

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

National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program (NGGDPP)

OMB Control Number 1028-0087

Terms of Clearance: None

A. Justification

- 1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information**

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program (NGGDPP) is authorized in Section 351 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Public Law 109-58). The objectives of the Program as outlined in the Act are to:

- (1) Archive geologic, geophysical, and engineering data, maps, well logs, and samples;
- (2) Provide a national catalog of archival material; and
- (3) Provide technical and financial assistance related to the archival material.

The USGS NGGDPP offers financial support to State geological agencies to preserve geoscientific samples and create associated metadata that describe the physical samples and sampling locations. The purpose of preserving and enhancing access to these geoscientific collections is to improve the breadth of information available to inform science and decision-making now and in the future. The USGS has established and continues to develop and advance a digital infrastructure, known as ScienceBase (www.sciencebase.gov), to promote data integration, preservation, and access. The NGGDPP National Digital Catalog resides on the ScienceBase platform and provides access to physical sample collections managed by State geological agencies. The National Digital Catalog helps to preserve the geoscience assets of the Nation and serves as a comprehensive source of geoscience data and materials to serve national needs today and in the future.

- 2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection. [Be specific. If this collection is a form or a questionnaire, every question needs to be justified.]**

Respondents submit proposals to acquire funding for State geological surveys to participate in a national effort to maintain geological and geophysical data and samples and to address their preservation and data rescue needs. The proposals request federal funds to inventory, assess, and preserve the condition of geoscientific collections and individual physical samples; create metadata for individual samples and collections; create or update digital infrastructure, including data migration to contemporary formats to assure data are not lost due to recording media degradation or changing data recording formats or software programs; and rescue data at risk. This collection will ensure that sufficient and relevant information is available to evaluate and select proposals for funding. Financial assistance is awarded annually on a competitive basis following the evaluation and ranking of State proposals by a review panel composed of

representatives from the Federal government, State geological surveys, and external representatives.

The respondents submit a final technical report and complete an online inventory (survey) of the condition of current collections summarizing the results of the work funded by the grant. The report references the inventory and contains a comparison of actual accomplishments to the goals established for the work period; reasons why established goals were not met, if applicable; and other pertinent information. This information is used by the USGS NGGDPP Program to evaluate current year success and determine the need to support additional State geological inventories and metadata collection.

The NGGDPP uses Standard Forms 424, 424a, and 424b. Applicants submit proposals for funding in response to Notices of Funding Availability published by the NGGDPP at Grants.gov and the NGGDPP web pages. Applicants submit a proposal through Grants.gov. NGGDPP collects the following information under each Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA):

- (1) The proposal narrative must include: primary investigator's contact information, applicant organization, collaborating organizations, short description of the project, project scope, technical approach, skills and capabilities of the applicant and staff performing the work, commitment to the effort, and organizational and managerial capacity.
 - (2) Proposed budget breakdown must provide detailed information about how the funds will be used.
 - (3) Letters of support and/or commitment that are used to demonstrate the project's viability.
 - (4) Completed Standard Forms 424, 424a, and 424b.
- 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].**

All proposals must be submitted electronically via [Grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) (<http://www.grants.gov>). All application instructions and forms are available on the Internet for filling and printing by the public. Hard/paper submissions are not accepted. Final reports are entered online or submitted by electronic mail. Spreadsheets containing metadata describing physical samples are electronically submitted to the National Digital Catalog.

- 4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.**

Due to the unique nature of this program and authorizing legislation, no other Federal agency collects this information. No duplication occurs.

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

The NGGDPP has made efforts to keep the amount of information requested to a minimum for all applicants. The information has to be sufficient to fulfill the requirements of the authorizing statutes, as well as sufficient to make a competitive funding decision. We do not believe the amount of information requested has a significant impact on small entities, as they are asked to provide minimum information needed to compete for financial assistance under this program.

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.

Section 351 of the Energy Policy Act directs the Secretary of the Interior, through the Director of the USGS, “to carry out a National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program.” Failure to collect this information would result in lost opportunities to improve access to and preservation of valuable earth science data collected at great expense over decades by State geological surveys and agencies of the Department of the Interior.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner: (i) requiring respondents to report more often than quarterly, (ii) requiring respondents prepare written responses in fewer than 30 days after receipt, (iii) requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document, (iv) retain records for more than 3 years; (v) 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; (vi) the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB; (vii) that includes a pledge of confidentiality not supported by authority established in statute or regulation; requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets or other confidential information.

There are no circumstances that require NGGDPP to collect the information in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify 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 [and in response to the PRA statement associated with the collection over the past three years] and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

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.]

Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every 3 years — even if the collection of information activity is the same as in prior periods. There may be

circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.

On March 24, 2015, we published a Federal Register notice (77 FR 12871) announcing that we would submit this information collection to OMB for approval. The notice provided a 60-day public comment period ending on May 26, 2015. We did not receive any comments in response to this notice.

In addition to our Federal Register notice, individuals consulted on this information collection are listed below. With their input, the burdened hour estimates were increased from previous PRA submission. The updated burdened hours are provided in Table 1. They confirmed the instructions were clear and the frequency of collection was not too burdensome. No suggestions for any adjustments or changes to the instructions or frequency of collections were provided.

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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 other than the remuneration of grantees.

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

No assurance of confidentiality is given to respondents. We will protect information from respondents considered proprietary under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) and implementing regulations (43 CFR part 2), and under regulations at 30 CFR 250.197, "Data and information to be made available to the public or for limited inspection." We intend to release the project abstracts and identify the State awardees for funded projects only.

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. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

The collection does not include sensitive or private questions.

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

We estimate the total burden hours for this collection will be 1,324. Our estimates are based on our own knowledge and past 8 years of experience with this grants program and the outreach described in question 8. We expect to receive approximately 32 applications annually. It takes each applicant approximately 38 hours to complete the narrative and present supporting documents. This includes the time for project conception and development, proposal writing and reviewing, and submitting the proposal application through Grants.gov (totaling 1,324 burden hours). We anticipate awarding 27 grants per year. The award recipients must submit a final technical report and complete an inventory. We estimate that it will take approximately 4 hours to complete the requirement for the report (totaling 108 hours).

We estimate the dollar value of the annual burden hours to be \$69,272 (see Table 1). The hour cost is based on BLS news release USDL 15-0386, March 11, 2015, (http://www.bls.gov/schedule/archives/ecec_nr.htm) for average full compensation per hour including benefits for Geoscientists (Professional and related – State Government). The particular values utilized are: States/local governments. Average hourly wage is \$35.16; benefits are \$17.16 per hour. The total dollar value of burden hour including benefits is \$52.32.

Table 1. Estimated Dollar Value of Annual Burden Hours

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Annual Number of Responses</i>	<i>Estimated Completion time per Response</i>	<i>Total Annual Burden Hours</i>	<i>Dollar Value of Burden Hour Including Benefits</i>	<i>Total Dollar Value of annual Burden Hours</i>
Application	32	38 hours	1,216	\$52.32	\$63,621
Reporting Requirement	27	4 hours	108	\$52.32	\$5,651
TOTAL	59		1,324		\$69,272

*** Note:** Total dollar values of burden hours are rounded.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual [non-hour] cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in Items 12 and 14).

There is no non-hour cost burden to applicants under this collection. There is no fee for application, nor any fees associated with application requirements.

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

The total estimated cost to the Federal Government for processing proposals and reviewing reports as a result of this collection of information is \$53,353 This includes Federal employee salaries and benefits. Table 2 below shows Federal staff and grade levels performing various tasks associated with this information collection. NNGDPP proposals will be reviewed by a peer panel of approximately nine members. We used the Office of Personnel Management Salary Table 2015-DEN (http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/15Tables/html/DEN_h.aspx) to determine the hourly rate. We multiplied the hourly rate by 1.5 to account for benefits.

Table 2. Annual Cost to the Federal Government

Position	Grade/Step	Hourly Rate	Hourly Rate incl. benefits (1.5 x hourly pay rate)	Estimated time spent by Federal Employees	Cost per federal staff (Hourly Pay Rate incl. Benefits x Number of Hours)
NGGDP Program Coordinator	GS-15/5	\$67.62	\$101.43	80	\$8,114
NGGDP Grants Program Manager	GS-14/5	\$57.48	\$86.22	120	\$10,346
NGGDPP Program Analyst	GS-11/5	\$34.13	\$51.20	80	\$4,096
NGGDPP Program Analyst	GS-9/5	\$28.21	\$42.32	40	\$1,693
Grants and Acquisitions Specialist	GS-12/5	\$40.91	\$61.37	120	\$7,364
Review Panelist #1	GS-12/5	\$40.91	\$61.37	80	\$4,909
Review Panelist #2	GS-11/5	\$34.13	\$51.20	80	\$4,096
Review Panelist #3	GS-14/5	\$57.48	\$86.22	80	\$6,898
Review Panelist #4	GS-13/5	\$48.65	\$72.98	80	\$5,838
TOTAL					\$53,353

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

NGGDPP has moved almost all of its operation to Denver, CO. As a result we are reporting a change to the annual cost to the Federal Government. The numbers above are based on Denver, CO salary table. In addition based on average grades/steps for Review Panelists, the grades/steps for have been revised in Table2.

The number of applications anticipated as well as the number of grants awarded are based on the eight years of data, and therefore, have been adjusted as necessary. As a result of input from three State Geological Surveys (Montana, New Jersey, and Indiana), the estimated dollar value of annual burden hours has been updated.

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

The information collected will not be tabulated or published for statistical use. All awarded proposal abstracts will be published on the USGS NGGDPP website.

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.

Not applicable. We will display the OMB control number and expiration date on the grant announcement.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement, "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions".

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.