

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
NATURAL RESOURCE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT
RESTORATION PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0497**

A. JUSTIFICATION

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

This request is a renewal of the information collection.

The purpose of the collection of this information is to assist state and federal Natural Resource Trustees in more efficiently carrying out the restoration planning phase of Natural Resource Damage Assessments (NRDA), in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. 4321-4370d; 40 CFR 1500 and other federal and local statutes and regulations as applicable. Currently, when a release or substantial threat of release of oil occurs and a NRDA is conducted, state and federal Natural Resource Trustees carry out three phases: pre-assessment, restoration planning, and restoration implementation. Traditionally, the restoration planning phase is time consuming and expensive because Trustees must contact numerous governmental agencies, as well as private groups and non-government organizations, to develop a list of restoration project alternatives for each incident; a requirement before selecting a suitable project(s) to compensate the public and environment for lost services and resources.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) restoration project information sheets facilitate the collection of information on a continual basis; thereby markedly shortening the time needed to generate a list of restoration alternatives following each incident. By reducing the time needed to conduct the restoration planning phase of a NRDA, the entire NRDA process becomes more efficient and habitat restoration projects will be implemented sooner for more benefit to the public and the environment.

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 purpose of the NRDA Restoration Project Information Sheet is to collect information on existing, planned, or proposed habitat restoration projects in a localized region. The NRDA Restoration Project Information Sheet will be provided in two formats to facilitate the information collection needs of two distinct programs: 1) the Louisiana Regional Restoration Planning program will use the original format since this form was developed specific to this program, and 2) NOAA fisheries' Damage Assessment Remediation Restoration Program will use the recently amended format for the NRDA restoration planning process since this form is a fillable, trackable PDF that will feed directly into a database and therefore is more robust for data management purposes.

The two formats for the NRDA Restoration Project Information Sheet will collect the same information, which includes:

- (a) Contact Information – Basic details necessary to identify and contact project managers such as name, title, address, organization, city, state, zip code, phone and fax numbers, e-mail, and URL for Web sites.
- (b) Project Information – Basic project information such as the project title, size, and cost and details on the physical location of the project site including Parish/ County, watershed, and latitude/longitude.
- (c) Project Categories– Respondents have the opportunity to provide categorical identifications of project types, habitats, and resource benefits to easily describe projects.
- (d) Project Status – Basic information indicating the status of certain phases of the project, such as resource acquisition, planning/design, permitting..
- (e) Description and Benefits – A detailed description of the project with background about the site as well as other potential benefits.
- (f) Project Partners – details on support (e.g. planning, funding, technical assistance) provided by other organizations including partner name, contact information, and involvement.

The data collection fields within the amended NRDA Project Information Sheet 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 the original form has only two categories: “resource/habitat/service” and “restoration result”.

The information collected from these forms will be used by NOAA staff and other federal and state agencies to occupy a database on an on-going basis. Following the release or substantial threat of release of oil (hereafter referred to as incident), NOAA staff and other state and federal agencies may query the database to identify potential restoration projects suitable for compensating the public and environment for the loss of services and/ or resources as a result of the incident. Queries for potential projects may also be made by nonprofit organizations and members of the public. The frequency of queries by agencies, organizations, and the general public will depend on the number of incidents or interest in habitat restoration.

Portions of the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support publicly disseminated information. 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 response to Question 10 of this Supporting Statement for more information on confidentiality and privacy. The information collection is designed to yield information that meets 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 Natural Resource Damage Assessment Restoration Project Information Sheets will be provided to government agencies, private organizations, non-government organizations, and the general public as a hard copy and will also be available as a fillable form from the internet at <http://www.darrp.noaa.gov>. They may be developed on a personal computer (if desired); however, while electronic submission via email of the information is allowed, it is not required.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

There are no other collections that gather similar information. No duplication of effort exists with other Federal Government information collection efforts.

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

The information to be collected is very basic in its nature and should not be a hardship or burden for small entities to produce. Separate requirements based on their size have not been developed.

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

If this information were not collected, the ability to pursue cost-effective planning and implementation of restoration projects would be adversely affected.

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 published on April 26, 2010 (75 FR 21582) solicited public comment on this information collection. No comments were received.

Consultations with interested and affected persons are an integral part of this information collection, and were accomplished by discussion with a representative cross section of intended submitters to explain and clarify the information needed. Future consultations will be held with groups, agencies, persons, etc., on an irregular basis as necessary to ensure they understand these information requests.

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

No payment, gift, or other remuneration will be provided.

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

The information collection does not request any proprietary or confidential information. No confidentiality is provided.

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.

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

It is estimated that approximately 66 respondents will annually submit completed Natural Resource Damage Assessment Restoration Project Information Sheets, with each respondent submitting an average of 2 to 3 Information Sheets for individual projects. It is estimated that approximately 165 annual responses will be received. At an estimated response time of 20 minutes each, this yields an estimate of 55 burden hours.

Estimated labor costs for this collection will be \$1,024 (based on an average hourly wage of \$18.62.* However, it should be noted that the restoration project information collected is intended to provide information to restoration practitioners throughout the areas of collection, including those submitting the data. Therefore, the burden of data collection is expected to be offset (and in some cases exceeded) by the benefits accrued to restoration practitioners from having access to project information.

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).

If the information is submitted via electronic mail, this collection will incur no cost burden on respondents beyond the costs of response time (assuming respondents have a computer). If respondents opt to mail the information, they will incur the cost of standard postage at \$0.44 per envelope if sent separately. If all responses were mailed separately, the maximum cost burden incurred would total approximately \$73 annually. If respondents opt to fax the information, they will incur the cost of a toll call which varies depending on the carrier. Assuming a cost of \$1 per

*U.S. Department of Labor – Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2005. National Compensation Survey: Occupational Wages in the United States, June 2005. Bulletin 2581; <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ocs/sp/ncbl0832.pdf>

faxed page, the maximum cost to the respondents using this method of submittal would be \$165 annually. It is assumed that most respondents will choose to either email or mail the information rather than fax it since there are no time constraints on submittals; therefore, the maximum estimated submission cost will be based on the total postage cost of \$73.

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

It is estimated that screening the submitted projects will require 1 week of a federal employees' time. The total estimated cost is \$1,366.

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

Because the postal rate increased since the last renewal, the maximum estimate for submission costs increased by \$5.

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

All data collected will be summarized and available either in table format and/or on the internet.

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.

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

This collection does not employ statistical methods.