

JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGE

AMENDMENTS TO THE NATURAL RESOURCE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT RESTORATION PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0497

We are requesting approval of this change request as soon as possible, so that it will be cleared before submission of the renewal request and will be available immediately for use in reporting on Deepwater Horizon-related matters.

Given the size and magnitude of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, it is expected that extensive restoration planning efforts will be needed as a part of the Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) process. NOAA Fisheries is proposing amendments to the current OMB approved NRDA Restoration Project Information Sheet (OMB Control No. 0648-0497) to reduce the burden on state and federal trustees when required by the NRDA process to gather public input on restoration project options.

Specifically, the original PDF format will be modified to develop both a fillable, trackable PDF and a web-based form, which will allow the user to input data directly into the form which will then feed into a database, managed by NOAA Fisheries. This will not change the burden on the public, but will make both the data input and management of the information derived from this form more efficient. In addition, data collection fields have been refined/consolidated to provide better clarification of the information requested and a means of standardizing restoration project ideas. Specifically, respondents, using a reorganized set of checklists, have the ability to more clearly and specifically identify the type of project they are proposing (restoration, protection, land acquisition, etc.), the habitat within which the project occurs (upland, riverine, marine and estuarine wetlands, etc.), and the resources that may benefit (marine mammals, birds, fish, etc.), where currently, they have only two categories: “resource/habitat/service” and “restoration results”. NOAA feels that these amendments are necessary to pursue cost-effective planning and implementation of restoration projects.

In addition, we would also like to retain the original format for the purposes of gathering restoration project information specific to the Louisiana Regional Restoration Planning program, who prefers the original format.