

Supporting Statement A for Paperwork Reduction Act Submission

The Nonindigenous Aquatic Species Sighting Reporting Form

OMB Control Number 1028--New

Terms of Clearance: None. This is a collection currently in use without a valid OMB Control Number.

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.

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is responsible for tracking the status and distribution of introduced aquatic organisms. The purpose of the Nonindigenous Aquatic Species Program (NAS) is to monitor and provide information concerning the status, distribution and potential impacts of non-native aquatic organisms in a timely manner for research, management and education. The Nonindigenous Aquatic Species (NAS) database (<http://nas.er.usgs.gov>) housed at the lab in Gainesville, FL functions as a repository and central clearinghouse for accurate and spatially referenced biogeographic accounts of nonindigenous aquatic species from across the country. The NAS database was created to obtain and disseminate information on exotic introductions and serves as a centralized source of data for aquatic invasive species in the United States. It exists to provide a complete listing of collections and personal observations of aquatic invasive species on a national basis. It is an information exchange base for monitoring distribution, rate of dispersal, and potential range expansion of established populations. The data base is available to individuals and state and federal agencies to enhance awareness of exotic species introductions and facilitate management decisions concerning exotics.

Information is collected from the public regarding the distribution of nonindigenous aquatic species, primarily fish, in open waters of the United States. This information is vital for early detection and rapid response for the possible eradication of organisms that may be considered invasive in a natural environment such as a lake, river, stream, and pond. Nonindigenous species are not native in the environment where they are now found and can oftentimes have negative impacts on native species. Early detection is a major focus of the Bureau. This system has been needed, and requested for a long time by invasive species biologists, particularly those in federal agencies. Federal, state and local natural resource managers need up-to-date information concerning any new species in the area, or new to a nearby area, in order to respond quickly. Conversely, these managers are encouraged to use the NAS database to report any new occurrences as well.

The public can help us by serving as the “eyes and ears” for the Survey’s Program. This extremely important because the USGS cannot be everywhere, observing and monitoring all open waters for nonindigenous aquatic species.

A web-form is posted on the USGS NAS Alert System website. The form is available for users to complete with biologic, geographic and sender information. It is completely voluntary and is received only when the public has encountered a nonindigenous aquatic organism, usually through fishing or some

other outdoor recreational activity. The alert system is tailored to provide wildlife managers the information they request to help them plan and manage the impact of invasive species on native species and habitats in their states, parks or conservation areas. It is also used by people interested in research and conservation, or those simply interested in the spread of invasive aquatic animals.

The form contains information on more than 1100 species including vertebrates, invertebrates and plants, introduced as early as 1850. Taxa include foreign species as well as those native to North America that have been transported outside of their natural range. Locality data is obtained from many sources including referenced literature; state, federal, and local monitoring programs; museum accessions; on-line databases; websites; professional communications; and on-line reporting forms. These data are then compiled and entered into the database and are mapped to show locations and spread of these organisms. Because of the nationwide extent of the problem, this effort benefits from the general public's recreational activities such as fishing in our efforts for early detection. Early detection is vital for the effective management of new invasive species.

Relevant legislation:

1. *Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Control and Prevention Act of 1990 - Public Law 101-646 (Nov 29, 1990).*

The Act established the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force – which then formalized our program as the national database. The Act requires the Task Force to develop and implement a program for the waters of the United States to prevent introductions and dispersal of aquatic nuisance species; to monitor, control, and study such species; and to disseminate related information. Research is to be conducted concerning:

- (a) the environmental and economic risks associated with the introduction of aquatic nuisance species into waters of the United States;
- (b) the principal pathways by which aquatic nuisance species are introduced and dispersed;
- (c) possible methods for the prevention, monitoring and control of aquatic nuisance species; and
- (d) the assessment of the effectiveness of prevention, monitoring, and control methods.

The purposes of the Act are -

- (1) to prevent unintentional introduction and dispersal of nonindigenous species* into waters of the United States through ballast water management and other requirements;
- (2) to coordinate federally conducted, funded or authorized research, prevention control, information dissemination and other activities regarding the zebra mussel and other aquatic nuisance species**;
- (3) to develop and carry out environmentally sound control methods to prevent, monitor and control unintentional introductions of nonindigenous species from pathways other than ballast water exchange;
- (4) to understand and minimize economic and ecological impacts of nonindigenous aquatic nuisance species that become established, including the zebra mussel; and
- (5) to establish a program of research and technology development and assistance to states in the management and removal of zebra mussels.

*Nonindigenous species means any species or other viable biological material that enters an ecosystem beyond its historic range, including any such organisms transferred from one country into another.

**Aquatic nuisance species means a nonindigenous species that threatens the diversity or abundance of native species or the ecological stability of infested waters, or commercial, agricultural, aquacultural or recreational activities dependent on such waters.

2. National Invasive Species Act of 1996 - Added USGS to the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force Executive Order 13112 (1999)

Section 2 -Federal Agency Duties:

(a) Each Federal agency whose actions may affect the status of invasive species shall, to the extent practicable and permitted by law,

(1) identify such actions;

(2) subject to the availability of appropriations, and within Administration budgetary limits, use relevant programs and authorities to: (i) prevent the introduction of invasive species; (ii) detect and respond rapidly to and control populations of such species in a cost-effective and environmentally sound manner; (iii) monitor invasive species populations accurately and reliably; (iv) provide for restoration of native species and habitat conditions in ecosystems that have been invaded; (v) conduct research on invasive species and develop technologies to prevent introduction and provide for environmentally sound control of invasive species; and (vi) promote public education on invasive species and the means to address them; and

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.]

The information collected is to be used by the USGS to document public sightings of the occurrences of any aquatic species outside of its native historic range. Specifically, the NAS uses the information to support the following Program goals which are to:

- Develop and provide an accurate ongoing assessment of the status and distribution of nonindigenous aquatic species nationwide;
- Identify geographic gaps in knowledge of the distribution of introduced aquatic organisms; and
- Gain an understanding of the scope and scale of aquatic introductions in the United States.

The following information will be collected when a report is submitted to the USGS-NAS Database:

Item #1: What are you reporting? What is the common name? What is the genus/species names (if known)? A drop down list is available and the respondent will chose from of three categories of responses (fish, mollusk/crustacean/others, or plants) to describe what they are reporting. The USGS will use this information to categorize the type of organisms being reported so that it can be handled by the appropriate USGS expert.

Item #2: When was it found? The respondent will use the space provided to indicate the date of the observation. The USGS will use this information to have a record of the organisms' first appearance or continued appearance at a location to establish a timeline of a possible invasion.

Item #3: Where was the observation made? The respondents will have two spaces to indicate the state and county where they observed the species. There is an additional box available to describe the specific location of the observation. The USGS will use this information to maintain a list of locations in order to create a distribution map of sightings.

Item #4: Who made the observation? (Name, Email, Telephone Number and Address)

The USGS uses this information to identify and communicate with the respondent. The USGS needs this information to verify it is a real address as to filter out bots that would otherwise flood us with spam submissions, and to get more information about the sighting.

Item #5: Additional Comments: The USGS will use this information to gather any other pertinent information that would be useful about the species that was observed or its location. This information will be used to further elaborate on the sighting and complete details about the record for which there was no accommodation in the submission form.

The compiled data will be shared with other agencies outside the USGS. Personal information submitted by the public (such as: name, address, phone number and email address) will not be publically available via the website <http://nas.er.usgs.gov>.

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].

The USGS-NAS encourages the use of the website. The respondent can use the Print Screen function once the form is completed and before it is submitted to receive a hard copy version of the data. Upon submission, the dates and locations of the identified species are immediately downloaded into the USGS NAS public website (see: <http://nas.er.usgs.gov>.)

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.

The information that we collect is not available from any other source. Other than the general identifying information (name, address, telephone number, email address), the information collected is unique for respondent submitting information to the NAS database.

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

The collection of this data will have no bearing on 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.

If we did not have this information, the USGS could not carry out the mandate of the National Invasive Species Act of 1996. Specifically the USGS would not be able to:

- provide information that could be used to prevent the introduction of invasive species;
- detect and respond rapidly to and control populations of such species in a cost-effective and environmentally sound manner;
- assist in monitoring invasive species populations accurately and reliably; provide for restoration of native species and habitat conditions in ecosystems that have been invaded;
- conduct research on invasive species and develop technologies to prevent introduction and provide for environmentally sound control of invasive species; and
- promote public education on invasive species and the means to address them.

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 the information to be collected 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.

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.]

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.

On February 22, 2010, a 60-day Federal Register notice (75 FR 7622) was published announcing this information collection. Public comments were solicited for 60 days ending April 23, 2010. We did not receive any public comments in response to that notice.

In addition to our Federal Register notice, we solicited comments from the three reviewers listed below to obtain their views on the method we are using to receive information from the public concerning the sighting of nonindigenous aquatic species, primarily fish in open waters in the United States. We asked them to provide an estimate of the time it took for them to access and fill in the information on our website. The individuals provided feedback concerning the website structure and approximate length of time it would take to complete the process; they also concurred with our estimated burden time for the application to be about 10 minutes or less. We did not change the website, because the reviewers suggested that no changes or updates were necessary at this time. The reviewers said that the website’s instructions were clear and easy to follow.

<p>Review# 1 Michael Goehle, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service 716-691-5456 ext. 132 Michael_goehle@fws.gov</p>	<p>Review# 2 Laurence Connor, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission 352-357-2398 larry.connor@myfwc.com</p>	<p>Review# 3 Jason Goeckler, Kansas Wildlife and Parks 620-342-0658 jasong@wp.state.ks.us</p>
--	--	---

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

We will not provide payment or gifts to respondents in this collection.

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

The information provided by respondents will be tabulated and reported in descriptive form, as is the standard procedure for a form of this type. Names and contact information (e.g. email address, address and phone number) will be kept in a temporary database only for the purpose of follow-up contact to clarify responses. Our primary purpose for collecting contact information is to follow-up with the respondents to verify the submission as a valid and reliable entry. The information is first cross checked with our available data in the current location. We will contact the respondent if the information is grossly inconsistent with other observations in the area.

Our intent is to report the observations in an aggregated form (for instance, in a list of our most popular search engine queries), in partial or edited form (such as in a report summarizing the number of nonindigenous species are in a specific geographical area), or verbatim (for example, in a complete listing a comment provided in the “additional comments” box of the form). We will not include the names or e-mail addresses in any of our reports.

The records will be maintained in the appropriate Privacy Act System of Records identified as Computer Registration System. (INTERIOR/USGS-20) published at 74 FR 23430 (May 19, 2009).

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.

The collection does not include questions of a sensitive nature.

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

Variations can be expected in the reporting burden for completion of the forms in this database because of the differences in user familiarity and use of the database and the time it takes for individual computer systems to make the connection with our website. The data entry level sought is the same as used in most computer operating program (no advanced knowledge, training, or expertise is required). For the respondents reporting more than one species per report the additional time has been considered in the average time it takes to complete the form, this is based on the feedback received in Item 8 above. We anticipate receiving approximately 1,000 responses totaling 167 annual burden hours for this information collection (see Table 1).

Table 1. Consolidated estimate of burden

Respondent	Responses	Completion Time	Burden Hours
Individuals or Households	300	10 min	50
State/Local Government Agencies	700	10 min	117
TOTAL	1000		167

We estimate the total dollar value of this collection to be \$5,694 (Table 2). The estimated dollar value of the burden hours for this collection takes into account the nature of our respondents Private individuals, state and local government agencies (this includes university employees). We arrived at this figure by multiplying the estimated burden hours by \$27.73 (for individuals or households) and 36.81 for State and Local government. This wage figure included the multiplier for benefits and is based on the National Compensation Survey: Occupational Wages in the United States March 2010 published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Occupation and Wages, (BLS news release USDL-10-0774 for Employer Costs for Employee Compensation—March 2010 at - <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ecec.pdf>), dated June 9, 2010).

Table 2: Estimated Dollar Value of Respondent Annual Burden Hours

Activity	Sector	Annual Number of Responses	Total Annual Burden Hours	Dollar Value of Burden Hours (Including Benefits)	Total Dollar Value of Annual Burden Hours
Completing and submitting the database form	Private	300	50	\$27.73	\$1,387
Completing and submitting the database form	State Government	700	117	\$36.81	\$4,307
TOTAL		1000	167		\$5,694

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual [non-hour] cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information.

We have identified no reporting and recordkeeping “non-hour cost” burdens associated with this proposed collection of information.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.

The total annual cost to the Federal Government is \$30,495. This includes salary and benefits for one federal employee to process the responses. We used the Office of Personnel Management Salary Table 2010-RUS (http://www.opm.gov/flsa/oca/10tables/html/DCB_h.asp) to determine the hourly rate (Table 3). We multiplied the hourly rate by 1.5 to account for benefits (as implied by the BLS news release USDL-10-10-0774).

Table 3. Annual Cost to the Federal Government

Position	Grade/ Step	Hourly Rate	Hourly Rate incl. benefits (1.5 x hourly pay rate)	Estimated time spent by Federal Employees (hours)	Cost per federal staff (Hourly Pay Rate incl. Benefits x Number of Hours)
Fishery Biologist	12/5	\$40.66	\$60.99	500	\$30,495

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

This collection is currently being conducted without a valid OMB Control Number or expiration date.

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.

Reported data will be analyzed to examine what proportion of new sighting reports come from the public. However, this type of data will be used for anecdotal purposes only, because the public are often the first ones to find new species and are therefore useful for early detection. There are no specific plans to for analyses beyond that. The geographic information will be published in the form of species-specific distribution maps at <http://nas.er.usgs.gov>. Species distribution maps are generated automatically on the website as the information is entered into the NAS Database and can be viewed by the general public.

Information collected with this form will be published in internal agency reports. The standard operating procedures for review and approval of USGS publications and reports will be followed.

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 on the information collection instrument.

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

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.