

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
User Engagement Survey for Water Resources Forecasts and
Climate Information
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-xxxx

A. JUSTIFICATION

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

This request is for a new information collection.

As part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA’s) mission to “... meet our Nation’s economic, social, and environmental needs”, [Executive Order 12862](#) and good management practices the proposed survey will be part of a stakeholder engagement effort to more clearly define what those needs are. The proposed survey will be used to engage with, and assess the science and forecasting needs of, stakeholders in the water resources sector. The water resources sector includes agencies and companies operating reservoirs and private and public interests in regulating rivers. The survey is designed to (1) assess the accessibility and utility of water & climate information products and datasets, (2) assess participants' perceptions and knowledge about water & climate, and (3) evaluate user needs and the gaps in existing water & climate information. Participation in the survey will be entirely voluntary and conducted in conjunction with workshops related to water resources and/or climate.

The purpose of the survey instrument is to allow for a rigorous assessment of the accessibility and utility of NOAA’s National Weather Service (NWS) water and climate forecasts, datasets, and products for NWS stakeholders. The instrument was developed and tested by NOAA research partners in 2010 through two workshops in Colorado and Utah. Prior to the development of this survey instrument, NWS had no effective way to measure stakeholder perceptions of the effectiveness of its water resources and seasonal climate forecasts and datasets.

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 by NWS staff charged with working with stakeholders in the water resources sector. The primary mechanism for information collection will be Web-based; however, a paper form of the survey will also be available should internet connections not be available. Information will be collected in conjunction with meetings or workshops where stakeholders are present. Survey results will be analyzed to determine the most frequent responses, correlations between survey responses and respondent characteristics, and to track changes over time.

The information will be used to assess the effectiveness, and provide some direction for improvement of NWS forecast programs, including new products and datasets, in stakeholder

decision-making, primarily in water management. Similar information collected by non-federal partners in a research environment has contributed to the development of improved web pages and other service delivery mechanisms by the NWS. Specific examples from the survey instrument that would lead us toward specific types of modifications: Questions 16-21 will be used to measure forecast usage; Questions 25-29 will be used to measure perceptions of forecast skill. These results will be used to identify more effective ways at communicating forecasts, and providing measures of forecast confidence and the track record of previous forecasts from NOAA forecasters to forecast users .

As explained in the preceding paragraph, the information gathered has utility. NWS will retain control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with NOAA standards for [privacy and protection of 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 NOAA decide to disseminate the information, it will be subject 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.

Survey responses will typically be collected electronically, using a web-based form such as survey monkey which easily allows surveys to be constructed, conducted, and analyzed. A paper form will be used only for instances when the internet is not available.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

Other agencies, such the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, have collected complementary information regarding water management by federal agencies through studies such as the current Colorado Basin Study, which assess water supply and demand in the basin. However, only NOAA does operational forecasts related to water and climate. The proposed survey focuses specifically on forecasting programs and products and perceptions of their effectiveness. While this survey was developed specifically for water and climate forecasts in the water resources sector, it also has utility for climate services beyond the water resources in areas such as wildfire management, managing vegetation changes, etc. If similar efforts by other entities were to materialize in the future, we would make every effort to work with those involved.

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

Responses to the proposed survey questions would provide information that will allow significant improvement to NWS's ability to assess the perception of effectiveness of use of its water and climate forecasts by stakeholders. Currently, NWS employees charged with making these forecasts have little information available to assess the effectiveness of water and climate forecast products. Without such surveys, assessment of effectiveness is significantly limited.

In order to track effectiveness over time, periodic information collection is necessary. The frequency of information collection proposed will be tied to tracking effectiveness of newly developed forecast products and datasets as well as tracking the use and perceptions of existing datasets.

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

NA.

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 August 23, 2010 (75 FR 51751) 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.

None.

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

The survey instructions state that responses are anonymous; no personally identifying information will be collected in the survey questions.

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.

We anticipate 90 respondents per year. Each respondent will respond to the survey instrument, at

most, once per year. The survey takes 30 minutes to complete. Therefore the total estimated annual burden for respondents will be 45 hours.

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 cost (other than time) to the respondents. If paper surveys are used, they will be collected on the spot and/or using prepaid envelopes.

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

No costs outside of regular staff costs and very minimal copying are anticipated. We expect to retain survey responses in order to track change over time. Agency staff will compile and analyze survey results. The staff time required for these operations is minimal – no more than 40 hours total or approximately \$1,600 in wages. Paper and copying expenses should be no more than \$100. Maximum total costs are thus estimated to be \$1,700.

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.

NA.

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.