

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION OFFICE OF EDUCATION: EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (EPP) AND ERNEST F. HOLLINGS UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

OMB CONTROL NO: 0648-0568

A. JUSTIFICATION

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

This request is for renewal of a currently approved information collection.

The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is authorized by section 4002 of the America COMPETES Act, [Pub. Law 110-69](#), to establish and administer a Graduate Sciences Program and two undergraduate scholarship programs to enhance understanding of ocean, coastal, Great Lakes, and atmospheric science and stewardship by the general public and other coastal stakeholders, including underrepresented groups in ocean and atmospheric science and policy careers. In addition, NOAA's Administrator is authorized by section 214 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005, [Pub. Law 108-447](#), to establish and administer the Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship Program to support undergraduate studies in oceanic and atmospheric science, research, technology, and education that support the purposes of the programs and missions of NOAA.

Student applicant information, including information provided by references, will be collected for the Graduate Sciences Program, the Undergraduate Scholarship Program and the Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship.

NOAA's Office of Education (OEd) administers all three student scholarship programs, as well as two additional grant programs: the Environmental Entrepreneurship Program (EEP) and Cooperative Science Centers (CSC). OEd maintains a student tracker database with student and alumni data from all of their educational programs. NOAA OEd staff enters data for the student scholarship programs. EEP and CSC grantees are required to update the student tracker database with the required student information.

In 2007, OEd included a voluntary alumni form in this collection. This information is collected to track students who complete the NOAA programs. The information collected determines whether the NOAA-funded students: pursue and complete NOAA-related science degrees; are employed by NOAA or a NOAA contractor, or employed by Federal, State, local and Tribal agencies in natural resources and science as a results of their NOAA-funded education and training.

2. Explain how, by whom, 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.

Education Programs and Their Purposes

NOAA recognizes outstanding scholarship and encourages independent graduate level research – particularly by female and minority students – in ocean and atmospheric science and policy careers. OEd Educational Partnership Program (EPP) is strongly committed to broadening the participation of [Minority Serving Institutions](#) (MSIs) such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities, Alaska Native-Serving Institutions, and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions. NOAA’s OEd EPP/MSI partnership is comprised of four program components:

- The **Undergraduate Scholarship Program** (USP) provides an opportunity for rising junior and senior students to study disciplines relating to the NOAA's mission. Students attending MSIs conduct internships at approved NOAA offices and sites upon acceptance to the program.
- The **Graduate Sciences Program** (GSP) is aimed primarily at increasing opportunities for students in NOAA-related fields to pursue research and educational training in atmospheric, environmental, remote sensing and oceanic sciences at MSIs when possible. The GSP offers between two years (master's candidates) to four years (doctoral students) of NOAA-related research and training opportunities.
- The **Environmental Entrepreneurship Program**'s (EEP) provides funding to eligible MSIs on a competitive basis to provide students with training in the application of NOAA sciences in order to foster economic development opportunities. EEP facilitates partnerships among MSIs; various NOAA offices; academic research, government and business organizations that can help prepare students with appropriate knowledge and skills to exploit environmental tools and technological resources.
- The **Cooperative Science Centers**' (CSCs) objectives are to educate and graduate students in NOAA-related sciences, to conduct research in support of NOAA’s mission, and to build capacity within the collaborating institutions. EPP established five Cooperative Science Centers at MSIs to advance collaborative research in the NOAA-related (pertains to NOAA’s mission) sciences. The first four Cooperative Science Centers were established in 2001 and the fifth Center in 2006. The Center Director and Distinguished Scientist at each Center develop and lead key education and research activities.

The **Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship Program** is designed to:

1. Increase undergraduate training in oceanic and atmospheric science, research, technology, and education and foster multidisciplinary training opportunities;
2. Increase public understanding and support for stewardship of the ocean and atmosphere and improve environmental literacy;
3. Recruit and prepare students for public service careers with NOAA and other natural resource and science agencies at the federal, state and local levels of government; and

4. Recruit and prepare students for careers as teachers and educators in oceanic and atmospheric science and to improve scientific and environmental education in the United States.

Undergraduate students majoring in NOAA-related sciences may complete and submit an application for the EPP Undergraduate Scholarship Program and/or the Hollings Scholarship Program, and reference forms are sent to their designated professors. Interested graduate students majoring in NOAA-related sciences may complete and submit a Graduate Sciences Program application, also requesting references. The annual scholarship application periods are as follows: 1) October 1st through February 17th for EPP Undergraduate Scholarship Program; 2) October 1st through January 22nd for the Graduate Sciences Program; and, 3) November 2nd through January 29th for the Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship Program.

OEd Student Tracker Database

The OEd Student Tracker Database maintains data for all students receiving funding under the programs previously described:

- EPP Undergraduate Scholarship Program;
- Graduate Sciences Program;
- Environmental Entrepreneurship Program;
- Cooperative Science Centers; and,
- Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship Program.

The collection of student data is a program requirement that enables OEd to assess compliance with its performance measures, described below. NOAA's OEd staff maintains this database and updates it for the three scholarship programs and thus no public burden is incurred for this portion of the input to the database. Information on CSC and EEP students is entered by CSC and EEP program coordinators or principal investigators, as required by a special award condition.

OEd requires that NOAA-funded student data be provided three times per year and is aligned with the trimester system to capture student graduation, transfers, and/or completions of the program that occur during the academic year. The volume of these updates strongly lends itself to this frequency of reporting; it would be unwieldy for the program coordinators to gather and input the data once per year. Also, receiving the information at these intervals allows ongoing tracking of performance measures. A student voluntary alumni form is used to collect follow-up information about the student. NOAA requires knowing whether the NOAA-funded students pursue and complete post-graduate NOAA-related science degrees, are employed by NOAA or a NOAA contractor, etc. The data collected on the student voluntary alumni form is added to and maintained in the student tracker database by the NOAA OEd staff.

The collected student data is also tabulated to provide the status on progress of all programs' performance measures.

Performance Measures

Graduate Sciences Program

- Number of graduate sciences program students hired in NOAA Line Offices.

Undergraduate Scholarship Program

- Number of undergraduate scholarship students attending MSIs who are trained and graduate in NOAA-related sciences;
- Number of undergraduate scholarship students attending MSIs who pursue graduate work in NOAA-related sciences; and,
- Number of undergraduate scholarship students attending MSIs who are hired by NOAA, NOAA contractors and other natural resources and science agencies at the Federal, State, local and tribal levels.

Ernest Hollings Scholarship Program

- Number of Hollings scholarship students who are trained in NOAA-related sciences, research technology, and education;
- Number of Hollings scholarship students who are hired by NOAA and other natural resource and science agencies at the Federal, State, and local levels;
- The number of students from the Hollings Program who teach and become educators in NOAA-related sciences; and,
- The number of Hollings students who pursue graduate work in NOAA-related sciences.

Environmental Entrepreneurship Program

Number of students who receive training and experiential learning opportunities in NOAA-related environmental business enterprises.

Cooperative Science Centers

- Number of students who are trained and graduate in NOAA mission sciences annually;
- Number of EPP funded students who are hired by NOAA, NOAA contractors and other natural resource and science agencies at the Federal, State, local and tribal levels;
- Number of collaborative research projects undertaken between NOAA and MSI partners in support of NOAA operations;
- Number of students and faculty who participate and complete postdoctoral level programs;
- Number of peer-reviewed papers published in NOAA-related sciences by scientists (faculty and students) sponsored by NOAA OEd; and,
- Funds leveraged with NOAA OEd funds (including leveraged funds for student support).

For the CSCs, the allocated funds are tracked. The grant recipients are required to direct thirty percent (30%) of the award funds to direct student support. The allowable direct student support categories include stipends, scholarships, travel, and training:

- Student stipends - to support the cost of tuition, housing, books, lab fees, etc.;
- Student scholarships - to assist and encourage students in their scientific education;
- Student travel to NOAA programs, facilities, and laboratories; and,
- Student training - to attend training conferences, workshops, and seminars.

To measure the impact of OEd programs, the data collected are compared to the available data in the national education databases (e.g., National Science Foundation and National Center for Education Statistics) and NOAA workforce management database. Furthermore, the student data collection identifies degree pipeline areas (BS, MS, or PhD) and where OEd and its academic partners may target recruitment for its' NOAA-related science educational and

training programs. NOAA scholarship programs produce a pool of qualified candidates that may be hired by NOAA and help to sustain a world-class NOAA organization.

OEd has revised the following collection forms, with changes shown on the forms posted in ROCIS:

- Graduate Sciences Program Student Application (paper application);
- Undergraduate Scholarship Application (web-based application);
- Voluntary Alumni Information Update Sheet (paper form); and,
- Student Tracker (web-based form).

The revisions are of several types including removing unnecessary questions (streamlining), editorial clarifications and corrections, and required changes in moving to a web-based application.

Burden Impact

The application for the graduate sciences program is estimated to require 2 hours less to complete.

The following change list is provided for each form:

Graduate Sciences Program Student Application (fillable form)

- **ADD** – “How did you learn about the Graduate Sciences Program?” under **GENERAL** heading.
- **DELETE** – “If not, give the country of your citizenship.” The information is unnecessary.
- **DELETE** – **GRADUATE RECORD EXAMINATION** section. The information is no longer required.
- **EDITORIAL** – Edits to instructions under the **TWO PAGE ESSAY**.
- **DELETE** – **UNDERGRADUATE COURSES IN YOUR MAJOR AND RELATED COURSES** section. This information is contained in the official transcript.
- **DELETE** – **GRADUATE COURSES IN YOUR MAJOR AND RELATED COURSES** section. This information is contained in the official transcript.
- **EDITORIAL** - Edits to the instructions, all editorial in nature.
- **EDITORIAL** – Edits to the **PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT INFORMATION** section. All comments are editorial in nature. With the proposed changes the application is estimated to require 8 hours instead of 10 hours to complete. The following two sentences were added: As needed, student information may be disclosed to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Office of Civil Rights and the Workforce Management Office to assist the Office of Education in completing and maintaining the student tracker records. The justification for sharing information on a need-to-know basis within the agency is provided explicitly within the statutory language of the Privacy Act. *See* 5 U.S.C. 552a(b)(1).

Undergraduate Scholarship Application (web-application)

- **ADD** – **LOGIN PAGE**. Each potential applicant is required to create a login account so that they can manage the application input.
- **ADD** – **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA PAGE** for Hollings and EPP Undergraduate Scholarship Programs. The purpose of this change is to check for the program eligibility

criteria and to query the potential applicant on how they were made aware of the scholarship opportunities. Each potential applicant will answer a series of questions pertaining to the eligibility criteria for the undergraduate scholarship program they are interested in applying to. If the responses meet the eligibility criteria, then the potential applicant will be allowed to complete the scholarship application. If the responses do not meet the eligibility criteria, then the potential applicant will not be allowed to apply.

- **EDITORIAL** - Edits to the scholarship student application.
- **REPLACED** – Contact person on the student application with the NOAA Office of Education, Student Scholarship Program information.
- **EDITORIAL** – Edits to the **PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT INFORMATION** section. All comments are editorial in nature. The following two sentences were added: As needed, student information may be disclosed to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Office of Civil Rights and the Workforce Management Office to assist the Office of Education in completing and maintaining the student tracker records. The justification for sharing information on a need to know basis within the agency is provided explicitly within the statutory language of the Privacy Act. *See* 5 U.S.C. 552a(b)(1).

Voluntary Alumni Information Update Sheet (fillable form)

- **ADD – Check box for Cooperative Science Center students:** The form may also be used by the NOAA Cooperative Science Centers scholarship recipients.
- **CHANGE – Last Name / First Name:** These fields are split from the original *Name* field for clarity in entering data into a database.
- **DELETE – Current Address:** The information is not needed as much as the e-mail address.
- **ADD – State:** This field is added for reporting purposes to identify how widespread the programs are and to identify areas for recruiting. Once the form is online, it will also allow for ease of input for students by allowing them to select a state and then to see a list of academic institutions to choose from in the state selected.
- **DELETE – (3) Institution:** The information is not needed.
- **ADD – Hired Date:** This field will allow for projections on hires as well as program impact assessments.
- **ADD – Industry Sector:** The collection of this information will allow OEd EPP to include reports on whether students are hired by government or private sectors.
- **ADD – Field of Work:** This field will allow the program to evaluate whether participants go on to pursue careers in their major fields and to show the impact the program has on certain fields.
- **DELETE – Work Phone, Fax, and Work E-mail:** NOAA OEd EPP will communicate with the student by using the phone and e-mail address requested near the top of the form.
- **DELETE – Deleted two of the three questions:** The form was streamlined to only ask question(s) that may be used for program purposes such as a newsletter article.
- **EDITORIAL** – Edited where the form should be returned to...Student Scholarship Programs
- **EDITORIAL** – Edits to the **PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT INFORMATION** section. All comments are editorial in nature. The following two sentences were added: As needed, student information may be disclosed to the National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration Office of Civil Rights and the Workforce Management Office to assist the Office of Education in completing and maintaining the student tracker records. The justification for sharing information on a need to know basis within the agency is provided explicitly within the statutory language of the Privacy Act. *See* 5 U.S.C. 552a(b)(1).

- Several fields may become drop down menu choices when the form is implemented as a web-based application. This will help the students with entry and will provide consistency and categories for OEd EPP's reporting purposes. The menu options which may eventually include drop down menus are the following: Institution, State, Major, Area of Concentration, Industry Sector, and Field of Work.

Student Tracker (web-form)

Student Tracker Logon Section

- **ADD – *UserId / Password***: These fields are required for the user to login to the system. The user is associated with students in which they are responsible for editing and providing new information. Each user is given an id and password by OEd EPP.

Password Change Section

- **ADD – *UserId / Old Password / New Password / Confirm Password***: These fields are optionally used as needed by the user to change their password.

Edit Screen

This page provides options for user to search for and click on a particular student to edit.

General Section

This section allows a user to enter a new student into the system or edit general information about the student. The following fields are included in this section:

- NO CHANGE – ***First Name***
- NO CHANGE – ***Last Name***
- **ADD – *Middle Initial***: This is an optional field, which will help in identifying students with the same first and last name.
- **ADD – *Suffix***: This is an optional field, which also may help identify a particular student.
- NO CHANGE – ***Race / Ethnicity***
- NO CHANGE – ***Gender***: This field is converted from a drop-down menu to a radio button.*

Academic Section

This section provides options for the user to edit, delete, or add student degree information. The following fields are included in this section:

- NO CHANGE – ***Academic Institution***: If the institution does not appear in the drop down menu, an 'other' option is provided to enter the institution name.
- NO CHANGE – ***Level of Education***: This field is converted to a drop down menu.

*A radio button is a user interface control on a web form which allows the user to choose from a list of choices which are all shown on the screen. Only one item can be selected at a time (indicated by a filled in circle beside the item).

- NO CHANGE – **Degree:** This field is converted to a drop down menu.
- NO CHANGE – **Major:** This field is converted to a drop down menu.
- NO CHANGE – **Area of Concentration:** This field is converted to a drop down menu.
- **CHANGE** – **Research Title Topic:** The name of the information collected is changed from ‘Research Title’ to ‘**Research Title Topic**’
- NO CHANGE – **Primary Academic Research Advisor:** If the advisor does not appear in the drop down menu, an ‘other’ option is provided to enter the advisor name.
- NO CHANGE – **Expected Date of Graduation:** A calendar is provided to select the date.
- **CHANGE** – **Graduation Status:** The name of the information collected is changed from ‘Graduated’ to ‘**Graduation Status**’.
- NO CHANGE – **Actual Date of Graduation:** A calendar is provided to select the date.
- **CHANGE** – **Student Status:** The name of the information collected is changed from ‘Student Withdrew, Was Suspended from Program, or Failed Qualifying Exam’ to ‘**Student Status**’.
- **CHANGE** – **Student Status Reason:** The name of the information collected is changed from ‘Reason for Withdrawal, Suspension, or Failure’ to ‘**Student Status Reason**’ and will be provided in a drop down menu.

Student Tracker Web Form: Funding Section

This section provides options for the user to edit, delete, or add student funding information.

The following fields are included in this section:

- NO CHANGE – **Degree:** This field is converted to a drop down menu.
- NO CHANGE – **Source of Funding:** This field is converted to a drop down menu.
- NO CHANGE – **Fiscal Year of Award:** This field is converted to a drop down menu.
- NO CHANGE – **Type of Award:** This field is converted to a drop down menu.
- **ADD - Description of Award:** This field will be optional. It will allow the program coordinators to provide a further description of the type of award specified if they see fit. Previously some program coordinators felt limited by the type of award choices.
- **CHANGE** – **Report Period:** The name of the information collected is changed from ‘Reporting Period’ to ‘Report Period’ and will be provided in a drop down menu.
- **CHANGE** – **Funding Amount:** The name of the information collected is changed from ‘Funding For This Report Period’ to ‘**Funding Amount**’

Summer Assignment Section

(This section may be combined with the Training Section and eliminated in the future.)

This section provides options for the user to edit, delete, or add student summer assignment information. The following fields are included in this section:

- NO CHANGE – **NOAA Summer Assignment:** This field is converted to a drop down menu.
- **CHANGE** – **NOAA Mentors:** The name of the information collected is changed from ‘NOAA Research Mentor(s)’ to ‘**NOAA Mentors**’ and will be provided using a list box.
- **ADD - Year of Participation:** This field is required for anticipated reporting purposes to specify the year of participation in a particular summer assignment. The existing form associates the current year with the summer assignment at the time of entry; the modification will allow for altering the date as well as the addition of older entries.

Outreach Section

This section provides options for the user to edit, delete, or add student outreach activities. The following fields are included in this section:

- NO CHANGE – **Outreach Category**
- NO CHANGE – **Outreach Activity**: This field is converted to a drop down menu.
- NO CHANGE – **Activity Year**: This field is converted to a drop down menu.
- NO CHANGE – **Role**

Training Section

This section provides options for the user to edit, delete, or add student training activities. The following fields are included in this section:

- NO CHANGE – **Training Category**
- NO CHANGE – **Training Activity**: This field is converted to a drop down menu.
- NO CHANGE – **Activity Year**: This field is converted to a drop down menu.
- **ADD - Role**: This field is required for clarification of the involvement in the training activity. It will also provide consistency with the outreach section, where a role is already collected.

Post Graduation Section

This section allows a user to edit post graduation information about the student. The following fields are included in this section:

- **ADD- Hired Date (MM/YYYY)**: This field is required, however estimated dates are accepted. It will allow for projections on hires as well as program impact assessments. It will also allow multiple job positions to be provided over the course of time. The existing form allows for only the current job position to be recorded.
- **CHANGE – Sector**: The name of the information collected is changed from ‘Post Graduation Information - Sector’ to ‘**Sector**’
- **CHANGE – Name of Organization**: The name of the information collected is changed from ‘Post Graduation Information – Name of Organization’ to ‘**Name of Organization**’
- **CHANGE – Position**: The name of the information collected is changed from ‘Post Graduation Information – Position’ to ‘**Position**’
- **CHANGE – Field of Work**: The name of the information collected is changed from ‘Post Graduation Information – Field of Work’ to ‘**Field of Work**’ and will be provided in a drop down menu.
- **CHANGE – Hired Level**: The name of the information collected is changed from ‘Post Graduation Information – Hired Government Level’ to ‘**Hired Level**’ and will be provided in a drop down menu.
- **CHANGE – Hired Grade**: The name of the information collected is changed from ‘Post Graduation Information – Hired Government Grade’ to ‘**Hired Grade**’ and will be provided in a drop down menu.
- **CHANGE – Promoted Level**: The name of the information collected is changed from ‘Post Graduation Information – Promoted Government Level’ to ‘**Promoted Level**’ and will be provided in a drop down menu.
- **CHANGE – Promoted Grade**: The name of the information collected is changed from ‘Post Graduation Information – Promoted Government Grade’ to ‘**Promoted Grade**’ and will be provided in a drop down menu.

- NO CHANGE – *NOAA Organization*
- NO CHANGE – *Office / Division*
- **ADD** - *Duty Station State*: This field will be optional. It will serve the purpose of providing basis for reporting and determining target hires regionally.
- **ADD** - *Series Number*: This field will be optional. It will allow staff to report on and project needs within certain disciplines at NOAA.
- **CHANGE** – *Future Plans or Studies*: The name of the information collected is changed from ‘Post Graduation Information – Future Plans or Studies’ to ‘**Future Plans or Studies**’

Comments Section

- **ADD** – *Comment Date*: This allows for multiple entries and keeps track of the dates entered. A calendar will be provided for date selection.

Deleted Items

- **DELETE** – *Program*: This does not need to be specified because the program is identified by which user has access to the system.
- **DELETE** – *Academic Start Date for Funding*: This information is no longer specified because it is captured in the funding section.
- **DELETE** – *Primary / Secondary / Post Secondary*: This information is no longer collected because it is directly determined by the level of education specified.
- **DELETE** – *Total Funding to Date*: This information is no longer collected because it can be calculated by summing the individual funding amounts provided.
- **DELETE** - *NOAA Employee*: The collection of this field can be eliminated. It will be determined based on sector selection and displayed on the screen accordingly.

Disclosure Information (slight revisions)

- **EDITORIAL** – Edits to the **PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT INFORMATION** section. All comments are editorial in nature. The following two sentences were added: As needed, student information may be disclosed to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Office of Civil Rights and the Workforce Management Office to assist the Office of Education in completing and maintaining the student tracker records. The justification for sharing information on a need to know basis within the agency is provided explicitly within the statutory language of the Privacy Act. *See [5 U.S.C. 552a\(b\)\(1\)](#).*

As explained in the preceding paragraphs, the information gathered has utility. NOAA 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 response to Question 10 of this Supporting Statement for more information on confidentiality and privacy. The information collection is designed to yield data that meet all applicable information quality guidelines. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures and a pre-dissemination 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.

The collection of information will primarily entail web-based forms with electronic fillable forms (e.g., PDF forms) as a back-up. Applicants and grant recipients will complete the web-based forms that will automatically be transferred to a database. In the event that the web-based method is not functional, the applicants and grant recipients may complete fillable forms that may be sent electronically or mailed.

4. Describe the efforts to identify duplication.

CSC & EEP student data and information are unique to the program component in that they are not collected by any other entity. The NOAA scholarship applications are unique in that the applications require responses to NOAA-related questions.

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

Not applicable.

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

If the collection is not conducted, the data will not be available to support program performance assessments and NOAA program reports.

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 was published on April 21, 2010 (75 FR 20981) soliciting comments on this collection of information. No comments were received.

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

Not applicable.

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

There is no statutory authority for confidentiality. However, only promotional information (student names, research projects, and photographs) is made public on the program website, in newsletter articles, and in press releases. All other information is available primarily to program staff. Protection of other information is assured on the forms.

As needed, student information may be disclosed to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Office of Civil Rights and the Workforce Management Office to assist the Office of Education in completing and maintaining the student tracker records. The justification for sharing information on a need to know basis within the agency is provided explicitly within the statutory language of the Privacy Act. *See* 5 U.S.C. 552a(b)(1).

The physical electronic files are protected from access outside of NOAA and outside of Office of Education by a system of firewalls and routers. Whenever feasible, applications are hosted within the internally protected network to limit access by NOAA personnel only. Restricted access is employed so that only authorized users within the NOAA Office of Education scholarship team have access to the scholarship files.

The student scholarship programs' paper application is destroyed after the evaluation and selection of NOAA student scholars. The student name, street address, telephone number and email address are maintained electronically in a secured location on the NOAA server, as is the student tracker database. Access to the electronic files on the OEd shared drive requires username/password combinations to retrieve the information.

A [Privacy Impact Assessment](#) was approved April 7, 2009 by the Department of Commerce. The primary means of file retrieval is not by a personal identifier, and thus this is not a system of records as defined by the Privacy Act.

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.

The race and ethnicity questions may be considered sensitive by some respondents.

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

No change in burden is anticipated for the student tracker web-form. The student tracker database form is required three times per year from 12 NOAA OEd grant recipients: 5 Cooperative Science Center grant recipients and approximately 7 active Environmental Entrepreneurship Program grant recipients, including unsolicited grant award recipients since 2003. Therefore, OEd expects 36 student tracker database forms annually. The completion of the student tracker database form by each grantee program coordinator, containing information on all students within his/her grant program, is expected to take a maximum of 16 hours to enter data for an average of 250 students (thus, an average of 4-5 minutes per student). In other

words, each time a program coordinator completes the student tracker report, the report includes updated information on approximately 250 students. A report is considered one response (including information on 250 students). There are 12 program coordinators; thus, with 3 reports per year per program coordinator, total reports/responses are 36. Each report takes 16 hours; thus, 36 x 16 hours makes a total burden for this information collection, annually, of 576 hours.

Based on a five-year history of applications, OEd expects to receive approximately 40 applications for the Graduate Sciences Program. Subject to OEd appropriated funds, 5 to 7 scholarships are awarded on an annual basis. Completion of the Graduate Sciences Program application form is estimated to take 8 hours (a 2 hour estimated decrease from the 2007 estimate of 10 hours). Based on the 40 applications, OEd calculates 120 reference forms, three references per application. The completion of the Graduate Sciences Program reference form is estimated to take 1 hour.

Based on a two-year history of applications, OEd expects to receive 1000 undergraduate scholarship programs (USP and Hollings) application. This is an increase of 200 applications from the 2007 estimate of 800 applications. Subject to the appropriated funds, approximately 15 and 100 students are selected annually for the USP and Hollings scholarship program, respectively. Completion of the undergraduate scholarship programs application is estimated to take 8 hours. Based on 1000 applications, OEd calculates 2000 reference forms, two references per application. Completion of the undergraduate scholarship programs reference form is estimated to take 1 hour.

OEd estimates that it will receive 312 Alumni Update Forms for the NOAA programs. Completion of the alumni form is estimated to take 1 hour.

The total hours of burden of 11,328 hours is provided in the table on the following page. The \$180,280 figure represents labor dollars required to complete the forms.

NOAA Office of Education and Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship Program Burden and Labor Costs

Requirement	# of Respondents	# Responses per Respondent	Total # Responses	Response Time (hours)	Total Burden (hours)	Labor Rates per hour (\$)	Labor Cost to Public Per Burden Hour
Student Tracker Database Web-Form for Cooperative Science Center and Environmental Entrepreneurship Program Components	12	3	36	16	576	\$30	\$17,280
Graduate Sciences Program - Application Form	40	1	40	8	320	\$20	\$6,400
Graduate Sciences Program - Reference Form	120	1	120	1	120	\$40	\$4,800
Undergraduate Scholarship Programs – Web-Application Form	1000	1	1000	8	8000	\$8	\$64,000
Undergraduate Scholarship Programs - Reference Form	2000	1	2000	1	2000	\$40	\$80,000
Voluntary Alumni Update Form for all Programs	312	1	312	1	312	\$25	\$7,800
TOTAL REQUESTED	3,484		3,508		11,328		\$180,280

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual recordkeeping/reporting cost burden to the respondents resulting from the collection (excluding the valued of the burden hours in Question 12 above).

Based on a two-year average of applications, OEd expects to receive 30 mailed undergraduate and graduate scholarship program applications annually. It is estimated that it will cost each applicant \$10.00 for photocopying and mailing of the application packages, **with a total cost of \$300**. Generally applicants express mail the scholarship application at a cost of \$9.00, but cost may run as high as \$20.00. Other submissions are e-mailed or submitted online.

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

Total annualized cost is \$45,600. The figure represents salary dollars needed to process the collected data (520 hours @\$80.00 per hour = \$41,600) and \$4,000 printing costs. The 520 hours is based on the following:

- 180 hours to process, verify and validate, the student data from the CSC and EPP;
- 200 hours to process the Hollings student applications and reference forms;
- 60 hours to process the GSP student applications and reference forms;
- 50 hours to process the USP student applications and reference forms; and,
- 30 hours to process the Voluntary Alumni Update Sheet form.

The increased hours are due to the estimated increase in applications (200) and reference forms (400).

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

Adjustments:

The OEd estimates that the number of undergraduate scholarship programs application will increase by 200 applications and 400 related reference forms, adding 1600 and 400 hours, respectively.

The estimated responses for the student tracker database have decreased by 39 responses and 624 hours, because the number of EEP grant recipients has decreased (grant awards have closed out).

Program change; The OEd also estimates that the graduate scholarship program application will require 2 hours less to complete as a result of the application form having being streamlined, decreasing hours for that information collection by 80. This is the only form whose changes have affected burden.

There is thus a net gain of 561 responses and 1,296 hours.

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

The EPP and Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship Program student data – student name, research project and photographs – are posted on NOAA’s Office of Education web site, included in EPP newsletter articles, and submitted for press releases. The number of NOAA OEd supported students (by NOAA-scientific or technological discipline and program component) is included in Government program reports, used for program evaluation and analysis, and used for outreach and promotional purposes.

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 the certification statement.

Not applicable.

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

This collection does not employ statistical methods.