

**Request for Approval under the “DOI Generic Clearance for the Collection of
Qualitative Feedback on Agency Service Delivery”
OMB Control Number: 1090-0011**

TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION:

Focus groups as part of the National Initiative to Understand and Connect Americans and Nature (Initiative)

PURPOSE:

Profound changes are occurring in the American public’s relationship to nature and the outdoors, and there are major questions about the present and future role of nature and the outdoors in our increasingly diverse, technologically oriented, and rapidly changing society. For programs of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (we, Service) to remain relevant to American life today and tomorrow, we must monitor public sentiment toward the part nature plays in the quality of our citizenry’s lives.

These focus groups are part of a larger study conducted in collaboration with partners, including Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, designed to understand the connection (or lack thereof) between adult Americans and nature. The focus group results will be used to refine a national quantitative survey of adult Americans. In addition, the focus groups will provide qualitative meaning and context for interpreting the quantitative survey.

More than three decades ago, in another time of significant change in American society, Yale University professor Dr. Stephen Kellert (the principal investigator for the Initiative) conducted a groundbreaking study to understand the views and behaviors of the American public toward wildlife and the natural environment.¹

From that Service-funded study and Dr. Kellert’s subsequent work, the theory of biophilia was developed.^{2,3} The theory of biophilia posits that human health and wellbeing continue to depend on beneficial contact with nature. The experience of the natural environment rather than being a dispensable recreational activity is instead a biological and cultural necessity. There is ample evidence to support the postulations of biophilia making the increasing disconnection from the natural world all the more worrisome. Efforts to improve existing Service programs and design, as well as develop and implement new programs that are responsive to contemporary American society will benefit from the deeper and more detailed understanding this Initiative will generate.

¹Kellert, Stephen R. 1980. Contemporary values of wildlife in American society. In, W.W. Shaw & E.H. Zube, eds., *Wildlife Values*, US For. Serv., Rocky Mt. For. & Range Exp. Sta., Instit. Serv. Rept. #1, Ctr. For Assess. of Noncommodity Nat. Res. Values:31-60.

²Kellert, S. and E.O. Wilson. 1993. *The Biophilia Hypothesis*. Washington, DC: Island Press.

³Kellert, Stephen R. 2012. *Birthright: people and nature in the modern world*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS:

Members of the American public who potentially participate in nature and outdoor-related activities at national wildlife refuges, national fish hatcheries, and in outreach and education activities offered by many Service programs.

TYPE OF COLLECTION: (Check one)

- Customer Comment Card/Complaint Form
- Usability Testing (e.g., Website or Software)
- Focus Group
- Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Small Discussion Group
- Other: _____

CERTIFICATION:

I certify the following to be true:

1. The collection is voluntary.
2. The collection is low-burden for respondents and low-cost for the Federal Government.
3. The collection is non-controversial and does not raise issues of concern to other federal agencies.
4. The results are not intended to be disseminated to the public.
5. Information gathered will not be used for the purpose of substantially informing influential policy decisions.
6. The collection is targeted to the solicitation of opinions from respondents who have experience with the program or may have experience with the program in the future.

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To assist review, please provide answers to the following questions:

Personally Identifiable Information:

1. Is personally identifiable information (PII) collected? Yes No
2. If Yes, is the information that will be collected included in records that are subject to the Privacy Act of 1974? Yes No
3. If Applicable, has a System or Records Notice been published? Yes No

Gifts or Payments:

Is an incentive (e.g., money or reimbursement of expenses, token of appreciation) provided to participants? Yes No (If yes, please explain.)

Each focus group participant will receive a check for \$85-\$100 (varies by location) to reimburse them for time and expenses they incurred to take part. This represents the standard range of stipend offered throughout the industry.

BURDEN HOURS

Category of Respondents	No. of Respondents	Participation Time	Burden
Individuals or households	150	2 hrs	300 hrs
Totals	150	2 hrs	300 hrs

FEDERAL COST: The estimated annual cost to the Federal government is \$150,000 (\$125,000 contract cost and \$25,000 staff time).

If you are conducting a focus group, survey, or plan to employ statistical methods, please provide answers to the following questions:

The selection of your targeted respondents

1. Do you have a customer list or something similar that defines the universe of potential respondents and do you have a sampling plan for selecting from this universe? Yes No

If the answer is yes, please provide a description of both below (or attach the sampling plan).

We will randomly select adult participants from a pool of more than 1.5 million opt-in panelists that is maintained by the Focus Pointe Global (FPG) research firm and its subcontractors. The pool affords access to almost every socio-demographic segment of the U.S. population. We will use qualifying demographic criteria, including an equal representation of men and women and representation across the adult age spectrum, to randomly select adult participants for 15 focus groups with the following geographic and demographic characteristics: (please note *general population* denotes respondents selected based only on gender and age distribution with no selection criteria based on race/ethnicity. The race/ethnicity-specific groups are similarly distributed across gender and age, but focus on a particular racial/ethnic group to ensure that we have good representation of different minority groups across the cities where focus groups will take place.)

Florida

Miami: General population and Hispanic/Latino American

Jacksonville: General population and African-American

Tampa/St. Petersburg: Asian American and Hispanic/Latino American

Texas

Dallas: African-American and Hispanic/Latino American

Houston: General population and African-American

San Antonio: General population and Hispanic/Latino American

Illinois

Chicago: General population

California

Los Angeles: Asian American

New York

New York City: General population

Administration of the Instrument

1. How will you collect the information? (Check all that apply)
- Web-based or other forms of Social Media
 - Telephone
 - In-person
 - Mail
 - Other, Explain

2. Will interviewers or facilitators be used? [X] Yes [] No

INSTRUCTIONS

TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION: Provide the name of the collection that is the subject of the request. (e.g., Comment card for soliciting feedback on xxxx)

PURPOSE: Provide a brief description of the purpose of this collection and how it will be used. If this is part of a larger study or effort, please include this in your explanation.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS: Provide a brief description of the targeted group or groups for this collection of information. These groups must have experience with the program.

TYPE OF COLLECTION: Check one box. If you are requesting approval of other instruments under the generic, you must complete a form for each instrument.

CERTIFICATION: Please read the certification carefully. If you incorrectly certify, the collection will be returned as improperly submitted or it will be disapproved.

Personally Identifiable Information: Provide answers to the questions.

Gifts or Payments: If you answer yes to the question, please describe the incentive and provide a justification for the amount.

BURDEN HOURS:

Category of Respondents: Identify who you expect the respondents to be in terms of the following categories: (1) Individuals or Households; (2) Private Sector; (3) State, local, or tribal governments; or (4) Federal Government. Only one type of respondent can be selected.

No. of Respondents: Provide an estimate of the Number of respondents.

Participation Time: Provide an estimate of the amount of time required for a respondent to participate (e.g., fill out a survey or participate in a focus group)

Burden: Provide the Annual burden hours: Multiply the Number of responses and the participation time in minutes and divide by 60.

FEDERAL COST: Provide an estimate of the annual cost to the Federal government.

If you are conducting a focus group, survey, or plan to employ statistical methods, please provide answers to the following questions:

The selection of your targeted respondents. Please provide a description of how you plan to identify your potential group of respondents and how you will select them. If the answer is yes, to the first question, you may provide the sampling plan in an attachment.

Administration of the Instrument: Identify how the information will be collected. More than one box may be checked. Indicate whether there will be interviewers (e.g., for surveys) or facilitators (e.g., for focus groups) used.

Please make sure that all instruments, instructions, and scripts are submitted with the request.