

FOIA Violations

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Posted in group: **FOIA Advisory Committee**

I represent a non-profit group of scientists who frequently make FOI Requests to various Dept. of Interior components, DoD, the US Forest Service and other agencies.

We have found that DOI often engages in a variety of behavior to avoid providing agency records, slow down FOIA response time, and to make their record look better.

DOI often illegally redacts records, and uses the redaction process to slow response time. DOI will "lose" a request, making it difficult for a requestor to track or receive the records, and DOI often fails to respond to inquiries from the requestor. In one example, the US FWS "lost" our request and then ignored nearly a dozen inquiries as to the request. After several years, we finally sued them in the District of Oregon and the judge held them liable for civil contempt. The FWS then changed the tracking number on the request to make it difficult for Congress and its oversight committees to discover this agency malfeasance.

DOI will assign new tracking numbers to FOIA Requests, making the time to fill the request difficult or impossible to trace by Congress and various oversight committees.

DOI will brake a FOIA Request into various parts and then process them sequentially, to increase search time and slow the response.

The National Archives are also remiss in not executing their duties with respect to agency documents and ensuring that various agencies keep their records in good order and organized.

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