



Office of the Chief  
Records Officer for the  
U.S. Government

***Sent Via Email. No Hard Copy to Follow.***

August 5, 2022

John Ellis  
Agency Records Officer  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave NW (MC 2822T)  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear John Ellis,

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) received the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) report dated July 29, 2022, regarding the premature deletion of temporary electronic records.

NARA understands that the deleted records were web server log files for the Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO) website. The volume of records is unknown, but the date range of the records is March 17, 2019 through October 6, 2021. These records are covered by the DAA-GRS-2013-0005-0004 records schedule.

Web server logs are routinely purged automatically based on a set retention period. In February 2022, EPA staff discovered that the retention period had been set to 30 days, and not the required 3 years. Once the error was discovered, staff at the National Computer Center recovered some web log files from backups and were able to restore logs going back to October 7, 2021. Logs prior to that date had already been removed from the backups as part of regular backup maintenance.

To mitigate any future losses of this kind, EPA's National Records Management Program will communicate this incident to all EPA offices and collaborate with the Office of Information Technology Operations to ensure that adequate storage capabilities, and appropriate IT rules, exist to successfully meet retention requirements for all web server logs across the agency.

Based on the information provided, the reporting requirements of 36 CFR 1230.14(a) have been met and this matter is now closed. Thank you for your commitment to improving your records management practices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laurence V. Brewer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L' and a distinct 'V'.

LAURENCE BREWER  
Chief Records Officer  
for the U.S. Government