The Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). We will be conducting usability tests on the TIGERweb web site http://tigerweb.geo.census.gov/tigerweb/default.htm to identify issues that are problematic and frustrating to the user. TIGERweb is a free online tool that allows users to find, customize and download Census geographic information. It is available to the public.

Census Bureau staff suspect a multitude of diverse users will use the tool. Some people will use the tool to look for school boundaries and legislative districts. Other people will use the tool to accomplish more complex geographic tasks such as overlaying incorporated places with census tracts. The developers of TIGERweb recently released a beta version of the tool. As this is a new tool, the developers are interested if users can navigate the site and find geographic information they need.

During May 2012, staff from the Census Bureau's usability lab will conduct up to 20 usability tests of the TIGERweb site. All interviews will be conducted in the Washington DC metropolitan area. Half of the interviews will involve novice users, that is, people who might be interested in finding out information such as school and county boundaries, street locations, and legislative district boundaries. Novice participants will be recruited from the Usability Lab database, which is composed of people from the metropolitan DC area who volunteered to participate after responding to a Craigslist posting or an ad in a local newspaper. Participants will also be recruited by word of mouth, and Census Partner organizations. All novice participants will come to the Usability Lab at the Census Bureau for the study.

The other half will involve urban planners, demographers, economists, and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) managers from different counties around the Washington DC area. The Geography Division at the Census Bureau has provided the Center for Survey Measurement with a list of 23 expert users from DE, MD, NJ, PA, and VA who fit one or more of those criteria. We will ask expert users to travel to the Census Bureau lab for the study, but we might have to conduct the usability session remotely as some of the expert users live outside of a reasonable distance to the Census Bureau.

All participants will have a minimum of one year Internet experience and use the Internet at least three times a week to search for information.   All participants will be compensated $40.00 for their participation

Participants will complete an initial questionnaire about their computer use, Internet experience and some demographic characteristics. Then each participant will be given a set of tasks for the Web site. Tasks will not be randomized. Novice users will receive a subset of the tasks given to expert users. Participants will be asked to think-aloud while they are working on the tasks, and they will also provide feedback about the Web site after each task and at the conclusion of the session. Following the concluding satisfaction questionnaire, the test administrator will ask final debriefing questions about the user interface. A copy of the print

version of the initial questionnaire, the satisfaction questionnaires, participant tasks and debriefing questions are all enclosed.

We estimate that users will spend one hour on average taking the study, including time spent working on the demographic and satisfaction questions, the tasks and the debriefing. Thus, the total estimated respondent burden for this study is 20 hours.

The contact person for questions regarding data collection and statistical aspects of the design of this research is listed below:

Elizabeth Nichols
Center for Survey Methods Research
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, D.C. 20233
(301) 763-1724
Elizabeth.May.Nichols@census.gov