Who designed the Puddles 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) Were any Puddles-related promotional items or tchotchkes created (e.g trading cards, coloring books)? If so, please produce them.
- (4) Were there any life-size Puddles 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.

(5) Did anyone in Congress ever object to FWS'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.

(6) Is FWS still using Puddles as part of its public outreach? If not, why not?

### **Response**

We are releasing 1 record to you that is responsive to your FOIA request. FOIA requests do not answer questions and can only respond with records. Items B, 1-6 are considered questions and may be found with in the record.

### **Mediation/Dispute Resolution**

If after contacting us as described below, you need further information or assistance with your request, you may wish to seek dispute resolution services from the Department's FOIA Public Liaison, Natasha Alcantara by email at [doifoiapublicliaison@sol.doi.gov](mailto:doifoiapublicliaison@sol.doi.gov).

If you need further information or assistance after contacting the Department's FOIA Public Liaison, you may wish to seek dispute resolution services from the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS). The 2007 FOIA amendments created the OGIS to offer mediation services to resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies as a non-exclusive alternative to litigation. Using OGIS services does not affect your right to pursue litigation. You may contact OGIS in any of the following ways:

Office of Government Information Services  
National Archives and Records Administration  
8601 Adelphi Road - OGIS  
College Park, MD 20740-6001  
E-mail: [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov)  
Web: <https://www.archives.gov/ogis>  
Telephone: 202-741-5770  
Fax: 202-741-5769  
Toll-free: 1-877-684-6448

Please note that using OGIS services does not affect the timing of filing an appeal with the Department's FOIA & Privacy Act Appeals Officer.

### **Appeal Rights**

You may appeal this response to the Department's FOIA/Privacy Act Appeals Officer. If you choose to appeal, the FOIA/Privacy Act Appeals Officer must receive your FOIA appeal no later than 90 workdays from the date of this final response. Appeals arriving or delivered after 5 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday, will be deemed received on the next workday.

Your appeal must be made in writing. You may submit your appeal and accompanying materials to the FOIA/Privacy Act Appeals Officer by mail, courier service, fax, or email. All communications concerning your appeal should be clearly marked with the words: "FREEDOM OF INFORMATION APPEAL." You must include an explanation of why you believe this response is in error. You must also include with your appeal copies of all correspondence between you and FWS concerning your FOIA request, including your original FOIA request and this response. Failure to include with your appeal all correspondence between you and FWS will result in the Department's rejection of your appeal, unless the FOIA/Privacy Act Appeals Officer determines (in the FOIA/Privacy Act Appeals Officer's sole discretion) that good cause exists to accept the defective appeal.

Please include your name and daytime telephone number (or the name and telephone number of an appropriate contact), email address and fax number (if available) in case the FOIA/Privacy Act Appeals Officer needs additional information or clarification of your appeal.

DOI FOIA/Privacy Act Appeals Office Contact Information

Department of the Interior  
Office of the Solicitor  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
MS-6556 MIB  
Washington, DC 20240  
Attn: FOIA/Privacy Act Appeals Office  
Telephone: (202) 208-5339  
Fax: (202) 208-6677  
Email: [FOIA.Appeals@sol.doi.gov](mailto:FOIA.Appeals@sol.doi.gov)

**Conclusion**

For your information, Congress excluded three discrete categories of law enforcement and national security records from the requirements of FOIA. See [5 U.S.C. 552\(c\)](#). This response is limited to those records that are subject to the requirements of FOIA. This is a standard notification that is given to all our requesters and should not be taken as an indication that excluded records do, or do not, exist.

This is our final response and closes your request DOI-FWS-2022-004066. If you have any questions about our response to your request, you may contact me by email at [john\\_declerck@fws.gov](mailto:john_declerck@fws.gov), or by mail at U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; ATTN: FOIA Office; 5275 Leesburg Pike; MS: IRTM; Falls Church, VA 22041.

Sincerely,

John De Clerck  
FWS HQ FOIA Coordinator