2009 Supporting Statement – Part A OMB 0596-0201

Role of Communities in Stewardship Contracting Projects.

Terms of Clearance

BLM may participate in this survey provided they do not undertake the NAU (Northern Arizona University) survey, which is duplicative of this effort.

A. Justification

1. **Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.**

   Section 323 of Public Law 108-7 (16 U.S.C. 2104 Note) requires the Forest Service (FS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to report to Congress annually on the role of local communities in the development of agreement or contract plans through stewardship contracting. To meet that requirement, the FS plans to conduct a survey to gather the necessary information for use by both the FS and BLM in developing their annual report to Congress.

2. **Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.**

   Information is collected annually through a phone survey conducted by the Pinchot Institute for Conservation and its sub-contractors. All respondents interviewed as part of the survey have been involved in a stewardship-contracting project as either a FS or BLM project manager, as an external participant in the project planning, or as a contractor involved in project implementation. The survey consists of 16 questions, although four of the questions have a part (a) and (b). The survey will be administered to a stratified random sample on an annual basis. During the interview process information is collected and entered into a uniform report format and sent to Michigan State University (MSU) for analysis. Following receipt of the data, MSU researchers will code questions and responses for entry into SPSS and NVivo software programs used for qualitative and quantitative analyses. The results from these analyses will then be delivered to the Pinchot Institute for inclusion into its final reports to the managing agencies. Both the FS and the BLM provide the information to complete the agencies' annual report to Congress on stewardship contracting implementation. The agencies will not share the survey responses with other organizations inside or outside the government. Congress does make the results of the analysis of the survey responses available for use by organizations both inside and outside the government in the form of the annual report.

   a. **What information will be collected - reported or recorded? (If there are pieces of information that are especially burdensome in the collection, a specific explanation should be provided.)**

The survey collects information on the role of local communities in the development of agreement or contract plans through stewardship contracting.

b. From whom will the information be collected? If there are different respondent categories (e.g., loan applicant versus a bank versus an appraiser), each should be described along with the type of collection activity that applies.

All respondents have been involved in a stewardship-contracting project – either as a FS or as BLM project manager, as an external participant in the project planning, or as a contractor involved in project implementation. This is a phone survey consisting of 16 questions with four of the questions having two parts (a) and (b). The survey will be administered to a stratified random sample on an annual basis. As information is collected during the interview process by the Pinchot Institute for Conservation and its sub-contractors, it will be entered into a uniform report format and sent to Michigan State University (MSU) for analysis. Following receipt of the data, Michigan State University researchers will code questions and responses for entry into SPSS and NVivo software programs used for qualitative and quantitative analyses. The results from these analyses will then be delivered to the Pinchot Institute for inclusion into its final reports to the managing agencies.

Table 1 (response to items a and b)

Information Collected	Description	Information Provided to:	Prepared by
Phone survey of 16 questions regarding the role of local communities in the development of agreement or contract plans through stewardship contracting	FS project manager involved in a stewardship contracting project	Michigan State University (analysis) and Pinchot Institute for Conservation (receive results of the analysis)	Michigan State University
Phone survey of 16 questions regarding the role of local communities in the development of agreement or contract plans through stewardship contracting	BLM project manager involved in a stewardship contracting project	Michigan State University (analysis) and Pinchot Institute for Conservation (receive results of the analysis)	Michigan State University
Phone survey of 16 questions regarding the role of local communities in the development of agreement or contract plans through stewardship	Contractor involved in stewardship contracting project implementation	Michigan State University (analysis) and Pinchot Institute for Conservation (receive results of the analysis)	Michigan State University

contracting			
Phone survey of 16 questions regarding the role of local communities in the development of agreement or contract plans through stewardship contracting	External participant involved in a stewardship contracting project	Michigan State University (analysis) and Pinchot Institute for Conservation (receive results of the analysis)	Michigan State University

c. What will this information be used for - provide ALL uses?

The information will be used for the annual report that to Congress that is required by both agencies. Neither the FS nor BLM share these responses outside of federal government. However, the responses, through its inclusion in the FS and BLM report to Congress, will be available for use by organizations both inside and outside the government.

d. How will the information be collected (e.g., forms, non-forms, electronically, face-to-face, over the phone, over the Internet)? Does the respondent have multiple options for providing the information? If so, what are they?

Information is collected through a phone survey conducted by the Pinchot Institute for Conservation and its sub-contractors. As the Pinchot Institute collects information during the interview process for Conservation and its sub-contractors, and will be entered into a uniform report format and forwarded to MSU for analysis. Following receipt of the data, MSU researchers will code questions and responses for entry into SPSS and NVivo software programs used for qualitative and quantitative analyses. The results from these analyses will then be delivered to the Pinchot Institute for inclusion into its final reports to the managing agencies.

e. How frequently will the information be collected?

Annually.

f. Will the information be shared with any other organizations inside or outside USDA or the government?

Survey information is sent to MSU for analysis. MSU researchers will code questions and responses for entry into SPSS and NVivo software programs, used for qualitative and quantitative analyses. The results from these analyses will be delivered to the Pinchot Institute for inclusion into its final reports to the managing agencies. The survey responses are not shared with other organizations. However, the final FS and BLM report to Congress will be available for use by organizations both inside and outside the government.

g. If this is an ongoing collection, how have the collection requirements changed over time?

Revisions to the original survey are being made to reflect minor word changes for clarity, minor format changes for clarity and or analysis purposes, and to add response categories based on feedback from interviewers and/or the scientist who designed the statistical aspects of the survey. These changes are designed to make it easier for both the interviewer and interviewee

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g. permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also, describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

The survey was designed for and will be conducted by phone so it will not involve the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques. However, the survey form is sent, via email, to the interviewee, so that they may have the option to review the questions prior to the telephone survey/interview.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.

Currently, the FS and BLM have no other approved surveys that address the role of local communities in stewardship contracting. The stewardship contracting project managers frequently work with external groups that are interested in stewardship contracting. As far as these program managers are aware, there are no similar information collections currently conducted by other government sources or other outside sources.

Regarding the exception "BLM may participate in this survey provided that they do not undertake the Northern Arizona University survey which is duplicative of this effort," the BLM worked with Northern Arizona University prior to development of the current survey by the Pinchot Institute under contract with the FS. The BLM has joined with the FS in its contract with the Pinchot Institute and no longer works with Northern Arizona University.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities[1], describe methods used to minimize burden.

The collection of information should not impact small businesses. There may be some small businesses within the survey pool. However, the phone survey was purposefully limited to 30 - 45 minutes in order to decrease the effect on small businesses and other contractors. The survey instrument is designed to take a maximum of 30 minutes, but the burden estimate

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1 ***Small business.*** *is a concern that:*

(1) *Is organized for profit with a place of business in the United States, operates primarily within the United States, or makes a significant contribution to the U.S. economy by paying taxes or using American products, materials, or labor.*

(2) *Is not dominant in its field on a national basis.*

(3) *Meets or is below an established size standard. The Small Business Administration's (SBA) Web site has detailed information on size standards for U.S. businesses. The following table shows the general size standards by industry. (For a more detailed definition, see 5 U.S.C. 601(3).)*

IndustryStandardMeasured by Number of Employees*Manufacturing and mining500 or fewer* shown in A-12 allows for a maximum of 45 minutes, just in case an interviewee wants to provide further comments or discuss in depth any of their responses with the interviewer. Additionally, the survey is voluntary, which will accommodate those that do not have time to respond.

6. **Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.**

   Without the information from this annual collection of data, the FS and BLM will not be able to provide the annual report to Congress on the role of local communities in the development of agreement and contract plans.

7. **Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:**

   - **Requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**

     There would be no special circumstances requiring respondents to report information to agencies more often than quarterly.

   - **Requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**

     There would be no special circumstances requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it.

   - **Requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**

     There would be no special circumstances requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document.

   - **Requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;**

     There would be no special circumstances requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years.

   - **In connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;**

     There would be no special circumstances in connection with a statistical survey that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study.

- **Requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**

  There would be no special circumstances requiring the use of statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB.

- **That includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or**

  There will be no assurances of confidentiality. However, the names of people interviewed will not be associated with the interviewer's notes from the phone survey, and the names of those interviewed will not be retained, ensuring some measure of privacy.

- **Requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secret, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.**

  There would be no special circumstances requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secret, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentially to the extent permitted by law.

  There are no special circumstances. The collection of information is conducted in a manner consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.6.

8. **If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8 (d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.**

   A 60-day notice was published in the Federal Register on December 15, 2008, Vol. 73, No. 241, p. 75996, requesting comments. Three comments were received.

   Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and record keeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

   Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to

be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every 3 years even if the collection of information activity is the same as in prior periods. There may be circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.

Persons Consulted

The following people were contacted to ascertain if the requested information collection and burden estimate are reasonable.

James Bowmer, Stewardship Contracting Coordinator, Bureau of Land ManagementBLM, 202.452.5081 was consulted on survey protocol and questions/revisions.

Bob Schrenk, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, (406) 829-9149 (3/25/2009)

Mr. Schrenk stated that he often hears from folks who are contacted that they do appreciate the call, as they want to tell the FS what they think about stewardship contracting. However, he also stated that he often hears there's a lack of feedback to those folks providing the information; the FS needs to work better at getting the monitoring reports out to the public.

Dave Wilson, National Wild Turkey Federation, (803) 637-7515

Mr. Wilson stated, "I like the revised questionnaire. The changes will make the interview more user friendly and will generate better information, particularly from individuals not fully involved in the process."

Dr. Sarah T. Warren, Associate Professor, Director of Graduate Programs, North Carolina State University. (919) 515-7996

Dr. Warren stated, "The instructions are written in complex language, with complex sentence structure and use of potentially unfamiliar terms (e.g., stratified random sample). Although it may be reasonable to assume that most contractors will understand the language, I would recommend that this portion of the survey be edited and set to a high school (rather than college) level on the Flesch-Kincaid reading level and reading ease scales. This is particularly important because the survey is to be sent by email. Currently the instructions would require four years of college to be understood…Several of the initial questions would be defined as "leading questions" in standard survey research. The questions (especially those with tables), seem very complicated. Is there an intent that the 'sample' being sent with the email serve as the 'exact' survey? Can you provide the respondent an option to pre-fill the answer boxes? Has this survey been pre-tested by telephone on a sample of likely respondents?

In response to Dr. Warren's comments, the survey (which has been used for three years) was designed for and will be conducted by phone although it is sent, via email, to the interviewee, so that they may have the opportunity to review the questions prior to the telephone survey/interview. The survey was designed by researchers at Michigan State University and by the Pinchot Institute for Conservation. Per personal contact with Maureen McDonough, Michigan State University, (517) 432-2293, mcdono10@msu.edu understanding the instructions has not been an issue raised by the interviewees. Also, questions 12 and 13 have been reworded, to remove any possible appearance of being misleading.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than re-enumeration of contractors or grantees.

There will be no payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

There will be no assurances of confidentiality. However, the names of people interviewed will not be associated with the interviewer's notes from the phone survey, and the names of those interviewed will not be retained, ensuring some measure of privacy.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

There are no questions in the proposed survey of a sensitive nature.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated.

- **Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form.**

  a) Description of the collection activity
  b) Corresponding form number (if applicable)
  c) Number of respondents
  d) Number of responses annually per respondent,
  e) Total annual responses (columns c x d)
  f) Estimated hours per response
  g) Total annual burden hours (columns e x f)

Since the number of stewardship contracting projects changes each year the potential respondent universe will vary slightly, however the manner of selecting respondents to be surveyed will not. It was originally estimated that over the first three years there would be no more than 550 stewardship-contracting projects in a given year. However, the actual number of stewardship contracts has generally been increasing each year (except for the BLM, which decreased from 113 in 2008 to 67 in 2009). Thus, the estimate has been revised to no more than 560 stewardship contracting projects in a given year. (See B.1. Table – Summary of FS Stewardship Project and Interview Response Data, which includes a footnote (2) regarding BLM's number of projects.)

As a result, the estimated number of potential respondents has been increased to 401 respondents. This increase is not due to any changes in the survey instrument, but rather due to an increase in stewardship contracting projects. Referencing supporting statement Table B.1 – Summary of FS Stewardship project and Interview Response Data, the potential number of FS interviewees for 2012 is 369. Per Table B.1, footnote 2, the potential number of BLM projects to be sampled, during FY 2012 are 70. This results in a potential of 32 interviewees for the BLM, during 2012, based on an estimated 45% sampling rate. Thus, a total of 401 potential respondents could be interviewed, during 2012, if every single person could be contacted and subsequently interviewed. The original estimate was for 350 respondents.

The estimate of annual burden per respondent remains at 0.75 hours. The estimated annual number of responses per respondent is one. Therefore, the estimated total annual burden is 263 hours.

The Pinchot Institute for Conservation and its' subcontractors have determined, based on their professional experience, that the survey will usually take 0.5 hours and no longer than 0.75 hours.

Table 2

(a) Description of the Collection Activity	(b) Form Number	(c) Number of Respondents	(d) Number of responses annually per Respondent	(e) Total annual responses (c x d)	(f) Estimate of Burden Hours per response	(g) Total Annual Burden Hours (e x f)
Phone Survey	None –	401	One	401	0.75	300.75; rounded to 301
Totals	---	401	---	401	---	301

Record keeping burden should be addressed separately and should include columns for:

a) Description of record keeping activity: None
b) Number of record keepers: None
c) Annual hours per record keeper: None
d) Total annual record keeping hours (columns b x c): Zero

- **Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories.**

Table 3

(a) Description of the Collection Activity	(b) Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents (Hours)	(c)* Estimated Average Income per Hour	(d) Estimated Cost to Respondents
Phone Survey	301 hours	$21	$6,321
Totals	301 hours	---	$6,321

To determine the estimated income per hour, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Table 1 Summary: mean hourly earnings and weekly hours for selected worker and establishment characteristics" were reviewed. The table is located at http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ocs/sp/nctb0298.pdf. Average mean hourly civilian earnings are $19.88; private industry workers are $19.21, and state and local government workers are $24.15. Averaging the three totals $21.08 (rounded to $21).

13. Provide estimates of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information, (do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in items 12 and 14). The cost estimates should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component annualized over its expected useful life; and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component.

There are no capital/start-up or operation and maintenance costs.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Provide a description of the method used to estimate cost and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

The response to this question covers the actual costs the agency will incur as a result of implementing the information collection. The estimate should cover the entire life cycle of the collection and include costs, if applicable, for:

Employee labor and materials for developing, printing, storing forms

Employee labor and materials for developing computer systems, screens, or reports to support the collection

Employee travel costs

Cost of contractor services or other reimbursements to individuals or organizations assisting in the collection of information

Employee labor and materials for collecting the information

Employee labor and materials for analyzing, evaluating, summarizing, and/or reporting on the collected information

A contract was awarded to Pinchot Institute for collecting information on the role of local communities in the development of stewardship contracting plans, analyzing the data, and writing the final reports for both the BLM and the Forest Service. Assuming that two-thirds of the effort each year of the contract goes to collecting and analyzing the information, the cost per year is approximately $161,700 (based on total FY 2008 contract costs) and $153,800 (based on total FY 2007 contract costs).

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in items 13 or 14 of OMB form 83-I.

Due to an increase in respondents from 350 to 401 the burden hours increased. Reevaluation of the survey form resulted in an increase from .5 hour to .75 minutes per respondent. These two changes resulted in an increase of the overall burden hours of 126 hours.

16. For collections of information whose results are planned to be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication.

The results of the collection of information will be included in the agencies' annual Report to Congress on stewardship contracting. Ideally, information collection from participants not employed by the federal government will begin in early July. The information collection and analysis will be done by the Pinchot Institute between July and September. The Pinchot Institute will provide a report to the FS and BLM by December 31 each year, and these agencies will provide their report to Congress by spring. After inclusion in the Report to Congress, the analysis of the data may be used in other reports created both internally and externally by the FS and BLM. No complex analytical techniques will be used.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate

The FS and BLM will display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in item 19, "Certification Requirement for Paperwork Reduction Act."

There are no exceptions to the certification statement identified in Item 19.