

Exhibit A

Sept. 22, 2017

National Freedom of Information Officer
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW (2822T)
Washington, DC 20460

To Whom It May Concern:

This is a request under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

I request all records concerning communications within the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and between U.S. EPA and federal or state agencies or outside parties since Jan. 20, 2017 concerning each of the following:

- 1) The “Bay Journal” or “Chesapeake Bay Journal;”
- 2) EPA Grant CB-96342701 awarded to Chesapeake Media Services Inc. (now Bay Journal Media) on 1/20/2016.
- 3) Documentation of any “shift in priorities” for the Chesapeake Bay Program affecting its activities, especially as they relate to grant programs.

Please include any phone calls, call logs, call sheets, Skype calls or videos, emails, letters, hand-written notes, day calendars, memorandums, meeting agenda sheets, text messages, voice and video recordings and other documented forms of communication.

Please search for responsive records to my request in the email accounts affiliated with the following individuals: Scott Pruitt, Ken Wagner, John Konkus, Cecil Rodrigues, John Armstead, and Diana Esher.

If possible, I would like to receive the largest number of records or documents in electronic form.

I am filing this FOIA request as a “representative of the news media,” since I am a reporter for/editor of the Bay Journal. This designation entitles me to a waiver of fees accumulated during the actual search and review process. Nevertheless, if your agency does determine that I should be charged for any part of this request, please contact me before estimate costed exceed \$100.

This request is made as part of news-gathering activity and is not for commercial use.

The information responsive to this FOIA request will contribute to the public’s understanding of EPA and the government at large. This information is not in the public domain, but once your agency responds to this FOIA request, it will be published online at www.bayjournal.com and in our print edition, with a combined readership of nearly 100,000. We expect the information that is produced through this and other FOIA requests to serve as the basis for several articles that explain the government’s actions and operations to the public. For more information about the Bay Journal, please refer to www.bayjournal.com

FOIA requires that if part of a record is exempt from disclosure, you must redact and release all segregated parts. Please describe the deleted material in detail and specify the reasons for believing that the alleged statutory justification applies in this instance.

If my request is denied in whole or in part, please specify which exemption(s) is (are) claimed for each passage or whole document denied. In addition, please give the number of pages in each document and the total number of pages pertaining to this request and the dates of the documents withheld. Such statements will be helpful in deciding whether to appeal an adverse determination.

As required by FOIA, I look forward to hearing from your office within 20 days in response to this request.

If you have any questions about the nature or scope of this request, please call me at 717-428-2819 or email me at kblankenship@bayjournal.com.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,

Karl Blankenship
Editor, Bay Journal
Executive Director, Bay Journal Media