

## Supporting Statement A for Paperwork Reduction Act Submission

### Department of the Interior Regional Climate Science Centers

January 21, 2010

OMB Control Number 1028-new

Terms of Clearance: Not Applicable – New Collection

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*

In September 2009, Secretary of the Interior Salazar issued Secretarial Order 3289 (<http://www.doi.gov/climatechange/index.html>). Among other provisions, the Order broadened the mandate of the National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center (NCCWSC) to include providing science on climate change-related impacts on the full array of resources, not limited to wildlife, fish, and aquatic and terrestrial habitats. During FY10 and FY11, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) NCCWSC will provide funding under a USGS Biology appropriation to establish eight Department of the Interior (DOI) Regional Climate Science Centers (CSCs or Regional Centers). This funding opportunity will provide an excellent opportunity for the CSCs to take a broad and integrated approach to developing research, models, and tools for natural and cultural resource adaptation strategies.

Pursuant to P.L. 110-161, and according to its mission, the USGS has been developing regional science centers to provide climate change impact data and analysis geared to the needs of fish and wildlife managers as they develop adaptation strategies in response to climate change. These DOI Regional Climate Science Centers are being developed in close collaboration with Interior agencies and other federal, state, university, and non-governmental partners. The NCCWSC and Regional Climate Science Centers will provide scientific research, data and information needed to explore the impacts from climate change and variability. The Regional Centers will also perform climate model downscaling, integrate ecological and habitat models, and forecast future changes to natural and cultural resources. Finally, the Regional Centers will coordinate with other DOI land managers to provide forecasting, decision support and information products for adaptive management strategies, options and mitigation.

The USGS NCCWSC will offer financial support through a cooperative agreement to organizations that maintain the physical facility, professional science researchers and super-computing capacity to host one of these regional centers. The purpose of this Program Announcement is to identify organizations that are willing to host a Regional Center, and to

determine if their science and partnership capabilities are sufficient to serve as a Host organization. Host organizations must be able to contribute climate science capabilities that complement and enhance USGS and DOI scientific and computational capacity, and those of other science partners.

Although 8 Regional Climate Science Centers will be established eventually, the program announcement will be issued in two phases, one in Fiscal Year 2010 and one in Fiscal Year 2011, depending on available funding. Initially, during phase 1, USGS will be seeking proposals for the development of Centers in the Northwest, Southeast, Southwest and North Central regions; the total number of Centers will ultimately be determined by need and availability of resources over time. We anticipate a phase 2 program announcement during 2011 for Centers located in the South Central, Pacific Islands and Northeast regions. Regional Climate Science Center and Host partnerships will be established on a 5-year renewable basis.

**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. [Be specific. If this collection is a form or a questionnaire, every question needs to be justified.]***

Only one proposal will be accepted from each potential Regional Center Host organization. Host proposals can be from a single organization, or a group of collaborating organizations with an identified lead. The USGS will use this information to evaluate applications for hosting one of eight Regional Climate Science Centers. This information collection will ensure that sufficient and relevant information is available to evaluate and select proposals for the Centers. Financial assistance in the form of a cooperative agreement will be awarded on a competitive basis following the evaluation and ranking of applications by a review panel composed of representatives from the USGS and DOI.

In addition to the Standard Forms 424, 424A, and 424B, each respondent will submit applications for funding assistance in response to Notices of Funding Availability (NOFA) that we will publish on Grants.gov and our program web pages. All proposals shall include the following information:

- Negotiated Rate Agreement which provide rates approved for use on grants, contracts, and other agreements with the Federal government,
- Narrative (including: title page, current climate change science program, existing linkages with DOI and regional partners, institutional organizational capabilities and contributions, and summary), and
- Detailed Budget.

Regional Climate Science Center Host proposals will be reviewed by a six-member panel. At least two (2) members will be USGS staff; the remaining members will be from the Department of the Interior or another DOI Bureau. Selection of Hosts for Regional Centers will be made based on a ranking of the proposals by the review panel. The information in the proposals will also be used by the USGS NCCWSC Chief to evaluate current year success and to determine the need for additional support or related activities.

**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].**

All applications must be submitted electronically via Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>). Hard/paper submissions and electronic copies submitted via e-mail will not be accepted under any circumstances.

**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.**

Due to the unique nature of this program and authorizing legislation, no other Federal agency collects this information. No duplication will occur.

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

We have made efforts to keep the amount of information requested to a minimum for all of our applicants. The information has to be sufficient to fulfill the requirements of the National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center, as well as sufficient to make a competitive funding decision.

**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.**

Under the Stafford Act (P.L. 93–288; Sec. 202), the Department of the Interior has the responsibility to provide timely and high quality scientific information and products, in this case relating to climate change and impacts on DOI lands and throughout the United States, in general. Failure to collect this information would result in a deficiency to comply with the congressional mandate to establish these centers and the inability to inform decision makers, develop adaptive management strategies, and mitigate the risks to natural resources associated with climate change.

**7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner: (i) requiring respondents to report more often than quarterly, (ii) requiring respondents prepare written responses in fewer than 30 days after receipt, (iii) requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document, (iv) retain records for more than 3 years; (v) 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; (vi) the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by**

**OMB; (vii) that includes a pledge of confidentiality not supported by authority established in statute or regulation; requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets or other confidential information.**

There are no circumstances that require us to collect the information in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

**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 in response to the PRA statement associated with the collection over the past three years] and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.**

On November 19, 2009, we published in the Federal Register (74FR59989) a notice of our intent to request that OMB approve the collection of information associated with the new National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center. We solicited comments for 60 days ending on January 19, 2010. We received one comment:

**Comment:** November 19, 2009, from Jean Public:

*fort collins - where deer diseases started. your site is hardly a favorable site for sound science since fort collins is where they diseased deer. many state agencies and colleges are poor choices for this kind of site since they have hired people with pre ordained minds and closed minds. they practice junk science. i would nominate the nj div fish & game division of NJDEP and Rutgers Agribusiness division, both of which seem to have hired biased individuals who dont even practice scientific principles or methods. in my opinion, these divisions seem to hire people with their minds made up who blacklist those who have conflicting views. it is not an open place or site where methods and processes can be discussed. you need to be careful in aligning yourself with the state agencies that "manage" wildlife. they all seem to be stocked by card carrying members of the gun clubs who believe in guns and killing. that kind of closed mind is certainly not environmental in the least. you need to be very careful that you are getting the best science for this kind of project. if you cant get the best science, you might as well not spend the taxpayer dollars because the taxpayers are already paying for alot of inaccurate, unfactual junk science. jean public 15 elm st florham park nj07932*

**Response:** January 13, 2010, from Douglas Beard, Interim Chief, USGS National Climate Change and Wildlife Science Center:

*Hello, and thank you for your comment on federal register document, FR Doc. E9-27780, This response acknowledges our receipt of your comment. We would like to assure you that the USGS mission and goal is to provide the best unbiased science that we can. This is the reason we are soliciting proposals in this case. Responding to national priorities and global trends is our highest priority and requires science that not only builds on our existing strengths and partnerships but also demands the innovation made possible by integrating the full breadth and depth of our capabilities with other strong science partners which includes other government agencies, academic institutions, non-government organizations and private industries. The USGS chooses to go forward at this time because the science issues that will be addressed will represent major challenges for our Nation's natural resources. We would like to assure you, that as*

*with all our efforts, we will be fair and unbiased in selecting the future sites and ever mindful concerning the advancement of our scientific integrity. We are thankful for your response and concern in this matter.*

As the commenter did not address this specific information collection, we have not made any changes as a result of the comment.

In addition to our Federal Register notice, we solicited comments from several potential applicants for the new program. We specifically requested comments on:

- Utility of the information we plan to request.
- Estimated length of time to complete a submission.
- Clarity of the instructions.

The individuals listed below provided editorial suggestions and feedback concerning the clarity of the procedure and approximate length of time it would take to complete the application, based on their previous experiences with cooperative agreement applications. We incorporated their suggested edits to improve the grammatical clarity of the final announcement. The respondents also said that the application was straightforward and that the instructions were very helpful. The respondents concurred with our estimated burden time for the application to be about 20 hours. We believe that this estimate reflects the time it takes each applicant to prepare the narrative and provide the additional information needed to complete the application. This estimate also includes the time that it takes to receive supporting feedback (i.e. peer-reviews and letters of support).

### **Individuals Contacted Outside the Agency**

1. Dr. Christine Turner, USGS Geology Discipline  
Box 25046, Denver Federal Center, Stop 939, Denver, CO 80225-0046.  
Phone: 303-236-1561.
2. Mark Humpert, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, 444 North Capitol Street, NW, Washington, DC 2000. Phone: 202-624-7890.
3. William S. Burgess, NSGIC Washington Liaison, BurGIS, LLC  
396 Stanford Court, Arnold, MD 21012. Phone: 410-544-2005.

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

We do not provide gifts or payments other than the remuneration of awards.

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

We do not provide any assurance of confidentiality to respondents.

**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. 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.**

We do not ask questions of a sensitive nature.

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

We estimate that we will receive 80 responses totaling 1,600 burden hours. We estimate the annual dollar value of the burden hours to be \$71,312.

Our estimates are based on our own knowledge plus the outreach described in item 8. We expect to receive approximately 80 responses from a combination of state/local and tribal governments as well as from individuals representing the private sector. We expect that it will take each applicant approximately 20 hours to complete the application process, totaling 1,600 burden hours.

We estimate the dollar value of the annual burden hours to be \$71,312 (see Table 1). The hour cost is based on BLS news release USDL 08-1802 of December 10, 2008, for average full compensation per hour including benefits for private industry. The particular values utilized are:

States/tribal/local governments. Average hourly wage is \$25.88 multiplied by 1.5 to account for benefits (\$38.82). To obtain the rate for State/local/tribal government, we used data from [http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/naics4\\_999200.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/naics4_999200.htm), Table 19-0000 – Physical Scientist mean hourly income.

Private sector. Average hourly wage is \$44.16 multiplied by 1.4 to account for benefits (\$61.82). To obtain the rate for Physical Scientist in the private sector we used data from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ocwage.pdf>, Table 1.

**Table 1. Estimated Dollar Value of Annual Burden Hours**

Activity	Annual Number of Responses	Estimated Completion Time per Respondent	Total Annual Burden Hours	Dollar Value of Burden Hour [Including Benefits]	Total Dollar Value of Annual Burden Hours
<b>Applications</b>					
State/Local/Tribal	60	20 hours	1200	\$38.82	\$46,584
Private	20	20 hours	400	\$61.82	\$24,728
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>80</b>		<b>1600</b>		<b>\$71,312</b>

**13. Provide an estimate of the total annual [non-hour] cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in Items 12 and 14).**

There is no non-hour cost burden to applicants resulting from this collection. There are no fees associated with application process or requirements.

**14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information. Agencies also may aggregate cost estimates from Items 12, 13, and 14 in a single table.**

The total estimated cost to the Federal Government for processing and reviewing proposals as a result of this collection of information is \$50,881. This includes Federal employee’s hourly wages and benefits. Table 2 below shows Federal staff and grade levels performing various tasks associated with this information collection.

Regional Climate Science Center proposals will be reviewed by a peer panel of six members. Two members will be Department of the Interior representatives and four members will be from the USGS. The panelists will read the proposals prior to their meeting. The panel will discuss each proposal and evaluate the technical merit. The peer review panel will vote on each proposal based on the criteria established. The panel rankings are the principal determination of proposal success pending available funds.

We used the Office of Personnel Management Salary Table 2009-DCB ([http://www.opm.gov/flsa/oca/09tables/html/dcb\\_h.asp](http://www.opm.gov/flsa/oca/09tables/html/dcb_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 (as implied by the previously referenced BLS news release).

**Table 2. Annual Cost to the Federal Government**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Grade/ Step</b>	<b>Hourly Rate</b>	<b>Hourly Rate incl. benefits (1.5 x hourly pay rate)</b>	<b>Estimated time spent by Federal Employees (hours)</b>	<b>Cost per federal staff (Hourly Pay Rate incl. Benefits x Number of Hours)</b>
NCCWSC Program Coordinator (and Peer Review Panelist #6)	GS-15/5	\$65.62	\$98.43	40	\$3,937
USGS Grants Coordinator (and Peer Review Panelist #5)	GS-14/5	55.78	83.67	140	11,714
NCCWSC Secretary	GS-8/5	24.78	37.17	120	4,460
Grants and Acquisitions Specialist	GS-12/5	39.70	59.55	120	7,146
Peer Review Panelist #1	GS-15/5	65.62	98.43	60	5,906

Peer Review Panelist #2	GS-15/5	65.62	98.43	60	5,906
Peer Review Panelist #3	GS-15/5	65.62	98.43	60	5,906
Peer Review Panelist #4	GS-15/5	65.62	98.43	60	5,906
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>\$50,881</b>

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

This is a new request.

**16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.**

The information collected will not be tabulated or published for statistical use.

**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. Explain each exception to the certification statement, "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions".**

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.