

Supporting Statement A for Paperwork Reduction Act Submission

OMB Control Number 1018-XXXX

Survey of National Wildlife Refuge Visitors

Terms of Clearance. None. This is a new collection.

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

The National Wildlife Refuge Improvement Act of 1997, which amended the National Wildlife Refuge Administration Act (16 U.S.C. 668dd-668ee), guides planning and management of the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS) by:

- Establishing the mission and objectives for NWRS. The mission is “to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.” To accomplish its mission, the NWRS developed a strategic plan and 12 strategic outcome goals.
- Identifying six priority wildlife-dependent recreational uses and providing a process for ensuring that these and other activities do not conflict with the management purpose and goals of each refuge.
- Requiring that each refuge develop a comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) by 2012. A refuge CCP outlines goals, objectives, and management strategies for the refuge. It provides a vision and describes desired future conditions for the refuge.

The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) (P.L. 103-62) requires that we develop goals to improve program effectiveness and public accountability, and to measure performance related to these goals. We developed GPRA goals for measuring visitor satisfaction with the quality of their recreational and educational experience at our national wildlife refuges. Our GPRA Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Plans, outlines the following goals:

- DOI 15.2/OP 15.2:
 - o Total number of surveyed visitors
 - o Percent of visitors satisfied with the quality of their experience
 - o Percent of customers satisfied with the value for fee paid

2. Indicate how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information is to be used. If the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support information that will be disseminated to the public, explain how the collection complies with all applicable Information Quality Guidelines.

We (Fish and Wildlife Service; FWS) have contracted with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to conduct a survey of national wildlife refuge visitors. The Policy Analysis and Science

Assistance Branch of the USGS will conduct this survey onsite at approximately 75 national wildlife refuges nationwide. It is anticipated this will be a biennial (every other year) sampling effort, pending funding for out years. For each sampling year, new refuges will be chosen (150 total over the period of this clearance). There will be two types of surveys, both of which use identical sampling methods as explained in Supporting Statement B.

- National Survey. USGS will survey visitors at 50 randomly selected refuges nationwide biennially for a total of 100 refuges.
- Individual Refuge Survey. If refuges not included in the National Survey are interested and have the funds, USGS will conduct the identical survey at up to 25 individual refuges biennially for a total of 50 refuges. The reports from these surveys will not be included in the National Survey.

The survey will provide refuge managers, planners, and visitor services professionals with scientifically sound data that can be used to:

- Prepare conservation planning documents,
- Determine if we are meeting GPRA visitor satisfaction goals,
- Improve the design of visitor facilities,
- Tailor visitor services and facilities to match visitor interests and needs,
- Better protect refuge resources by combining this data with biological data, and
- Understand the economic impact of visitors to the local community.

More specifically, this survey will inform our planning processes and project prioritization for the Refuge Roads Program of the Federal Lands Highway Program. This program is jointly administered by FWS and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to improve public access to refuges, such as roads, parking lots and trails.

Additionally, we will use information from the survey to address climate change in planning and outreach efforts with visitors as directed in DOI Secretarial Order No. 3285 (issued March 2009) and FWS' Draft Strategic Plan for Responding to Accelerating Climate Change (September 2009).

Justification of Survey Questions

Section 1 identifies key characteristics of national wildlife refuge visitors and visitation. We will use this information to better understand and incorporate visitor use patterns in future refuge management and planning efforts. This information will also help us to develop effective marketing and outreach tools.

We ask question(s)...	To ...
1, 2	Identify the types of activities refuge visitors participate in and those activities that are <i>primary</i> to refuge visitation.
3	Obtain information about use of visitor centers.
4	Characterize refuges as primary or incidental destinations to visitors' trips.
5	Determine the amount of time it took visitors to get to refuges.
6	Identify the amount of time visitors spend at refuges.
7, 8	Determine the size and type of groups that visit refuges.
9	Determine information sources that visitors use.
10	Determine how frequently respondents visit refuges.

Section 2 gathers information on visitor experience as it relates to transportation planning and services. One objective of this survey is to obtain information to inform the reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Bill.

We ask question(s)...	To ...
1	Determine the modes of transportation that visitors use, which is vital to transportation planning.
2	Obtain information on visitor way finding to reach refuges.
3	Evaluate importance of and satisfaction with transportation-related facilities and services.
4, 5	Determine likely demand and acceptability of alternative transportation on refuges.

Section 3 provides information on the economic benefits of visitors by determining their spending profile, impact on the local community, etc.

We ask question(s)...	To ...
1	Obtain information concerning expenses related to the visit.
2	Standardize the information from Question 1 on a per person basis.
3	Determine user values.
4	Estimate the amount of time visitors spent in local communities.
5, 6, 7	Obtain information related to satisfaction with fees.

Section 4 measures the importance of various aspects of the national wildlife refuge visitor experience and visitor satisfaction with current conditions. USGS will use an importance/performance scaling analysis approach to identify areas of excellence or where management action may be necessary, in order to comply with GPRA requirements to report on services we provide.

We ask question(s)...	To ...
1, 2	Measure the importance of and satisfaction with services and facilities.

Section 5 measures visitors' understanding of the unique mission of the NWRS and the resources that refuges protect. This information will be useful for outreach and education purposes.

We ask question(s)...	To measure visitors' ...
1	Understanding of the NWRS and its mission.
2, 3	Perceptions about the relative uniqueness of national wildlife refuges.
4	Perceptions regarding climate change and communication on climate change.

Section 6 provides baseline demographic information about national wildlife refuge visitors.

We ask question(s)...	To determine ...
1 - 8	Baseline demographics about refuge visitors.
9	Number of outdoor recreation trips that visitors take in a 12-month period.

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 [and specifically how this collection meets GPEA requirements].

Survey participants will have two options for completing the survey:

- Mail-back survey (anticipated 80 percent of respondents will use this method).
- Online survey with unique web address (anticipated 20 percent of respondents will use this method).

Some respondents may find the online option more socially desirable and more conducive to their lifestyle, as they will not receive paper copies or have to physically mail back the survey. By offering this electronic option, this collection complies with the Government Paperwork Elimination Act. Studies have shown that using the web as an alternative to other survey modes such as mail or telephone is becoming increasingly accepted (Couper, 2000)¹ as a strategy to decrease costs, increase the speed of data collection, increase response rates by providing additional modes for response, and decrease the amount of non-response error (Dillman, 2007; Schaefer and Dillman,1998)².

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

No other Federal agency or FWS office collects this information. We conducted a national survey of visitors to national wildlife refuges approximately 5 years ago (OMB Control Number 1040-0001). That data is not up-to-date.

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

This collection will not impact small businesses.

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.

The National Wildlife Refuge Improvement Act requires that the FWS develop a comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) for every refuge by the year 2012. If the surveys were not conducted, we would not have current data necessary to effectively plan and manage national wildlife refuges. Surveys will be conducted biennially, pending funding for out years.

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

¹ Couper, M. P. 2000. Web surveys: a review of issues and approaches. Public Opinion Quarterly, 64(4), 464-494.

² Dillman, D.A., 2007, Mail and internet surveys-The tailored design method, 2nd ed: Hoboken, NJ, John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Schaefer, D., and Dillman, D.A. 1998. Development of a standard e-mail methodology: Results of an experiment. Public Opinion Quarterly, 62(378-397).

- * 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;
- * 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
- * requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets, 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.

We will collect this information consistent with OMB guidelines. However, following the Dillman Method (2007), USGS will ask respondents to respond to the survey within 2 weeks of receipt.

- 8. Provide 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 (or in response to a PRA statement) and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments.**

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 recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported. [Please list the names, titles, addresses, and phone numbers of persons contacted.]

On February 3, 2009, we published in the Federal Register (74 FR 5940) a notice of our intent to request that OMB approve this information collection. In that notice, we solicited comments for 60 days, ending on April 6, 2009. We received three comments and addressed them as follows:

Comment: One commenter requested that the survey include questions on:

- Whether the visitor is a consumptive or nonconsumptive wildlife user,
- What activities visitors do on national wildlife refuges,
- Whether or not visitors are aware that hunting and trapping are allowed on national wildlife refuges,
- Appropriateness of allowing sport hunting and trapping on national wildlife refuges, and
- Compatibility of sport hunting and trapping to the purpose of national wildlife refuges.

Response: The survey contains questions that directly address the first two issues. Measuring public understanding or perceptions about the appropriateness of hunting on national wildlife refuges is not an objective of this study. However, the survey asks visitors to rate the importance of and their satisfaction with a list of uses and services provided on refuges, including hunting. The survey also provides an opportunity for visitors to express their opinions or concerns concerning national wildlife refuge policies (such as hunting and trapping on refuges).

Comment: The commenter stated that we have conducted this survey every 5 years and that is enough. The commenter also stated opposition to hunting.

Response: We believe the commenter is referring to the National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation. That survey is of the general public and asks questions about activities on all types of lands (Federal, State, local, and private). The proposed survey is of visitors to national wildlife refuges only. Responses to questions on the proposed survey will help us better manage national wildlife refuges.

Comment: We received a request for a copy of the survey instrument and information on sampling frames.

Response: The USGS provided a copy of the draft survey instrument and a description of the sampling frames.

In addition to the Federal Register notice, USGS consulted with the following FHWA and academic professionals in the field to obtain their views on the clarity of the survey, the sampling design, the clarity of instructions and the annual hour burden.

Dr. John B. Loomis, Economist Colorado State University Dept of Agriculture & Resource Economics B310 Andrew G. Clark Fort Collins, CO (970) 491-2485	Dr. David Fulton, Associate Professor University of Minnesota Dept. of Fisheries , Wildlife and Conservation Biology Hodson Hall 1980 Folwell Avenue St.Paul, MN 55108 (612) 625-5256
Susan A. Winter, Economist U.S. Forest Service Planning Analysis Group, EMC 2150 Centre Ave, Bldg A., Suite 300 Fort Collins CO 80526 (970) 295-5726	Susan Law Federal Highway Administration Central Federal Lands Highway Division 12300 West Dakota Ave Lakewood, CO 80228 (720) 963.3570
Chris Jaeschke, P.E., Planning Engineer Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division Federal Highway Administration 21400 Ridgetop Circle Sterling, VA 20166 (703) 404-6306	Roxanne Bash, Transportation Planner Federal Highway Administration Western Federal Lands Highway Division 610 East 5th Street Vancouver, WA 98661-3801 (360) 619-7558

Peer Reviewer Comments and Actions Taken to Address Comments.

Peer reviewer comments	Actions taken
The length of the survey is burdensome.	Deleted questions of a lesser priority throughout the survey. In Section 3, Question 1, we listed fewer spending categories.
Survey sections and individual questions should be prioritized to decrease the overall length and respondent burden.	Reworded survey questions viewed as difficult or not clear, and deleted or shortened sections with a lower priority.
Items related to people's attitudes and values are potentially contentious or are too subjective in nature.	Deleted the most potentially contentious items related to people's values.
Some items in the transportation section were not clear in objective. Possibly add questions related to different modes of transportation, motivations behind transportation choice, and likelihood of using various transportation options.	Revised the transportation section to include measures of transport mode, use of way-finding resources, importance/satisfaction for transportation-related items, and visitors' likelihood of using different alternative transportation options.

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

Visitors will receive a *de minimis* token incentive onsite when initially contacted. Dillman (2007) indicates an improvement in response rate for mail and online surveys when incentives are included. The incentive will be an FWS magnet, notepad, or other item displaying an FWS or an NWRS visual identifier. FWS outreach activities commonly include these items. Providing this type of incentive will not increase burden on refuge personnel or the Government.

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

We will not provide any assurance of confidentiality. Those who inquire about this issue will be told that their answers are used only for statistical purposes. Visitors will also be told that reports prepared from this study will summarize findings across individual samples so that responses will not be associated with any specific individual.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

The survey will not include questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

This surveying effort will be conducted biennially, with visitors to 75 refuges every other year. For each biennial sampling effort, visitors to a new set of refuges will be sampled. As a result, the burden to each respondent will be one time. *Numbers below reflect totals for the 3-year period of approval.* Visitors at approximately 150 refuges will complete the survey (National and Individual Refuge). We estimate a total of 37,500 responses and 13,941 burden hours. We based this estimate on previous similar surveying efforts of USGS researchers and by the peer review and pretest for this information collection (see item 8 and Supporting Statement B).

- Initial Contact. USGS anticipates that 250 visitors at 150 national wildlife refuges (37,500) will agree to participate in the survey. We estimate a burden of 2 minutes per visitor for this contact, or a total of 1,250 hours.
- Respondent Surveys. We estimate a total of 30,000 responses for the National and Individual Refuge surveys. The survey will take about 25 minutes, including time to review instructions, complete the survey, and return it (online or by mail), totaling 12,500 hours.
- Nonrespondent Surveys. USGS will send a survey to all nonrespondents. We estimate a total of 2,250 responses for the nonrespondent survey. The survey will take about 5 minutes, including time to review instructions, complete the survey, and return it, totaling 188 hours.

The total dollar value of the annual burden hours is approximately \$400,107 (rounded). We used the Bureau of Labor Statistics news release USDL 09-1501, December 9, 2009, Employer Costs for Employee Compensation--September 2009 (<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ecec.pdf>), to estimate average hourly wages and calculate benefits. We used the wage and salary costs for all workers from Table 1, which states an hourly rate of \$20.50. To calculate benefits, we multiplied the hourly rate by 1.4. The hourly rate including benefits is \$28.70. The table below annualizes the burden and costs over the 3-

year approval period.

ACTIVITY	ANNUAL NO. OF RESPONSES	COMPLETION TIME PER RESPONSE	TOTAL ANNUAL BURDEN	DOLLAR VALUE OF BURDEN HOUR
Visitor Contact Onsite	12,500	2 minutes	417 hours	\$ 11,967.90
Respondent Survey	10,000	25 minutes	4,167 hours	119,592.90
Nonrespondent Survey	750	5 minutes	63 hours	1,808.10
TOTAL	23,250		4,647 hours	\$133,368.90

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual [nonhour] cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information.

There is no nonhour cost burden associated with this collection.

14. Provide estimates of annualized costs to the Federal Government.

We estimate that the total cost to the Federal Government will be \$1,101,554 (\$270,204 for the National Survey plus \$831,350 for Individual Refuge Surveys). Over the 3-year approval period, the annualized cost to the Federal Government will be approximately **\$367,185**.

See the tables below for estimated costs including survey design, production, data collection, analysis, and reporting. We used the Office of Personnel Management Salary Table 2009-RUS (http://www.opm.gov/flsa/oca/09tables/html/RUS_h.asp) to determine the hourly wages for the Federal employees associated with this collection. We multiplied the hourly wage by 1.5 to account for benefits in accordance with the previously mentioned BLS news release.

Estimated Federal Cost for National Survey

POSITION/ACTIVITY	HOURLY COST	TOTAL HOURS	TOTAL COST
Project Leader, GS-12/5	\$55.08	470	\$ 25,888
Economist, GS-13/5	65.49	389	25,476
Social Scientist, GS-11/9	51.36	210	10,786
Wildlife Biologist, GS-11/9	51.36	40	2,054
Contractors/ support staff	20.00	5,750	115,000
Printing and Mailing			60,000
Report Preparation			4,000
Travel			27,000
TOTAL			\$270,204

Estimated Federal Cost for Individual Refuge Surveys

POSITION/ACTIVITY	HOURLY COST	TOTAL HOURS	TOTAL COST
Project Leader, GS-12/5	\$55.08	80	\$ 4,406
Economist, GS-13/5	65.49	80	5,239
Social Scientist, GS-11/9	51.36	80	4,109
Contractor support staff	20.00	475	9,500
Printing and Mailing			2,000
Report Preparation			2,000
Travel			6,000

Total per Refuge			\$ 33,254
Total for 25 Refuges			\$831,350

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments.

This is a new collection.

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

USGS staff will directly code the data collected during this study into a computerized database and analyze most of the statistics using SPSS® 17. Data analysis will include:

- Frequency distributions.
- Cross tabulations.
- Multivariate analysis.

USGS will publish the results from the National Survey in USGS Publication Series (Open File Report) and peer-reviewed scientific journals. Results of Individual Refuge surveys will be provided online. The table below presents a time schedule for this surveying effort.

	Begins	Ends
Survey Information Collection	Upon OMB approval	12 months after collection begins
Data Analysis	3 months after collection begins	3 months after collection ends
Report Preparation and Publication	When analysis ends	+3 months

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.

We will display the OMB control number and expiration date.

18. Certification.

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.