

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**  
**NOAA RESTORATION CENTER PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT**  
**OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0472**

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

This request is for extension of this information collection.

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

This information collection assists the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in the administration and evaluation of coastal and marine habitat restoration projects. It helps inform policy and practitioner decisions on restoration cost-effectiveness and relative 'success' through evaluation of short and long-term outcomes, building evidence of the program's effectiveness as a tool for fisheries management.

NOAA notifies the public periodically through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) regarding financial and technical assistance available for coastal and marine habitat restoration projects. Examples of previously funded restoration actions that improve habitat for recreational, commercial and managed fish species include:

- Projects that seek to restore coastal and marine habitat to recover threatened or endangered species or benefit species of concern;
- Diadromous fish habitat, particularly projects that remove in-stream migration barriers or create/restore habitats limiting productivity;
- Shellfish habitat restoration/creation, for the broad ecological benefits and ecosystem services it provides;
- Coral reefs, through projects that address land-based sources of pollution, recovery from disturbance or disease, or that promote coral recruitment and/or recovery;
- Coastal wetlands, through shoreline restoration or hydrological reconnection;
- Projects that provide protection for communities and infrastructure through habitat restoration to improve coastal resiliency to storms and flooding;
- Projects that improve the potential for coastal habitat to respond to climate change through restoration or protection of transition zones that provide room for habitat migration with sea level rise;
- Projects that seek to address the problem of marine debris accumulation in coastal and marine habitats;
- Projects that support conservation corps type activities to provide employment, education and training through restoration of coastal and marine habitat; and
- Restoration of Great Lakes habitats within Areas of Concern (AOC) addressing beneficial use impairments to loss of fish and wildlife habitat and/or degradation of benthos.

Federal Funding Opportunities (FFO) posted on [grants.gov](http://grants.gov) describe eligible habitat restoration activities and applicant groups, specific program priorities and the standard, NOAA-wide evaluation criteria against which applications are reviewed. They also describe the necessity for

pre-and post-restoration monitoring to detect short- and long-term ecological and socioeconomic outcomes, as well as describe the technical assistance available from restoration specialists located in field offices around the coastal United States. To evaluate a basic level of ecological success, NOAA expects a minimum level of short-term evaluation parameters to include one or more of the following: acres restored; stream miles opened for fish passage; tonnage of marine debris removed; or another, similar measure that describes the significance of the proposed actions. NOAA further encourages outcome-based performance measures that focus on numerical increases in target species. Examples of long-term performance evaluation include, but are not limited to: improved fish habitat quality; increased abundance of target species; impact on status of listed species and species of concern; changes in recreational angling and similar parameters. Restoration specialists work with successful applicants to incorporate long-term monitoring parameters into select projects to facilitate outcome level analysis of specific project types (fish passage, hydrological reconnection, coral reef and shellfish habitat) over time.

Awards are made as grants or cooperative agreements under the authority of the [Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act](#), 16 U.S.C. 661, as amended by the [Reorganization Plan No. 4 of 1970](#), the [Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization Act of 2006](#) (Title 1, Sec. 117), the [Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act](#) (MDRPR Act, 33 U.S.C. 1951 et seq.), the [Estuaries and Clean Waters Act of 2000](#) (Title I, Public Law 106-457) and other authorities. Applications for federal financial assistance are submitted via the grants.gov website using the required OMB-approved federal application forms. Funding recommendations are typically determined through a competitive process involving technical merit review and ranking of the applications.

Successful applicants are required by the NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD) to submit periodic performance reports and a final report for each award. This information collection stipulates what is to be provided in these reports and will assist grantees in fulfilling their responsibilities in meeting semi-annual and final progress report requirements. Local, state and regional NOAA partners use this information collection to report to NOAA in aggregate the results of sub-awarded projects supported with NOAA restoration funding.

Over 2000 restoration projects have received NOAA funds since 1996. Requests for individual project funding has increased, and projects have become more complex in scope and scale. It is critical to accurately track the status and success of funded projects to provide accountability for the expenditure of these federal restoration funds. Collection of this information allows NOAA to respond quickly to inquiries from management, members of Congress and constituents, and directly supports NOAA performance measure reporting under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) “acres restored” measure.

**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.**

This information collection will continue to be used by NOAA Restoration Center (RC) staff to populate a project tracking database (Restoration Center Database, or RCDB) on an ongoing basis. Results of staff queries to the database are currently used by upper level NOAA

management to respond to congressional and constituent inquiries, provide an accurate accounting of ‘acres restored’ under the GPRA measure, and enable the NOAA Restoration Center to distinguish between acres of wetlands restored, enhanced and protected. The database tracks sources and amounts of funding, volunteer numbers and hours contributed toward projects, provides a quality controlled subset of project data to the public through live links from the World Wide Web, and promotes planning through a web-based Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping function. Project data is reported to the public only once projects have been completed and verified by field staff.

This information collection requirement applies only to those parties receiving NOAA restoration funds under specific competitions (Community-based Restoration Program, Open Rivers Initiative, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act projects, Marine Debris Removal grants, Estuary Restoration grants, National and Regional Restoration Partnership grants, and Great Lakes Habitat Restoration grants), and will focus on specific project sites where NOAA funds were used to implement habitat restoration and monitoring activities.

Grantees are required to provide information in a two-part process consisting of a Progress Report Narrative and form-fillable fields for specific project data, both parts of which are included in a single Project Data Form (attached). Stakeholder feedback was most recently collected informally from ARRA grantees and partners that will receive FY12 funding, as well as through the Federal Register Notice of the renewal of this information collection (77 FR 14347) on March 9, 2012 regarding the practical utility of the data.

Comments and suggestions for improvement were solicited, but there were no improvements or modifications recommended for the currently approved collection. Feedback on progress reporting using the currently approved collection amongst ARRA recipients and current project partners was overwhelmingly positive. Grantees understood the utility of the information they provided, felt that it helped improve their own program’s internal operating procedures, and that the form helped them work collaboratively with NOAA staff to set appropriate targets and milestones as well as consistently report performance on NOAA-funded projects.

a. The general information to be collected in the Performance Progress Report includes:

- (1) Name of federal agency and organization to which report is submitted.
- (2) Grant number as assigned by NOAA’s Grants Online electronic grants management system.
- (3a) Recipient organization’s Dun & Bradstreet (DUNS) number.
- (3b) Federal tax identification number (Employer Identification Number, or EIN).
- (4) Recipient Organization (Name and complete address including ZIP code).
- (5) Recipient designated identification or account number for organization’s internal purposes.
- (6) Project/grant start date and end date (MM/DD/YY).
- (7) Reporting period end date (MM/DD/YY).
- (8) Final Report (check the box ‘yes’ or ‘no’).

- (9) Report Frequency (check the box ‘annual’, ‘semi-annual’, ‘quarterly’ or ‘other’).
- (10) Performance Narrative. For interim progress reports, the narrative includes overall goals for the project, details on progress achieved during the reporting period, challenges or potential roadblocks to future progress, and an updated timeline of remaining tasks. For the final progress report, also included is the relevance of the project to enhancing habitat, the problems the project has addressed, the methodology used to undertake restoration activities, including materials used and specific monitoring techniques, and lessons learned.
- (11) Other Attachments. Grantees list other documents they upload into NOAA Grants Online as part of the report including things such as monitoring reports, articles/news clippings, project photographs, etc.
- (12a) Typed name and title of authorized certifying official for the award.
- (12b) Signature of authorized certifying official, submitted electronically.
- (12c) Telephone number of authorized certifying official.
- (12d) Email address of authorized certifying official.
- (12e) Date (MM/DD/YY) report submitted (electronically via NOAA Grants Online).

b. Project-specific information to be collected in the Performance Progress Report includes:

- (2-01) Project title.
- (2-02) Federal program officer’s name.
- (2-03 to 2-06) Details on the project’s main contact person (name, title, email address and phone number).
- (2-07) The organization’s website URL (if they have one).
- (2-08 to 2-10) The location of the project (city, county and state).
- (2-11) Land ownership (check the box ‘public’, ‘private’ or ‘both’).
- (2-12) Geographic coordinates of the project site (longitude and latitude in decimal degrees) so it can be mapped using GIS; for projects with multiple locations, the grantee is instructed to choose a location where most of the grant resources are used).
- (2-13) A check box denoting whether there is one project site for the award or multiple locations.
- (2-14) The names and organization affiliation of any partners contributing to or otherwise involved in the project.
- (2-15) A list of the target species that will directly benefit from the restoration project.

Section A. Program Indicators.

In this section, grantees work with NOAA Federal Program Officers and technical monitors to number (column 1) and describe (column 2) distinct restoration activities outlined in the final proposal narrative agreed to by the grantee and NOAA, indicate whether the activity is completed, ongoing/in progress, or not started during the reporting period (column 3), and provide a brief description of the grantees progress toward completing the activity (column 4).



## Section B. Performance Measures

In this section, grantees work with NOAA Federal Program Officers and technical monitors to number (column 1) and describe (column 2) specific performance goals and objectives for the project as specified in the approved work plan relative to the type of habitat to be restored, identify the unit of measure (column 3), identify a baseline for that measure (column 4), enter the year the grantee expects to accomplish the target measure specified in the work plan (column 5), the overall amount to be achieved (column 6), the actual, cumulative amount achieved by the end of the reporting period (column 7) and a brief explanation (column 8) that describes monitoring or verification activities related to the specific measure and whether the target was met, and if not, why it was not.

## Section C. Table of Activities and Funding

In this section, grantees work with NOAA Federal Program Officers and technical monitors to number (column 1) and describe (column 2) major project activities or categories of funds spent from NOAA and match sources. Grantees itemize (columns 3.1 to 3.5) the total NOAA award amount, as well as the matching funds, the cumulative amount of NOAA and matching funding used by the end of the current reporting period, as well as the source and nature of matching funds (cash, goods, services, etc) for the current reporting period. Section C.4. provides a text box where grantees can explain any discrepancies between the approved budget and the actual or planned expenditures, particularly those that do not require prior approval of the NOAA Grants Management division.

## Section D. Program/Project Management

This section is required only for those recipients who provide sub-awards for multiple projects under a single grant or that receive awards of \$500,000 or greater. The objective of collecting information in this section is to ensure partners offering restoration sub-awards and those grantees who are implementing large-scale restoration projects consider the performance management systems they use to evaluate and manage their federal restoration funding, identify and correct any project management deficiencies, remain focused on meeting proposed performance targets and achieving long-term performance goals, and properly managing the sub-award process.

It is anticipated that the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support publicly disseminated information. NOAA Fisheries 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. The information collection is designed to yield data that meet all applicable information quality guidelines. The information is subjected to quality control measures prior to project records being approved for the production mode of the database, and specific products produced from the data undergo 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 progress reports are form-fillable PDF files that are populated, saved, and updated using Adobe software and a personal computer. Grantees can access the report form at <http://www.habitat.noaa.gov> and it is also provided to grantees by their Federal Program Officer; grantees can save the information in the first progress report and use the same file to produce and print subsequent reports, eliminating duplication, and simplifying the effort needed to produce a comprehensive final report. Electronic submission of the information collected is required and all grantees provide this information electronically by uploading it to NOAA's Grants Online system. Reports are then viewable by select technical monitors in field locations for review and verification before being accepted by Federal Program Officers. Most grantees have the technology available to collect project location information and verify using a hand-held Geographic Positioning System unit (GPS). This is not required however, as the RCDB has a web-based GIS mapping function that can identify specific project sites for grantees that don't have access to GPS. The RCDB has the capability to look up and map geographic coordinates, and confirmation of geographic coordinates is part of the quality assurance/quality control plan associated with the RCDB. No other type of information technology is necessary to collect the majority of information that will be requested. A subset of the information that is collected is made available to the public over the internet once a database record is populated and approved for production, which ensures the data meets NOAA Section 515 Information Quality Guidelines. The restoration database that stores this information, first established in 2001, is in the midst of being upgraded, a process that will be completed in early FY13 to increase its functionality and utility.

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

Based on discussions with staff from other federal programs that undertake similar types of granting activities related to habitat and fisheries and that collect project-specific data, no evidence of duplication of information collection could be found. NOAA and The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat programs have worked to better align their respective databases (NOAA's RCDB and FWS HaBITS) to standardize data fields and definitions to enable meaningful comparison of habitat data. Grantees that receive project funding from more than one agency indicated that this information collection did not duplicate information collected by other agencies, as funds tend to go toward different project components; in fact, grantees found that NOAA's information collection was often useful in helping them report on project status to their other funding sources. The information provided to NOAA by grantees is unique to each project and progress report, and is typically used by grantees to report on project status to interested parties outside NOAA.

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

Only successful applicants are required to submit semi-annual and final progress reports. Specific instructions are provided to guide the preparation of semi-annual and final reports to

prevent submission of unnecessary information and to minimize the burden on grantees. The information to be collected is very basic in its nature and should not be a hardship or burden for small entities (approximately 4% of grantees) that receive NOAA community-based project funds to produce.

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

If the information collection is discontinued, NOAA's ability to precisely account for the expenditure of federal funds for voluntary restoration activities, and provide accurate data to support GPRA 'acres restored' and other performance measures, will be compromised. If this information is not conducted or conducted less frequently, it will compromise the agency's ability to use and build evidence of effectiveness for its restoration grant programs. There will be no means to respond to Congressional inquiries in a rapid, accurate, efficient and cost-effective manner. Conducting this information collection less frequently will not meet the standards of the NOAA Grants Management Division for semi-annual reporting, and would make it more difficult to determine and correct poor grantee performance, since less frequent collection provides insufficient information to monitor awards to ensure Federal monies are properly used. Altering collection frequency will also inhibit timely responses to Freedom of Information Act requests that may be submitted.

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

Not Applicable.

**8. Provide a copy of 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, 2012 (77 FR 14347) solicited public comment on this information collection renewal request. No comments were received.

Consultations with interested and affected persons are an integral part of this information collection, and are accomplished by discussions with a representative cross section of current grantees to explain and clarify the information needed and solicit suggestions for improvement, typically on a one-on-one basis. The information collection was most recently discussed with grantees conducting large-scale habitat restoration under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and with current national and regional habitat restoration partners. These discussions took place periodically from 2010 through 2012, and were between NOAA Federal Program Officers and grantee partners (e.g. FishAmerica Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, American Rivers, among others). This timeframe covers the period of



performance for most ARRA awards and NOAA's existing national and regional restoration partnership grants.

There was overwhelming support for the continued collection of this information and the electronic format in which it is collected; frequency of reporting and data elements were deemed appropriate, and data was readily available. As a result of these discussions, the form helped two of NOAA's partners (FishAmerica Foundation and the Hawaii Community Foundation) align their own reporting processes with those of NOAA. This made it easier for them to aggregate project accomplishments and streamline overall partnership accomplishment reporting. Grantees recognized that this collection not only provides NOAA with data critical for the purposes discussed above, but that it will, over time, reveal status and trends within categories of projects to help grantees strengthen the technical aspects of similar project types proposed for funding consideration and improve NOAA decision making. Consultations will continue with current and future grantees as necessary to ensure they understand the information collection requirements and to solicit suggestions for improvements.

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

No payments or gifts will be provided to respondents of this information collection other than remuneration of contractors or grantees implementing projects supported through the NOAA Restoration Center.

**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 information of a sensitive nature is collected.

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

Estimated burden hours and costs during one year for this renewed information collection will be 4,145 hours and \$145,625 respectively, as shown below. Costs are based on an average of \$35 per hour for professional labor. However, it should be noted that the cost for the semi-annual and final reports are included as personnel costs by grantees (either federal or matching funds), and are therefore not costs incurred by the public for this information collection\*. This amounts to less than 2% of programmatic funds that are used for record keeping and reporting purposes that are part of routine project management for grants recipients.

The Restoration Center annually provides 125 new awards on average, with an award period of 24 months. Three semi-annual reports and one final report are required for each award over a 24-month period totaling 500 reports over the life of these projects. Each year 2 semi-annual reports from 125 new grantees and 1 semi-annual and 1 final report from the previous year's 125 grantees will be submitted. Approximately 25 of these semi-annual and 75 of these final reports also require recipients to fill out Section D, adding a slight increase to annualized burden hours.

### Annual Burden Hour Estimates for NOAA Performance Progress Reports

| Instrument Components                    | Type of Report | Number of Respondents* | Total No. of Responses | Response Time (hrs) | Total Burden (hrs) |
|--|----------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Performance Progress Report - Cover Page | semi-annual    | 125                    | 3                      | 3                   | 1125               |
|  | final          | 125                    | 1                      | 5                   | 625                |
| Cover Page Continuation                  | semi-annual    | 125                    | 1                      | 0.5                 | 62.5 (63)          |
|  | final          | 125                    | 1                      | 0.5                 | 62.5 (63)          |
| A. Program Indicators                    | semi-annual    | 125                    | 3                      | 1                   | 375                |
|  | final          | 125                    | 1                      | 2                   | 250                |
| B. Performance measures                  | semi-annual    | 125                    | 3                      | 0.75                | 281.25 (281)       |
|  | final          | 125                    | 1                      | 1                   | 125                |
| C. Table of Activities and Funding       | semi-annual    | 125                    | 3                      | 2                   | 750                |
|  | final          | 125                    | 1                      | 3                   | 375                |
| D. Program/Project/Sub-award Management  | semi-annual    | 25                     | 3                      | 0.5                 | 37.5 (38)          |
|  | final          | 75                     | 1                      | 1                   | 75                 |
| <b>Total Hours Requested</b>             |                |                        |                        |                     | <b>4,145</b>       |

**\* Assumptions:**

125 new recipients annually whose awards run for 24 months.

125 new recipients turn in 2 semi-annual reports annually.

125 recipients from prior year awards turn in 1 semi-annual and 1 final report annually.

Semi-annual reports take less time to research and prepare than final reports.

Final reports are cumulative.

Cover Page Continuation is needed at the 1st semi-annual reporting period and final report only.

\*\*Section D - used by a subset of recipients that make sub-awards and/or receive awards over \$500,000.

Accountant Level III work at \$35/hour is required for bookkeeping and report writing.

Interim report costs: \$254 to \$271\*\* per respondent (slightly higher cost is for recipients that fill out Section D)

Final report costs: \$403 to \$438\*\* per respondent

375 semi-annual reports/year X \$254 = \$95,250

125 final reports/year X \$403 = \$50,375

TOTAL charge to CRP grants required for reporting\* = \$145,625

**Collection totals are 250 respondents, 500 responses, and 4,145 hours.** This includes the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, and gathering and maintaining project information (photos, press releases, partner contributions, volunteer hours, tracking of multiple project sites, etc) needed to answer survey questions based on information that awardees should have readily available. Respondents are limited to those organizations that have received funding through select NOAA Restoration Center programs. These estimates were determined from a representative sample provided by recipients that have been using the existing approved information collection to report grants progress to the NOAA Restoration Center through NOAA's Grants Online grants management system.

The estimated total annual burden hours for information collected from NOAA recipients under the currently approved form are unchanged from the prior approval.

**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).**

No capital or start-up costs are expected to result from this collection by the respondents. Any need for the purchase of a computer, software, or supplies required for project implementation, or for monitoring and data entry, are included as part of the grant request. Operations and maintenance costs are limited to writing reports and maintaining financial records; these too are included as part of the grant request. There are no costs for submission of reports, as they are submitted through grants.gov.

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

It is anticipated that twenty restoration specialists (full-time employees, or FTE) will devote no more than 5% of their time annually to input the information collected into a database, one computer specialist FTE will devote no more than 15% of their time annually to update quality controlled data and maintain GIS maps and webpage links, and supervise and task a contractor, and that one contractor will provide 10% of their time to maintain the database, work on change requests and subsequent enhancements and version releases. Assumptions are as follows:

20 restoration FTEs X (\$85,000 annual average salary) X (5% of their time) = \$85,000

1 computer engineer FTE X (\$102,000 annual average salary) X (15% of their time) = \$15,300

1 IT contractor X (\$102,000 annual average salary) X (10% of their time) = \$10,200

The annualized cost to the Federal government to conduct this information collection is estimated to be \$110,500. No equipment, overhead, printing or other costs should be involved with the processing of this information collection. The Restoration Center Database (RCDC) has been upgraded and a new version in a new programming language was released in July 2012. This recent enhancement will enable more powerful queries and faster responses to answer specific questions, and subsequent releases will incorporate key monitoring and evaluation data to allow evidence-based evaluation of program effectiveness.

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

There are no changes or adjustments from the currently approved information collection.

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

The results of this collection will not be published. A subset of the information is however made available to the public on the Restoration Center's home page at [www.nmfs.gov/habitat/restoration](http://www.nmfs.gov/habitat/restoration), under the "Programs and Projects" link, where the public can view projects by location or habitat type, see the project location on a map, and review an abstract of the project including funding information, project partners, and a contact for more information.

**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.