

Email Language for Initial Contact

Dear [Respondent Name]—

Hello, I am [Name of Team Member], a social scientist with NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science or NCCOS (<http://oceanservice.noaa.gov>). NCCOS is a scientific research organization within NOAA's National Ocean Service.

I am contacting you to invite your participation in a survey that we are conducting on the status and value of coral reefs in the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI). Specifically, we are inviting people who work as SCUBA divers in the USVI to answer questions about their diving experience, as well as complete a mapping exercise to provide important spatial information on the coral reef areas that they use.

We are contacting you because you were identified as a professional SCUBA diver by a member of the research team, a local partner in the USVI or a previous survey respondent. The survey is voluntary, but your participation would be greatly appreciated. We recognize that local divers who regularly use coral reefs have unique knowledge that is needed to understand the importance of coral reefs to the community, as well as coral reef health and resiliency.

In the coming weeks, I will be contacting you by phone to describe the project in more detail and to request your participation in the survey.

I look forward to talking with you about our research project. In the meantime, if you have any questions about the project, please feel free to contact me by email at [email address here] or by telephone at [phone number here]. [If you like, you may also contact the NOAA project lead, Dr. Theresa Goedeke by email at theresa.goedeke@noaa.gov or phone at 301-713-3028 x237].

Kind Regards,
[Name of Team Member]

Telephone Contact Script

Greeting and Introduction

Good [Morning, Afternoon or Day], this is [Name of Team Member]. I am a social scientist with NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science or NCCOS. May I speak with [Name of Respondent]? [Repeat greeting and introduction for respondent.]

If you remember, I contacted you by email recently to invite your participation in a survey that we are conducting on the status and value of coral reefs in the U.S. Virgin Islands. We are inviting professional SCUBA divers to answer questions about their diving experience, as well as to complete a mapping exercise providing important spatial information on the coral reef areas that they use. I wanted to follow up with you today to explain the project in more detail, answer any questions that you might have, and learn if you would be willing to participate in the research.

Project Detail

Let me provide just a little more background on the research project. This survey is one part of a larger research project geared toward creating a tool that will allow natural resource managers to identify and characterize the jurisdiction's best and most valuable coral reef areas. The tool will combine data that describes the physical, biological, ecological and social elements of coral reef ecosystems in the USVI. The tool will help territorial managers to answer the following key questions:

- Where are the best examples of healthy coral reefs?
- Where are the reefs with the highest potential for recovery?
- Where are the threats to coral reefs located relative to priority reefs?
- Which reefs are most important to the professional SCUBA diving community?

Local knowledge held by individuals like you is also needed so that we can understand the human use-value of particular reefs, as well as learn the status of those reefs in terms of health and resiliency. Our objective is to collect spatially explicit data on where you go to dive, how you use particular areas, and what your perceptions are about the health status and recovery potential of familiar reefs. We are contacting you because you were identified as a professional SCUBA diver by a member of the research team, a local partner in the USVI or a previous survey respondent.

Now let me provide just a little information about the survey itself. The survey is taken online by respondents using a special survey administration tool. The survey includes questions and a mapping exercise. The mapping exercise is very important because this is how you will provide spatial information on the coral reefs that you know best. The mapping exercise is easy to navigate; it looks a lot like a Google map. It takes the average person about 30 minutes to complete survey, both the questions and mapping exercise. However, you can take as much time as you choose to complete the survey.

Once you agree to participate, we will send a link with a URL and passcode via email so that you can log into the survey. If needed, you will have the option of completing the survey with the help of a research team member. We know that not everyone has a computer or ready access to the Internet, so we are happy to provide in-person assistance for people who want to participate, but don't have the ability to do so themselves. We can also provide assistance remotely, if this is needed.

Summary & Conclusion

Now that I have explained the study, would you be interested in participating?

- No--Okay, no problem. Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. If you change your mind and decide that you would like to participate, please just let me know.
- Yes--Great, thank you very much. Would you like to participate unassisted?
 - Yes--- Okay, we will send you an email with the URL and passcode so that you can complete the survey. If you have questions while completing the survey, just let me or another member of our research team know.
 - No--- Okay, we can assist you either in-person or remotely over the Internet. Do you have access to a computer and the Internet? If yes, we can help you remotely to navigate through the survey. If not, we can schedule a time to meet with you in person to complete the survey with you. [Record the respondent's preference for assistance.]

Thank you again for talking with me today.

Email Providing Survey URL

Dear [Name of Respondent]—

Thank you again for agreeing to participate in our survey. Your participation is greatly appreciated! Below you will find a URL and a passcode. Please do not share them with other persons.

URL:

Passcode:

The survey is located online at this URL. You may go to the survey by either clicking the link here or by pasting the URL into a web browser. Once you arrive at the survey introductory page, just enter your passcode and press “Enter” to start the survey.

Please let us know if you have any difficulty with the survey administration tool or if you have questions about the survey or the project, generally. You may contact any of our survey team members:

Theresa Goedeke, Lead	theresa.goedeke@noaa.gov	301-713-3028 x237
Maria Dillard	maria.dillard@noaa.gov	843-762-8929
Angela Orthmeyer	angela.orthmeyer@noaa.gov	301-713-3028 x108

Sincerely,
[Name of the Team Member]