

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT  
NOAA TEACHER-AT-SEA ALUMNI SURVEY  
OMB CONTROL NO.: 0648-0600**

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

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

This request is for renewal of this information collection.

Consistent with the support for research and education under the [National Marine Sanctuaries Act](#) (16 U.S.C. 32 §1440) and other coastal and marine protection legislation, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) provides educators an opportunity to gain first-hand experience with field research activities through the Teacher-At-Sea Program (TAS). Through this program, educators spend up to three (3) weeks at sea on a NOAA research vessel, participating in an on-going research project with NOAA scientists. Once educators are selected and participate on a cruise, they write a report detailing the events of the cruise and ideas for classroom activities based on what they learned while at sea. These materials are then made available to other educators at links for each “field season”, e.g. <http://teacheratsea.noaa.gov/2009/index.html>

so they may benefit from the experience, without actually going to sea themselves (the TAS is approved under OMB Control No. 0648-0283). The TAS is soliciting information from past teacher participants on their experience before, during, and after they return from sea, in order to collect program evaluation data and improve program operations.

**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 goal of this survey is to enable NOAA’s Teacher-At-Sea Program to acquire a better understanding of how we can improve our services to our local participants before, during, and after the experience. This information will be compiled in the form of easy-to-read graphics, such as bar graphs or pie charts, and used to develop specific objectives intended to establish a stronger partnership with our teachers. We plan to contact a portion of our alumni (about 30) every 6 months: first to the most recent program participants, and then repeating a random sample starting from 2004 and beyond.

The survey will be conducted by Dr. Bora Simmons, founding director of the National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education no more than twice per year. The survey is being conducted in collaboration with the NOAA Teacher-At-Sea Program staff. The purpose of collecting this information is to provide the program management an idea of the program’s success in reaching its goals as well as make it a better run program.

Based on the first year of surveys, the evaluation expert found that the NOAA Teacher-At-Sea Program was meeting its short and midterm goals. When asked to compare their pre- and post-NOAA Teacher-At-Sea experiences, teachers consistently reported increased understanding across a range of NOAA-related topics. In particular, teachers reported an increased understanding of how NOAA research efforts can be linked to the [National Science Education Standards](#) (mean = 5.2 on a 6 point scale) and the [Ocean Literacy: The Essential Principles and Fundamental Concepts](#) (mean = 4.9).

As explained in the preceding paragraphs, the information gathered has utility. NOAA's Teacher-At-Sea 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 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. Although the information collected is not expected to be disseminated directly to the public, results may be used in scientific, management, technical or general informational publications. Should the Teacher-At-Sea 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 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 survey form will be conducted via a Web-based instrument or a paper instrument (based on the respondent's choice), preceded by a telephone call and e-mail.

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.**

This information is not collected in any other forum or format, so there is no duplication of effort.

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

There are no small businesses participating.

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

By not conducting this survey, the NOAA Teacher-At-Sea program's ability to improve program operations is limited, as well as its ability to report to NOAA and DOC leadership on the benefits the program provides.

**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 October 15, 2010 (75 FR 63439) 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.**

Not Applicable.

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

Respondents are told on the survey form that their responses are anonymous.

**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.**

Not Applicable.

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

Thirty responses are expected every six months, taking 30 minutes each. Total responses are 60, and total hours are 30.

**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).**

Up to 20 responses per year are expected to be mailed, resulting in approximately \$8.80 in postage costs (20 x \$0.44) per year.

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

\$5,000 is the approximate annualized cost to the Federal government for the collection and analysis of this information.

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

Adjustments: The respondent pool has increased since the last submission, with a total of six more surveys planned per year. Also, the postage cost for the few surveys mailed in was not included in the last submission, but the omission in error was corrected in this renewal.

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

Not Applicable.

**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.