

Purpose

This Tips & Tricks handout will guide Records Management Coordinators (RMC) and Records Management Assistant Coordinators (RMAC) through the process of conducting a records inventory. After conducting the inventory, the Records Inventory Worksheet (STD. 70) may be used to create a Records Retention Schedule (STD. 73).

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What is a Records Inventory?

A records inventory documents exactly what records are received, generated, and used by a given unit within a State entity. To establish and maintain a records management program, it is necessary for a unit to find out the nature, location, quantity, and use of its records.

The inventory process applies to both physical records—papers, maps, blueprints, publications, etc. and electronic records—computer files, databases, emails, servers, etc.

A Records Inventory Documents the:

- **Nature of records**
- **Location of records**
- **Quantity of records**
- **Use of records**

The following examples are suggestions for how State entities may conduct their records inventories. Each State entity may need to adjust the process depending on staffing, structure, and workload.

Steps in a Records Inventory

- 1) Identify which areas need to be inventoried.
- 2) Create maps of the areas being inventoried.
- 3) Program staff inventory their individual work spaces.
- 4) Managers inventory common work spaces and storage areas with the help of program staff.
- 5) The RMC/RMAC compiles Inventory Worksheets into one Worksheet.

Step 1 – Identify Inventory Areas

Identify which areas within the State entity need to be inventoried. The RMC (or the RMAC if there is one) will work with the managers and program staff of the unit being inventoried.

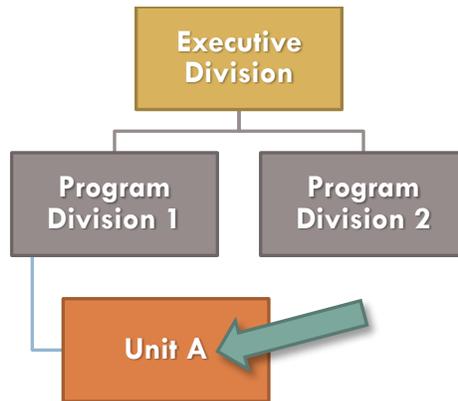


Figure 1. Example Diagram of Unit Being Inventoried

Step 2 – Create Area Maps

The RMC will create maps of the areas being inventoried—this may also be done by a manager or by program staff. These maps should be very simple floor plans of the areas where program staff work and the areas where records are stored. The maps may be as simple as a hand drawing on graph paper or as complex as a computer rendering of the program area.

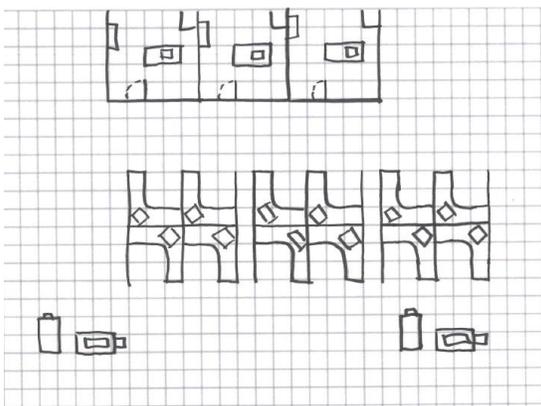


Figure 2. Hand-Drawn Floor Plan

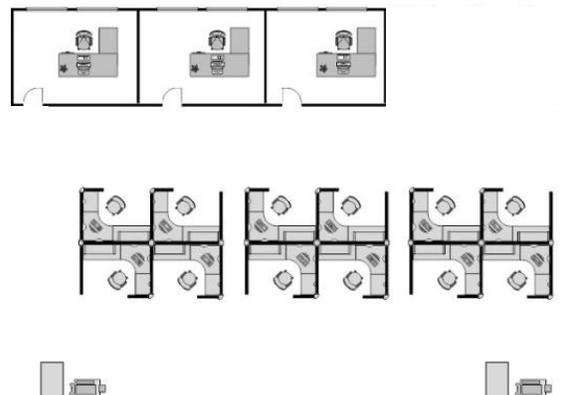


Figure 3. Computer-Generated Floor Plan

Each work station, office, common work area, and storage space should be assigned a unique number or title. Storage locations within those areas should also be be labelled. A key should be developed to track the labels and to ensure they are applied consistently.

KEY	
COM	Computer
CU	Cubicle
FC	Filing Cabinet
FS	File Shelf
OF	Office
OHS	Overhead Shelf
PC	Pedestal Cabinet
ST	Storage Area

Figure 4. Example Key of Storage Location Labels

State entities may develop their own labels according to their business practices and needs.

Using the example key in Figure 4, the maps may be labeled like this:

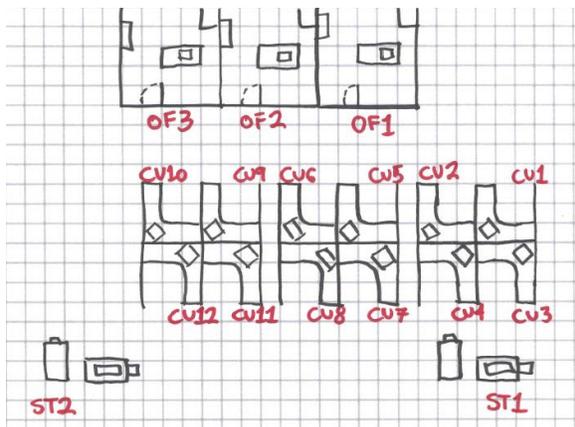


Figure 5. Hand-Drawn Floor Plan with Labels

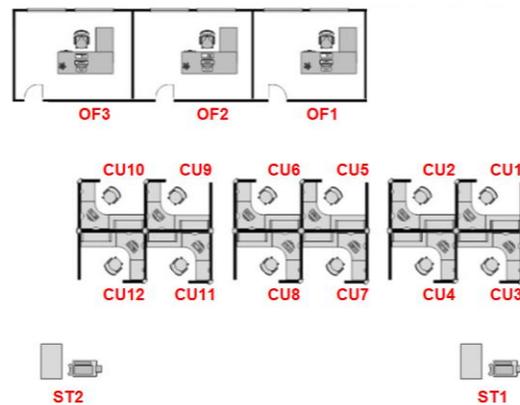


Figure 6. Computer-Generated Floor Plan with Labels

Step 3 – Inventory Individual Work Spaces

Maps should also be created for individual work spaces within the unit being inventoried. The RMC should discuss with program staff what documents they work with, where the documents are located, and whether or not the documents meet the definition of a record.

A Record is:

Any document received, created, or used by a State entity during the course of business.

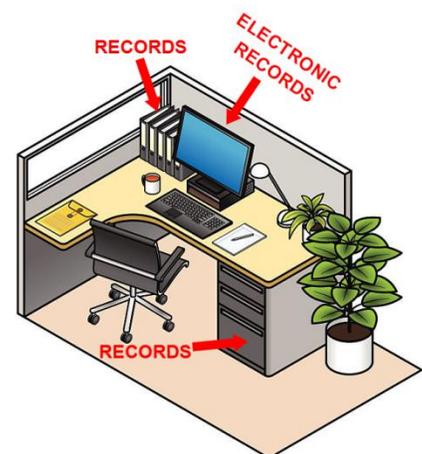
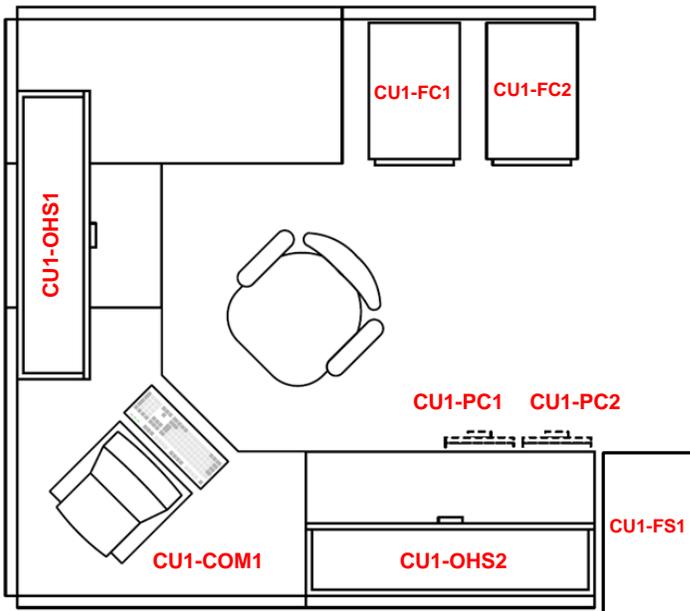


Figure 7. Possible Record Locations

Using the example key in Figure 9, an individual cubicle map may be labeled like this:



KEY	
COM	Computer
CU	Cubicle
FC	Filing Cabinet
FS	File Shelf
OF	Office
OHS	Overhead Shelf
PC	Pedestal Cabinet
ST	Storage Area

Figure 9. Example Key of Storage Location Labels

Figure 8. Work Station Storage Location Map

A [Records Inventory Worksheet \(STD. 70\)](#)¹ should be filled out for all areas where records are stored. This may include individual work stations, offices, group work stations, storage rooms, etc. The inventory should be conducted by file location to avoid missing any records.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
RECORDS INVENTORY WORKSHEET
 STD. 70 (REV. 5-92)

DEPARTMENT	DIVISION/SECTION	PAGE	OF
PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR RECORDS	ADDRESS	ROOM NUMBER	
		TELEPHONE NUMBER	

RECORDS INVENTORY

(1) RECORDS SERIES	(2) DESCRIPTION	(3) FILE LOCATION	(4) MEDIA TYPE	(5) YEARS COVERED	(6) REFER- ENCE STATUS	(7) DOCUMENT		(8) VOLUME OF RECORDS IN CUBIC FEET	(9) REMARKS (<i>Vital or Confidential Records, Retention Authority, etc.</i>)
						ORIG.	COPY		

Figure 8. Sample Records Inventory Worksheet

¹ <http://archives.cdn.sos.ca.gov/pdf/calrim-std070-records-inventory.pdf>

The STD. 70 is a sample guide of how to record an inventory. State entities may develop their own inventory worksheet to suit their business processes. The inventory worksheet is an internal document and will not be used outside the State entity. CalRIM does not review or approve inventory worksheets.

Section 1 – Record Series

A record series is a group of related records arranged under a single major category. These records are created and maintained as a unit because of their relationship and the purpose they serve. The records may deal with a particular subject, may result from the same activity, or may have a distinctive form—such as maps, blueprints, and purchase requests, etc. A record series may exist in any format and may exist in multiple formats—electronic, magnetic, microfilm, or paper.

RECORDS INVENTORY									
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)		(8)	(9)
RECORD SERIES	DESCRIPTION	FILE LOCATION	MEDIA TYPE	YEARS COVERED	REFERENCE STATUS	DOCUMENT		VOLUME	REMARKS
						ORIG.	COPY		
Project X Files									

Figure 9. Records Inventory Record Series Example

Section 2 – Description

The description of a record series should outline the contents, function, and purpose of the records in that series. This section should contain information on how the records are used, what function the records serve in the unit, and what business processes the records support or document. The description should be written as if explaining the record series to a person who is completely unfamiliar with the processes and purpose of the unit and the State entity. Any acronyms should be spelled out or defined in a separate key.

RECORDS INVENTORY									
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)		(8)	(9)
RECORD SERIES	DESCRIPTION	FILE LOCATION	MEDIA TYPE	YEARS COVERED	REFERENCE STATUS	DOCUMENT		VOLUME	REMARKS
						ORIG.	COPY		
Project X Files	Documents pertaining to Project X. Records in this series include Project X Consultant Reports, Project X Budget Reports, and Project X Media Activity.								

Figure 10. Records Inventory Description Example

Section 3 – File Location

The file location of a record series will refer to the map of the area being inventoried. The file location includes the room or storage space number and the numbered location within that area. For example, a record may be stored in Cubicle 1 (CU1) in Pedestal Cabinet 1 (PC1).

RECORDS INVENTORY									
(1) RECORD SERIES	(2) DESCRIPTION	(3) FILE LOCATION	(4) MEDIA TYPE	(5) YEARS COVERED	(6) REFERENCE STATUS	(7) DOCUMENT		(8) VOLUME	(9) REMARKS
						ORIG.	COPY		
Project X Files	Documents pertaining to Project X. Records in this series include Project X Consultant Reports, Project X Budget Reports, and Project X Media Activity.	CU1-PC1							

Figure 11. Records Inventory File Location Example

Section 4 – Media Type

When entering the media type of records, use the chart in Figure 12 to enter the appropriate code. Some record series may exist in more than one format.

Code	Media Type	Examples
E	Electronic	CD, Database, DVD, Email, Removable Media, Server, Social Media, etc.
F	Film	Film Stock, Microfiche, Microfilm, Silver Halide, etc.
M	Magnetic Media	Audio Cassette, VHS, etc.
P	Paper	Architectural Drawing, Blueprint, Graphic Print, Map, Photograph, etc.

Figure 12. Media Types

RECORDS INVENTORY									
(1) RECORD SERIES	(2) DESCRIPTION	(3) FILE LOCATION	(4) MEDIA TYPE	(5) YEARS COVERED	(6) REFERENCE STATUS	(7) DOCUMENT		(8) VOLUME	(9) REMARKS
						ORIG.	COPY		
Project X Files	Documents pertaining to Project X. Records in this series include Project X Consultant Reports, Project X Budget Reports, and Project X Media Activity.	CU1-PC1	P						

Figure 13. Records Inventory Media Type Example

More specific information on the media carrier type should be included in the Remarks section of the Inventory Worksheet. For example, if a record series is labeled with media type “E” for electronic, the Remarks should say whether the records are stored on CDs, floppy discs, removable media, database, server, etc.

If a record series exists in both paper and electronic formats, the electronic records should be listed as a separate line item below the paper records.

RECORDS INVENTORY									
(1) RECORD SERIES	(2) DESCRIPTION	(3) FILE LOCATION	(4) MEDIA TYPE	(5) YEARS COVERED	(6) REFERENCE STATUS	(7) DOCUMENT		(8) VOLUME	(9) REMARKS
						ORIG.	COPY		
Project X Files (Paper)	Documents pertaining to Project X. Records in this series include Project X Consultant Reports, Project X Budget Reports, and Project X Media Activity.	CU1-PC1	P						
Project X Files (Electronic)	Electronic copies of documents pertaining to Project X. Records in this series include Project X Consultant Reports, Project X Budget Reports, and Project X Media Activity.	CU1-COM1	E						

Figure 14. Records Inventory Multiple Media Types Example

Section 5 – Years Covered

This section of the Inventory Worksheet refers to the period of years covered by the record series. Years should be written from the earliest to the latest period.

RECORDS INVENTORY									
(1) RECORD SERIES	(2) DESCRIPTION	(3) FILE LOCATION	(4) MEDIA TYPE	(5) YEARS COVERED	(6) REFERENCE STATUS	(7) DOCUMENT		(8) VOLUME	(9) REMARKS
						ORIG.	COPY		
Project X Files (Paper)	Documents pertaining to Project X. Records in this series include Project X Consultant Reports, Project X Budget Reports, and Project X Media Activity.	CU1-PC1	P	2014-2015					
Project X Files (Electronic)	Electronic copies of documents pertaining to Project X. Records in this series include Project X Consultant Reports, Project X Budget Reports, and Project X Media Activity.	CU1-COM1	E	2014-2015					

Figure 15. Records Inventory Years Covered Example

Section 6 – Reference Status

Reference status is a measure of how often a record series is accessed during daily business. Records series that have a higher reference status—accessed daily by staff—may need to remain in the office longer than records series with a low reference status—accessed by staff a few times per year.

Reference Status	Frequency of Use
High	Referenced on a daily basis. Records need to be readily available to staff.
Medium	Referenced on a weekly to monthly basis. Records may be moved to a holding area or to an offsite records center.
Low	Referenced a few times per year or every few years. Records are no longer required to conduct current business activity. May be stored in an offsite records center until retention period is ended and records may be destroyed or sent to the State Archives.

Figure 16. Reference Status Chart

Records series with a very low reference status usually do not need to be retained in the office and may be moved to a low-cost storage area like the State Records Center.

RECORDS INVENTORY									
(1) RECORD SERIES	(2) DESCRIPTION	(3) FILE LOCATION	(4) MEDIA TYPE	(5) YEARS COVERED	(6) REFERENCE STATUS	(7) DOCUMENT		(8) VOLUME	(9) REMARKS
						ORIG.	COPY		
Project X Files (Paper)	Documents pertaining to Project X. Records in this series include Project X Consultant Reports, Project X Budget Reports, and Project X Media Activity.	CU1-PC1	P	Active	High				
Project X Files (Electronic)	Electronic copies of documents pertaining to Project X. Records in this series include Project X Consultant Reports, Project X Budget Reports, and Project X Media Activity.	CU1-COM1	E	Active	High				

Figure 17. Records Inventory Reference Status Example

Section 7 – Document

This section refers to whether the record series contains record copies or access (also known as convenience) copies of records. A “record copy” is the version designated by a State entity as the *official* record. “Access copies” are for personal reference and may not need to be retained.

RECORDS INVENTORY									
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)		(8)	(9)
RECORD SERIES	DESCRIPTION	FILE LOCATION	MEDIA TYPE	YEARS COVERED	REFERENCE STATUS	ORIG.	COPY	VOLUME	REMARKS
Project X Files (Paper)	Documents pertaining to Project X. Records in this series include Project X Consultant Reports, Project X Budget Reports, and Project X Media Activity.	CU1-PC1	P	Active	High	X			
Project X Files (Electronic)	Electronic copies of documents pertaining to Project X. Records in this series include Project X Consultant Reports, Project X Budget Reports, and Project X Media Activity.	CU1-COM1	E	Active	High	X			

Figure 18. Records Inventory Document Type Example

Determining whether a record should be considered a record copy or an access copy may become complicated when some records series contain both record copies and access copies. The State entity may need to consult other divisions as well as the control agencies responsible for that type of records.

Section 8 – Volume

The volume of a record series is the space the records occupy. Volume may be comprised of physical space—such as the number of boxes needed to contain the records—or volume may be comprised of digital “space”—such as the number of bytes a record may take up on a server. When calculating the volume of record series for the inventory, the totals should represent the records on hand at the time of the inventory.

The basic measurement for paper records is the 15”L x 12”W x 10”D box used to send records to the State Records Center (SRC). One full SRC box equals one (1) cubic foot (C.U.).

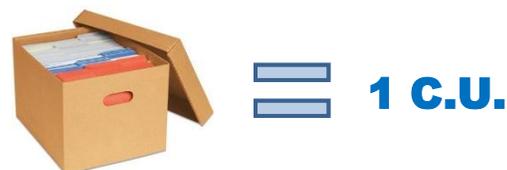


Figure 19. Record Storage Box 1 C.U. Volume

Electronic or magnetic record volumes shall be reported in bytes—megabytes, gigabytes, terabytes, etc. In the Remarks column, more specific information on the media carrier type should be included, such as whether the records are stored on CDs, floppy discs, removable media, database, server, etc.

RECORDS INVENTORY									
(1) RECORD SERIES	(2) DESCRIPTION	(3) FILE LOCATION	(4) MEDIA TYPE	(5) YEARS COVERED	(6) REFERENCE STATUS	(7) DOCUMENT		(8) VOLUME	(9) REMARKS
						ORIG	COPY		
Project X Files (Paper)	Documents pertaining to Project X. Records in this series include Project X Consultant Reports, Project X Budget Reports, and Project X Media Activity.	CU1-PC1	P	Active	High	X		10 CU	
Project X Files (Electronic)	Electronic copies of documents pertaining to Project X. Records in this series include Project X Consultant Reports, Project X Budget Reports, and Project X Media Activity.	CU1-COM1	E	Active	High	X		6 GB	

Figure 20. Records Inventory Volume Example

For more details, refer to the [Guide for Computation of Record Volume²](#).

Section 9 – Remarks

Remarks justify the retention period of a record series, the disposition of the series, the vital or confidential status of the series, and more. In the case of electronic records, the remarks will include the storage method used for the record series, the retention period, the back-up process, and the disposition of the electronic records.

Potential Remarks Section Components

- Retention Period Justification
- Vital Storage Method
- Confidential Status
- Disposition
- Electronic Records Storage Method
- Electronic Records Back-Up Process
- Code Citations
- Legal Requirements
- Policy/Procedure Citations

² <http://archives.cdn.sos.ca.gov/pdf/calrim-volume-guide.pdf>

As staff complete the Inventory worksheet, they should note in the Remarks section any record series already possessing established retention periods, as well as any comments pertaining to the filing activity or the frequency of reference for the records.

Remarks become very important when using the inventory to fill out the Records Retention Schedule (STD. 73). Much of this information will be transferred to the remarks column on the Retention Schedule and will inform future staff how to properly store and dispose of the records.

The disposition of records in the remarks section should reflect current business practices. If, during the inventory, staff discover that there is a more efficient way to handle the records, the inventory should be updated accordingly.

REMARKS
<p><u>Retention:</u> Active until Project X is completed and management signs off on final product. Then retain records in office 3 years. Then retain at SRC 5 years.</p> <p><u>Destruction:</u> Confidential</p> <p><u>PRA/IPA Exemption:</u> None</p> <p><u>Code Sections:</u> None</p> <p><u>Policies/Procedures:</u> Internal Project Management Policy; Social Media Policy.</p>
<p><u>Retention:</u> Active until Project X is completed and management signs off on final product. Then retain in office 5 years. Then retain in electronic storage 5 years.</p> <p><u>Storage:</u> Internal server.</p> <p><u>Back-Up:</u> Back-ups occur on a weekly basis on Friday evenings at 5:00PM.</p> <p><u>Destruction:</u> Confidential</p> <p><u>PRA/IPA Exemption:</u> None</p> <p><u>Code Sections:</u> None</p> <p><u>Policies/Procedures:</u> Electronic Records Management Policy</p>

Figure 21. Records Inventory Remarks Example

Step 4 - Inventory Common Storage Areas

Inventories should also be conducted for any common areas where records are stored. These inventories may be conducted by the RMC, management, or by program staff.

Step 5 – Compile Inventory Worksheets

Once all areas have been inventoried, the RMC will compile the Records Inventory Worksheets (STD. 70) into one Inventory Worksheet. This will provide an opportunity to see where any duplication may exist.

Once the final Inventory Worksheet is complete, the RMC will use it to appraise the records series, set retention periods, and create a new Records Retention Schedule or update an existing one.

The RMC should retain the final Records Inventory Worksheet and the maps in their Records Management files. It is a best practice to maintain digital copies of these files so they may be more easily updated during future inventories.

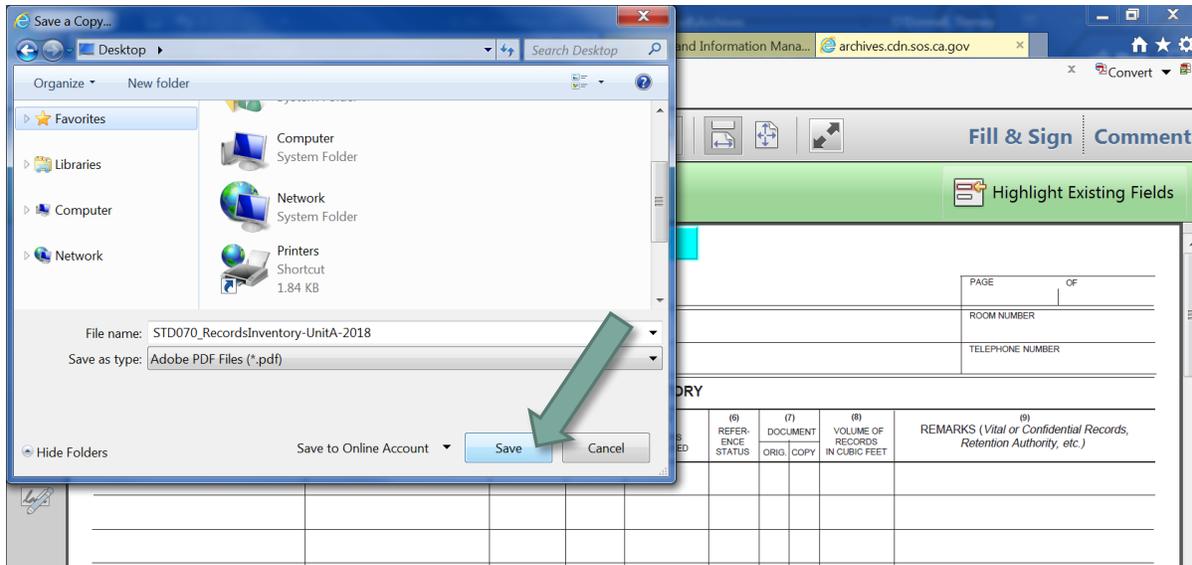


Figure 22. Saving Electronic Inventory File