

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
NOAA Constituent Engagement Survey
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-xxxx

A. JUSTIFICATION

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

On August 9, 2007, President Bush signed into law the America COMPETES (*America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education and Science Act, Public Law 110-69*), which seeks to strengthen education and research related to science and technology. This legislation is significant for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), granting the agency a mandate to engage in agency-wide education and outreach efforts to all stakeholders. NOAA is charged with developing and promoting education and outreach activities at all levels for the purpose of heightening the public's current understanding of issues related to atmospheric science, the earth's environment and protecting life and property.

NOAA products, services and information are important to both the nation as a whole, and to the daily lives of United States (U.S.) citizens. NOAA's Science Advisory Board (SAB) identified a need for more effective two-way communication between its programs and the customers and clients it serves. NOAA's Gulf of Mexico Extension, Outreach and Education (EOE) Engagement Pilot Program has a goal of improving the way the agency engages with its constituents. NOAA's EOE Engagement Program, under the NOAA Sea Grant Program, is analyzing the way NOAA currently engages with its constituents and will provide recommendations to NOAA on ways to improve two-way communication with customers.

To achieve this goal, Engagement staff is utilizing existing Office of Management and Budget-approved survey questions and has also developed new valid and reliable questions to create a survey instrument to collect responses from core groups of NOAA constituents. The survey instrument will assess NOAA's accessibility, responsiveness and respect for partners. These parameters are three of the seven parameters identified in the Kellogg Commission's report *Returning to our Roots: The Engaged Institution*, recommended by the SAB for NOAA's use in assessing constituent engagement (attached). A longer-term goal is that the survey instrument we have developed will ultimately become a standard NOAA tool for assessing how well NOAA engages with constituents throughout the nation.

This is a request for a new information collection.

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.

Information will be collected from the Gulf of Mexico Region annually for a period of three years by the NOAA Coastal Service Center Indefinite Duration, Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contractor, who specializes in survey administration and analysis. The data will be used by NOAA line offices to assess how well NOAA is meeting the needs of Gulf of Mexico

constituents in terms of accessibility, responsiveness and respect for its partners. The survey instrument could become a standard tool for measuring how NOAA engages its constituents throughout the country and could be available to all NOAA regions – this is to be explored at a later time.

The survey instrument is flexible in design and through minor modifications can be applied to other NOAA defined regions (e.g., change the phrase “Gulf of Mexico” to “Southeast” or “Alaskan”). The amount of burden hours specified is for the Gulf of Mexico Region. Other NOAA regions may choose a different sample population, which will result in different burden hour totals.

Results of the administered survey will provide NOAA with valuable information and feedback from its constituents that can lead to:

- Techniques to improve NOAA products, services and information
- Improved accessibility and responsiveness throughout NOAA
- Greater emphasis on collaboration with NOAA partners
- Improved reputation among the public.

NOAA’s Oceanic and Atmospheric Research’s Sea Grant Program 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 of this Supporting Statement for more information on confidentiality and privacy. The information collected is designed to yield data that meets all applicable information quality guidelines. Individual responses will not be disseminated; summary results may be used in scientific, management, technical or general informational publications. Should the NOAA Sea Grant Program decide to disseminate the information, it will be subject to the quality control measures and pre-dissemination review pursuant to Section 515 of Public Law 106554.

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.

Primarily, respondents will be asked to complete the survey online through the web-based survey tool “Survey Monkey” (www.surveymonkey.com). The online survey can be found at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NOAAengagementsurvey>. Alternatively, a print version of the survey will be made available upon request, which can be returned by mail or facsimile.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

Through research, consultation with NOAA line offices and personal/professional experiences, it appears that there are no other efforts that duplicate the proposed questions. Guiding OMB-approved survey documents have been obtained and used as a reference in creating the draft survey instrument.

- NOAA’s *Quantitative Questions* (OMB Control No. 0648-0342) were used as a guideline for a table of specifications.

- A 2009 Office of Education survey regarding the Teacher at Sea Program was used as a guideline for questions pertaining to regions. The Teacher at Sea Program collection targeted the measurement of professional development programs, and is not a duplicate of the proposed collection.
- We are aware of a collection entitled the *NOAA Awareness Study*, OMB Control No. 0648-0574, begun February 14, 2008. The proposed collection herein differs from the NOAA Awareness Study. The NOAA Awareness Study is focused on collecting information to assess the general public's understanding and awareness of NOAA and its programs. The proposed NOAA Engagement survey is designed to specifically measure NOAA accessibility, responsiveness and respect for partners in terms of two-way communications with customers.

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

The survey instrument will create minimal burden on small business owners because it is brief, taking only about 20 minutes, and answering the survey is optional. The brevity of the survey is purposeful since NOAA seeks to repeat the survey over time to assess change.

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 were not conducted, NOAA's two-way communications with its constituents would remain unchanged or would improve only incrementally because of the lack of quantifiable input from constituents for the three constructs of this survey. Collection of constituent input as frequently as annually will allow NOAA to monitor improvements in constituent engagement through time.

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

N/A.

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 published on March 9, 2010, (75 FR 10755) solicited public comments. No comments were received.

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

N/A.

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

There will be no assurance of confidentiality; responses themselves will be public information.

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.

N/A.

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

An estimated 650 respondents from the NOAA Gulf of Mexico Region will spend 20 minutes answering the survey questions annually, over a 3 year period: $650 \times 20 \text{ minutes} = 13,000 \text{ minutes}$
 $13,000 \text{ minutes} / 60 \text{ minutes} = 216.6$ (total annual burden hours are 217). The 217 annual burden hours x 3 years = 651 total burden hours for the NOAA Gulf of Mexico Region.

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).

There will be no record-keeping/reporting costs to respondents.

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

N/A.

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

This is a new program.

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

N/A.

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.

N/A

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

N/A.