

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
JONES and NOAA AWARDS NOMINATIONS
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0598**

A. JUSTIFICATION

This request is for revision and extension of a current information collection. The change is the digitalization of the Nomination form.

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

The 1990 reauthorization of the Coastal Zone Management Act authorized NOAA to “implement a program to promote excellence in coastal zone management by identifying and acknowledging outstanding accomplishments in the field.” As authorized in [Section 314 of the CZMA](#), the Walter B. Jones Awards recognize three categories of excellence: Coastal Steward of the Year, Excellence in Local Government, and Excellence in Coastal and Marine Graduate Study. The CZMA authorizes NOAA to conduct public ceremonies to acknowledge such awards, which allows NOAA to fund invitational travel and purchase awards for the Jones Awards.

In conjunction with the Walter B. Jones Awards, NOAA instituted several additional categories of awards, to recognize: Volunteer of the Year, Non-governmental Organization of the Year, Excellence in Promoting Cultural & Ethnic Diversity, Excellence in Business Leadership, and the Susan Snow Cotter Award for Excellence in Ocean and Coastal Resource (NOAA re-named this award in honor of Susan Snow Cotter in 2007).

NOAA issues a call for nominations to solicit nomination for each of the award categories.

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.

NOAA conducts the Jones/NOAA Awards on a biannual basis. The nominations provide background information on potential nominees, including name, address and other contact information as well as a description of the nominees’ accomplishments. The information is used to evaluate the nominees as candidates for awards, issue press releases and is provided in a program that is distributed at the award ceremony as well as on the webpage (<http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/>).

NOAA 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. 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 Call for Nominations brochure was developed as a digital document in 2012. The brochure was emailed to NOAA constituents and posted at <http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/programs/ocrm/jones-noaa-awards.html> and our partners were encouraged to distribute the information widely. There is no form; the instructions are in the brochure. Nominations can be accepted via hard copy, fax or email.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

No other Walter B. Jones Memorial and NOAA Excellence Awards program is conducted. Only the CZMA created the Walter B. Jones Awards and it directs NOAA to conduct the program.

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 involved.

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

The awards nominations could not be solicited and the awards would not be made and NOAA would not be able to adhere to the requirements of the CZMA.

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 October 1, 2012 (77 FR 59899) solicited public comments. No comments were received.

In the past few cycles, efforts to simplify the process have resulted in a very lean process. During the 2010 and 2012 Awards cycles, NOAA responded to only a handful of questions in response to the Call for Nominations. The questions asked included: Could the nomination be sent in via email (yes); how many nominations could be submitted by one nominator (no limit); and could the deadline be extended (generally this was yes, and the official deadline was publicly extended).

Following the 2012 cycle, NOAA solicited comments from a number of the nominators. The questions asked included:

1. The instructions for submitting a nomination were clear - yes or no.
2. The time it took to complete the required nomination elements was reasonable - yes or no.
3. The submission of a completed nomination was efficient - yes or no.
4. The items required for a nomination package are appropriate - yes or no.
5. Do you have any recommendations to improve the nomination process?

Responses received from those polled indicated that the instructions were clear, efficient, not overly burdensome, and appropriate. No one offered any additional comments on the awards process.

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.

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

The nominations are peer reviewed by NOAA agency and other Federal agency staff, state agency staff or private individuals. The reviewers conduct their review in confidence and return their rankings to NOAA for compilation. The winners are those nominations that rank highest. Only the names and brief descriptions of the winners are released.

As far as directly assuring nominators of confidentiality, it is assumed. Winners are not told who nominated them. The names of those not selected for awards are not announced.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

No questions of a sensitive nature are asked.

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

A nomination generally takes less than one hour to prepare. Historically, fewer than 25 nominations are received for any 2-year award cycle. Thus, a maximum burden of 25 hours is requested. Annualized: 13 responses and 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 are no costs other than postage or faxing for submissions not emailed. The maximum total cost would be \$150.00, annualized to \$78 (\$6 x 13).

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

Program administration, 200 hours = \$10,000.
3 hours per each of 5 nomination reviewers = \$750.

Total - \$10,750 every 2 years, annualized to \$5,375.

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

Adjustments: Previously, we had neglected to annualize the burden and cost; we have now corrected the annualized burden to 13 responses and hours, and \$78 in recordkeeping/reporting costs.

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

The only information made public is the names of the winning nominees as well as a brief description of their accomplishments. No other information is published.

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.