

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
2009 NOAA COASTAL SERVICES CENTER COASTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
CUSTOMER SURVEY OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0308

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g. establishments, State and local governmental units, households, or persons) in the universe and the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form. The tabulation must also include expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection has been conducted before, provide the actual response rate achieved.

	Businesses	Not-for-profit	State, Local or Tribal Government	Federal Government	TOTAL
	25	75	350	50	500
Examples	Technological consultants Geospatial technology providers Chamber of Commerce Member	The Nature Conservancy Land Trust Alliance NatureServe EBM Tools Network	State Coastal Zone Management Agencies County and municipal planners	Other Ocean Service offices	

The universe of respondents for this information collection comprises the NOAA Coastal Services Center’s core customer base involved in coastal natural resource and hazard management. The 2006 CRM survey was sent to all Center customer audiences at the state government level with an identified role in the management of coastal resources. Additionally, the Center attempted to broaden its respondent universe with the inclusion of federal offices within the US Department of the Interior, USDA Forest Service, and the US Army Corps of Engineers. For the 2009 survey, the additional federal offices will be removed from the respondent universe, scaling the survey back to only those audiences identified as core customers to the Center. The total number of responses targeted will be 500.

The response rates for the 1996, 1999, 2002, and 2006 CRM Surveys were 54, 70, 74, and 65 percent, respectively. Administration plans for the 2009 CRM Survey will follow steps outlined by Salant and Dillman (1994), including follow-up reminder communications to increase the response rate. Based on past efforts and lessons learned, a response rate of greater than 70 percent is expected for the 2009 survey. Two factors that potentially led to a decreased response rate for the 2006 survey have been remedied. First, the survey was emailed by the hired subcontractor mail server, which subsequently led to all emails coming from an unknown address. The survey will, this year, be administered via a NOAA email account, which will increase recognition and will lessen the likelihood of the survey to be discarded, or perceived as spam. Secondly, the 2006 survey attempted to reach out to a substantially broader audience

base, with which the Center has little interaction. While the effort was in good faith to identify areas of potential collaboration and means to prevent redundancies in effort, it was the new “survey audiences” that substantially drove down the response rate. For this survey, we are retuning to the core Center audiences. We anticipate that these two actions, as well as the shorter survey, will increase the response rate substantially.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection, including: the statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection; the estimation procedure; the degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification; any unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures; and any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

No statistical methodology has been applied to stratify the sample. The 2009 CRM Survey will be sent to all existing Center Customer offices responsible for coastal resource management. The CRM Survey is conducted on a triennial basis. Given the rapid progression and changes in resource management-related technology tools, less frequent collection would not have adequate utility for Center planning and product and service development.

3. Describe the methods used to maximize response rates and to deal with nonresponse. The accuracy and reliability of the information collected must be shown to be adequate for the intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided if they will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

Actions to maximize response rate:

- The survey has been reduced and simplified from its predecessor in order to reduce time to complete and improve response rate.
- Prior to fielding of the survey, both Center publications will run an announcement, announcing the survey—this is expected to have a positive effect on survey awareness and response.
- The initial (preliminary notification) contact will contain a personalized emailed cover letter from the Center, cordially inviting participation and describing the purpose of the survey along with the survey instrument and instructions.

- A series of two follow-up reminders will be sent to respondents at two-week intervals, following the delivery of the survey instrument.
- All letters, messages, and reminders will be personally addressed (i.e., with salutation).
- If a paper copy is requested, postage-paid return envelopes will be enclosed.
- Respondents will be given multiple ways to contact Center representatives with questions regarding the survey (phone, fax, email).
- For expediency, electronic mail will be used instead of postal mail to communicate with customers, unless postal or private carrier services are requested.

Action to address nonresponse:

If response rates are below 80 percent, nonrespondents will be contacted to test for nonresponse bias: fielded questions will include demographic elements, including years of experience in coastal resource management, geographic area of professional activity, profession type, and degree of familiarity and previous interaction with the Center.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Tests are encouraged as effective means to refine collections, but if ten or more test respondents are involved OMB must give prior approval.

Pilot testing of the survey instrument was completed in April, 2009. Pilot test participants included representative members from across the coastal management community—reflecting respondent types. The goals of the pilot test were to gauge readability, ease of completion, clarity of instructions, and estimated completion time. Pilot testing included timing of respondents, identification and discussion of unclear instructions and question content, asking respondents about the length of the survey instrument, and discussing suggestions for improvements. Fewer than 10 non-federal employees participated in the pilot test and subsequent discussions. Comments from the pilot test were highly beneficial and resulted in design, content, and wording changes to clarify responses.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on the statistical aspects of the design, and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

MRAG Americas will conduct the survey and collect and analyze all responses. However, the survey invitation will be sent on behalf of the NOAA Coastal Services Center.

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