

LBLNRA FACA Board
Response to Question posed to the LBLNRA Designated Federal Officer
January 11, 2023

The Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area Advisory Board reconvened in October 2022. Board members requested the Forest Service provide an online collaborative tool for the Board's use to allow the Board to continue to work between formal meetings.

The U.S. Government has a responsibility to safeguard technology systems and the information therein. We also have a responsibility to meet public inspection requirements as set forth in the Freedom of Information Act. To meet the current security, public inspection, and records retention requirements, we are limited to official channels for online collaboration when it involves the entire Board.

To meet the request, and using the U.S. Government's security criteria, several systems were vetted including "Basecamp", "Monday.com", TEAMS, etc. The Communications staff further tested the different secure online collaborative platforms, and these are our findings:

- A. The USDA has a secure collaborative platform called "SharePoint". We beta tested SharePoint use with the assistance of an Advisory Board member. The platform allows for the storage of files, chats, records retention, and the sharing of information. The beta test demonstrated significant security hurdles that require advanced computer knowledge. We do not believe this is a practical option based on the significant time involvement in approval and familiarity.
- B. The USDA has a secure collaborative file storage platform called "Pinyon". Pinyon allows end users to share access to files in a secure centralized storage location. We found Pinyon to be a suitable file sharing platform that requires far less security credentialing. We have requested a Pinyon site and are awaiting approval. Pinyon is only a file storage location. It does not allow for instant messaging or emailing.

Based on the test results, we are moving to implementation of the Pinyon option. We will provide an update when it is actionable and will provide training to everyone on its use.