Supporting Statement for OMB 0596-0205

Public Attitudes, Beliefs, and Values
About National Forest Systems Land Management
February 2010

A. Justification

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.**

   Legal Authority:

   - The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321-4347)
   - National Forest Management Act (NFMA) of 1976, as amended (NFMA) (16 U.S.C. 1600)
   - The 2005 NFMA Planning Rule (36 CFR, Part 219).[1]

   The USDA Forest Service is requesting OMB approval to collect information on public attitudes, beliefs, and values toward public land and public land use and how those values are affected by public land management. Additionally, the information collected helps determine the acceptable tradeoffs in developing alternative management plans. Surveys completed by the public and specific stakeholder groups assist natural forest land managers and planners with scientifically credible information. This information is critical to planning and implementing public policy related to national forests. Renewal of this authority will allow the Forest Service to monitor changes in public attitudes, beliefs, and values over time.

   Legal authority for this collection call for periodic forest plan revision and planning related to management policies and actions. The data collected is analyzed and incorporated into these planning and decision making processes. Social science and economic information provide qualitative and quantitative metrics to assist natural forest land managers in developing alternative processes and in evaluating performance. Monitoring the public with survey instruments over time provides data to examine and evaluate changes in social and economic conditions. Recognizing and evaluating such changes is an essential component of adapting management plans to changing conditions.

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.**

   a. **What information will be collected - reported or recorded? (If there are pieces of information that are especially burdensome in the collection, a specific explanation should be provided.)**

[1] Federal Register, Vol. 70, No. 3, pages 1024-1030, January 5, 2005

Information will be collected on attitudes, beliefs, and values that people have for public land and public land use; how those attitudes, beliefs, and values are affected by public land management; and acceptable tradeoffs in developing alternative management plans. This information is critical to planning and implementing public policy related to national forests especially in the Southwestern Region.

b. From whom will the information be collected? If there are different respondent categories (e.g., loan applicant versus a bank versus an appraiser), each should be described along with the type of collection activity that applies.

Information will be collected from a stratified random sample of the public within the administrative boundaries of the Forest Service Southwestern Region (Arizona, New Mexico, and a few counties in Texas and Oklahoma). The sampling plan is described under Section B, Question 1.

Information collected will be summarized, analyzed, and reported to Forest Service managers and planners. Results will be presented in a form in which they can be applied by land managers and planners to assist in the planning and decision making process, in particular to the Southwestern Region forest plan revision process. Analyses will be done cooperatively by the project team, comprised of research scientists at the Rocky Mountain Research Station, and faculty members and graduate students at the University of New Mexico, Department of Economics.

c. What will this information be used for - provide ALL uses?

The information will inform managers and planners regarding public values, objectives, and expectations regarding management of the National forests and grasslands in the Southwestern Region. Beyond the forest plan revision process, the information will be used in project planning and evaluation. Results of this information collection will be used by other national forests and grasslands to assist the planning process in other regions in two ways. First, the work described here will serve as an example and prototype of a process that could be applied in other regions with minimal changes to the questionnaire (which would necessitate obtaining a new information collection review and approval). Second, the results obtained in the Southwestern Region will be compared to the national level results from the NSRE. Such comparisons will likely indicate the potential danger of blindly applying national level information to region and forest specific planning exercises.

d. How will the information be collected (e.g., forms, non-forms, electronically, face-to-face, over the phone, over the Internet)? Does the respondent have multiple options for providing the information? If so, what are they?

This information collection is a region-wide survey to be administered to the public in Forest Service Region 3. Region 3 is comprised of New Mexico, Arizona, and a few counties in Texas and Oklahoma. The anticipated usable sample size for this survey is 20,202. This sample will be randomly split by response mode. One group will receive a traditional mail survey utilizing a mail-back response and the other group will be offered the option of responding electronically using a web-based survey. If the web-based survey group does not exercise that option, they can respond via a mail-back survey.

The table below summarizes the anticipated responses from each survey and response mode:

Item	Type of Survey / Response Mode	Anticipated Number of Responses	Total Number of Responses Anticipated
Region-wide Survey (distributed to random sample of entire Region 3 general population)	Initial mail contact. Mail-back response.	10,101	20,202
	Initial mail contact. Option for web-based electronic response; otherwise mail-back response.	10,101	

This methodology will allow the Forest Service to make comparisons between the “mail-only” and “mail plus online” response options for the surveys. The methodology will help determine the validity of using online surveys for Forest Service planning and evaluate the use of online response option surveys for future Forest Service applications. Results of testing the responses to the first round of surveys indicated no statistically significant differences between the two response treatments. Those results indicate that an online response format does not attract an identifiably different group of respondents. At the same time, the option of an online response did not increase response rate as was anticipated. Those tests will be replicated in this second round of surveys to verify those initial findings.

The National Survey of Recreation and the Environment (NSRE) is related to the information collected here, but is not sufficient, to meet the needs of the Region 3 National Forests. The NSRE is a telephone-based National survey designed to collect general information about recreation behaviors and demographics. As a nationwide, random sample survey, a greater number of responses are collected from more highly populated areas than from less populated areas in Arizona and New Mexico.

As with other nationwide surveys using random sampling, the sample sizes are too small to allow statistically valid analysis and interpretation at the state level, let alone the sub-state levels at which national forest planners need information. Those applications (for which this proposed information collection was designed) require specific and detailed information about how individuals and groups in the public think about actual and potential uses of

National Forests and Grasslands at sub-state levels corresponding to areas adjacent to specific National Forests and Grasslands.

Though sampling is discussed in Part B Question 1, some information about sampling is helpful here for understanding who receives these different surveys and treatments. The region-wide survey will be administered to a stratified random sample of the public in the whole of Region 3. Within the region-wide survey, random samples will be drawn large enough for both the mail-back response treatment and the web-based electronic response option treatment. Those large samples will then be randomly split between the two response modes (mail-back and mail plus electronic response option). In that way, we will maximize the likelihood that the samples for the two response mode treatments are identical and ensure that no one receives more than one survey.

e. How frequently will the information be collected?

Over the life of this approval (3 years), the survey will be administered once to possible respondents.

f. Will the information be shared with any other organizations inside or outside USDA or the government?

Information collected with this survey will be analyzed and published in internal agency reports; Agency Publication Series; and in peer-reviewed scientific and management journals. Standard Forest Service procedures for review and approval of analyses and reports will be followed. Timeframes for publication are planned over a 1 – 4 year time span from the date of data collection. Copies of all survey project reports will be archived at the Rocky Mountain Research Station. Additionally, information pertaining to specific national forest/grassland plan revisions will be maintained in the project administrative record files associated with that national forest/grassland plan. The raw data will be maintained with all identifying information removed to ensure anonymity of respondents. Raw data will be in the public domain and available under the Freedom of Information Act.

g. If this is an ongoing collection, how have the collection requirements changed over time?

The collection requirements remain the same. The purpose of the collection is to update the data obtained in previous collections and monitor changes in attitudes toward and objectives for public land management.

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.

This survey effort has designed identical survey instruments. One is distributed using traditional mail back survey. The other is web-based. The sample contacted for the web-based survey is encouraged to respond online to the web-based survey. Those choosing not to respond online will be asked to respond to the survey as a mail back survey.

This procedure will allow us to test the willingness of the public to respond to a web-based survey and allow us to compare data collected in the web-based survey to data collected using a traditional mail back survey. It will also allow us to make cost comparisons between the two methodologies.

These findings will have implications for future surveys proposed by the Forest Service. Results and findings from these surveys will be reported to, and broadly distributed among, National Forest System planning staffs. Further, they will be incorporated into Forest Service training modules related to social analysis and decision-making.

A 50 percent response rate is expected for this survey.

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.

Searches of literature and consultations with peers were conducted. The results indicate, to the best of our knowledge, that no surveys are in existence that collect similar information at the scale needed by the Southwestern Region national forests. Additionally, no such surveys have been conducted in recent years.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities (Item 5 of OMB Form 83-I), describe any methods used to minimize burden.

This information collection will not affect small businesses or other small entities. The sample frame consists of individuals. Further, the voluntary nature of response to the survey will be made clear to everyone contacted.

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.

Consequences of not having the data for managerial planning are extensive. Substantial funds are commonly spent on public land management with only one source of information about the users—the assumptions of the project planners. Sometimes those assumptions are data based. In many instances, however, up-to-date data regarding forest visitors, potential visitors, and residents of communities near national forests/grasslands are not available for units of the National Forest System.

This data collection effort is designed to supply the desired information for forest planning, management, and budgeting decisions. Forest Plans can be revised, and projects and programs can be planned and designed, using rigorous and reliable information from the public's they are seeking to serve. Often, feedback to managers comes from a vocal few who represent their own interests, or the interests of a specific user group, to the exclusion of the interests of other, potentially conflicting uses.

Data collected with this survey will consist of a representative sample of the public at several levels, i.e., Southwestern Region wide, state wide, and from sub-state areas adjacent to each national forest and grassland in the Southwestern Region.

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;**
- **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 secret, 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.**

There are no special circumstances. The collection of information is conducted in a manner consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.6.

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 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 record keeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

Notice was published in the Federal Register on December 14, 2009 (vol. 74, no. 238, p. 66084) soliciting comments on the information collection. Eight comments were received in response to this notice. Copies of the notice and the comments are included in this package.

The comments received did not address cost or hour burden; they were generally supportive of the need and effort to collect information from the public in regards to their input to public land management. No specific actions were taken in response to the comments. The comments underscore the need for management agencies to seek information from all groups within the general population and not exclude any group.

Preliminary planning for the project that includes the current survey included presentations and discussions at various professional conferences and symposia, including the 2005 International Symposium on Society and Resource Management, among others. The primary focus at these professional meetings was the framework providing the conceptual foundation for this collaboration between social scientists and natural resource managers.

Open discussions among all participants occurred in which no documents or set questions were presented. In the course of those discussions, methodological issues related to the need for and the best ways to collect the types of information proposed here were raised and discussed among professional peers. In addition, the Forest Service social scientists and managers involved in this effort made contacts with several contractors and university cooperators with extensive experience and expertise in survey development, testing, implementation, evaluation, analysis, and reporting.

- Dr. Robert Berrens, University of New Mexico, rberrens@unm.edu
- Dr. Jennifer Thacher, University of New Mexico, jthacher@unm.edu
- Dr. Mark Brunson, Utah State University, mark.brunson@usu.edu
- Dr. Dale Blahna, Utah State University, blahna@cc.usu.edu
- Dr Gene Theodori, Texas A&M University, g-theodori@tamu.edu
- Ms. SuzAnne Miller, Dunrovin Research, dunrovin@bigsky.net

All the above-mentioned scientists provided input and feedback on various methodological issues. Dr. Berrens and Dr. Thacher, in particular, are serving as cooperators on the complete process of sample and survey design, implementation, analysis, and reporting. Dr. Deborah Shields, USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station, provided input on questionnaire design, including a select set of questions on values, objectives, beliefs and attitudes, which comprises a module of the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE). Dr. Richard Periman, USDA Forest Service, Southwestern Region, provided reviews on all phases of the survey design and sampling plan.

Further, statistical consulting and review related to design, sampling, and analysis is/has been available as needed from the Rocky Mountain Research Station, Statistical Support Group, as well as elsewhere in the Forest Service organization.

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.

Consultation was done with: Dr. Neal Christensen, Christensen Research, Missoula, MT, Dr. Kristine Grimsrud, University of New Mexico, and Mr. Alejandro Prera, University of New Mexico in the context of using data collected by the information collection and applying the data to management issues.

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

Respondents to the survey proposed here will not receive any gratuity for completing a questionnaire.

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 is reported only in tabulated form, as is the standard procedure for surveys of this type. Names and addresses are kept temporarily for the purpose of follow-up contact to improve response rates; upon completion of data collection, names and addresses will be deleted from all files.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or 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.

No sensitive questions are asked. The only potentially sensitive questions are in the demographics section. These include income, age, and other commonly asked demographic questions. Responses to these questions will be used only in categorizing people for the purpose of understanding and interpreting responses to other questions.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of

response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated.

- **Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in Item 13 of OMB Form 83-I.**

  a) Description of the collection activity

  b) Corresponding form number (if applicable)

  c) Number of respondents

  d) Number of responses annually per respondent,

  e) Total annual responses (columns c x d)

  f) Estimated hours per response

  g) Total annual burden hours (columns e x f)

Based on previous OMB review and changes to the survey instruments, only one survey instrument will be used instead of two as originally proposed. Other than this change, the survey methodology will remain the same. Based on the changes made under OMB instruction, the estimated time for completion of the survey is 20 minutes.

Although the complete survey estimates 20,202 total responses, in order to achieve this response rate, it is speculated that contact attempts will have to be made to more than 40,000 names.

The sampling plan for the region-wide effort calls for 10,000 completed questionnaires in the mail-back group and 10,000 completed questionnaires in the web-based electronic option group. The estimated time required to complete the questionnaire is 20 minutes per response. We plan to conduct brief telephone contacts with approximately 200 non-respondents as part of testing for non-response bias. Burden hours for those non-respondents' surveys will be less than 20 minutes, but we have included them in the region-wide survey groups. Hence, we estimate 6,734 burden hours to complete the questionnaire (20,202 total responses at 20 minutes each).

Table 12-1

(a) Description of the Collection Activity	(b) Form Number	(c) Number of Respondents	(d) Number of responses annually per Respondent	(e) Total annual responses (c x d)	(f) Estimate of Burden Hours per response	(g) Total Annual Burden Hours (e x f)
Region-wide survey	NA	20,202	1	20,202	0.333	6,734

(a) Description of the Collection Activity	(b) Form Number	(c) Number of Respondents	(d) Number of responses annually per Respondent	(e) Total annual responses (c x d)	(f) Estimate of Burden Hours per response	(g) Total Annual Burden Hours (e x f)
Totals	---	20,202	---	20,202	---	6,734

Record keeping burden should be addressed separately and should include columns for:

a) Description of record keeping activity: None
b) Number of record keepers: None
c) Annual hours per record keeper: None
d) Total annual record keeping hours (columns b x c): Zero

Table 12-2

(a) Description of record keeping activity	(b) Number of Record keepers	(c) Annual hours per record keeper	(d) Total annual record keeping hours (b x c)
No record keeping required			
Totals	zero	---	zero

- **Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories.**

Table 12-3

(a) Description of the Collection Activity	(b) Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents (Hours)	(c) Estimated Average Income per Hour	(d) Estimated Cost to Respondents
Region-wide survey	6,734	$19.88	$ 133,872
Totals	6,734	$19.88	$ 133,872

* Based on the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010 Statistical Abstract "Mean hourly earnings and weekly hours by selected characteristics" (www.census.gov/compendia/statab/cats/labor_force_employment_earnings.html)

13. Provide estimates of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information, (do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in items 12 and 14). The cost estimates should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component annualized over its expected useful life, and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component.

There are no capital, start-up, operation, or maintenance costs associated with this collection.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Provide a description of the method used to estimate cost and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

The response to this question covers the actual costs the agency will incur as a result of implementing the information collection. The estimate should cover the entire life cycle of the collection and include

costs, if applicable, for:

- **Employee labor and materials for developing, printing, storing forms**
- **Employee labor and materials for developing computer systems, screens, or reports to support the collection**
- **Employee travel costs**
- **Cost of contractor services or other reimbursements to individuals or organizations assisting in the collection of information**
- **Employee labor and materials for collecting the information**
- **Employee labor and materials for analyzing, evaluating, summarizing, and/or reporting on the collected information**

There are no additional fixed costs related to this request. The social scientists and managers involved are currently Forest Service employees. Efforts under this program are consistent with their ongoing assignments. The estimated total cost to government of those efforts is $186,319 for one year:

- 50 percent time for 1 GS-14 scientist,
- 25 percent time for 1 GS-14 scientist,
- 5 percent time for each of 13 GS-12 (average) forest level planners,
- 5 percent time for each of two GS-12 regional level planning staff.

Estimated annual travel costs associated with this project are $6,000.

Additional variable costs for this program are the costs of data collection, estimated to be $17 per respondent (which extrapolates up to a total $343,400 in total). That cost will come from the operating budgets of the Forest Service units involved. Funds for this effort are included among those already allocated for Forest Plan Revision in the Southwestern Region.

Total estimated annual cost to the Federal government is $535,719.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-1.

This submission is an extension and there are no changes in burden or responses.

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

Information collected with this survey will be analyzed and published in internal agency reports, Agency Publication Series, and in peer-reviewed scientific and management journals. Standard Forest Service procedures for review and approval of analyses and reports will be followed. Timeframes for publication are planned over a 1 – 4 year time span from the date of data collection.

Copies of all survey project reports will be archived at the Rocky Mountain Research Station. Additionally, information pertaining to specific national forest/grassland plan revisions will be maintained in the project administrative record files associated with that national forest/grassland plan.

Standard methods of analysis will be used as are common in the social science and economic literature. Such statistical methods as frequencies cross tabulation and contingency tables, regression, factor analysis, cluster analysis, and discriminate analysis will be used as appropriate to individual data items and groups of items.

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.

The expiration date will be displayed.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified on Form 83-I "Certification Requirement for Paperwork Reduction Act."

No exceptions to the certification statement are expected for surveys administered under this Request for Approval.