

Data, Tools, and Technology

Is a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request confidential? Does my identity impact the results?

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests are not confidential. Once a FOIA request is received, it becomes a public record of the USGS. If the request contains personally identifying information or the request is deemed “sensitive,” we may redact information under [FOIA Exemption 6](#) (personal privacy).

The identity of the FOIA requester does not have any bearing on the outcome of the FOIA request, regardless of what the FOIA requester may know about the subject matter or the records. See the Department of Justice Guide to the FOIA: [Responding to FOIA Requests](#), and the [Department of the Interior FOIA Handbook](#), section 5.9.

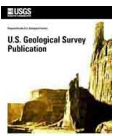
In cases where a law firm represents a client and uses the requested information in a lawsuit, the identity of the client generally does not have any bearing on the outcome of the FOIA request. The FOIA is designed to inform the public about agency actions, not to benefit individual litigants.

For more information, visit [FOIA.gov](#), the [USGS FOIA Reading Room](#), or send an email to foia@usgs.gov

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Freedom of Information Act

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, as amended, generally provides that any person has a right to request access to Federal agency records. The USGS proactively promotes information disclosure as inherent to its mission of providing objective science to inform decisionmakers and the general public. USGS scientists...

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New Accessions Arriving at Field Records

Materials arrive from across the country to be accessioned and processed at the Denver Library, Field Records Collection. Geologic Discipline scientists are encouraged to deposit their project materials and with the Field Records Collection. Materials in the collection are managed as Federal records to ensure ongoing access in perpetuity for future researchers.

