

A. SUPPORTING STATEMENT JUSTIFICATION FOR CONSUMER FOCUS GROUPS (1090-NEW)

A1. Circumstances Making Collection of Information Necessary:

The U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) is requesting approval for a new information collection related to the use of focus groups to pretest the Klamath Nonuse Valuation Survey it is developing. The 60 day notice published in the *Federal Register* on June 9, 2009 (74 FR 27340).

The Klamath River Basin provides essential habitat for several fish species including Chinook salmon, Coho salmon, steelhead trout, Pacific lamprey, and Shortnose suckers. Some of these species are important components of ocean and/or in-river harvest, while others are rarely harvested due to fishery regulations, limited availability, and/or listed status under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). In addition to its importance as fish habitat, the Klamath River and its tributaries also provides water to agriculture through the Bureau of Reclamation's Klamath Irrigation Project. Oversubscription of Klamath water has thwarted recovery of depressed fish stocks and led to economic hardship for farming and fishing communities – prompting federal disaster relief for farmers in 2001 and for fishermen in 2006.

In February 2010, the U.S. Government, the States of Oregon and California, the chairmen of the Klamath, Yurok and Karuk Tribes, and the utility company PacifiCorp signed the Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement (KBRA) and the Klamath Hydroelectric Settlement Agreement. These agreements define a set of activities, including the removal of four dams on the Klamath River by 2020, which are designed to restore fisheries and provide water supply certainty in the Basin. The Hydroelectric Settlement Agreement calls for the Secretary to determine whether dam removal will advance restoration of the salmonid fisheries of the Klamath Basin and is in the public interest.

The Secretary, acting through the Bureau of Reclamation has authority to undertake these

studies under both the Secure Water Act of 2009 March 30, 2009, 123 Stat. 991, and the Bureau of Reclamation's general planning authority pursuant to the Act of June 17, 1902, 32 Stat. 388. The conduct of these studies will be performed in accordance with all applicable legal requirements.

The Secretary of the Interior authorized development of the Klamath project on May 15, 1905, under provisions of the Reclamation Act of 1902 (32 Stat. 388). The Hydropower Settlement Agreement as well as the KBRA will impact the Klamath project operations.

Absent the agreements, the Department would be participating in a judicial process administered by FERC.

In October 2011 the Secretary of the Interior is expected to make a final determination regarding dam removal and the KBRA, contingent on results of an economic analysis that will address benefits, costs and distributional effects of dam removal. An interagency economics team consisting of representatives from DOI agencies including the Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Reclamation, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service is responsible for completing the economic analysis that will inform the Secretarial determination.

To comply with the Secretary's responsibilities, one important area of benefits that needs to be addressed as is "nonuse value." Nonuse values accrue to members of the public who value Klamath Basin improvements regardless of whether they ever consume Klamath fish or visit the Klamath Basin. To measure these values, DOI has contracted with RTI International in Research Triangle Park, NC, to design and implement a nonuse valuation survey of the U.S. public. A key aspect of the survey design process is to thoroughly pretest topics, materials, and questions to be addressed and used in the survey instrument, using focus groups and cognitive, one-on-one interviews (the cognitive interviews will be addressed in a later ICR). The main objectives of

these information collection activities are to ensure that the survey questions and scenarios are presented to respondents in a way that is accurate, easily understood and least burdensome, while at the same time collecting all of the necessary information for estimating nonuse values.

Because of the controversy over the agreement in the Klamath Basin, the survey text needs to be neutral and present all sides.

A2. How, By Whom, and Purpose Information Is To Be Used:

DOI has contracted with RTI International in Research Triangle Park, NC, to pretest the nonuse valuation survey by conducting 4 focus groups. DOI and RTI will use the results of these information collection activities to optimize the design of the survey instrument. The nonuse valuation survey will apply a stated preference conjoint analysis approach. In this approach, respondents are first presented with a choice context – in this case, the opportunity to vote on alternative plans for the future of the Klamath River Basin. The description of the choice context requires an explanation of current (i.e., baseline) conditions including ecological, water quality, and water availability conditions as they currently exist and of possible actions for improving habitat for fish and providing a more natural flow of the river, including dam removal and ecosystem restoration activities. Second, the survey describes the main dimensions (i.e., attributes) over which the different possible actions will vary, including the extent and timing of fish recovery and cost per household. Third, respondents are presented with a series of choice tasks where they are asked to compare and state their preferences for alternative actions, which vary in the previously described dimensions.

The focus groups will provide valuable information to address several key questions relating to the survey and, in particular, the conjoint design. First, can respondents fully understand and accept the choice context? If not, how could the information be expanded,

revised, reformatted, or reorganized to facilitate understanding of the context or to make the choice context more plausible for respondents. Second, what attributes (i.e., outcomes) of alternative KBRA actions matter most to respondents, and how well do these align with the attributes presented and varied in the conjoint task questions? Third, are the attributes of the alternative actions and the different levels of these attributes described and communicated to respondents in the most meaningful and understandable way? Fourth, which types and combinations of visuals – i.e., maps, graphs, and pictures – are most helpful to respondents for understanding the context and choice tasks? Fifth, to what extent do the answers to the previous questions depend on how far respondents live from the Klamath Basin? How can the survey materials be presented in a way that is meaningful for individuals from across the country who are likely to have very different levels of familiarity with and interest in the Klamath region and its river restoration issues?

Two of the focus groups will be conducted in or near the Klamath Basin – one in Southern Oregon (e.g., Medford or Klamath Falls) and one in Northern California (e.g., Yreka or Redding). The other two focus groups will be conducted in other parts of the country – one in Raleigh, NC, and the other in Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN. Because the survey is intended for the general population of adults in the U.S., the only screening criteria for the focus groups will be to exclude individuals younger than 21 years of age. Otherwise, individuals will be recruited to ensure that a broad mix of sociodemographic characteristics are represented, including sex, age, education, income, race, and rural/urban residence.

Each focus group will have an experienced moderator who will use a moderator guide to conduct the focus group. Each focus group participant will complete a focus group participant worksheet collecting basic demographic information and a consent form.

The focus groups will discuss the following general issues:

- What individuals perceive to be the most serious natural resource or environmental problems facing their regions and U.S. in general.
- Respondents' familiarity with and perceptions of the Klamath Basin and its water and fishery resources, including their uses of and perceived benefits from these resources.
- Respondents' perceptions of and reactions to the most serious water resource or environmental problems facing the Klamath River Basin.
- Individuals perceptions regarding the importance of restoring populations of anadromous fish and protecting threatened and endangered fish species.
- How individuals think about and consider plans that may provide increases in fish populations or habitat improvement, as well as impact other factors that individuals perceive as being important to the Basin.

A3. Use of Improved Information Technology:

To interpret the study findings, the focus groups will be audio- and videotaped. No electronic copies of the questions will be provided to the participants before the focus group meeting or the interviews.

A4. Efforts to Identify and Avoid Duplication:

Most of the issues to be addressed in the focus groups are unique and specific to issues surrounding the KBRA, and no existing data collection activities have specifically addressed the information needs of this study.

A5. Methods to Minimize Burden on Small Business Entities:

Only individuals will be contacted and participate in the focus groups and interviews.

A6. Consequences of Less Frequent Data Collection:

This is not a periodic data collection. If DOI did not collect this information from the public, the Agency would not have the best information for developing the Klamath Nonuse Valuation Survey.

A7. Circumstances That Would Cause the 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.

All information collection and recordkeeping activities in this submission are consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.6.

A8. Consultations with Persons outside the Agency

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, DOI published a 60-day notice requesting comments regarding this information collection request (74 FR 27340; June 9, 2009). The Agency received no comments.

In addition to input from RTI and its project team of consultants, including Dr. V. Kerry Smith of Arizona State University and Dr. John Duffield of the University of Montana, DOI has received feedback from an external expert review panel – Dr. Trudy Cameron (University of Oregon), Dr. Kevin Boyle (Virginia Tech University), and Dr. Wictor Adamovicz (University of Alberta) – regarding the overall survey plan, including the specific plans to conduct these focus groups. These experts will also review the survey instrument and final data collection plans.

A9. Payments to Respondents:

To encourage participation, each focus group participant will receive a cash honorarium of \$75 for participating, and each interview participant will receive a cash honorarium of \$30.

A10. Assurance of Confidentiality:

The confidentiality and anonymity of the focus group and interview participants will be protected by using an independent contractor to collect the information, by enacting procedures to prevent unauthorized access to respondent data, and by preventing the public disclosure of the

responses of individual participants. During the focus groups, only first names will be used. The focus group will be taped to help prepare a summary of the group discussion but these records will be destroyed within 4 weeks of the focus groups. The only record of the respondents' names will be the Participant Consent form and the receipt for their \$75 payment that will be signed by the participants. The receipts will be destroyed following submittal to RTI's accounting department for reimbursement.

A11. Questions of a Sensitive Nature:

Participants will not be asked any questions that are personal or sensitive in nature during the focus group discussions.

A12. Estimates of Respondent Burden:

The total annual burden associated with this information collection is 110 hours.

DOI estimates that 50 respondents who are recruited and screened will be eligible to participate in the 4 focus groups. Screening will take an average of 25 minutes (0.42 hours) per respondent for an annual total of 21 burden hours.

RECRUITING & SCREENING: ELIGIBLE RESPONDENTS

Type of Respondent	No. of Respondents	No. of Responses per Respondent	Total Annual Responses	Average Burden Hours per Response	Total Annual Hour Burden
Focus Group Participant	50	1	50	0.42	21

DOI estimates that 30 individuals who are asked to be screened to participate in the focus groups will decline to participate and it will take 17 minutes (0.28 hours) per response with an

annual total of 9 burden hours.

RECRUITING & SCREENING: NONRESPONDENTS

Type of Respondent	No. of Respondents	No. of Responses per Respondent	Total Annual Responses	Average Burden Hours per Response	Total Annual Hour Burden
Focus Group Nonrespondent	30	1	30	0.28	9

DOI estimates that 25 individuals who are recruited and screened will not be eligible to participate in the focus groups, and it will take 20 minutes (0.33 hours) per response with an annual total of 8 burden hours.

RECRUITING & SCREENING: INELIGIBLES

Type of Respondent	No. of Respondents	No. of Responses per Respondent	Total Annual Responses	Average Burden Hours per Response	Total Annual Hour Burden
Focus Group Ineligible	25	1	25	0.33	8

DOI estimates that 36 respondents will spend 2 hours participating in the focus groups, for an annual total of 72 burden hours.

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPATION

Type of Respondent	No. of Respondents	No. of Responses per Respondent	Total Annual Responses	Average Burden Hours per Response	Total Annual Hour Burden
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Focus Group Participant	36	1	36	2	72
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The Agency estimates that it will cost respondents \$27.17 per hour in loss of potential salary and benefits by participating in the focus groups. Respondents will spend an annual total of 110 hours worth \$2,989.¹

A13. Capital and Start-up Cost and Subsequent Maintenance:

There are no capital and start-up costs and subsequent maintenance burdens.

A14. Annual Cost to Federal Government:

The cost to the Federal Government for these information collection requirements is \$55,000. The costs arise from the time spent by the contractor designing and conducting the focus groups, and summarizing the results.

A15. Reasons For Changes in Burden:

There is a new information collection resulting in a program change.

A16. Tabulation, Analysis, And Publication Plans:

Once OMB approval is received, it will take 2 months to recruit individuals and conduct the 4 focus groups. The contractor RTI will provide DOI with a draft report of the focus group discussions within 14 days of the last interview and will provide a final report 7 days after DOI

¹ Based on an average hourly wage of \$19.41 multiplied by 1.4 to account for benefits. See *BLS Employer costs for Employee Compensation – December 2009*, March 10, 2010.

(<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecec.nr0.htm>).

provides comments on the draft report. No statistical analyses will be conducted and there are no plans to publish the data for statistical use.

A17. Display of Expiration Date for OMB Approval

DOI will display the OMB approval number on any instructions it publishes relating to recordkeeping activities.

A18. Exceptions to the Certification:

There are no exceptions to the certification. This information collection accords with the certification in item 19 of the OMB 83-I.