

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT  
HAWAIIAN MONK SEAL: PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE AND OPINION SURVEY  
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-XXXX**

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

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

This request is for a new information collection.

The purpose of this data collection is to research target audiences' knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviors regarding the endangered Hawaiian monk seal (*Monachus schauinslandi*) (subsequently referred to as monk seal). The surveys developed to assess these areas include questions on general knowledge about monk seals, personal behavior when encountering monk seals, opinions on management of human-seal interactions, and thoughts on educational outreach. The data will be used to develop an education and outreach plan aimed at minimizing negative human-seal interactions. It will also be used, in conjunction with other information, to develop and assess management strategies for dealing with human-seal interactions. Target audiences for this survey include those members of the public likely to encounter monk seals in the wild. Target audiences include but are not limited to fishers, surfers, beach goers, divers, operators and patrons of commercial water sports tours, and hotel managers or owners operating in areas of high monk seal activity. The information gathered by this survey is critical because as the human population of the main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) increases, the probability of human-seal interactions may also increase.

Over the last 50 years, the Hawaiian monk seal population has declined by more than 60%. The monk seal population is currently declining at a rate of 4% annually and is estimated at fewer than 1,200 individuals. Survival rates of monk seal pups have dropped from 80-90% in the 1970s to lower than 15% today.

The Hawaiian monk seal was listed as an endangered species pursuant to the Endangered Species Act (ESA) on November 23, 1976 (41 FR 51611). Monk seals are also protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Hawaii State laws. The United States (U.S.) Fish and Wildlife Service has assigned the monk seal a recovery priority number of one (high), based on the high magnitude of threats, the high recovery potential, and the potential for economic conflicts while implementing recovery actions.

Section 4(f) of the ESA directs the responsible agency, in this case the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), to develop and implement a recovery plan for endangered species. The most recent Recovery Plan for the Hawaiian Monk Seal (2007) includes a number of actions focused on education and outreach. This information collection will facilitate effective implementation of those actions.

Human-seal interactions can have negative results for both the human and the seal. Some of the main threats to seals directly related to human activity are: entanglement in fishing nets and other marine debris; fishing hooks becoming lodged in their mouths or throats; and general disturbance by people. Monk seals are very sensitive to human contact. They have been known to avoid

beaches for breeding where people have disturbed them. While it is uncommon, a few human-seal encounters have resulted in humans being injured.

In order to effectively develop education and outreach campaigns aimed at minimizing harmful human interactions with monk seals in the wild, NFMS recognizes that more information is needed about people's knowledge and opinions regarding monk seals and current management strategies. An effective way to collect this information is by directly asking user groups and target audiences about their knowledge and opinions and how that information was acquired. This can be accomplished through surveys administered in locations where these groups work or recreate. This project will assist NFMS in gathering information about the target audiences, measuring the effectiveness of existing outreach strategies, and determining more effective management and outreach strategies to minimize negative human-seal interactions.

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

The collection effort consists of five separate surveys: 1) survey for individuals: tourists, and local residents, including fisher people, 2) short survey for fishermen, 3) short survey for all other individuals, 4) survey for commercial tour boat operators and 5) survey for lodging operators.

Surveys will be administered to both tourists and local residents on five of the MHI: Hawai'i, O'ahu, Maui, Moloka'i and Kaua'i. The questions on each survey are similar in nature but directed at different target audiences and will be administered in different ways. Three surveys will be administered to individuals using the intercept method. Intercept surveys will be conducted at beaches and popular fishing areas near known monk seal haul out, pupping, and molting locations, at marinas and local fishing tournaments. Potential respondents will be asked if they are willing to complete the survey in writing, which consists of 62 questions. If they decline, they will be asked if they are willing to take a couple of minutes to answer "just a few questions" about monk seals. If the potential respondent agrees, they will be asked one qualifying question to determine if they fish regularly in Hawai'i. Based on the response to that question, one of the two short surveys will be administered in a one-on-one interview. The short versions of the survey consist of approximately 20 questions drawn from the longer version. One of the short versions of the survey is intended to capture the knowledge and opinions of fisher people, an important target audience. The other short version will be administered to all other participants. Two other versions of the survey will be distributed by mail to commercial tour boat operators and lodging operators in areas of known monk seal activity. The surveys for the commercial boat and lodging operators are essentially the same survey, with some very minor wording changes specific to each industry.

The intercept surveys will be administered to randomly chosen people, both tourists and local residents. Surveys will be conducted at different locations at different times of the day and on different days of the week to ensure a variety of respondents are captured. Surveys will be conducted at several areas on each of the five islands. The locations will be chosen in coordination with the NMFS monk seal recovery team, based on the amount of monk seal activity and locations of frequent human-seal interactions.

The mail surveys will be administered to randomly chosen members of two specific groups. Captains of boats conducting commercial sightseeing, fishing, diving and other water sport tours that leave from the main harbors on five of the MHI will be randomly selected for participation. The harbors chosen are Honokohau (Hawai'i), Ala Moana (O'ahu), Waianae (O'ahu), Lahaina (Maui), Maalaea (Maui), Kaunakakai (Moloka'i), Port Allen (Kaua'i) and Nawiliwili (Kaua'i). Lodging operators located in areas of known monk seal activity on five of the MHI will be randomly chosen for participation and will receive a survey that is nearly identical to the one for commercial boat operators except for some minor wording adjustments. Surveys administered to commercial tour operators and lodging operators are aimed at determining the knowledge and opinions of the operators, as well as the amount and type of information they are conveying to clients.

In order to obtain a high response rate, a number of different techniques will be used, including short survey length, visually appealing questionnaires, providing a pre-addressed stamped envelope and follow-up with people who have not responded. These methods are described in more detail in Part B, Question 3.

The information collected will be used to develop an education and outreach plan aimed at minimizing negative human-seal interactions and to develop and assess management strategies for dealing with human-seal interactions. Survey results will help determine target groups for education and outreach, which activities education and outreach should focus on, the content of the education and outreach messages, and new or suggested changes to management strategies.

### **Justifications for questions on each survey follow.**

#### **Survey for Individuals (Intercept Method)**

Q1-3: Identifies if the respondents have ever seen a monk seal in the wild (Q1) and if so how many times in the past five years (Q2) and in what setting (Q3). This question is aimed at determining any experience that the respondent has with monk seals in the wild and helps provide baseline information about the level of human-seal interaction.

Q4: Asks the respondents to identify their level of knowledge of Hawaiian monk seals. This question is aimed at determining how much knowledge respondents have about monk seals and helps provide baseline information for analysis of other questions.

Q5: Asks the respondents if they think monk seals are native to the Hawaiian Islands. This question is being asked because some people in Hawai'i have stated that they believe monk seals are not native to the Hawaiian Islands. The results will be used to determine if this information should be included in educational and outreach messages.

Q6: Asks the respondents if they believe the population of monk seals is increasing or decreasing over the past twenty years. This question is being asked to determine what proportion of respondents realizes that the species is in decline.

Q7-8: Identifies if, prior to this survey, respondents were aware of any of the legal protection in place for the Hawaiian monk seal (Q7) and at what level they believe the monk seal is protected

under current regulations (Q8). Responses will be used to direct educational and outreach messages.

Q9: Asks the respondents if they agree or disagree with the following statement: *Protection of the Hawaiian monk seal is NOT very important because there are many types of seals throughout the world.* This question helps identify at what level respondents are concerned with the protection of this individual species.

Q10: Asks the respondents if they agree or disagree with the following statement: *I believe that in general Hawai'i's native marine life is declining.* This question helps identify respondents level of knowledge and perception about the status of Hawai'i's native marine life in order to contextualize the questions about the status of monk seals, a specific native marine mammal that is declining.

Q11-13: This series of questions asks: if respondents are familiar with the ESA (Q11), if they were aware of the possible penalties (Q12) and if violations are regularly enforced (Q13). This series of questions is intended to identify respondents' knowledge specifically about existing protections and associated violations and penalties. Responses will be used to direct educational and outreach messages.

Q14: Asks the respondents to identify which types of behavior they believe constitute harassment of monk seals. This question is intended to gauge the level of knowledge about this issue. Responses will be used to direct education and outreach messages.

Q15-17: This series of questions is aimed at capturing the respondents' opinion on human-seal interactions. Identify if the respondent knows it is illegal to harass monk seals (Q15). Identify if the respondent believes interaction with monk seals in the water is dangerous (Q16). Identify if the respondent believes that it is dangerous for people to approach monk seals on land (Q17). Responses will be used to direct education and outreach messages.

Q18-19: These questions ask: if the respondent would be likely to report a monk seal sighting (Q18) and if they know who to report it to (Q19). Responses will be used to direct education and outreach messages.

Q20: Asks respondents' opinion on if dog-seal interactions are dangerous. Responses will be used to direct education and outreach messages.

Q21-22: These questions are aimed at identifying the respondents' potential behaviors when encountering monk seals in the wild. Respondents are asked what they think they would do if they encountered a monk seal in the water (Q21) and what they think they would do if they encountered a live monk seal tangled in a net (Q22). Responses will be used to direct education and outreach messages.

Q23-Q30: This series of questions is directed at people who fish regularly. Respondents are asked if they or any members of their household regularly engage in fishing (Q23). If the answer is "no", they are directed to skip these questions and continue to Q31. This series of questions is

intended to gauge the attitudes and opinions of fisher people so the result may be used to direct educational and outreach messages to that specific target audience.

Q24: The respondents are asked the reasons why they or members of their household engage in fishing. This question helps provide baseline information for analysis of the other questions in the survey.

Q25-Q26: The respondents are asked if they believe that if monk seals are present in an area where they are fishing, less fish are caught (Q25) and if they feel that if the number of monk seals increases, they would catch less fish (Q26). These two questions are directed at gauging fisher people's beliefs about resource competition between monk seals and fisher people.

Q27-Q29: The respondents are asked how they would likely respond if they were fishing and a monk seal became hooked on the line (Q27), if they would be willing to use hooks without barbs (Q28) and if they believe using hooks without barbs would affect fish catch (Q29). Responses will help identify some of the actions fisher people are willing to take to protect monk seals as correlated with potential impacts on their catches. Responses will be used to evaluate if the current outreach campaigns have been successful and to direct education and outreach messages.

Q30-Q32: The respondents are asked if they would be willing to obtain a yearly license for marine recreational fishing (Q30). Currently a fishing license is not required for recreational salt water fishing in state waters. Q30 is directed at people who fish regularly. The respondents are asked if they believe it is necessary to regulate recreational line fishing in the MHI to reduce or prevent monk seals from becoming hooked (Q31). They are asked if they would support or oppose a restriction requiring lay gill nets\* in the MHI to be attended at all times (Q32). This series of questions is directed at gauging opinions on regulation of fishing as it relates to protection of monk seals.

Q33-36: Asks the respondents if certain human activities should be prohibited in the presence of monk seals (Q33) and if so, to identify which ones (Q34). Asks the respondents if they agree with the current policy of closing a portion of the beach surrounding monk seals when they are present (Q35). Asks the respondents if they think closing small sections of beach to human activity during the height of birthing season in areas that are heavily used by mother monk seals for birthing is appropriate (Q36). This series of questions is directed at identifying opinions on restricting human activity around monk seals. Responses will be used to direct education and outreach messages and inform management strategies.

Q37: Asks the respondents if they would consider it a hardship if small areas of beaches they frequent were blocked off from human activity during periods of the monk seal birthing season. This question is directed at determining if attitudes about restricting human activity change when the respondent knows they would be directly affected. Responses will be used to direct education and outreach messages and inform management strategies.

\*Lay gill nets are fishing nets that are set in one location and are usually not actively attended. In Hawai'i lay gill nets can only be left in place for four hours total and may not be left unattended for more than 30 minutes at a time.

Q38: Asks the respondents to identify which outreach tool(s) provided any knowledge they have about what to do when encountering monk seals. An extensive list is provided to help respondent recall. Responses to this question will help determine which tools have been particularly effective in providing the desired outreach message(s).

Q39-41: Asks the respondents to provide their personal opinions on the effectiveness of various educations and outreach methods. The respondent is asked to rate each of the 11 general outreach tools as “not at all effective”, “somewhat effective”, or “very effective” (Q39). A “not sure” category is also provided. Common methods of outreach (e.g., brochures, signs) are provided as well as innovative techniques, such as using social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter). These innovative techniques were included because although they are relatively new, they have the potential to reach a large number of people for little to no cost. The respondents are asked to rate how likely they are to read informational signs or pamphlets placed in each of nine different locations (Q40). They are given a choice to rate each location as “not at all likely”, “somewhat likely”, or “very likely”. A “doesn’t apply to me” category is also provided. The respondent is provided an opportunity to suggest any other methods to inform and educate people on monk seal conservation (Q41). This series of questions is directed at determining the most effective methods of implementing education and outreach.

Q42: Two representative signs are displayed. The respondents are asked if either of the two signs placed near a monk seal would convince them not to disturb the seal. If they answer “yes” or “not sure”, they are asked to identify which sign would work best, or which sign they prefer. They are also given the choice to reply that both signs would be equally effective. Responses will be used to direct education and outreach.

Q43-45: Asks the respondents if they would be likely to participate in volunteer activities that may benefit monk seals. Responses will be used to make decisions on the promotion of volunteer opportunities, and possible development of new ones.

Q46- 62: Demographic questions that will be used to help make general conclusions about the survey participants.

Q46: This question is to determine if the respondent is a full-time or part-year resident of the Hawai‘i, or a first-time or repeat visitor to the area.

Q47-51: To aid in categorizing their visits, respondents are asked: the length of the visit (Q 47), the reason for the trip (Q 48) and the type of lodging they stayed in during their visit (Q 49), the number of people they are traveling with (Q 50) how many times they have visited Hawai‘i (Q 51).

Q52-54: Asks the respondents a series of questions to gain information on what type of water activities they will or may engage in while in Hawai‘i. Responses will assist in identifying potential target audiences and avenues for distributing education and outreach messages.

Q55: Asks the respondents to identify memberships in recreation-based or conservation-based organizations. Responses may help identify the potential for other avenues for distributing education and outreach messages.

Q56: Respondents who are year-round or part-year residents are asked whether they own a boat or jet-skis. Those who take out their own vessels on a regular basis and do not know about safe practices, may engage in behavior harmful to monk seals, suggesting the importance of targeting outreach activities for this group.

Q57-61: Demographic and socioeconomic questions. The questions were written to mirror those of the U.S. Census to the highest extent possible. The demographic and socioeconomic information collections include: zip code/country of residence (Q 57), sex (Q 58), race (Q59), ethnicity (60), employment status (Q 61) and level of education (Q 62).

The respondent is thanked for taking the time to participate and given space to provide any additional comments.

### **Short Interview Survey for Individuals and Fisher People (Intercept Method)**

All of the questions included in the two short versions of the survey were drawn from the survey for individuals described above. The questions for the short survey for individuals were selected from each topic area; general knowledge about monk seals, personal behavior when encountering monk seals, opinions on management of human-seal interactions, thoughts on educational outreach and demographic information. The questions for the short survey for fisher people were also selected from each of those topic areas, but the survey includes all of the questions related to fishing from the survey for individuals (long version). The justifications for the questions are as described above.

### **Survey for Commercial Tour and Lodging Operators (Distributed by Mail)**

Q1-3: Identifies if clients have reported observing monk seal in the wild (Q1) and if so how many times in the past year (Q2) and in what setting (Q3). This question is aimed at determining any experience that the respondent has with monk seals in the wild and helps provide baseline information about the level of human-seal interaction.

Q4: Asks if operators make a point of locating monk seals for clients to view. This question is directed at determining if owner/operators directly seek out monk seals for clients. Responses will be used to provide baseline information about the potential visibility of monk seals as directed by commercial operators and information on how to direct educational and outreach messages.

Q5- 6: Asks the respondents if they discuss information about monk seals with their clients (Q5) and to identify their level of knowledge of Hawaiian monk seals (Q6). These questions are aimed at determining how much knowledge operators have about monk seals and if they are disseminating that to their clients. Responses will help provide baseline information for analysis of other questions.

Q7: Asks the respondents if they think monk seals are native to the Hawaiian Islands. This question is being asked because some people in Hawai'i have stated that they believe monk seals are not native to the Hawaiian Islands. The results will be used to determine if this information should be included in any educational and outreach messages.

Q8: Asks the respondents if they believe the population of monk seals is increasing or decreasing over the past twenty years. This question is being asked to determine what proportion of respondents realize that the species is in decline.

Q9-10: Identifies if, prior to this survey, the respondents were aware of any of the legal protection in place for the Hawaiian monk seal (Q9) and at what level they believe the monk seal is protected under current regulations (Q10). Responses will be used to direct educational and outreach messages.

Q11: Asks the respondents if they agree or disagree with the following statement: *Protection of the Hawaiian monk seal is NOT very important because there are many types of seals throughout the world.* This question helps identify at what level respondent is concerned with the protection of this individual species.

Q12: Asks the respondent if they agree or disagree with the following statement: *I believe that in general Hawai'i's native marine life is declining.* This question helps identify the respondent's level of knowledge and perception about the status of Hawai'i's native marine life in order to contextualize the questions about the status of monk seals, a specific native marine mammal that is declining.

Q13-15: This series of questions asks: if the respondents are familiar with the ESA (Q13), if they were aware of the possible penalties (Q14) and if violations are regularly enforced (Q15). This series of questions is intended to identify respondent knowledge specifically about existing protections and associated violations and penalties. Responses will be used to direct educational and outreach messages.

Q16: Asks the respondents to identify which types of behavior they believe constitute harassment of wildlife. This question is intended to gauge the level of knowledge about this issue. Responses will be used to direct education and outreach messages.

Q17-19: This series of questions is aimed at capturing the respondents' opinion on human-seal interactions: to determine whether the respondent has knowledge about the potential legality of harassment of monk seals (Q17), determine if the respondent believes interaction with monk seals in the water is dangerous (Q18), determine if the respondent believes that it is dangerous for people to approach monk seals on land (Q19). Responses will be used to help determine if the current outreach campaigns have been successful and to direct education and outreach messages.

Q20-21: These questions ask if the respondent would be likely to report a monk seal sighting (Q20) and if they know whom to report it to (Q21). Responses will help determine if the current outreach campaigns have been successful.

Q22-24: The respondent is asked if clients on their tours ever encounter monk seals while doing activities in the water (Q22). The respondent is asked if clients do encounter monk seals in the water, how often it happens (Q23). The respondent is asked if he/she gives clients any instruction on what to do if they encounter monk seals either in the water or on the beach (Q24). This series of questions is aimed at providing baseline information about the amount of interaction between tour clients and monk seals and the degree to which they are informed by tour operators. Responses will be used to direct educational and outreach messages.

Q25: Respondents are asked what they would suggest if a client reported encountering a live monk seal tangled in a net (Q25). Responses will be used to help identify if the current outreach campaigns have been successful and to direct education and outreach messages.

Q26: Respondents are asked if clients engage in fishing. This question is aimed at providing baseline information about the clients of the commercial operator. Results will be used to direct educational and outreach messages.

Q27-Q28: Respondents are asked if they believe that if monk seals are present in an area where clients are fishing, less fish are caught (Q27) and if they feel that if the number of monk seals increases, clients would catch less fish (Q28). These two questions are directed at gauging fisher people's beliefs about resource competition between monk seals and fisher people.

Q29-Q31: Respondents are asked how they would likely respond if clients were fishing and a monk seal became hooked on the line (Q29). Respondents are asked if they would be willing to provide hooks without barbs to clients (Q30) and if they believe using hooks without barbs would affect fish catch (Q31). Responses will help identify some of the actions people are willing to take to protect monk seals as correlated with potential impacts on their catches. Responses will be used to evaluate if the current outreach campaigns have been successful and to direct education and outreach messages.

Q32: The respondent is asked if they believe it is necessary to regulate recreational line fishing in the MHI to reduce or prevent monk seals from becoming hooked (Q32). This question is directed at gauging opinions on regulation of fishing as it relates to protection of monk seals.

Q33-36: Asks the respondents if certain human activities should be prohibited in the presence of monk seals (Q33) and if so, to identify which ones (Q34). Asks the respondents if they agree with the current policy of closing a portion of the beach surrounding monk seals when they are present (Q35). Asks the respondents if they think closing small sections of beach to human activity during the height of birthing season in areas that are heavily used by mother monk seals for birthing is appropriate (Q36). This series of questions is directed at identifying opinions on restricting human activity around monk seals. Responses will be used to direct education and outreach messages and inform management strategies.

Q37: Asks the respondents if they would consider it a hardship if small areas of beaches they frequent were blocked off from human activity during periods of the monk seal birthing season. This question is directed at determining if attitudes about restricting human activity change when the respondent knows they would be directly affected. Responses will be used to direct education and outreach messages and inform management strategies.

Q38: Asks the respondents to identify which outreach tool(s) provided any knowledge they have about what to do when encountering monk seals. An extensive list is provided to help respondent recall. This will help determine if a specific tool has been particularly effective in providing the desired outreach message(s).

Q39-40: Asks the respondent to provide their personal opinion on the effectiveness of various outreach methods for conveying monk seal conservation issues to clients. The respondent is

asked to rate each of the five outreach tools as “not at all effective”, “somewhat effective”, or “very effective” (Q39). A “not sure” category is also provided. Common methods of outreach (e.g., brochures, signs) are provided to rank their effectiveness, as well as innovative techniques, such as using social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter). These innovative techniques were included because although they are relatively new, they have the potential to reach a large number of people for little to no cost. The respondent is provided an opportunity to suggest any other methods to inform and educate people on monk seal conservation (Q40). This series of questions is directed at determining the most effective methods of implementing education and outreach.

Q41: Two representative signs are displayed. The respondent is asked if either of the two signs placed near a monk seal would be likely to convince clients not to disturb the seal. If the respondents answer “yes” or “not sure”, they are asked to identify which sign would work best, or which sign they prefer. Respondent is also given the choice to reply that both signs would be equally effective. Responses will be used to direct education and outreach.

Q42: This question is intended to determine if the respondent would be likely to display educational materials. Responses will be used to make decisions on the development and promotion of educational materials.

Q43: This question is intended to determine if the respondent would be likely to participate in educational workshops. Responses will be used to make decisions on the development and promotion of educational opportunities.

Q44: Asks the respondents their level of interest in participating in volunteer activities that may benefit monk seals. Responses will be used to make decisions on the promotion and expansion of existing volunteer opportunities, and possible development of new ones.

Q45- 47: Demographic questions that will be used to help make general conclusions about the survey participants and their clients. Only a few demographic questions are included as these surveys are aimed at identifying what information commercial tour and lodging operators may be conveying to clients.

Q45: This question is to determine if the majority of clients of the respondent are a full-time or part-year resident of Hawai‘i, or if they are visitors.

Q46: The respondent is asked this question to gain information on what type of water activities clients engage in while in Hawai‘i. Responses will be used to identify the potential target audiences and avenues for distributing education and outreach messages.

Q47: Asks the respondent their highest level of education.

Respondent is thanked for taking the time to participate and given space to provide any additional comments.

It is anticipated that the information collected will be used to support publically disseminated information. The results of the collection will be made available to the public in statistical aggregate form, upon request. All personally identifying data will be protected and will not be released to the public. NMFS will retain control over the information and safeguard it from

improper access, modification and destruction, consistent with NOAA standards for confidentiality, privacy, and electronic information. See the response to Question 10 for additional information about confidentiality. This information collection is designed to meet all applicable information quality guidelines. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures and a pre-disseminated review pursuant to Section 515 of Public Law 106-554.

**3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological techniques or other forms of information technology.**

This collection effort will use a minimum amount of information technology. Surveys will be distributed by mail or in-person. The survey will not be available on the internet. Responses will be collected either in-person or by mail, fax and email. Follow-up for s will be done via mail.

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.**

This survey collection is the first one through NMFS to gather information on people's knowledge and opinions about monk seals. An extensive literature search and inquiries with other agencies was completed in order to identify any duplication of this effort; none were found. This information is not available through other means.

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

This survey will have a negligible impact to small businesses. The survey targets user groups who may potentially come in contact with monk seals in the wild, as well as operators of businesses that may convey information about monk seals to the target user groups. The administration of the survey to operators of businesses will be conducted via mail and participants will be able to complete the survey at their convenience. The survey is estimated to take 15 - 20 minutes to complete and return. Participants returning the survey by mail will be provided pre-addressed stamped envelopes. The survey requires a one-time completion.

**6. Describe the consequences to the Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.**

If the information collection is not conducted through this survey, NMFS' ability to develop more effective education and outreach tools targeting appropriate users groups will be reduced. This effort supports the *Recovery Plan for the Hawaiian Monk Seal* (2007) by contributing to the development of education and outreach tools and the development and assessment of management strategies that are an integral part of the plan actions.

**7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.**

Not applicable.

**8. Provide information on the PRA Federal Register Notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to that notice and describe the actions taken by the agency in response to those comments. Describe the 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.**

A Federal Register Notice soliciting public comments was published on January 26, 2010 (75 FR 4042). During the public comment period, one set of comments was received from Western Pacific Regional Management Council. The comments were considered carefully and the majority have been incorporated into the survey instrument and methodology. The comments and corresponding responses are detailed in Table 1.

**Table 1: Summary of Comments and Responses**

| <b><u>Comment</u></b>  | <b><u>Response</u></b>  |
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| <p><b>I. Survey Instrument does not Adequately Assess Public Attitudes about Hawaiian Monk Seals</b></p> <p>This comment stated that the current draft of the survey instrument includes a variety of questions regarding the respondents’ knowledge, experience, and behavioral intentions, as well as some questions regarding the respondents’ beliefs toward monk seals. However, the survey does not adequately assess respondent attitudes toward monk seals, and thus the results will lack practical utility in developing an outreach plan and future management strategies.</p>  | <p>Both relevant literature and researchers continue to be consulted on the content and methodology of administering the survey instrument. The changes made to the survey instrument should address the concerns expressed in this comment.</p>  |
| <p><b>II. Survey Methodology does not Allow Representative Sampling of the Target Audience</b></p> <p>This comment stated that the proposed method of data collection appears to target the tourism industry and visitors more broadly than local residents and fishers. Such an approach would be appropriate if the survey is conducted solely for the purpose of informing an education and outreach plan, but is not appropriate if results from the survey are to be used to inform future management strategies. If survey results are to inform management strategies, then the survey should attempt to obtain a representative sample of Hawaii residents instead of focusing on those who are likely to interact with monk seals to improve the practical utility of the survey results.</p> | <p>Intercept surveys are intended to capture both local residents and tourists. The number of surveys conducted at area beaches and other shore areas will likely account for the highest proportion of intercept surveys. The majority of locations where intercept surveys will be conducted are areas not frequented by tourists. The agency is confident that the selected locations will allow a significant number of local residents to be surveyed.</p> <p>The main intent of gathering the information is not to inform future management strategies but rather to develop education and outreach campaigns. However, the information will be available to be utilized in conjunction other knowledge to aid in the development and assessment of management strategies regarding human-seal interactions.</p> <p>Because the main goal of the information collection is to develop education and outreach tools, this collection is focused on identifying prevalent attitudes and opinions that may shape behaviors. Descriptive statistics will be used to quantitatively summarize the data collected, but the results will not be used to provide inferences about the entire population within a certain confidence level. For example, the information collection is not intended</p> |

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|  | <p>to give the ability to draw a conclusion that 95% of all recreational fishers have a certain opinion, but rather to determine what the prevalent opinions among recreational fishers are.</p>  |
| <p><b>III. Scope of the Survey Does Not Adequately Address a Major Concern in Human-Seal Interactions</b></p> <p>This comment addressed fisher people’s interactions with monk seals. The comment recommended including a few more questions related to interactions between fisher people and monk seals, specifically to assess attitudes on resource competition.</p>   | <p>Two questions regarding resource competition have been added to the survey. A few other questions related to fisher people’s interactions with monk seals have been modified to address this valid concern.</p>  |
| <p><b>IV. Current Survey Design and Methodology Create Large Response Burdens and Negatively Impacts Response Rates</b></p> <p>This comment addressed the anticipated response rate and the length of the survey instrument. The comment expressed concern that an 80% response rate would be difficult to obtain due to the length of the survey, the format, and asking the other people accompanying potential respondents to wait while one person completes the survey.</p> | <p>The 80% response rate is expected based on using the Dillman Tailored Design Method (2009) for mailing surveys as well as several techniques that will be used for conducting the intercept survey. All of these techniques have been shown to improve response rates for surveys.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Surveys will be available for return by mail, but administrators will spend enough time at each location for respondents to complete the survey at their leisure and return it.</li> <li>2) The draft survey does not represent the final layout. The final layout will be in booklet form and the questions presented in a more user friendly format.</li> <li>3) The current version of the survey has taken test subjects 10 – 15 minutes to complete. This is well within the acceptable limit that is discussed in the literature for obtaining a high response rate.</li> <li>4) The method used for intercept surveys allows the potential respondent to decline. If the potential respondent declines they will be asked if they are willing to take a couple of minutes to answer “just a few questions”. If the respondent agrees the questions will be administered in a one on one interview. The approximately 20 questions, taken directly from the more detailed survey, took respondents approximately three to four minutes to answer in a test interview. In order to capture opinions of different target populations when using the shorter surveys, the respondent will be asked if they fish regularly in Hawai‘i. If the respondent is a fisher person, they will be asked one set of questions from the more detailed survey. If they do not fish regularly they will be asked another set of questions from the more detailed survey.</li> </ol> <p>The majority of respondents will have time to complete the survey without creating an inconvenience to others in their party. Respondents intercepted at beach and shore areas will have an opportunity to go to their location, complete the survey, and return it to the administrator when they are finished. Most of the areas where surveys will be conducted are small enough that the administrator can go and collect any unreturned surveys before departing the area. At fishing</p> |

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|   | tournaments, where intercept surveys will also be conducted, there is a period of time between when the allotted time for fishing ends and the winners and various prizes are announced. This period of time will be utilized to administer surveys to a group of respondents that can complete them all at the same time.     |
| <p><b>V. Survey does not Follow Commonly Accepted Standards of Social Science Questionnaire Design</b></p> <p>This comment recommended a number of ways to improve response rates and reduce response burden.</p>                                   | The detailed comments on the survey instrument were quite helpful in addressing a number of the concerns listed. The vast majority of the detailed comments have been incorporated into the survey instrument as suggested.  |
| <p><b>VI. Conclusion</b></p> <p>This comment recommended improving the survey methodology and design as suggested to: enhance the quality of data, reduce response burden and increase the practical utility of the information to be gathered.</p> | The thorough review of the survey instrument and methods of collection is appreciated. Gathering information from a number of different target audiences is challenging while trying to keep the length manageable. The vast majority of the detailed comments have been incorporated into the survey instrument as suggested. |
| Appendix 1 contained suggestions for changes to be made to specific questions.  | All suggested changes were valuable and all except two have been incorporated into the survey instrument.  |
| Appendix 2 was a copy of the draft survey with various small changes made throughout using track changes.   | Nearly all of the suggested changes were valuable and have been incorporated into the survey instrument.   |

**9. Explain any decisions to provide payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.**

No payments or gifts will be given to respondents.

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

All data will be protected and will not be released for public use except in aggregate statistical form (and without providing and personally identifying characteristics). In the cover letter accompanying each mailing, respondents will be told that their name and address information will be kept separate from their responses and that only their responses will be listed in any reports compiled. In addition, because individuals that are contacted using the intercept method will not be receiving a cover letter, the initial page of the survey will contain the following statement:

*Your participation in this survey is voluntary. Any material that might identify you will be destroyed at the end of the study.*

Following the completion of the data collection, any information identifying individuals (e.g., name and addresses) will be deleted and not included in any reports or data files.

**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.**

No questions of a sensitive nature are asked in either survey.

**12. Provide an estimate in hours of the burden of the collection of information.**

The estimated total number of respondents for this survey is approximately 500. Respondents will number approximately 420 (out of 525 approached) from the intercept method used to survey individuals in person and approximately 80 (out of 100 approached) from the mail surveys sent to commercial tour and lodging operators.

The estimated burden for the one-time response is 20 minutes per respondent, which accounts for the respondent's time to answer and submit the survey (it is estimated that it will take the respondent 10-15 minutes to complete the survey and another 5 to mail it in the provided pre-addressed stamped envelope or return it in person to the administrator). This estimate would generate a maximum total of 167 hours for this collection, if all participants complete the long versions of the survey. The collection will take place over a period of nine weeks.

**13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection (excluding the value of the burden hours in Question 12 above).**

No additional cost burden will be imposed on respondents aside from the burden hours indicated in the response to Question 12.

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

Annual cost to the Federal government is approximately \$95,094: \$94,374 in contract award money and \$720 in NMFS staff time. Contractor services include survey creation, implementation and analysis.

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

This is a new collection.

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

The information gained through the surveys will be used internally by NMFS personnel. Results from this survey will primarily be used in the development of education and outreach plans aimed at minimizing negative human-seal interactions as well as the development of management strategies for dealing with human-seal interactions. Results of the data collected in the survey will be tabulated and presented in a summary form report using descriptive statistics (means, variances and frequencies) to NMFS employees. The report is not expected to receive outside peer review however, internal reviews will be done. It is not anticipated that results will be published or used for anything other than internal reports or to inform management decisions, however, the results will be made available to the public in statistical aggregate form, upon request.

**17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons why display would be inappropriate.**

Not applicable.

**18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.**

Not applicable.