Exploring AWS Essentials:

A Hands-On Journey into Cloud Computing

27 November 2024

Taeko Harada

Table of Contents

Project objectives

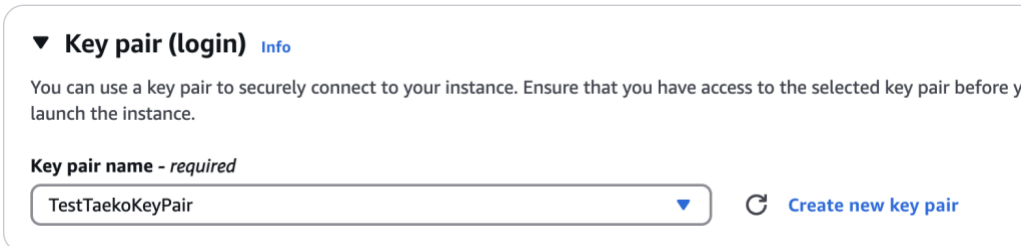
Although I hold an AWS certification, I have not yet had the opportunity to work on practical, hands-on projects. To enhance my practical skills for real-world application, I decided to explore key AWS features through hands-on practice. My study for AWS certification has provided a solid foundation to understand and apply these skills effectively.

EC2

Objective: Deepen my understanding of virtual servers.

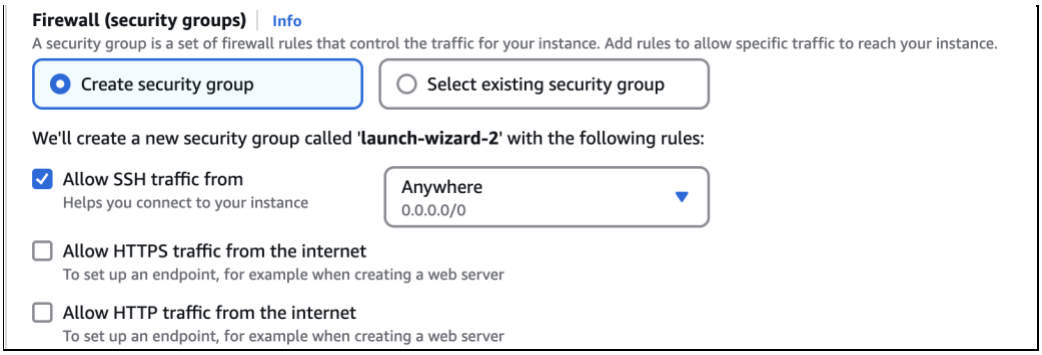
Create a EC2 Instance

Create a key pair to connect by OpenSSH

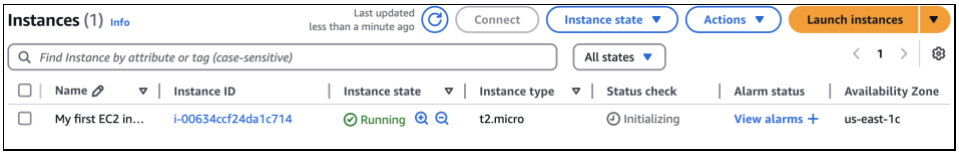


Security group setting

The connection is SSH which does not allow HTTP or HTTPS for hosting web sites.

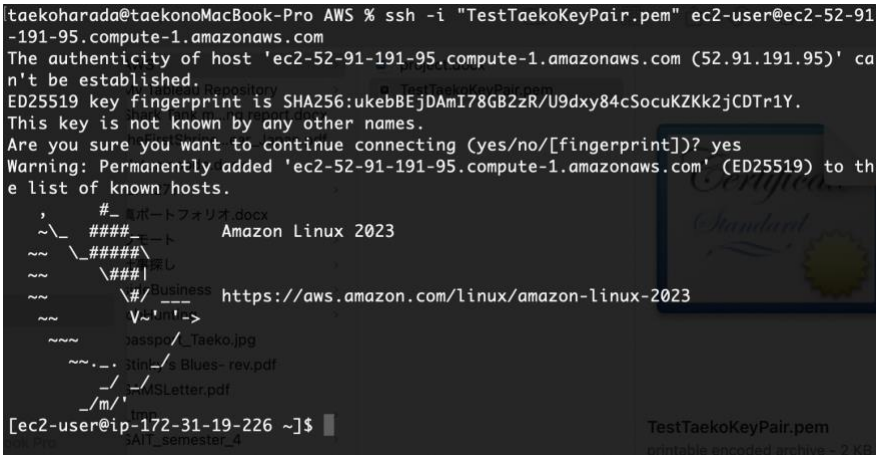


Instance list



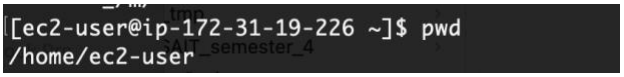
Connect to EC2 Instance

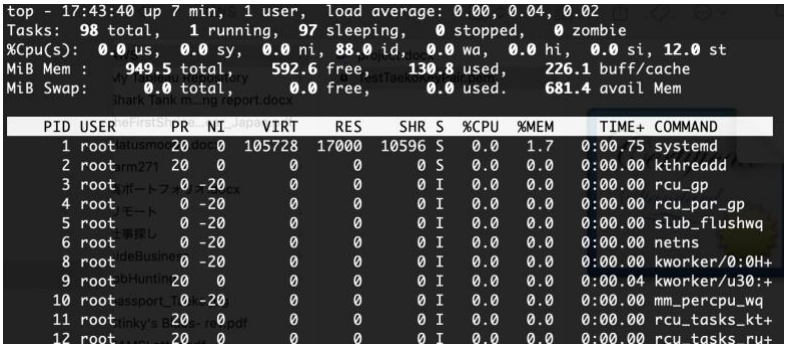
Use SSH to connect



Basic Commands

Explore the instance with commands like ls, pwd, and top





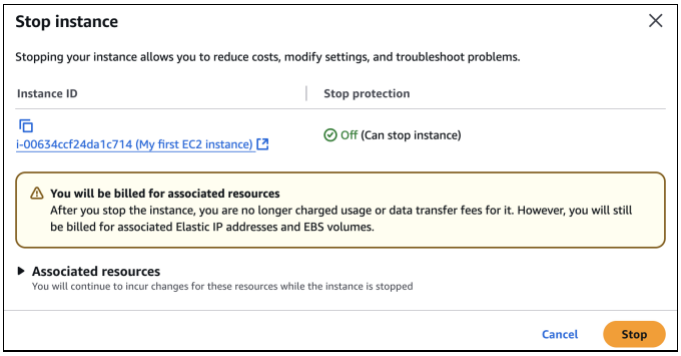
Install software on EC2 instance

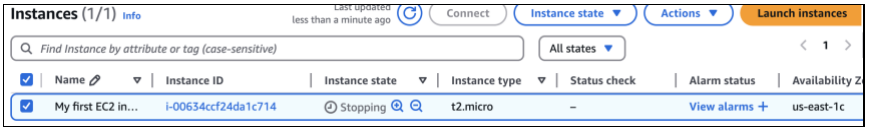
Install python

```
[ec2-user@ip-172-31-19-226 ~]$ sudo yum install python3 -y
Last metadata expiration check: 0:13:04 ago on Tue Nov 26 17:36:18 2024.
Package python3-3.9.16-1.amzn2023.0.9.x86_64 is already installed.
Dependencies resolved.
Nothing to do.
Complete!
[ec2-user@ip-172-31-19-226 ~]$ python3 -version
Unknown option: -e
usage: python3 [option] ... [-c cmd | -m mod | file | -] [arg] ...
Try `python -h' for more information.
[ec2-user@ip-172-31-19-226 ~]$ python3 --version
Python 3.9.16
```

Stop/Restart the Instance

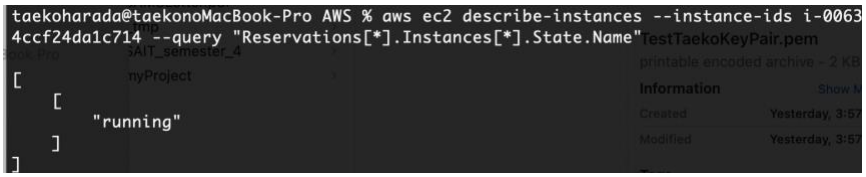
Stopping the EC2 instance from the AWS Management Console





Restarting the EC2 instance from CLI

```
taekoharada@taekonoMacBook-Pro AWS % aws ec2 start-instances --instance-ids i-00634cc
f24da1c714
{
    "StartingInstances": [
        {
            "InstanceId": "i-00634ccf24da1c714",
            "CurrentState": {
                "Code": 0,
                "Name": "pending"
            },
            "PreviousState": {
                "Code": 80,
                "Name": "stopped"
            }
        }
    ]
}
```


taekoharada@taekonoMacBook-Pro AWS % aws ec2 describe-instances --instance-ids i-0063
4ccf24da1c714 --query "Reservations[*].Instances[*].State.Name"
[
[
"running"
]
]
TestTaekoKeyPair.pem
Information

S3 (Simple Storage Service)

Objective: Learn how to store and retrieve files.

Create a Bucket

Object Ownership

ACL (Access Control List) is set to ‘disable’. ACL is for granting permission (read/write).

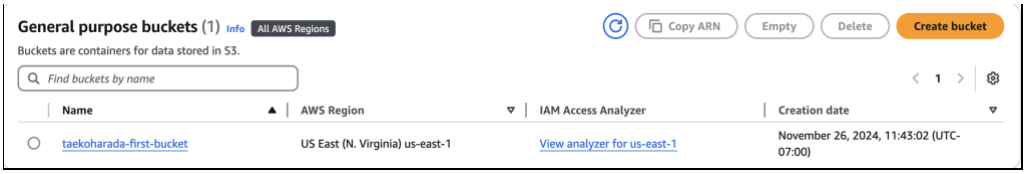
Block Public Access settings for this bucket

Set to ‘Block all public accesses.

Bucket Versioning

Versioning is for restore. Set to ‘Disable’.

The list of Buckets




```
taekoharada@taekonoMacBook-Pro AWS % aws s3 ls
2024-11-26 11:43:02 taekoharada-first-bucket
```

Upload Files

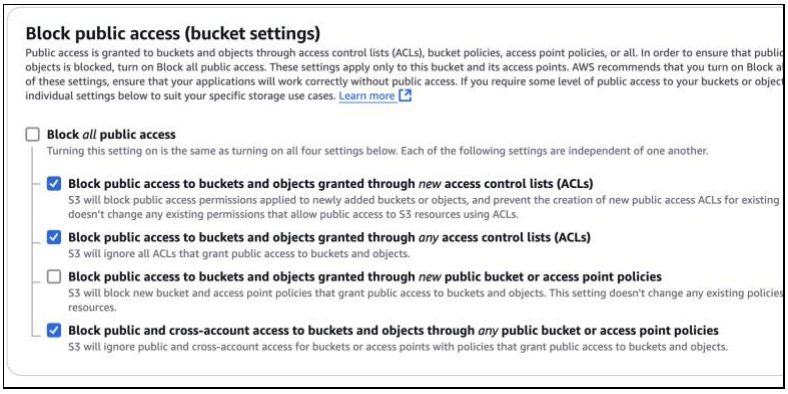
Create a text file and upload to S3.

```
taekoharada@taekonoMacBook-Pro AWS % echo "Hello, S3" > testfile.txt
taekoharada@taekonoMacBook-Pro AWS % cat testfile.txt
Hello, S3
taekoharada@taekonoMacBook-Pro AWS %
taekoharada@taekonoMacBook-Pro AWS % aws s3 cp testfile.txt s3://taekoharada-first-bucket/
upload: ./testfile.txt to s3://taekoharada-first-bucket/testfile.txt
taekoharada@taekonoMacBook-Pro AWS % aws s3 ls s3://taekoharada-first-bucket/
2024-11-26 11:54:01         10 testfile.txt
```

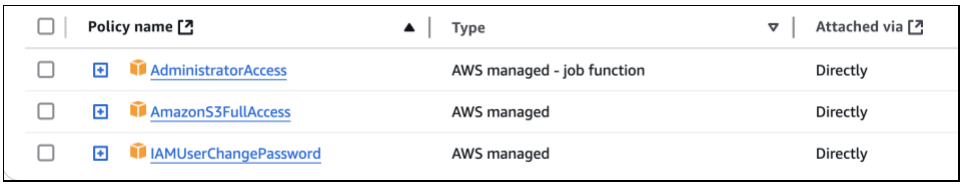
Access the File

Make the file public and use the URL to view/download it.

To add a new bucket policy allows the file access from public, it is necessary to change Block Public Access setting.

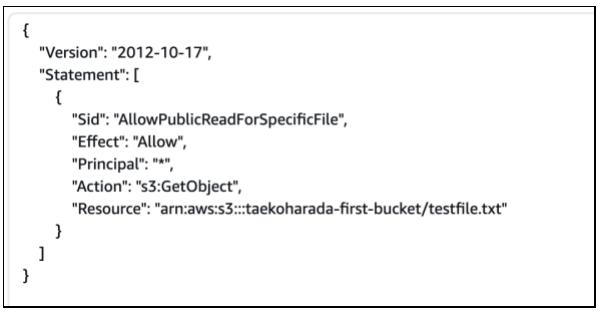


Grant the necessary permissions to the user responsible for setting the bucket policy.
Assign the **AmazonS3FullAccess** policy to the user.
This policy includes the permissions **s3:PutBucketPolicy** and **s3:GetBucketPolicy**.



Set Bucket Policy

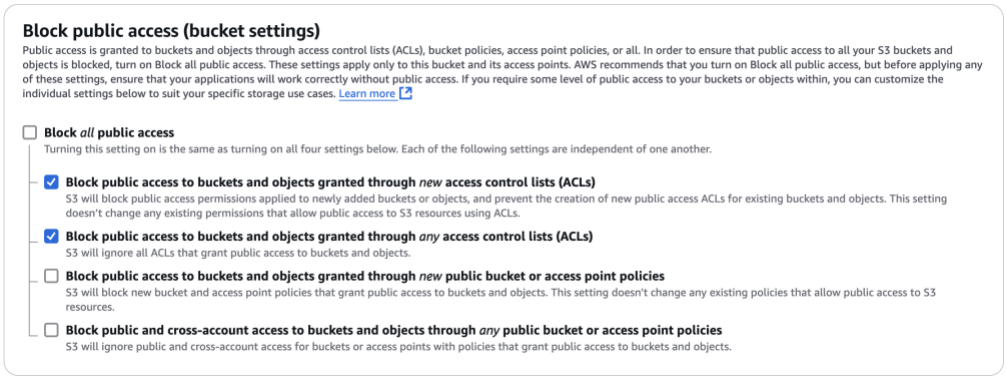
Finally, admin-user can edit bucket policy.



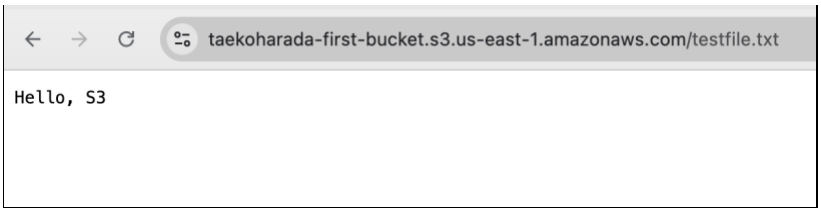
```
{
  "Version": "2012-10-17",
  "Statement": [
    {
      "Sid": "AllowPublicReadForSpecificFile",
      "Effect": "Allow",
      "Principal": "*",
      "Action": "s3:GetObject",
      "Resource": "arn:aws:s3:::taekoharada-first-bucket/testfile.txt"
    }
  ]
}
```

Allow public access to testfile.txt

On **Block Public Access Settings,** uncheck **“Block public and cross-account access to buckets and objects through *any* public bucket or access point policies”**.



Access to testfile.txt in the browser.

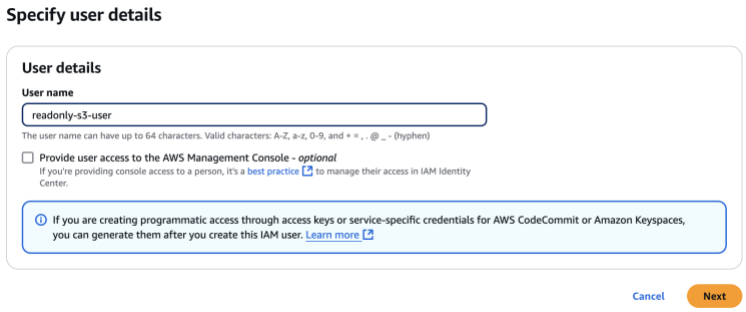


IAM (Identity and Access Management)

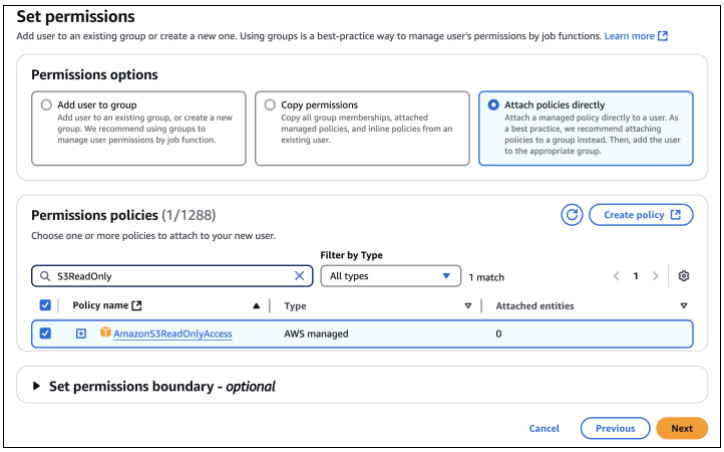
Objective: Manage user permissions and policies.

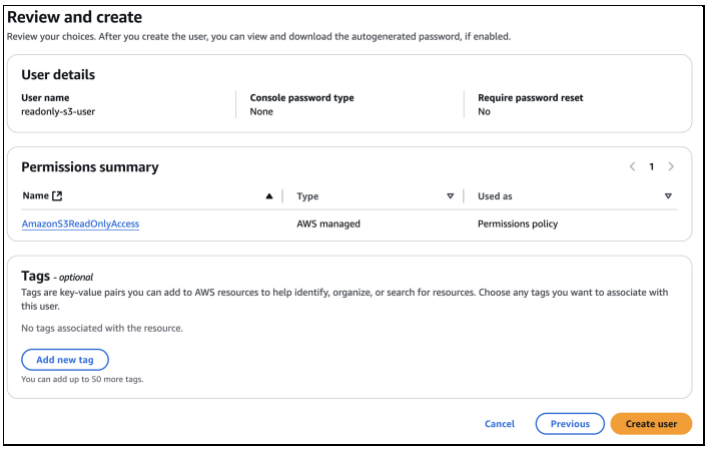
Create a new IAM user with read-only permission to S3

Create a new user named ‘readonly-s3-user’

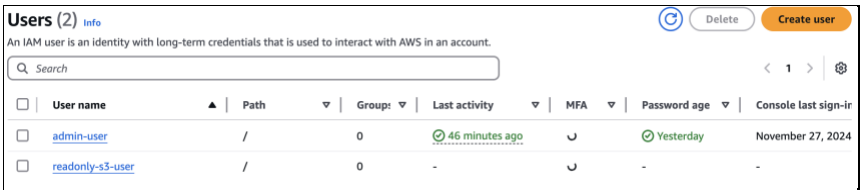


Set permission, ‘AmazonS3ReadOnlyAccess’.

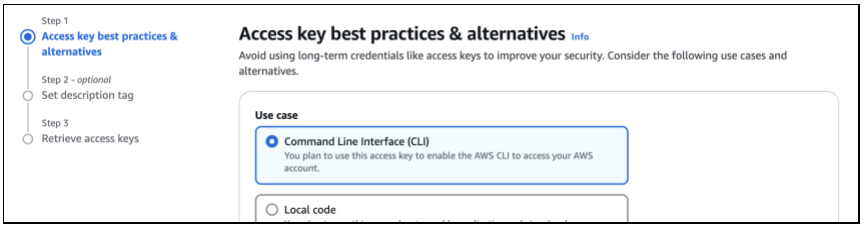


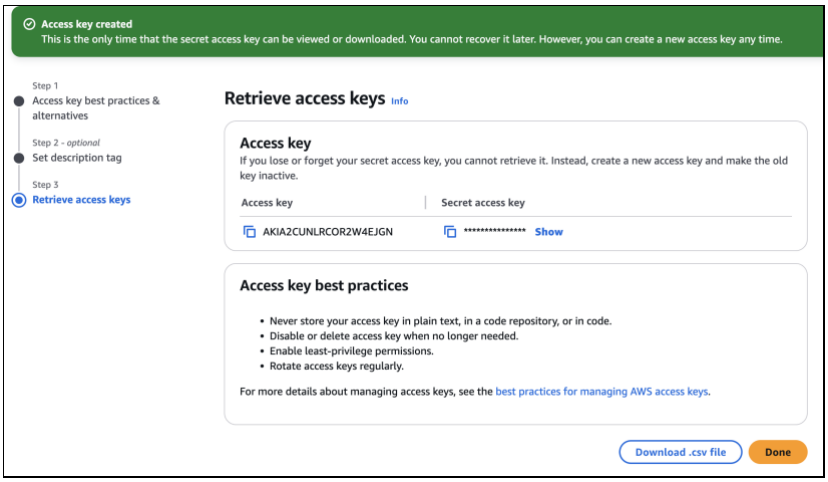


Existing user list



Create Access Key





Configure AWS CLI for the User

```
taekoharada@taekonoMacBook-Pro AWS % aws configure
AWS Access Key ID [****************7FI2]: AKIA2CUNLRCOR2W4EJGN
AWS Secret Access Key [****************l0wv]: 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
Default region name [us-east-1]: us-east-1
Default output format [json]: json
```

Verify which user I am using.

```
taekoharada@taekonoMacBook-Pro AWS % aws sts get-caller-identity
{
    "UserId": "AIDA2CUNLRCOY7L47CYN6",
    "Account": "692859930781",
    "Arn": "arn:aws:iam::692859930781:user/readonly-s3-user"
}
```

Test the Read-Only User

The user should see a list of S3 buckets.

```
taekoharada@taekonoMacBook-Pro AWS % aws s3 ls
2024-11-26 11:43:02 taekoharada-first-bucket
```

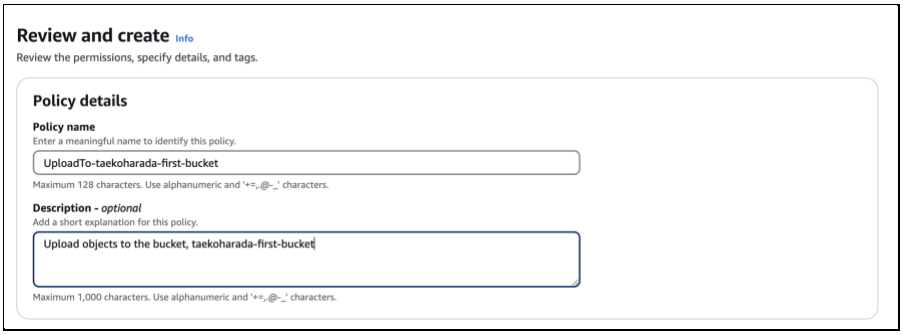
Uploading a file to S3 bucket failed.

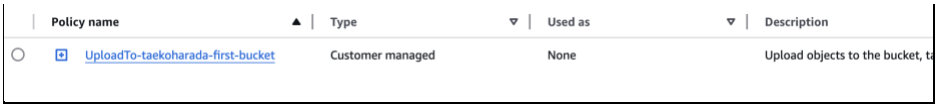
```
taekoharada@taekonoMacBook-Pro AWS % echo "Read only user file" > testReadOnly.txt
taekoharada@taekonoMacBook-Pro AWS % ls
TestTaekoKeyPair.pem    testReadOnly.txt        ~$roject.docx
project.docx            testfile.txt
taekoharada@taekonoMacBook-Pro AWS % aws s3 cp testReadOnly.txt s3://taekoharada-first-bucket/
upload failed: ./testReadOnly.txt to s3://taekoharada-first-bucket/testReadOnly.txt An error occurred
 (AccessDenied) when calling the PutObject operation: User: arn:aws:iam::692859930781:user/readonly-s
3-user is not authorized to perform: s3:PutObject on resource: "arn:aws:s3:::taekoharada-first-bucket
/testReadOnly.txt" because no identity-based policy allows the s3:PutObject action
```

Use IAM Policies

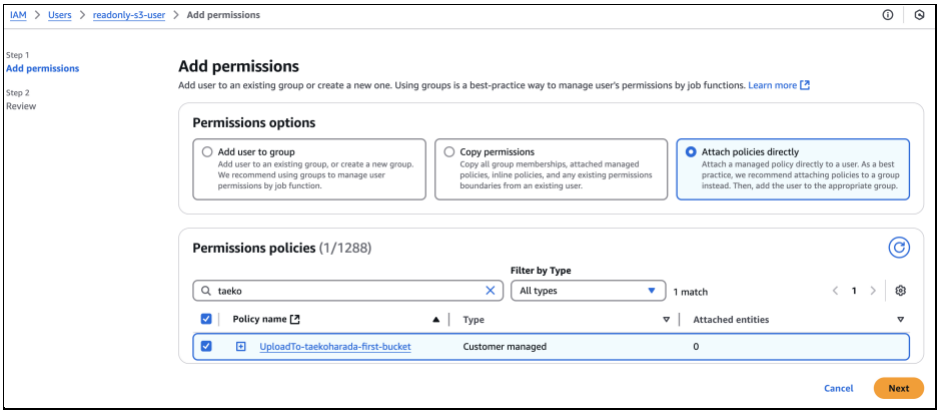
Create a **custom** policy to grant the permission, 's3:PutObject'.

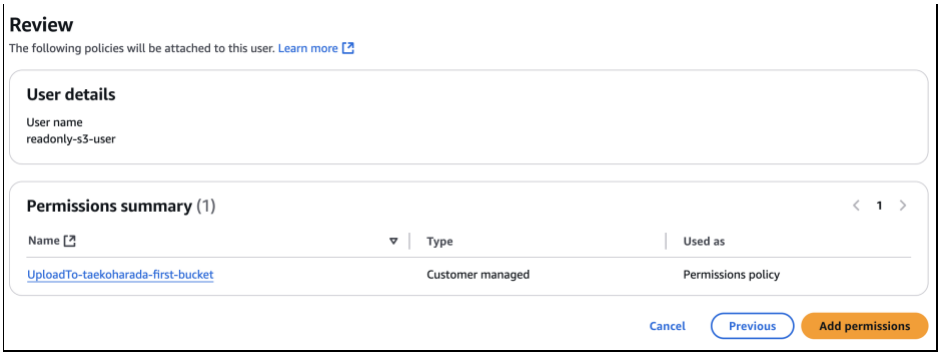
```
{
    "Version": "2012-10-17",
    "Statement": [
        {
            "Sid": "Statement1",
            "Effect": "Allow",
            "Action": "s3:PutObject",
            "Resource": "arn:aws:s3:::taekoharada-first-bucket/*"
        }
    ]
}
```





Attach the custom policy to ‘readonly-s3-user’





Upload the file to the bucket again. The file was successfully uploaded.

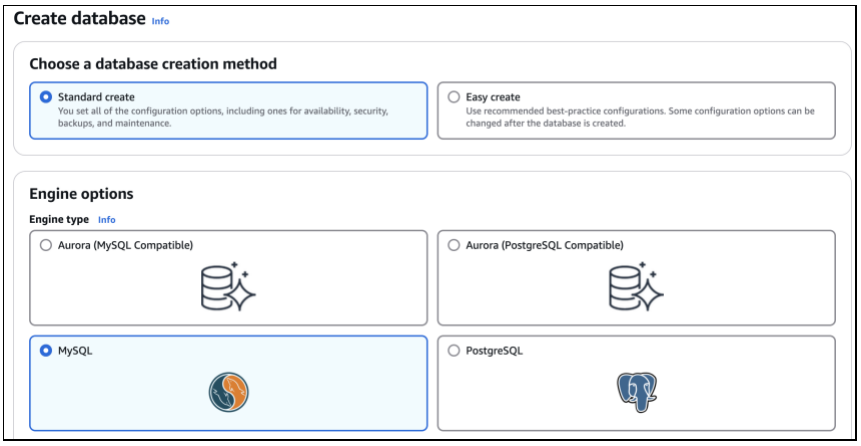
```
taekoharada@taekonoMacBook-Pro AWS % aws s3 cp testReadOnly.txt s3://taekoharada-first-bucket/
upload: ./testReadOnly.txt to s3://taekoharada-first-bucket/testReadOnly.txt
```

RDS (Relational Database Service)

Objective: Set up a managed database.

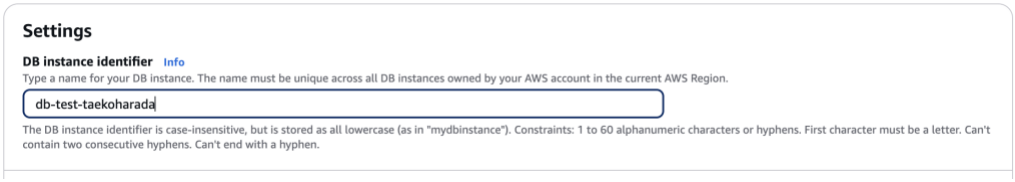
Launch an RDS Instance

Choose a database engine, MySQL.

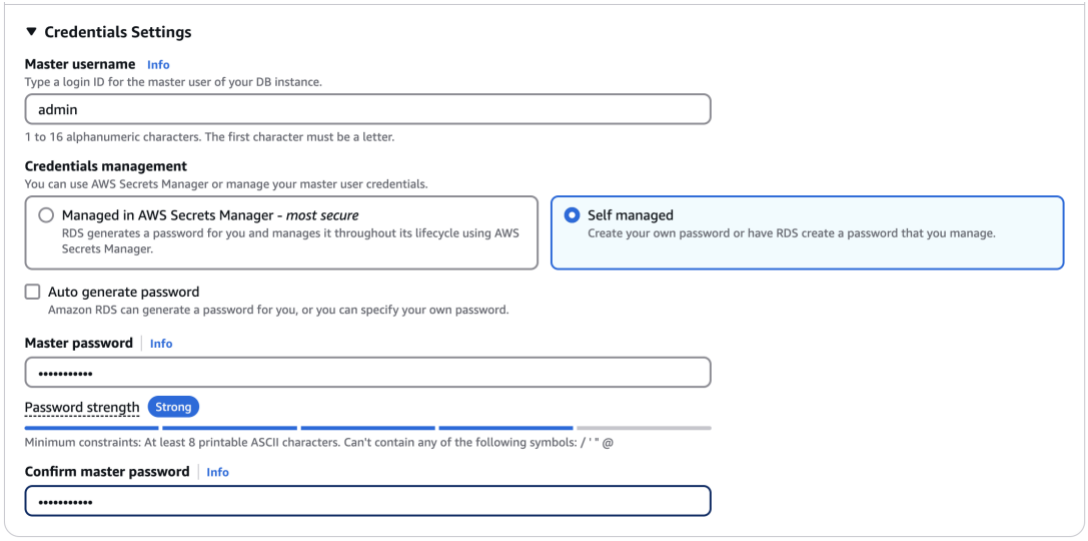


Choose Free tier.

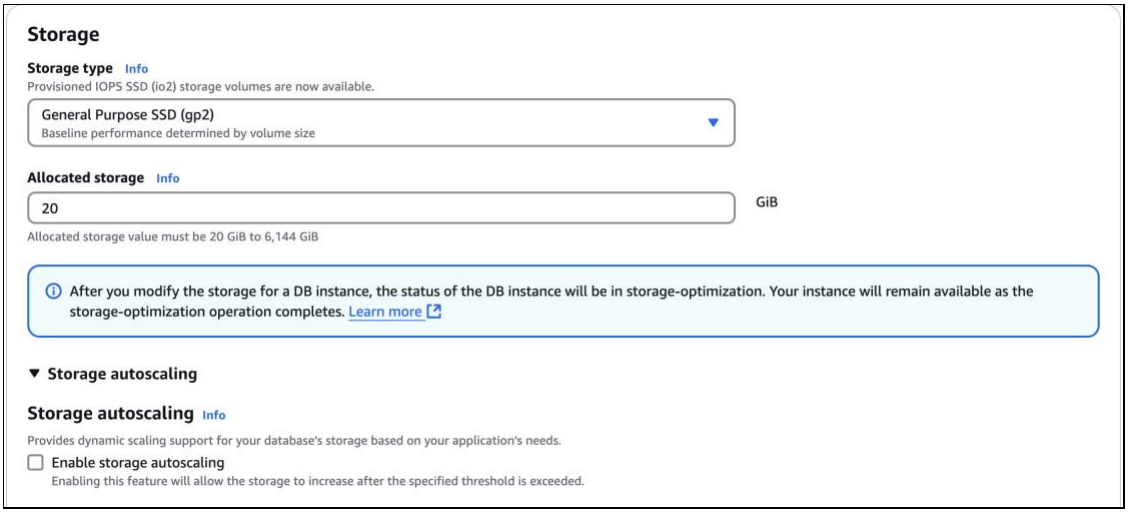
Name the database instance.



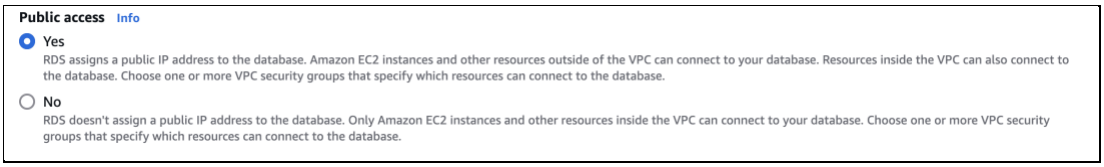
Set database user name and password.



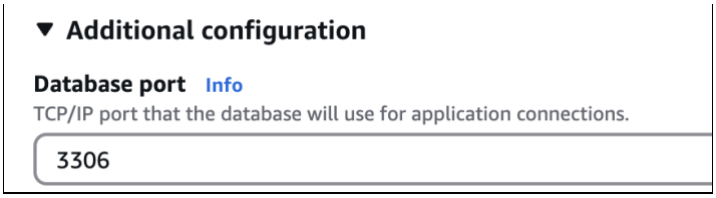
Uncheck ‘Enable storage autoscaling’.



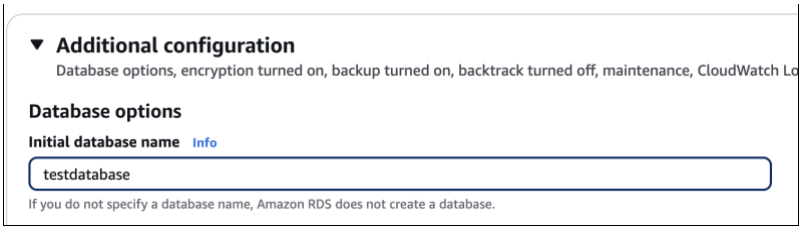
Allow public access for testing.



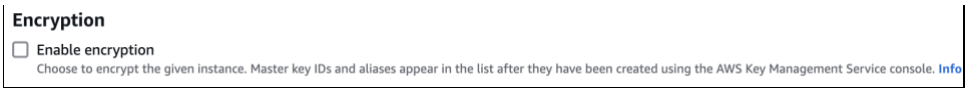
Verify the port number



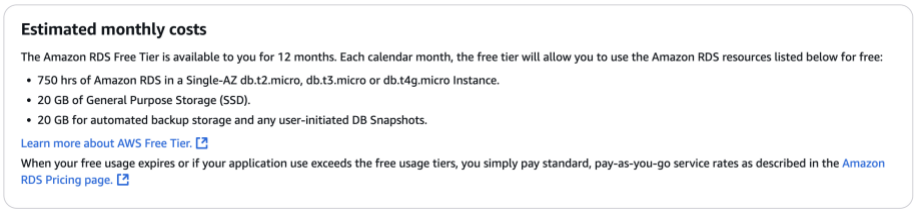
Enter the initial database name.



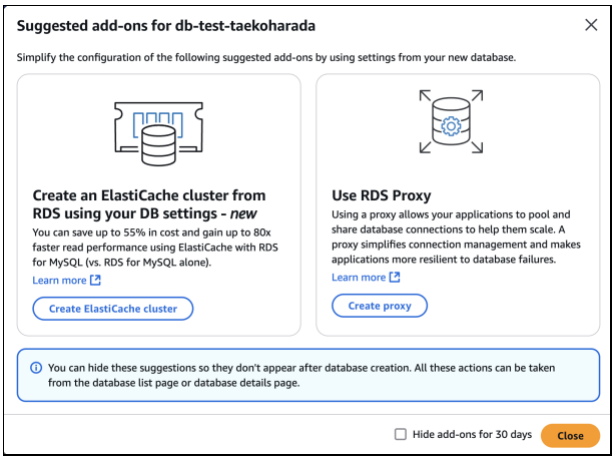
For free tier setting, uncheck these options.



Verify the estimated cost.

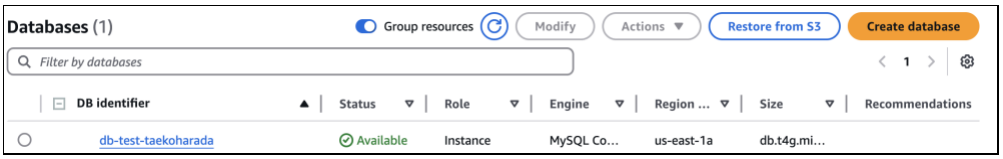


Add-ons (Not Free Tier Eligible)



ElastiCache cluster: Caching service to improve database performance.

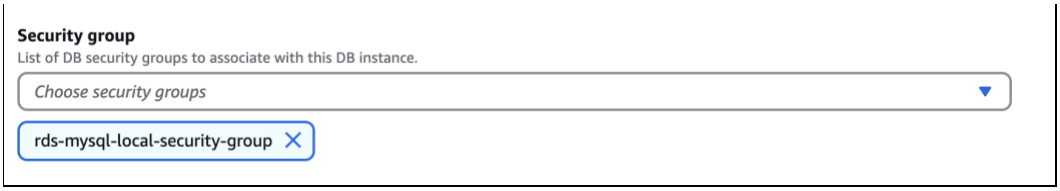
RDS Proxy: The proxy creates a pool of connections to reduces the overhead on the database and improves response times.



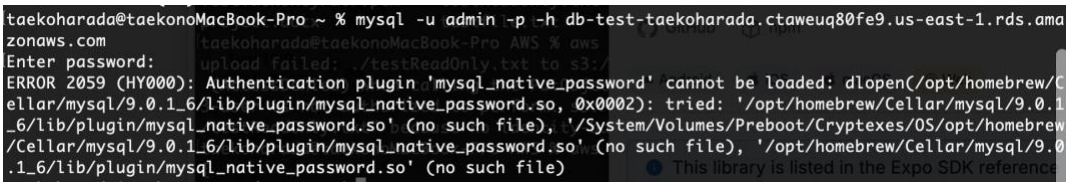
Connect to the Database

For connecting from local, create a new security group named ‘rds-mysql-local-security-group’.

Modify the database’s security group.

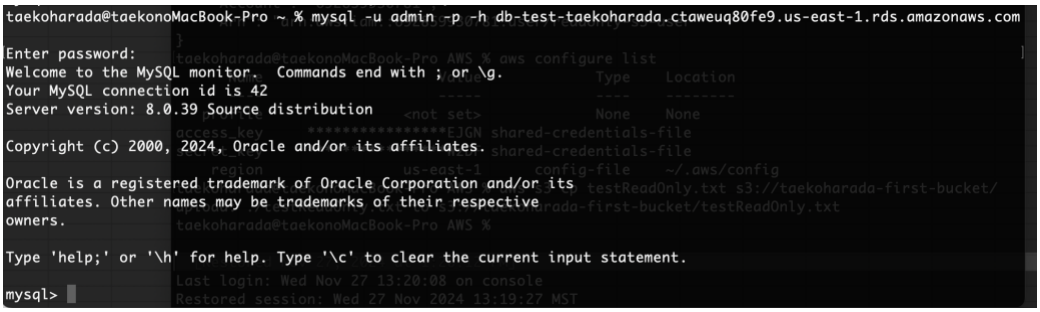


Fail to the connection.



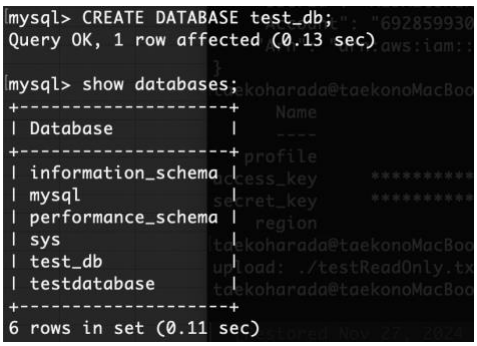
Install [mysql@8.0] to use the authentication, ‘mysql_native_password’.

Successfully, connected to RDS from local.



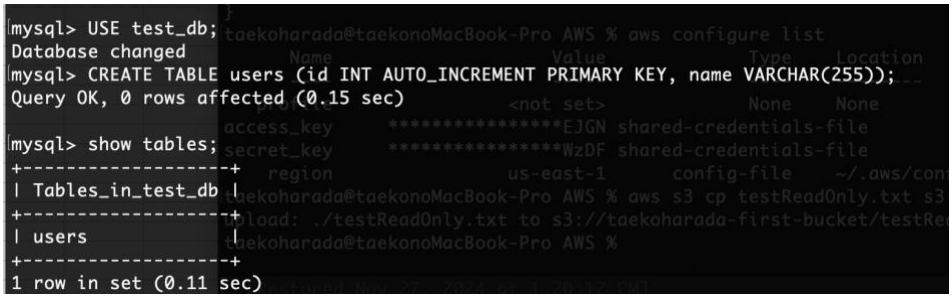
Test Basic Queries

CREATE DATABASE test_db;



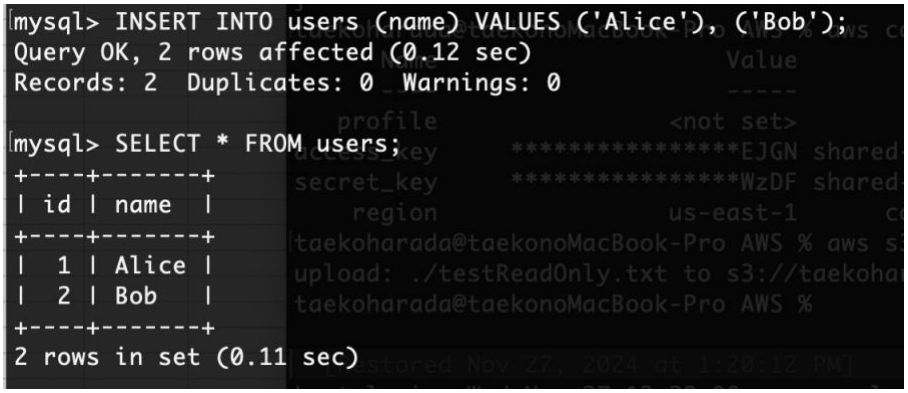
USE test_db;

CREATE TABLE users (id INT AUTO_INCREMENT PRIMARY KEY, name VARCHAR(255));



INSERT INTO users (name) VALUES ('Alice'), ('Bob');

SELECT * FROM users;



Conclusion

This project allowed me to deepen my understanding of AWS through hands-on experience with main features like EC2, S3, IAM, and RDS. I learned that AWS provides robust permission configurations, which can make the settings complex and challenging. However, this complexity is necessary, as it significantly enhances security. This project provided me with the skills to confidently tackle real-world cloud computing scenarios.