

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN CONSERVATION OUTREACH SURVEY
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0594**

A. JUSTIFICATION

This request is for extension and revision of this information collection: use of a previously administered survey, but in a different location.

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

These surveys will be used to enhance wild bottlenose dolphin conservation efforts by achieving three main goals. These are:

- (1) To better understand and define user groups who participate in dolphin-related activities, such as viewing, feeding, and/or other activities that may be harmful and illegal;
- (2) To assess the effectiveness of various outreach tools that were implemented as part of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) “Protect Dolphins” campaign, which educates the public that feeding and harassment of wild dolphins is illegal and harmful; and
- (3) To determine if there are more applicable and appropriate outreach tools to convey the “Protect Dolphins” campaign message to the intended audience.

The Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and its implementing regulations at 50 CFR 216 prohibit harassment and feeding of wild marine mammals. Feeding is specifically identified as a “take,” which means to harass, hunt, capture, or kill, or attempt to harass, hunt, capture, or kill any marine mammal. The harmful effects of feeding and harassing wild dolphins are well documented by scientific researchers. Feeding wild marine mammals alters their natural behavior; reduces their wariness of people and boats, which increases their risk of getting hit by a propeller and/or entangled in fishing line; harms them by feeding contaminated or inappropriate food and non-food items; and poses a significant safety risk to humans.

Due to the proliferation of illegal feeding and harassment activities, the NMFS initiated a nationwide campaign in 1997, called “Protect Dolphins,” to educate the public about the legalities and harm of feeding and harassing dolphins in the wild. The NMFS Southeast Regional Office (SERO) also developed marine mammal and sea turtle viewing guidelines to help recreational and commercial boaters view marine mammals responsibly and avoid harmful interactions. Since the initiation of the Protect Dolphins campaign, the SERO has also worked collaboratively with stakeholders on various outreach and education efforts to raise awareness about the harmful impacts of feeding and harassing dolphins in the wild, as well as how to responsibly view them.

Despite these outreach efforts, feeding and harassment of wild dolphins continue to increase in the Southeast United States, which may be attributed to both commercial and recreational user groups and the ability to enjoy water activities year-round. The Southeast United States (U.S.) has several known “hot-spots” in which commercial dolphin tours are prevalent, such as Panama

City/Destin, the Florida Keys, St. Petersburg/Tampa/Sarasota, and Indian River Lagoon, Florida; Hilton Head, South Carolina; Savannah, Georgia; and Corpus Christi, Texas. In some cases, tourists are brought to locations where dolphins are known to aggregate and provided with the opportunity to closely interact with dolphins in the wild. The extent to which dolphin feeding is encouraged on commercial dolphin tours is unknown, but it is certain these activities occur at some level, despite outreach efforts.

Prevalent feeding of wild dolphins by all user groups may also be contributing to other conservation concerns, such as dolphins removing bait and catch from recreational angler's gear. These interactions are increasingly evident with recreational boaters and anglers in many locations throughout the Southeast U.S. This behavioral change in the dolphin's foraging strategy results in fishing line entanglement and ingestion of both fishing line and lures/hooks. This is evident by a marked increase in dolphin strandings associated with fishing line and lures/hooks.

Due to the increases in harmful human interactions with dolphins in the wild, coupled with a diversity of user groups and target audiences, NMFS recognizes more information is still needed about the human dimension of this management issue. An effective way to collect this information is by directly asking those user groups and target audiences about their knowledge and attitudes of issues concerning harassment of dolphins and how that information was acquired. This can be accomplished through surveys and interviews administered in locations where these groups work or recreate. This project will assist NMFS in gathering information about the target audience and help determine more effective management and outreach strategies to decrease the prevalence of dolphin feeding and harassment throughout the Southeast United States, as well as measure the effectiveness of existing outreach strategies. Specifically, the collection of this information will aid and enhance NMFS' ability to reduce harmful and illegal interactions between humans and dolphins in the wild; foster public awareness about harmful interactions; and encourage responsible viewing of dolphins in the wild, thus aiding in their conservation.

People's age, race, gender, educational background, income level, place of residence, and other variables may influence their understanding and perspective of the natural environment. Other user group characteristics, such as where they get their information, current knowledge level, and perceptions and opinions regarding interacting with captive and wild dolphins are also critically important to discern for effective outreach and education tools. Understanding and defining user groups who feed and harass dolphins in the wild will assist in developing a more effective outreach approach targeting the appropriate audience, as well as the ability to measure its success. Clarifying and defining the target audience and objectives for the outreach program will also aid in more readily measuring the success of the program. Furthermore, understanding the target audiences' knowledge, perceptions, attitudes, motivations, and opinions before and after the implementation of the outreach program will provide a useful tool for measuring success.

This data collection effort was previously conducted in the Panama City, FL area because it has been a hotspot for illegal feeding and harassment of wild dolphins for almost two decades. Although the geographic locations for subsequent collections are currently unknown, the location for this requested survey will be a coastal tourism city in the Southeast United States with similar human-dolphin interaction concerns. Another collection is important to ground truth what was learned in Panama City and determine motivations to change attitudes and behaviors.

The following are some of the major findings from the Panama City survey:

- Large majorities of residents (60%), tourists (47%), and businesses (55%) said they were very concerned about protecting wild dolphins.
- Many respondents who expressed the most concern about protecting wild dolphins also indicated interest in feeding, swimming with, and touching dolphins in the wild.
- 30% of residents and 47% of visitors said they were very or somewhat interested in feeding dolphins in the wild; and 31% of residents and 42% of visitors were very or somewhat interested in closely interacting with dolphins in the wild, including swimming with, touching, and petting them. Residents and visitors stated television, movies, aquariums, word or mouth, personal experience, zoos, and wildlife parks most commonly created this interest.
- Slightly more than half of residents (56%) and businesses (55%) gave the correct answer that feeding wild dolphins is both illegal and harmful, while 40% of businesses said it was illegal but not harmful. Charter fishing businesses were most likely to say that feeding wild dolphins is illegal but not harmful.
- There was more variation in answers to the question of whether swimming with, touching, or petting dolphins in the wild is both harmful and illegal – 31% of businesses said it was illegal but not harmful; whereas, 41% of residents, 33% of tourists, and 39% of businesses said it was illegal and harmful. Newer businesses were more likely to indicate that these activities were not illegal.
- About half of businesses said they tell their guests how to view wild dolphins without disturbing and why it is important. Newer businesses were more likely to inform their guests, while a majority of businesses said they were willing to provide, display, or play pre-recorded educational materials to guests if these were provided at no cost.
- Generally, signs at marinas and boat ramps, information provided as part of boating safety education courses, and public service announcements on TV were the top ranked methods for disseminating outreach materials.

NMFS believes assessing the effectiveness of current outreach tools in at least two tourism locations is crucial to determine if the conservation messages are being conveyed and received by the intended audiences for two main reasons: (1) illegal feeding and harassment of wild dolphins continues to increase throughout the Southeast United States; and (2) educational messages have been implemented for well over a decade, and to date, there has not been an attempt to see if the messages have been received by the target audience.

Some of the specific questions the collection is designed to answer and help achieve the stated goals are as follows:

What general categories of existing outreach tools appear to have been effective in educating visitors, residents, and employees of recreation-based businesses in [insert location] of the legality and harm caused by feeding and harassing wild dolphins? Which existing categories of outreach tools have been ineffective at reaching the intended audiences with the intended outreach messages?

What currently underutilized outreach tools are potentially an effective means of educating visitors, residents, and employees of recreation-based businesses in [insert location] of the legality and harm caused by feeding and harassing wild dolphins?

Do demographic characteristics, such as household income and education level influence the effectiveness of various outreach tools?

Do the knowledge and attitudes of issues related to dolphin feeding and harassment differ according to the type of recreation-based business? Are certain types of recreation-based businesses more prone or more willing to provide education on these issues to their customers than other types of recreation-based businesses?

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 collection effort consists of surveys at various piers, tourist visitor centers, marinas, and beach-side hotels in the study location. There are two surveys: (1) one survey administered to visitors to these areas and to local residents; and (2) a separate survey administered to relevant commercial businesses operating in the study area. The two surveys will be administered at various times throughout the year based on their target audience.

The survey for visitors and local residents will be administered to ensure all months in which tourists visit the area are captured. The surveys will be administered in locations in the study area that target respondents who are most likely to participate in water-based activities that may lead to close interactions with wild dolphins (i.e. marina, docks, piers, etc).

The commercial business survey will be administered to businesses that provide water-based activities during medium peak season for the project area, such as July. Medium peak season is preferred over peak season, such as spring break, to avoid unduly burdening business owners when business is extremely high. Medium peak season is also preferred in the event some businesses close during non-peak seasons. Surveyors may, during subsequent trips to the study area, follow up with businesses that were not available during the first survey timeframe.

NMFS will use collected information to compare and assess the effectiveness of various education and outreach efforts under the Protect Dolphins campaign throughout the Southeast United States. The results will also be crucial in directing the development of future education and outreach efforts in areas where close human interactions with wild dolphins occur, as well as understanding attitudes and motivations.

Justifications for questions on each survey follow.

TOURISM/LOCAL RESIDENTS SURVEY

Q1: Asks respondent the level at which s/he is concerned with the protection of dolphins in the wild. Identifies the level of concern and provides a simple identification about the respondent's general feelings about protecting dolphins in the wild.

Q2: Identifies whether respondent has knowledge about the legality of feeding dolphins in the wild, as well as the potential harm caused to dolphins from feeding or attempting to feed.

Q3: If such knowledge is identified in Q2, the respondent is requested to identify which outreach tool(s) provided this knowledge. An extensive list is provided to help the respondent recall, as well as indicate if they cannot recall and why. The information from this question provides information as to whether a particular outreach tool may have been more effective in providing the desired outreach message(s) from Q2. The list of outreach methods provided in Q3 were merged, rather than provided separately, for the responses to Q2. Merging the list of outreach methods shortens the survey length, while enabling NMFS to collect the information needed to better assess the overall effectiveness of various outreach tools.

Q4-Q5: The respondent is asked whether s/he has heard it is acceptable to engage in particular activities of concern with dolphins in the wild. These questions help identify sources of misinformation for engaging in activities that are illegal, potentially illegal, and harmful to dolphins in the wild. If the respondent answers Q4 affirmatively, we ask for the source(s) of the erroneous information (Q5) and provide a list to help the respondent recall. The information obtained from these questions will help determine where these sources of misinformation were generated or provided, rather than speculating, and additional outreach needs to prevent those sources of misinformation.

Q6: Identify whether respondent has knowledge about the potential legality (i.e., harassment) and harm caused by swimming with, touching, or petting dolphins in the wild, as well as whether the respondent has knowledge of the potential for injuries inflicted to humans and dolphins by interacting with dolphins in the wild. This question is separate from Q2 because Q2 asks about the respondents' general knowledge as to whether feeding is illegal and harmful. Feeding is explicitly stated as illegal in the Marine Mammal Protection Act, whereas, swimming, petting, or touching dolphins in the wild is not explicitly stated as illegal but has the potential to be illegal and cause harm to dolphins. Separating these questions allows us to understand the respondents' general level of knowledge and perceptions about these various types of human interactions; those that are illegal and not illegal; and those that are harmful to dolphins and humans.

Q7: If such knowledge is identified in Q6, the respondent is requested to identify which outreach tool(s) provided this knowledge. An extensive list is provided to help the respondent recall. This will help determine if a specific outreach tool has been particularly effective in providing the desired outreach message(s), knowledge, and perceptions associated with Q6.

Q8: The respondent is asked to provide their personal opinion on the effectiveness of various outreach methods, as well as rating each of the 14 outreach tools as "very effective", "somewhat effective", "not very effective", or "not at all effective". The "other" category is provided in the event the respondent feels there is another effective means of outreach that was not provided. Common methods of outreach (i.e., brochures, articles, etc) were provided to rank their effectiveness, as well as innovative techniques, such as billboards and Podcasts. These innovative techniques were included because they have the potential to reach broad-scale audiences, and in the case of Podcasts, reach younger generations.

Q9: This question asks the respondent to indicate which form of media may have contributed to their interest and desire to engage in feeding, petting, touching, and/or swimming with dolphins in the wild. It also allows the respondent to indicate that they are not interested in these activities with dolphins in the wild. The goal of this question is to obtain information on what motivates

people to want to engage in behavior that is illegal, potentially illegal, and harmful to themselves or dolphins.

Q10: This question is to determine if the respondent is a full-time or part-year resident of the [insert location], or if they are a first-time visitor to the area or a repeat visitor.

Q11-17: These questions categorize the respondent's current visit to the [insert location]. To aid in categorizing their visit, respondents are asked: the length of the visit (Q11); the reason for the trip (Q12); how they traveled to [insert location] (Q14); and the type of lodging they stayed in during their visit (Q15). The respondent is asked the following questions to gain information on why they traveled to [insert location] and if part of their motivation for choosing [insert location] as a destination was the opportunity to participate in dolphin tourism activities; if viewing dolphins in the wild was the motivation for visiting the area (Q13); how many others were traveling with them (Q16); and in which water-based/shore-based recreational activities they intend to participate during the current visit (Q17). Full-time and part-year residents are not asked these questions because their levels of participation in dolphin tourism activities in [insert location] are determined by Q18. Including full-time and part-year residents in this series of questions may become duplicative.

Q18: This question asks respondents who are repeat visitors to [insert location], including year-round and part-year residents, the number of times they participated in wild dolphin tourism activities. This helps gauge the level of interest of year-round, part-year residents, and visitors for participation in tourism-style activities. It also helps determine if dolphin tourism is part of their motivation for living in the area year-round or visiting.

Q19-20: Identifies whether the respondent previously participated in wild dolphin viewing activities outside of the [insert location] (Q19), and if so, where and what activities (Q20). These questions are intended to collect information on where the respondent may have gained additional perceptions or received information related to the appropriateness of interacting with dolphins in the wild and how to interact with (responsibly or inappropriately) with dolphins in the wild. They are also helpful in identifying other potential locations for conducting outreach campaigns.

Q21-22: Respondents are asked if they would be more willing to participate in a dolphin viewing tour that practices responsible viewing of dolphins in the wild, as well as provides additional educational and conservation information. If the respondent answers “no” or “none of the above” to Q21, they are asked to answer Q22 and check all potential reasons that best characterizes their answer or provide an additional description. This information is helpful to gauge whether participants see the value in promoting responsible viewing of wild dolphins, especially if programs, such as Dolphin SMART, were implemented locally¹. If participants do not feel responsible viewing and associated information are worthwhile, the information from

¹ Dolphin SMART is a voluntary education program for commercial businesses to promote responsible advertising and viewing of dolphins in the wild. Dolphin SMART is currently implemented in Key West and Southwest, FL; Orange Beach, AL; and Hawai'i, with the goal of implementing in other areas of the southeast region and Hawai'i. For more information, please visit www.dolphinSMART.org.

Q22 helps to identify potential reasons and barriers to these conservation measures and programs.

Q23: Respondents who are year-round or part-year residents are asked whether they own a boat or jet-skis. Those who take out their own vessels on a regular basis and do not know about safe dolphin viewing practices, may repeatedly engage in behavior harmful to dolphins, suggesting the importance of targeting outreach activities for this group.

Q24: Respondents are also asked about memberships in recreation-based or conservation-based organizations, to identify the potential for other avenues for distributing outreach/education messages and products.

Q25-32: Demographic and socioeconomic questions. The questions were written to mirror those of the U.S. Census to the highest extent possible. The demographic and socioeconomic information collections include: zip code/country of residence (Q25); employment status (Q26); total household income (Q27); ethnicity and race (Q28 and Q29); primary language (Q30); gender (Q31), and level of education (Q32).

TOURISM-RELATED COMMERCIAL BUSINESS SURVEY

Q1: Asks respondent the level at which s/he is concerned with the protection of dolphins in the wild. Identifies the level of concern and provides a simple identification about the respondent's general feelings about protecting dolphins in the wild.

Q2: Identifies whether respondent has knowledge about the legality of feeding dolphins in the wild, as well as the potential harm caused to dolphins from feeding or attempting to feed.

Q3: If such knowledge is identified in Q2, the respondent is requested to identify which outreach tool(s) provided this knowledge. An extensive list is provided to help the respondent recall, as well as indicate if they cannot recall and why. The information from this question provides information as to whether a particular outreach tool may have been more effective in providing the desired outreach message(s) from Q2. The list of outreach methods provided in Q3 were merged, rather than provided separately, for the responses to Q2. Merging the list of outreach methods shortens the survey length, while enabling NMFS to collect the information needed to better assess the overall effectiveness of various outreach tools.

Q4-Q5: The respondent is asked whether s/he has heard it is acceptable to engage in particular activities of concern with dolphins in the wild. These questions help identify sources of misinformation for engaging in activities that are illegal, potentially illegal, and harmful to dolphins in the wild. If the respondent answers Q4 affirmatively, we ask for the source(s) of the erroneous information (Q5) and provide a list to help the respondent recall. The information obtained from these questions will help determine where these sources of misinformation were generated or provided, rather than speculating, and additional outreach needs to prevent those sources of misinformation.

Q6: Identify whether respondent has knowledge about the potential legality (i.e., harassment) and harm caused by swimming with, touching, or petting dolphins in the wild, as well as whether the respondent has knowledge of the potential for injuries inflicted to humans and dolphins by

interacting with dolphins in the wild. This question is separate from Q2 because Q2 asks about the respondents' general knowledge as to whether feeding is illegal and harmful. Feeding is explicitly stated as illegal in the Marine Mammal Protection Act, whereas, swimming, petting, or touching dolphins in the wild is not explicitly stated as illegal but has the potential to be illegal and cause harm to dolphins. Separating these questions allows us to understand the respondents' general level of knowledge and perceptions about these various types of human interactions; those that are illegal and not illegal; and those that are harmful to dolphins and humans.

Q7: If such knowledge is identified in Q6, the respondent is requested to identify which outreach tool(s) provided this knowledge. An extensive list is provided to help the respondent recall. This will help determine if a specific outreach tool has been particularly effective in providing the desired outreach message(s), knowledge, and perceptions associated with Q6.

Q8: The respondent is asked to provide their personal opinion on the effectiveness of various outreach methods, as well as rating each of the 14 outreach tools as "very effective", "somewhat effective", "not very effective", or "not at all effective". The "other" category is provided in the event the respondent feels there is another effective means of outreach that was not provided. Common methods of outreach (i.e., brochures, articles, etc) were provided to rank their effectiveness, as well as innovative techniques, such as billboards and Podcasts. These innovative techniques were included because they have the potential to reach broad-scale audiences, and in the case of Podcasts, reach younger generations.

Q9: Basic background information about the respondent and business to help characterize the nature of their business. Information collected includes category of water-based or wildlife-based commercial business.

Q10-13: These four questions ask the respondent specific information related to their business to better understand the demographics of the tourism business in [insert location], particularly related to wild dolphin tourism. General questions include: the number of years the business has been operating (Q10); the average size of vessels (Q11); if the business operates year-round (Q12); and if the business was initially started for wild dolphin tourism (Q13).

Q14-15: Those respondents identifying themselves as businesses engaged in wild dolphin tourism (Q13) are asked additional questions regarding whether there is an educational component to their trips or operations pertaining to responsibly viewing dolphins in the wild (Q14). If respondents answered affirmatively to Q14, they are asked which types of outreach methods/materials they provide (Q15). These questions will help gauge how many businesses participating in wild dolphin tourism provide some means of education pertaining to dolphin conservation and what type of products they use to provide their educational messages.

Q16-18: These questions assess the respondent's interest in participating in training pertaining to responsibly viewing dolphins in the wild for no cost or a low cost (Q16) and providing educational materials that are free of charge to promote responsible dolphin viewing (Q17). If respondents answer "yes" to Q17, they are asked what type of media products they would be willing to distribute, display, or play to their guest (Q18). These questions help identify the general level of interest in promoting responsible viewing of wild dolphins to their guests and other potential avenues for providing outreach tools to the general public. If they answered "no," they are asked to go to Q19.

Q19-20: Respondents are asked if they see the value in programs that enhance wild dolphin conservation by promoting responsible viewing and advertising techniques, while benefitting from participation incentives. If the respondent answers “no,” they are asked to go to Q20 to check all potential reasons that may characterize why they answered “no.” This information is helpful to gauge whether participants see the value in promoting responsible viewing and advertising of viewing wild dolphins. Specifically, it provides useful information to determine potential interest for implementing, locally, voluntary education and recognition programs, such as Dolphin SMART. If participants do not feel such programs are worthwhile, the information from Q20 helps identify potential reasons and barriers to these conservation measures and programs.

All data will be kept confidential and will not be released for public use except in aggregate statistical form (and without providing any personally identifying characteristics). Only authorized NMFS personnel will have access to this information as necessary to analyze the effectiveness of various components of the existing education and outreach program, as well as use the information to make improvements to the existing program.

It is anticipated that the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support publicly disseminated information. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)/ 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. This information collection is designed to yield data that meet 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 survey will not involve the use of information technology. Responses will be collected in-person or via telephone as a follow-up if the randomly selected individual is willing but unable to complete the survey at that time. The survey will not be available on the Internet for the public to print.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

NMFS previously administered this survey in Panama City, FL. The Panama City survey collection was the first survey conducted by NMFS to gather information on user groups potentially interacting with wild dolphins; assessing their level of knowledge or perception about the potential concerns with those interactions; where that knowledge or perception was gained; and how they prefer to receive their educational information. Since the launch of the Protect Dolphins campaign in 1997, the effectiveness of such outreach efforts -- especially those targeted to various locations like Panama City -- have not been evaluated. Because illegal activities, like feeding and harassment of wild dolphins, continues and may even be increasing in many areas of the Southeast United States, it is important to evaluate how we are educating applicable user

groups and if there is a more effective technique. It is also important to further understand the opinions, attitudes, and motivations that may impact conservation efforts.

No information will be collected that can be available through other means. Collecting this information in a different study area will not create duplication of effort or information collected and assessed.

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

This survey will have negligible impact on small businesses. The results may be made available on the Internet in summary form. The estimated 30 minute completion time includes 20 minutes to complete and review the survey and an additional 10 minutes to mail the survey, using the pre-addressed stamped enveloped provided, should the respondent choose to send back the survey, rather than completing it onsite. If the respondent completes the survey on site, the estimated completion time is 20 minutes. The survey requires a one-time completion.

Only the minimum data to meet the requirements of the above data needs are requested from participants. Most of the respondents for the survey targeting commercial businesses are considered small businesses; therefore, separate requirements based on the size of the business 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.

Throughout the past decade, NMFS developed public education and outreach tools, such as marine mammal viewing guidelines and the Dolphin SMART program, to encourage voluntary compliance with implementing regulations under the MMPA. Despite numerous outreach efforts within NMFS and with various stakeholders, feeding and harassment activities of wild bottlenose dolphins continue to increase in areas throughout the Southeast United States. The collection of this information will aid and enhance NMFS' ability to reduce the harmful and illegal interactions between humans and wild dolphins; foster awareness to the public on these interactions and their harmful nature to both humans and dolphins; and encourage responsibly viewing wild dolphins.

If the information collection is not conducted, NMFS' will not have a holistic ability to develop more effective outreach tools targeting appropriate user groups and a potentially more cost-effective public education and outreach campaign will be significantly reduced. As financial and personnel resources become more limited, it is increasingly important to engage in the most efficient and effective use of outreach tools and mitigation efforts to aid in the conservation of wild dolphins, as mandated under the MMPA. Without the information collected, NMFS will not be able to assess whether existing outreach tools were effective in their application in various locations. NMFS will also be unable to effectively create and disseminate future outreach and education information to intended audiences and in the format that will enhance its utility. Furthermore, as illegal feeding of wild dolphins throughout the Southeast United States continues to increase, despite consistent outreach efforts, additional conservation issues are arising, such as dolphins removing bait/catch from recreational gear and becoming entangled. The information collected will aid NMFS in understanding human behaviors that create and

reinforce additional conservation challenges that may not be otherwise understood, as well as provide potential avenues for mitigation strategies to curtail additional conservation challenges.

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

This information collection is consistent with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidelines.

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 soliciting comments on the information collection was published on April 17, 2012 (77 FR 22579).

One public comment was received applicable to the scope of notice.

Comment: The commenter expressed their strong support of NMFS' efforts to collect information related to unsafe human interactions with bottlenose dolphins, which poses risks to both dolphins and people. The commenter stated that the results should help NMFS develop more effective management measures, including outreach, monitoring, and enforcement. It also allows an opportunity for the public to participate in this process by providing their views and opinions.

Response: NMFS agrees and believes this collection effort will help with bottlenose dolphin conservation needs. Specifically, it will evaluate the effectiveness of current outreach measures at conveying the harm of human interactions with wild dolphins to both dolphins and people.

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

We will not provide payments or gifts to respondents.

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

As stated on the survey instrument, all responses will be handled as confidential in accordance with [NOAA Administrative Order 216-100](#), Protection of Fishery Statistics. All data will be protected and will not be released for public use except in aggregate statistical form (and without providing any personally identifying characteristics). The initial page of the survey will contain the following statement:

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. Any material identifying you will be destroyed at the end of the study.

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 in either survey.

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

The estimated total number of respondents for this survey is approximately 469 of 625 approached. Visitor and resident respondents will number approximately 375 individuals (out of 500 approached) in the study area and 94 commercial tourism and recreation businesses operating nearby (out of 125 approached). The estimated burden for the one-time response is 30 minutes per respondent, which accounts for the respondent's time to answer and submit the survey (NMFS conservatively estimates that it would take the respondent 20 minutes to complete the survey and another 10 minutes to submit the survey if the respondent chose to complete it later and mail it in a stamped envelope provided by NMFS). If the respondent completes the survey on site, which is likely to occur in the majority of cases, the estimated completion time is 20 minutes.

Estimating a 75% response rate from the sample of individuals (residents/tourists) and the up to 125 businesses would generate a total of 235 hours [188 hours (375 x 30 minutes) for visitors/local residents and 47 hours (94 x 30 minutes)] for commercial businesses] for this collection. The collection effort will take place over the course of one year during various seasons. Thus, this burden will be annualized over the entire period authorized for this collection (i.e. 3 years).

The annualized burden is 79 hours (63 hours for visitors/local residents and 16 for commercial businesses). Annualized respondents and responses would be 125 (375/3) for individuals and 31 (94/3) for businesses, totaling 156.

The estimated annualized cost to all respondents assumes a respondent wage value of \$15/hour. Using this assumed value, the annualized cost to respondents would be approximately \$1,185.00.

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 additional cost burden will be imposed on respondents, as the information will be collected either on site or by a telephone call initiated by the contractor.

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

NMFS Southeast Regional office would hire a professional survey research company to administer the survey instrument. NMFS previously hired a professional survey company to implement the collection in Panama City, Florida for a total cost of \$34,983.97. The work was

conducted in 2010 and 2011, so a similar cost is anticipated to conduct the survey in another coastal tourism location within the Southeast United States. Inflation costs are anticipated since future survey administration may be up to three years in the future, so NMFS anticipates a cost ranging from \$35,000 - \$45,000 to conduct the work.

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

Program Change:

This data collection effort was previously conducted in the Panama City, FL area because it has been a hotspot for illegal feeding and harassment of wild dolphins for almost two decades.

Although the geographic locations for subsequent collections are currently unknown, the location for this requested survey will be a coastal tourism city in the Southeast United States with similar human-dolphin interaction concerns. Another collection is important to ground truth what was learned in Panama City and determine motivations to change attitudes and behaviors.

The estimated burden has been reduced, based on results of the previous survey.

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

Results from this study and the prior collection in Panama City, FL will primarily be used for the purposes of program evaluation to ensure conservation messages are effective. The information gained through the surveys will be used internally by NOAA to help direct effective outreach strategies and measure their effectiveness. Results from this collection may also be used in scientific or management reports published by the agency. If results are published in any format, the results will only be presented in a statistical summary form (means, variances, and frequencies of categorical responses). Raw data will be available only to NOAA employees on a need-to-know basis.

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.

