



United States Department of the Interior

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
Reston, VA 20192



SEP 01 2009

Mr. Nathan Frey
Department of the Interior Desk Officer
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Mr. Frey,

The US Geological Survey (USGS) is requesting emergency approval and permission to waive the requirements to publish Federal Register notices for information collection associated with the National Geospatial Program (NGP) Cooperative Agreements Program. This is a new grant program, which uses American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding.

The USGS feels that expediting the normal Paper Reduction Act process and making stimulus funds available more quickly are justifiable in this situation and follow the spirit of the ARRA. The USGS is seeking emergency approval by September 11, 2009 so that we can begin the process to solicit proposals. If you approve this emergency request, we will immediately publish a 60-day notice and seek regular OMB approval for this information collection.

Background

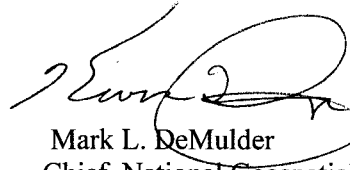
Applications selected for funding through this program announcement will be implemented through a cooperative agreement, with awards dependent upon the amount of funds made available to USGS for this purpose by Congress. USGS estimates up to \$8,775,000.00 may be available for collection of lidar elevation data and orthoimagery in priority areas over the United States. USGS will emphasize the selection of large area projects with partners identifying ARRA projects that will (1) yield significant amounts of new data that revise current elevation and orthoimagery holdings in the national databases and (2) stimulate local economies through the creation or retention of jobs. High priority will be given to applications for projects that:

- Have the greatest potential to achieve large area collections of new lidar or imagery data in priority areas;
- Leverage ARRA funds with applicant resources through multi-partnered agreements;
- Can be completed within 12-18 months;
- Identify specific goals, outcomes and economic performance metrics consistent with one or more of the following ARRA goals;
 1. To preserve and create jobs and promote economic recovery.
 2. To assist those most impacted by the recession.
 3. To provide investments needed to increase economic efficiency by spurring technological advances in science and health.
 4. To invest in transportation, environmental protection, and other infrastructure that will provide long-term economic benefits.
 5. To stabilize State and local government budgets, in order to minimize and avoid reductions in essential services and counterproductive state and local tax increases.

It is estimated that 20 applications will receive funding. To allow applications to be reviewed, selected and grants allocated and in order to afford grantees enough time to select contractors for late winter (in the southern States) or early-mid spring (in the Northern states), leaf-off data collections, we wish to publish the Notice of Funding Availability as soon as possible on Grants.gov.

If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Phadrea Ponds, Information Collection Clearance Officer, US Geological Survey, at 970-226-9445.

Sincerely,



FOR M. DEMULDER
Mark L. DeMulder
Chief, National Geospatial Program