

## **SUPPORTING STATEMENT**

### **Generic Testing – Census of Aquaculture**

**OMB No. 0535-0248**

This mini-supporting statement is being submitted to OMB to define the need for conducting cognitive interviews under the Generic Testing docket. No more than 40 operations that produce aquaculture products will be contacted. The interviews are being conducted in preparation for the upcoming 2013 Census of Aquaculture.

#### **A. JUSTIFICATION**

##### **1. Circumstances making collection of information necessary.**

Following the 2005 Census of Aquaculture, NASS made several notations of changes necessary to improve the 2013 follow-on census. NASS will make adjustments to questions, layout and flow of the questionnaire based on feedback. Cognitive testing will be solely for the purpose of confirming that previously identified issues are addressed.

##### **2. How, by whom, and for what purpose information is to be used.**

The information gathered through cognitive interviews will be analyzed by our Research and Development Division along with our Census Section to see if additional modifications need to be made to the questionnaire, Interviewer's Manual, editing parameters, internet data collection instrument, etc. Approved changes will be implemented into the Census of Aquaculture survey, which is scheduled to be mailed out in December, 2013.

##### **3. Use of improved information technology.**

The cognitive interviews will be conducted by face to face interviews; no electronic equipment will be used in the interview. If the respondent inquires about the use of the internet when they fill out the live survey in December, the interviewers will be able to explain how that system will operate.

##### **4. Efforts to identify duplication.**

No additional efforts will be taken to identify duplication. Operators who are selected for the cognitive interviews will be drawn from our list of known aquaculture producers. Routine duplication procedures are performed before names were added to our List Frame.

**5. Methods to minimize burden of small businesses.**

The 40 cognitive interviews will be dispersed across the different types of aquaculture operations along with the different size groups to adequately represent the target population.

**6. Consequence if information collection were less frequent.**

This testing will only be conducted one time as a final test before the implementation of the 2013 Census of Aquaculture.

**7. Special circumstances.**

There are no special circumstances associated with this information collection.

**8. Federal register notice and consultation with outside persons.**

Not applicable.

**9. Payments or gifts to respondents.**

There are no payments or gifts to respondents.

**10. Confidentiality provided to respondents.**

The same confidentiality that is applied to the 2013 Census of Aquaculture will be applied to data collected during the cognitive interviews.

**11. Questions of a sensitive nature.**

There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

**12. Hour burden and annualized costs to respondents.**

The test is scheduled to be conducted in 8 states (AR, FL, LA, MD, MS, PA, VA, and WA). The test States were selected based upon their diversity of aquaculture production. The cognitive testing involves conducting 3 to 5 interviews in each of the States.

	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Hours per Interview</b>	<b>Total Burden Hours</b>
<b>Cognitive Testing</b>	40	1.5	60

Cost to the public of completing the questionnaires is assumed to be comparable to the hourly rate of those requesting the data. Reporting time of 60 hours is multiplied by \$24 per hour for a total cost to the public of \$1,440. NASS regularly checks the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Employment Statistics. Median wage rates for bookkeepers, farm managers, and farm supervisors are averaged to obtain the wage for the burden cost. The May, 2012 median wage for bookkeepers is \$16.91. The median wage for farm managers is \$33.32. The median wage for farm supervisors is \$20.99. The mean wage of the three is \$23.74.

**13. Total annual cost burden to respondents.**

There are no capital/start-up or ongoing operation/maintenance costs associated with this information collection.

**14. Annualized costs to federal government.**

Costs for conducting the test interviews are estimated at \$40,000. This will cover expenses for staff payroll, travel, survey analysis, and any other expenses that may be incurred while updating survey materials based on our findings. Several NASS employees that have been trained in conducting cognitive interviews will travel to the farm operations in the 8 selected states to conduct the surveys.

Due to the variety of aquaculture products (shellfish, food and sport fish, catfish, trout, ornamental fish, crustaceans, mollusks, oysters, crabs, etc.) that are included in this survey we need to conduct tests in different regions of the country. The \$40,000 includes travel expenses and hotel accommodations for the individuals who will be conducting the cognitive interviews with the farm operators. Based on recent expenses that were incurred for other tests conducted by NASS we came up with an average cost per questionnaire. This combined with costs for our Research Division to develop the test questions along with analyzing the data following the interviews, the total costs for testing 40 questionnaires is estimated at \$40,000.

**15. Reasons for changes in burden.**

This supporting statement addresses the cognitive interviews that were not included in the Census of Aquaculture docket.

**16. Tabulation, analysis, and publication plans.**

No data will be published from these tests. Data are for internal use only.

**17. Request for approval of non-display of expiration date.**

There is no request for approval of non-display of the expiration date.

**18. Exceptions to certification statement.**

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.

**B. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS:**

**1. Respondents universe, sampling and response rate.**

From the known aquaculture operations that are located in the 8 test states (AR, FL, LA, MD, MS, PA, VA, and WA) our Research and Development Division will work with Field Offices to select operations that produce various aquaculture products.

Cognitive interviews will be conducted with 40 aquaculture operations from the 8 test States. The operations that will be selected will have historic information on file with NASS identifying the type of products they produce. We will also select operations that have a history of being very responsive to NASS surveys. We are expecting a 100% response rate for the test questionnaires.

**2. Procedures for the collection of information.**

Interviewers will follow standard cognitive interviewing techniques as defined in the original Supporting Statement Part A for this docket.

Cognitive and Usability Laboratory and Field Techniques are other qualitative methods that refer to a set of tools employed to study and identify errors that are introduced during the survey process. These techniques are generally conducted one-on-one with respondents. Cognitive techniques are generally used to clarify the question-response process, whereas usability is generally used to understand the physical features of a survey, for instance, its display and navigational features. In concurrent interviews, respondents are asked to think aloud as they actually answer the survey. In

retrospective interviews, respondents answer the survey as they would normally, then 'think aloud' afterwards. Other techniques described in Survey Research and Survey Methodology literature will be employed as appropriate. These include follow-up probing, memory cue tasks, paraphrasing, confidence rating, response latency measurements, free and dimensional sort classification tasks, and vignette classifications. The objective of all of these techniques is to aid in the development of surveys that work with respondents' thought processes, thus reducing response error and burden. These techniques have also proven useful for studying and revising pre-existing questionnaires.

**3. Information collected adequate for intended uses.**

Operations with a history of cooperation to NASS surveys will be selected for this test. Non-response is not expected to be an issue for this test.

**4. Test of procedures or methods.**

Not applicable.

**5. Individuals consulted on statistical aspects of survey.**

The NASS census statistician responsible for the Census of Aquaculture is Julie Searle, Census Section, Census Planning Branch, Census and Survey Division; Branch Chief is Chris Messer, (202) 690-8747. The statistician is responsible for coordination of OMB approval, questionnaires, data collection procedures, data processing, and field office support.

Selection of methods of testing and providing of training is done by the Research and Development Division; Chief Cognitive Research Methodologist is Jaki McCarthy, (703) 877-8000. Statistical Methodology Research Branch Chief is Wendy Barboza, (703) 877-8000. Geospatial Information Branch Chief is Jeff Bailey, (703) 877-8000.

June 2013

Revised July 2013