

**1 Supporting Statement A for
Paperwork Reduction Act Submission**

OMB Control Number 1018-0066

**Marine Mammal Marking, Tagging, and Reporting Certificates and
Registration of Certain Dead Marine Mammal Hard Parts
50 CFR 18.23(f) and 18.26**

Terms of Clearance: None

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

Under section 101(b) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, (MMPA) as amended, Alaska Natives residing in Alaska and dwelling on the coast of the North Pacific or Arctic Ocean may harvest polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*), northern sea otter (*Enhydra lutris kenyoni*), and Pacific walrus (*Odobenus rosmarus divergens*) for subsistence or handicraft purposes. Section 109(i) of the MMPA authorizes the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary) to prescribe marking, tagging, and reporting regulations applicable to the Alaska Native subsistence and handicraft take. Under section 50 CFR 18.26, collection of certain dead marine mammal hard parts by non-Natives is permitted. Any bones, teeth, or ivory of any dead marine mammal may be collected from a beach or from land within ¼-mile of the ocean. This collection of information allows us to track who has registered beach found hard parts and determine if marine mammal hard parts were legally taken. Without authority to collect this information, we would not be able to distinguish between Native legal harvests and non-Native collection. Acting on behalf of the Secretary, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (we, Service) published regulations at 50 CFR 18.23(f) and 50 CFR 18.26(a)(b)(c)(d). These regulations require, among other things, that Alaska Natives and non-Natives report harvest or collection of marine mammals to the Service and have them tagged.

2. Indicate how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information is to be used. If the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support information that will be disseminated to the public, explain how the collection complies with all applicable Information Quality Guidelines.

We use the information that we collect from Alaska Natives to operate the Marking, Tagging, and Reporting Program (MTRP). This program improves our decision making ability by substantially expanding the quality and quantity of harvest and biological data upon which we base future management decisions. Further, it provides us the ability to make inferences about the condition and general health of the populations. Without authority to collect this harvest information, our ability to measure the take of polar bears, northern sea otters, and walrus would be inadequate. Harvest information allows us to make rational, knowledgeable decisions regarding the Alaska Native harvest.

We use three forms to collect harvest information on Alaska Native harvest:

- FWS Form 3-2414 (Polar Bear Tagging Certificates).
- FWS Form 3-2415 (Walrus Tagging Certificates).
- FWS Form 3-2416 (Sea Otter Tagging Certificates).

The information we collect from Alaska Natives is the same as currently approved. We collect information on:

A. Date of kill. The date of kill provides information on chronology of the harvest that will be used in population modeling and in determining which cohorts are being killed.

B. Sex of the animal. This information is used in population modeling, determining the status of populations, and predicting population trends.

C. Kill/collection Location. This information yields insights on the distribution and relative abundance of the three species, the level and intensity of the harvest, and the harvest impacts on the species and their subpopulations.

D. Form of transportation used to make the kill of polar bears (3-2414). This provides information on the level of use of available transportation methods. Such data are useful in determining trends toward the use of more modern and efficient means of transportation, which may increase the mobility of Alaska Natives and possibly increase the level of harvest.

E. Amount of time (i.e., hours/days) spent hunting each polar bear (3-2414). The amount of effort exerted to harvest these animals varies with the availability of animals, individual hunter skills, weather conditions, etc. With other factors being constant, the amount of time necessary to take these species is an indicator of density and/or availability. The use of catch per unit effort is well established as a requirement of effective wildlife management.

F. Condition of the polar bear and whether or not cubs were present (3-2414). We use this information (1) as an indicator of polar bear physiological condition across their range based upon five newly standardized condition categories and (2) to supplement basic polar bear production and survival information based upon hunter observations.

G. Type of take for walrus (LK = live killed, BF = beach found; (3-2415). This information increases the accuracy of the known mortality and harvest data by discriminating between a walrus killed for subsistence purposes or found dead and salvaged. Requiring all ivory that has been taken or collected (pursuant to the Alaska Native exemption) to be marked, tagged, and reported also simplifies Service enforcement efforts.

H. Number of otters present in and number of otters harvested from a pod (3-2416). We use this information as an indicator of both otter density across range and hunter effort.

I. Name of the hunter, collector, or possessor of the specified parts at the time of marking, tagging, and reporting. The tagging officials located in the individual villages are paid based on the number of animals tagged. The name and signature of the hunter/collector are intended for purposes of internal control, and to reduce the chance of false reporting for the tagging official's economic gain.

We do not place any additional reporting burden on the Alaska Natives. Service personnel or authorized Service representatives will obtain other information on the reporting forms without input from the Alaska Native hunter.

We are proposing to collect information from non-Native collectors on FWS Form 3-2406 (non-Native Marine Mammal Certificate). U.S. Fish and Wildlife marking, tagging, and reporting employees and Law Enforcement personnel will collect information from non-Native collectors. Non-Native collectors may retain marine mammal hard parts, if they are registered within 30

days. This collection of information allows us to track who has registered beach found hard parts and determine if marine mammal hard parts were legally taken. We collect information on:

- A. Date tusks are tagged.**
- B. Village or town where tusks are tagged.**
- C. Tag number of plastic-headed wire tag used for left tusk.**
- D. Tag number of plastic-headed wire tag used for right tusk.**
- E. Date found.**
- F. Age of walrus.**
- G. Sex of walrus.**
- H. Tusk circumference at gum line.**
- I. Tusk length from gum line to tip along front side following the curve of the tusk.**
- J. Record the date tusks are tagged.**
- K. Exact location of kill or find.**
- L. Tag number for polar bear skull.**
- M. Tag number for sea otter skull.**
- N. Location and date collected of any polar bear, sea otter or (non-tusk) walrus hard part.**
- O. Any information of interest about the beach found hard part collected.**
- P. Name of the person that collected the hard part.**
- Q. Collector's address.**
- R. Collector's phone number.**
- S. Collector's date of birth.**

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology; e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden [and specifically how this collection meets GPEA requirements].

The forms are currently available in paper format only. We considered the possibility of using improved information technology to reduce burden on the Alaska Natives, but were unable to identify any such technology at this time. Much of the improved information collection and reporting technology that is commonplace in the contiguous 48 States does not yet reliably exist in coastal Alaska due to the remoteness and the social economic conditions in many of these communities.

The requested information is unique to each individual Alaska Native hunter, or non-Native collector, and no other sources are available. The information changes with each location and each animal killed or collected, and it is necessary for the individual hunter(s) and collector(s) to provide the required parts of each animal killed/collected and the information associated with those kills/finds. We have attempted to minimize the burden on Alaska Natives by establishing a network of individuals in this program at strategic locations around the State. These individuals are in place to receive reports from Alaska Native hunters so that time necessary for complying with these marking and reporting stipulations is minimized. However, it is necessary for hunters to report in person each individual kill so that Service representatives can (1) attach marks and tags to the marine mammal parts and (2) collect information important for wildlife management purposes from the parts provided (e.g., measurements of polar bear and northern sea otter skulls and walrus tusks).

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

No similar real-time information is currently being collected for these species and populations nor are we aware of any similar marking program currently in use.

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

This information collection does not impact small businesses or other small entities.

6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

If the collection were not conducted or conducted less frequently, we would lose the ability to census the entire harvest annually and to mark all available specimens for law enforcement

purposes. Our capability to scientifically manage polar bear, Pacific walrus, and northern sea otter harvest in Alaska would be seriously compromised. If non-Native collected beach found hard parts were not tagged we would not be able to distinguish between Native legal harvests and non-Native collection. There is no information otherwise available that can be used in place of the information that we currently collect on the reporting forms.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:

- * **requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**
- * **requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**
- * **requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**
- * **requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records, for more than three years;**
- * **in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;**
- * **requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**
- * **that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or**
- * **requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.**

We ask respondents to report information more often than quarterly. The MTRP is intended to gather reports of all kills and to tag or mark, as appropriate, all skins, skulls, and tusks of marine mammals to reduce illegal trade in walrus ivory and polar bear and northern sea otter skins. Collecting information from non-Natives is required to inhibit illegal trade of marine mammal hard parts. We use the data from the reports for management of polar bears, northern sea otters, and walruses. If these reports were submitted quarterly rather than as now required (i.e., within 30 days of take), the accuracy of the data would be seriously compromised, thereby reducing our ability to make sound management decisions. Increased illegal traffic of marine mammal parts could ensue. There are no other circumstances that require us to collect information in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines

8. Provide the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice (or in response to a PRA statement) and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments.

Describe 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. [Please list the names, titles, addresses, and phone numbers of persons contacted.]

On November 8, 2013, we published a Federal Register notice (78 FR 67184) informing the

public of our intent to ask OMB to renew approval for this information collection and soliciting comments for 60 days. The comment period ended on January 7, 2014. We received one comment from a private citizen. The commenter submitted an email objecting to the killing of polar bears in general, but did not address the information collection requirements on which we sought comment. The regulations at 50 CFR 18.23(a) reaffirm the Native exemption for Alaskan Natives, which allows for the taking (harvest) of marine mammals, (including polar bears) by any Indian, Aleut, or Eskimo who resides in Alaska and who dwells on the coast of the North Pacific Ocean or the Arctic Ocean may take any marine mammal without a permit, subject to the restrictions contained in this section 18.23, if such taking is:

- (1) For subsistence purposes, or
- (2) For purposes of creating and selling authentic native articles or handicraft and clothing, and
- (3) In each case, not accomplished in a wasteful manner.

In 2013, we interviewed village taggers already participating in the program:

Winston Davies P.O. Box 1721 Wrangle, AK 99929	Tony Okpealuk P.O. Box 563 Teller, AK 99778
Casey Iyakitan P.O. Box 78 Gambell, AK 99742	Dean Kulowiyi P.O. Box 48 Savoonga, AK 99769
Jodeva Oozeva P.O. Box 59 Gambell, AK 99742	Frank Huges P.O. Box 596 Kake, AK 99830

Results from these interviews indicate that our estimate of the burden required to complete the tagging certificates is correct and has not changed since the last renewal. One individual was concerned with a question on the Polar Bear form. The concern was in reference to the transportation block on the polar bear certificate. The individual thought that the block Car/Truck was not appropriate. We explained to the individual that in some locations in the State of Alaska, cars/trucks are used for the transportation of hunters. This person is from an isolated village without cars and trucks.

We did not make any changes to our requirements, based on these comments.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

We do not provide payments or gifts to respondents.

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

The hunter must print his name and sign the certification containing harvest information, but we do not ask for social security numbers or other sensitive information. We ask for the following information from the non-Native collectors: name, date of birth, phone number, and address of the collector. This information is protected by provisions of the Privacy Act of 1974.

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.

We do not ask questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

We estimate that we will receive 2,140 annual responses totaling 535 annual burden hours. We estimate the total dollar value of the annual burden hours is \$15,124 (rounded). The Bureau of Labor Statistics May 2013 State Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates lists the mean hourly wage for persons in fishing, farming, and forestry occupations in Alaska as \$20.19 (http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_ak.htm#45-0000). We multiplied the hourly wage by 1.4 to account for benefits in accordance with BLS news release USDL 14-0390, released March 12, 2014, Employer Costs for Employee Compensation—December 2013, resulting in a total hourly cost factor of \$28.27. This rate is likely high for most subsistence users.

ACTIVITY	ANNUAL NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	ANNUAL NUMBER OF RESPONSES	COMPLETION TIME PER RESPONSE	TOTAL ANNUAL BURDEN HOURS	\$ VALUE OF ANNUAL BURDEN HOURS (\$28.27/HR)
3-2414 (polar bear)	25	60	15 minutes	15	\$ 424.05
3-2415 (walrus)	100	500	15 minutes	125	\$3,533.75
3-2416 (sea otter)	75	1,280	15 minutes	320	\$9,046.40
3-2406 (non-Native)	300	300	15 minutes	75	\$2,120.25
TOTALS	500	2,140		535	\$15,124.45

13. Provide an estimate of the total [nonhour] cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information.

There is no nonhour burden cost. The only foreseeable nonhour burden cost would be travel expenses that could be incurred by the Alaska Native hunters to comply with the rule. Since we have personnel or authorized representatives in individual villages or in nearby villages to do the actual marking and tagging, travel costs to Alaska Natives are not significant and in the majority of instances do not occur.

14. Provide estimates of annualized costs to the Federal Government.

We estimate the total annual cost to the Federal Government to administer this information collection is \$165,496. This is a decrease from the costs reported in previous years because we are not reporting Law Enforcement costs this year. While LE staff are involved in enforcement of the MTRP, they are not directly involved with the information collection.

To calculate salary costs, we used the Office of Personnel Management Salary Table 2014-Alaska to determine the annual wage. We multiplied the annual wage by 1.5 to account for benefits in accordance with BLS news release USDL 14-0390. We estimated the percentage of time spent by each staff person annually to administer this information collection.

Position/Cost	Grade/Step	Annual Wage Incorporating a locality payment of 24.69%	Percent of time working on MTRP	Total Annual Cost (rounded)
Salary Costs				
Wildlife Biologist MTRP	GS 11/4	\$69,663	67%	\$41,797.80
Natural Resource Specialist MTRP	GS 09/4	\$57,577	67%	\$38,576.59
Clerical	GS 7/1	\$42,792	33%	\$14,121.36
Payments to Taggers				\$35,000
Cost of Tags and supplies				\$6,000
Travel				\$30,000
Total				\$165,495.75

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

We are reporting 2,140 annual responses totaling 535 burden hours, which is an increase of 745 responses and 186 hours from our previous submission.

- We are reporting as a program change, 300 responses and 75 annual burden hours associated with the use of FWS Form 3-2406.
- We are reporting as an adjustment, a net increase of 445 responses and 111 annual burden hours. This adjustment is a result of our reestimating the number of responses based on our experience in administering this collection.

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

Results are tabulated quarterly, for management purposes and, along with population census data, a determination is made if a population is depleted as defined in the MMPA. Summarized information is occasionally presented at both internal external technical and scientific meetings.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

We will display the OMB control number and expiration date.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.