

# Public records request 2025-11: Updated staff guidance

## How do I use this document?

This document was created to give SCC staff guidance on how to respond to PRR 2025-11. It includes information on:

1. What does the public records request ask for?
2. What are the contract details and relevant deliverable items I should be searching for?
3. How do I search my records?
  - a. Where do I look for records?
  - b. Which records do I include?
  - c. How do I save/format these records for release?
4. Where do I put my records once I'm finished searching?
5. How long do I have to complete my records search?
6. I already provided my records. Do I need to search again?

## What does the public records request ask for?

### PRR 2025-11

"This public records request is for emails and documents related to Liberum, LLC, and KR Creative Strategies and affiliated associates hired or under contract to the Washington State Conservation Commission from December 15, 2023, to present. The specific criteria for the records requested are as follows:

- Date of contract, qualifications, scope of work, and deliverables.
- The dollar amount of contracts, dates, and amounts of invoices and payments.
- All relevant emails and documents related to recommendations, draft reports, final reports, or other deliverables from contracted entities."

## What timeframe should I be searching to find responsive records?

The public records request was submitted on December 18, 2025. SCC interprets "to present" to mean up until December 18, 2025. Staff should search for documents from **December 15, 2023, to December 18, 2025.**

## What are the contract details and relevant deliverable items I should be searching for?

For your easy reference, we have included the contract names, the dates, and the deliverables associated with each contract. You should search for items related to these contracts and their deliverables, per the records request.

For the first KR Creative contract, you should be searching for and producing all information related to team meetings set up per this contract's deliverable. This may include, but not be limited to, Outlook meeting invitations, retained notes from these meetings, and agendas.

## **KR Creative**

### **KR Creative\_K2455 Organizational Development**

#### **Contract dates**

From March 8 to June 21, 2024.

#### **Deliverables**

Define current state of SCC processes and program administration, explore solutions to optimize agency structure to deliver intended outcomes:

- Team meetings, explore process gaps/opportunities, define performance measures, identify near and long-term priorities to improve program workflow and results
- Survey on current SCC processes and potential program improvements.
- Stakeholder interviews with key partners who could unlock new perspectives for optimizing SCC operations and Structure.
- Deliverable report to summarize findings of the meetings, surveys, and interviews.

### **KR Creative\_K2474 Smart Agriculture**

#### **Contract dates**

From June 2024 to April 2025.

#### **Deliverables**

**Task 1:** Stakeholder Interviews representing two different audiences, the agriculture industry and agencies/non-production partners.

**Task 2:** Interview Data Summary Report-report will organize interview data to integrate the literature review report being developed by Washington State University.

**Task 3:** Interview Data Summary Presentation-contractor will design and present a summary of interview during a webinar.

**Task 4:** Design and format of the final report, max 100 pages using final written content, graphics and photos provided by WSU and SCC.

### **KR Creative K2459 BMP-Youth Activity Guide**

#### **Contract dates**

From April to September 2024.

#### **Deliverables**

Develop a series of creative assets to educate landowners on best management practices and individual actions, as well as a youth activity guide on the importance of riparian areas.

- Best management practices catalog to small-scale or beginning farmers, BMPs they could engage in on their property.
- Youth educational activity guide, print-ready guides one in English and one in Spanish.

## **Liberum**

### **Liberum\_K2518 Change Management**

#### **Contract dates**

From December 5 to December 31, 2024.

#### **Deliverables**

Change Management Process Review Riparian Grant Program workshop. Preparation and completion of process review workshop for the Riparian Grant Program.

### **Liberum\_K2520 Program & Project Support**

#### **Contract dates**

From December 24, 2024, to June 30, 2025.

#### **Deliverables**

Riparian Grant Program (RGP) finalized work plan and tentative timeline. Create a tentative timeline and more detailed work plan based on the Riparian Grant Program Workshop held on December 11, 2024.

### **Liberum\_K2636 Organizational Development**

#### **Contract dates**

From July 1 to December 31, 2025

#### **Deliverables**

Continue more detailed work and a tentative timeline for the Riparian Grant Program, Science Hub, and Organizational Development. Includes process assessments, current state analysis, future state design, and implementation.

## **How do I search my records?**

### **Where do I need to look for records?**

Search all emails, hard drives, the “Y” drive, SmartSheet, or other areas you might use, using the search terms “Liberum, LLC,” “Liberum,” “KR Creative Strategies.” These are examples of search terms. Conduct your search terms that are reasonably likely to uncover all responsive records. For more information, please review: [MRSC Practice Tips for Local Governments](#).

### **How do I search my email archive for messages older than a year?**

Within Outlook, scroll further down the side bar under your standard inbox and folders, you should see a folder titled “Online Archive – [first letter of your first name, last name]”. In this secondary inbox you’ll find messages dating back more than a year.

## **Which records do I need to include?**

### **What does relevant mean?**

There has been confusion about what “relevant” means specific to what kinds of emails and documents to include in the search. Relevant is defined as directly related to recommendations, draft reports, final reports, or other deliverables from contracted entities.

## Do I include transitory messages?

If you have retained transitory documents beyond their retention schedule AND it is relevant (as defined above) to the request, then yes, you must disclose it. Relevant to the request means it relates to the requested materials: *All relevant emails and documents related to recommendations, draft reports, final reports, or other deliverables from contracted entities.*

If you have emails that involve either KR Creative and/or Liberum, are not directly related to the request above, and are transitory, these are not in scope. Emails defined as “transitory messages” are short-lived, informational communications with temporary value, created to facilitate routine, day-to-day business or personal interaction rather than to document formal, official actions, policies, or decisions. They are considered non-records that have served their purpose or become obsolete. An example of this kind of communication might be emailing Liberum that you are running late to a meeting because your dog vomited, or letting another staff member know you are bringing your lunch to a meeting with Liberum.

## How do I save and/or format these files for release?

### Should I convert an email to a PDF?

DO NOT convert the email to a PDF. The requester may want the metadata.

### What if I am cc'd?

If you are cc'd on an email, include the email in your folder on the OneDrive.

### What about attachments?

#### Include any attachments to emails.

Review the narrative of records to see whether they reference additional responsive records that may be held elsewhere.

### How should I rename emails from a string of emails?

If the email is part of an email string with the same message title, you may have difficulty moving it over to your search folder, where you are putting the emails. You may number each email by adding a number to it, so it will transfer over.

If the first email is, “John Doe works at home” then the second email would be, “John Doe works at home\_2” and so on. You should then be able to move it over into the folder. **Do not alter any documents** you find and move over, other than adding a number to the subject line to move to a folder.

## Where do I save my records?

Karla will be setting up individual folders for each of you on OneDrive to collect your records. She will send each of you a link to your unique, individual, secure folder via email. Please save your documents in your designated folder and notify Karla via email when you are finished.

## How should I document the search terms used, and the locations searched for this public records request?

Documenting search efforts at the time of the search avoids having to reconstruct the search at a later date, maintains accurate search information, and reduces the time and effort required by staff to show the search was adequate. This could be a Word document that you keep as a record that documents the date you conducted the search, the search terms you used, and where those records were submitted (the OneDrive folder).

**NOTE:** The documentation of the search terms used may be kept where you can find it, in case we are questioned about how we conducted our search. It prevents trying to remember which terms were used. Please keep this somewhere you can refer to in the future in case you are asked.

## **I already provided responsive documents. Do I need to search again?**

The answer is: it depends. This document provides additional clarity on deliverables associated with each contract, and that increased detail may help you identify more responsive records. One example could be the KR Creative\_K2455 Organizational Development contract deliverable related to “team meetings.” Responsive records for this deliverable would include any Outlook meeting invites, meeting notes, agendas, or other “team meeting” related items. You need to make sure your records search is thorough.

You may also have not known about the Outlook email archive folder and mistakenly assumed you didn’t have emails older than a year. In this case, you’ll need to search your email archive folder.