

# Supporting Statement A

## CERTIFICATION SUMMARY FORM AND REPORTING SUMMARY FORM FOR ACREAGE LIMITATION 43 CFR PART 426 AND 43 CFR PART 428

**OMB Control Number 1006-0006**

**Terms of Clearance: None**

### General Instructions

A completed Supporting Statement A must accompany each request for approval of a collection of information. The Supporting Statement must be prepared in the format described below, and must contain the information specified below. If an item is not applicable, provide a brief explanation. When the question “Does this ICR contain surveys, censuses, or employ statistical methods?” is checked "Yes," then a Supporting Statement B must be completed. OMB reserves the right to require the submission of additional information with respect to any request for approval.

### Specific Instructions

#### Justification

- 1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection.**

The Reclamation Act of 1902, Sections 206, 224(c), and 228 of the Reclamation Reform Act of 1982 (RRA), and Section 5302 of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1987 mandate and/or authorize the collection of information in this information collection request (ICR). Respectively, they establish a policy of Federal assistance through irrigation development, establish ownership and pricing provisions for Reclamation irrigation water deliveries, require RRA form submittal (including water district responsibility for submittal and collection thereof) as a condition for the receipt of Reclamation irrigation water, and establish audit requirements.

In response to litigation, the revised Acreage Limitation Rules and Regulations (Regulations, 43 CFR part 426) were published (effective January 1, 1997). Comments received during the rulemaking process for the revised Regulations led to the creation of 43 CFR part 428 (“Information Requirements for Certain Farm Operations in Excess of 960 Acres and the Eligibility of Certain Formerly Excess Land”), which supplements the Regulations by establishing (among other things) the RRA form submittal requirements for certain farm operators.

In accordance with the requirements of the RRA, an information collection has taken place since 1984 to administer and enforce the acreage limitation provisions of Federal reclamation law. The RRA forms included in this ICR reflect the requirements of **43 CFR 426.19(g)** that became effective January 1, 1998, and **43 CFR 428.4 through 428.8** that generally became effective January 1, 2001.

- 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.**

The RRA forms (as currently approved in another ICR under OMB approval number 1006-0005) are to be completed by each landholder and certain farm operators subject to the acreage limitation provisions of Federal reclamation law. These forms are submitted to the district where the land is located. Each district will use the data in the forms to (a) determine the total number of acres each landholder is entitled to irrigate under Federal reclamation law, (b) determine the rate to be charged for such water deliveries, and (c) identify farm operators providing services to more than 960 acres westwide held in trusts or by legal entities within the district.

Districts are required to use the summary forms in this ICR (Forms 7-21SUMM-C and 7-21SUMM-R) to summarize landholding information submitted to the districts by individual landholders and certain farm operators (via the forms approved under OMB approval number 1006-0005). The districts annually submit the summary forms to Reclamation. It should be noted that in general, Reclamation does not collect the forms submitted by landholders, and those that are collected are not retained permanently. Thus, the district summary forms are the only permanent record maintained by the Federal government on acreage limitation program administration.

The summary forms meet the statutory requirements included in section 228 of the RRA. If Reclamation did not require summary forms from districts showing all landholders' data, Reclamation would not know if RRA section 228 requirements were being satisfied. Summary forms indicating large amounts of unreported acreage, or significant discrepancies between the reported acreage and the congressionally authorized acreage for any particular district, will alert Reclamation to potential compliance problems in that district. Thus, the summary forms are a primary tool for prioritizing districts for Reclamation audits. Reclamation's experience to date has shown that compliance problems are frequently revealed through mathematical discrepancies in the summary forms. For example, a summary form showing 3,000 acres leased by two landholders, but showing no full-cost acreage, almost certainly indicates a compliance problem. (Generally speaking, the maximum nonfull-cost acreage that could be leased by two landholders would be 1,920 acres.)

The summary forms' breakdown of landholder data into various farm size categories and the summarization of owned, leased, excess, and full-cost acreage, gives Reclamation valuable information on land tenure in Reclamation projects. Reclamation frequently receives inquiries from the Congress, the public, and various other parties on land tenure, excess acreage, etc., for specific districts. This information is often critical in making legislative and policy decisions. Reclamation's inability to quickly answer such questions has, in the past, subjected Reclamation to criticism.

The moderate level of detail and categorization specified in the summary forms forces districts to examine data contained in each landholder's RRA form (as currently approved under OMB approval number 1006-0005). We believe this procedure is invaluable in helping districts discover false and/or erroneous reporting. It must be remembered that district officials are not Federal employees and generally consider themselves to be representatives of the farmers' (not the Government's) interests. If we did not require districts to transfer landholder data to summary forms in reasonable detail, the majority of landholder forms would likely never be reviewed until a Reclamation review took place. Additionally, this moderate level of detail and categorization gives Reclamation some definite parameters to determine districts' attention to forms requirements. If, for example, all landholdings below 960 acres were summarized with no differentiation, as has been suggested in the past, it would be far more difficult for Reclamation to determine whether a district had, in fact, examined landholder forms at all. For these reasons, we believe the level of detail prescribed in the enclosed summary forms is necessary and appropriate.

No changes have been made to the currently approved forms or the corresponding instructions other than correction of minor typographical errors.

#### List of forms

Following is a list of district summary forms, their corresponding tabulation sheets, and a brief discussion of the purpose of each form. A detailed discussion of the purpose of each question on the forms is provided in Attachment 1.

**Form 7-21SUMM-C** is to be used by districts to summarize landholdings and landholders subject to discretionary provisions. Districts that are subject to discretionary provisions also summarize the landholdings of all trusts and all public entities in their districts. The summarization is derived from tabulation sheets that are explained below. Reclamation requires that districts use and submit the following tabulation sheets, except where noted, to facilitate completion of the summary forms and to aid in fulfilling specific requests for information. This has eliminated numerous requests to districts for detailed information.

**Form 7-21SUMM-R** is to be used by districts to summarize landholdings and landholders that are subject to prior law. Districts that are subject to prior law also summarize the landholdings of all trusts and all public entities in their districts. The summarization is derived from tabulation sheets that are explained below. Reclamation requires that districts use and submit the following tabulation sheets, except where noted, to facilitate completion

of the summary forms and to aid in fulfilling specific requests for information. This has eliminated numerous requests to districts for detailed information.

Form 7-21SUMM-C and Form 7-21SUMM-R each have a set of applicable tabulations (seven forms, Tabulation A through Tabulation G). Separate tabulations for Form 7-21SUMM-C and Form 7-21SUMM-R are required because of the different forms submittal thresholds and acreage limitation entitlements applicable to the discretionary and prior law provisions. Tabulations are completed and attached to Form 7-21SUMM-C or Form 7-21SUMM-R as applicable based on the landholders identified on the corresponding Form 7-21SUMM-C or Form 7-21SUMM-R. Each of the seven tabulations collects the following information:

Tabulation A tabulates information from certification forms submitted by individuals and entities.

Tabulation B tabulates information from forms submitted by trusts and estates.

Tabulation C tabulates information from forms submitted by public entities.

Tabulation D tabulates information from certification forms submitted by religious or charitable organizations.

Tabulation E tabulates errors or infractions detected in the review and compilation of landholder forms (e.g., forms nonsubmittal by landholders whose westwide landholdings exceed the forms submittal threshold, erroneous or incomplete landholder information where failure to complete RRA forms properly will jeopardize the landholders' eligibility to receive Reclamation irrigation water, etc.). District reporting of errors will help Reclamation verify that districts took appropriate action in the case of infractions, and facilitate Reclamation's efforts to administer and enforce the acreage limitation provisions of Federal reclamation law.

Tabulation F is an optional form, provided only for district convenience, to detail and tabulate information concerning part owners who indirectly hold land. While indirect landholding information is not addressed on any other tabulation sheet and is consequently not transferred to Form 7-21SUMM-C or Form 7-21SUMM-R, summarized part owner information can be used by both districts and Reclamation to determine applicable acreage limitation entitlements.

Tabulation G tabulates information from forms submitted by farm operators who provide services to more than 960 acres westwide held in trusts or by legal entities.

- 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.**

Reclamation has made all of the RRA forms in this ICR and the associated instructions available on the Internet for printing and manual completion, electronic completion and manual submission, **or** electronic completion and submission. This effort was fully accomplished in October 2004 for electronic completion, and December 2008 for electronic submittal. These forms can be found at [www.usbr.gov/rra](http://www.usbr.gov/rra). Since 1997, Reclamation has offered districts the opportunity to develop their own electronic RRA forms. In 1997 Reclamation developed standards for computerized RRA forms which several districts and companies have used, and continue to use, to develop substitute forms in word processing, database, and spreadsheet files. Reclamation's standards require Reclamation's inspection and approval of such electronic, substitute RRA forms prior to their use. While the districts use the substitute forms they have developed to complete forms for their landholders and the district's summary forms, at least one private company has developed a software package of substitute RRA forms that they have marketed to the public.

The acreage limitation provisions of Federal reclamation law provide statutory and regulatory authority for Reclamation to require landholders' submission of RRA forms that gather information pertinent to the lawful delivery of Reclamation irrigation water, and the retention requirements associated with such forms. There is, however, no statutory or regulatory acreage limitation provision that allows Reclamation to mandate electronic submittal. At this time and for the foreseeable future, electronic submittal is voluntary for the districts that submit the RRA forms in this ICR. Districts subject to the acreage limitation provisions vary widely in their staffing levels and technological capabilities. In many cases, RRA administration is a collateral duty for water district staff, and is a low priority for a district's financial resources. Therefore, while some districts may have the staff and equipment to utilize the electronic submittal option, other districts are not capable of electronic submittal at this time. Although Reclamation has, to the best of its ability, made the electronic submittal option available for use, it will be difficult to estimate year to year the number of districts that will choose to submit electronically. For the 2015 water year, only 17 of the 177 respondents for this ICR requested a PIN for electronic submittal (respondents are required to request a new PIN annually to facilitate security and privacy of information).

**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.**

The acreage limitation provisions of Federal reclamation law apply only to certain Reclamation projects that provide Reclamation irrigation water for agricultural purposes; consequently, similar data are neither collected nor available through any other Federal agency, State or local government, or private organization. An attachment to a letter from Mr. Scott J. Cameron, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Performance and Management (Department of the Interior), to U.S. Representative Doug Ose regarding an April 11, 2002, hearing on Paperwork Reduction Act issues (specifically, pages two and three of the attachment to Mr. Cameron's letter) detail the following general findings:

- a. Not all of Reclamation's customers participate in USDA programs, and most of USDA's customers do not receive Reclamation irrigation water.
- b. Reclamation and USDA do not use the same categories of program respondents due to statutory and regulatory program requirements.
- c. The level and nature of detail in USDA and Reclamation ICRs differs in such ways that it is clear USDA data would not be sufficient to allow Reclamation to properly administer and enforce the acreage limitation provisions of Federal reclamation law.
- d. RRA forms are filed at the local (district) level; USDA forms are filed at county offices with centralization of that data.

For the foregoing reasons, it has been determined that there is no duplication with regard to this particular data collection.

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

Water user organizations are the respondents to this ICR. Reclamation has carefully analyzed this requirement to ensure the information requested of these organizations is the minimum necessary to implement and enforce the acreage limitation provisions of Federal reclamation law.

**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 228 of the RRA and section 426.19(g) of the Regulations specify that districts must report to Reclamation on an annual basis. This eliminates the possibility of not conducting the ICR, or conducting it less frequently. Furthermore, if information was collected and verified on a less frequent basis, enforcement of the law would be weakened, and landholders and districts would become less aware of the continuing requirement for compliance with the acreage limitation provisions of Federal reclamation law.

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

**a. requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**

Some Reclamation regional offices require districts to update summary forms as they receive more forms from their landholders. Reclamation rarely requests district summary forms more frequently than once per year. The reason Reclamation may issue such a request typically pertains to correction of errors (e.g., submittal of a corrected form if Reclamation finds errors during a regularly scheduled water district review). There are reasons a district may choose to submit more than one district summary form per year, such as the addition of data for landholdings of a new landholder in the district if the

addition takes place after RRA summary forms have been submitted to Reclamation for the year. In such a case, the district's submittal of a new summary form would be of the district's choosing and not at Reclamation's request.

- b. requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**

This would never be required.

- c. requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**

This would never be required.

- d. requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records, for more than three years;**

Retention of records provisions are not applicable to district summary forms. Forms 7-21SUMM-C and 7-21SUMM-R are submitted by the districts to Reclamation, and Reclamation's Records Retention Schedule (approved by the National Archives and Records Administration) identifies these forms as permanent records.

- e. 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;**

The summary forms will not be used this way.

- f. requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**

Statistical data classification will not be used.

- g. 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;**

A pledge of confidentiality is not used.

- h. 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.**

This will not be required as part of the summary forms.

- 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.**

Notice was given in the Federal Register on February 17, 2015 (80 FR 8341). No public comments were received in response to this notice or in response to the PRA statement associated with the collection over the past two years.

- a. 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.**

In addition to conducting several public hearings and public scoping meetings associated with various rulemaking activities, Reclamation involved district personnel in the last major revision to the RRA forms (which was effective with the 1997 RRA forms). Every year that Reclamation seeks renewal of OMB approval for its ICRs, all districts subject to the acreage limitation provisions receive a letter from Reclamation that announces the start of the public comment period. In that letter is a copy of the corresponding Federal Register notice and an announcement regarding the availability of copies of the draft forms upon request. Regarding the current request for ICR approval, all districts subject to the acreage limitation provisions received such a letter from Reclamation dated February 25, 2015.

- b. Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every three 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.**

This ICR contains forms that are completed by districts (using information taken from the RRA forms submitted by landholders [under OMB approval number 1006-0005]) and submitted annually to Reclamation as documentation of acreage limitation administration (generally, whether the landholders in a particular district received Reclamation irrigation water). The burden hour estimate associated with the forms in this ICR is an average figure because no single district is representative of all districts. The number of landholders in the districts subject to the acreage limitation provisions varies from fewer than 10 respondents in some districts to more than 4,000 respondents in others. Furthermore, the information a particular district submits on the forms in this ICR can (and frequently does) change from year to year. For example, landholders that lease land in a district may no longer have such leases during the next water year for a variety of reasons. Or, an entity that holds land in a particular district during one water year may sell all of its land before the start of the next water year. In either case, the affected

landholders would no longer be required to submit RRA forms (under OMB approval number 1006-0005), and consequently there would be a decrease in the amount of information the district would submit to Reclamation on the forms in this ICR (OMB approval number 1006-0006). In any given water year, a district can also see an increase in the landholders identified on the forms in this ICR (e.g., new landholders, parties to new annual leases, etc.). Throughout each year, Reclamation conducts regularly scheduled water district reviews at district offices that are subject to the acreage limitation provisions. Discussions between Reclamation RRA staff and district staff are held at those reviews during which burden hour feedback is addressed. In other words, Reclamation continually assesses burden hour estimates for the RRA forms through discussions with district staff (i.e., the respondents of the forms in this ICR), and has done so since these forms were first drafted in 1983. The estimated burden identified in item 12 below reflects outcome of these ongoing discussions.

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

No payments or gifts will be provided to respondents.

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

Personal and financial information collected on these forms is protected under the Privacy Act of 1974. The Privacy Act system of records notice associated with this ICR is INTERIOR/WBR-31, Acreage Limitation.

**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.**

No questions of a private or sensitive nature will be asked.

**12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. The statement should:**

- a. Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. Unless directed to do so, agencies should not conduct special surveys to obtain information on which to base hour burden estimates. Consultation with a sample (fewer than 10) of potential respondents is desirable. If the hour burden on respondents is expected to vary widely because of differences in activity, size, or complexity, show the range of estimated hour burden, and explain the reasons for the variance. Generally, estimates should not include burden hours for customary and usual business**

**practices.**

See response to item 12(b).

**b. If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens.**

Based on the number of current contracts, approximately 177 districts are required to submit RRA district summary forms. This total is 5 districts less than the total used in the most recent request for ICR approval. This is consistent with our expectations based on the numbers of districts that in the last two years (a) fulfilled their contractual project construction cost obligations to Reclamation, (b) were legislatively exempted, or (c) voluntarily completed requirements in order to be exempt from the acreage limitation provisions of Federal reclamation law.

The summary forms are to be submitted annually. If changes to the full-cost acreage or excess land acreage are made during the irrigation season, then districts submit this new information to Reclamation. In some regions, updated summary forms are submitted throughout the year. We estimate the number of responses per respondent to be 1.25 annually, or 221 total annual responses (177 districts multiplied by 1.25 responses per district).

The total estimated annual burden hours for this information are 8,840 hours. We estimate that each district will require an average of 40 person-hours of labor per response annually to collect, file, and summarize the landholders' forms. These 40 hours consist of about 5 hours for reporting or disclosure burden and about 35 hours of recordkeeping burden. The size of districts varies widely. The range is from over 4,000 respondents in a few districts to fewer than 10 in others. The estimated annual burden hours per form are listed below:

<b>Form No.</b>	<b>Estimated No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Frequency of Response</b>	<b>Total Annual Responses</b>	<b>Burden Hours Per Response</b>	<b>Total Burden Hours</b>
7-21 SUMM-C and tabulation sheets	169	1.25	211	40	8,440
7-21 SUMM-R and tabulation sheets	8	1.25	10	40	400
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>1.25</b>	<b>221</b>		<b>8,840</b>

**c. Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories. The cost of contracting out or paying outside parties for information collection activities should not be included here. Instead, this cost should be included under "Annual Cost to Federal Government."**

The average annual cost per response is estimated to be \$876 which is based on the median wage rate of \$15.64\* per hour for office and administrative support occupations, multiplied by a benefits multiplier of 1.4\*\*, multiplied by 40 hours per response. It should be noted that this figure represents costs to the average district; because districts vary widely in size, their costs related to this ICR will also vary widely. The total annual cost to all districts is estimated to be \$193,596 (\$876 per response multiplied by 221 responses). This represents a net decrease of \$1,848 from May 2012.

\* Occupational Employment and Wages, May 2014 (Office and Administrative Support Occupations) (<http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes430000.htm> )

\*\*Bureau of Labor Statistics news release USDL-15-0386, March 11, 2015  
Private industry workers, sales and office, by occupational group (office and administrative support), December 2014  
Table 9 (<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ecec.pdf>)

**13. Provide an estimate of the total annual non-hour cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden already reflected in item 12.)**

- a. The cost estimate should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component (annualized over its expected useful life) and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component. The estimates should take into account costs associated with generating, maintaining, and disclosing or providing the information (including filing fees paid for form processing). Include descriptions of methods used to estimate major cost factors including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital equipment, the discount rate(s), and the time period over which costs will be incurred. Capital and start-up costs include, among other items, preparations for collecting information such as purchasing computers and software; monitoring, sampling, drilling and testing equipment; and record storage facilities.**

The estimated total capital and start-up cost is \$0.00. The only equipment necessary for this ICR is file cabinets. Because this ICR has been ongoing for over two decades, file cabinets will have already had been purchased by districts long before now. All other purchases, such as computers, will be to achieve regulatory compliance with requirements not associated with this ICR, or as part of customary and usual business.

The estimated total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component is estimated to be \$877.25 per district. The only equipment necessary for this ICR is file cabinets, which are not expected to have O&M costs associated with them. Administrative costs are estimated at \$750; postage and envelopes for mailing forms that are to be summarized to the landholders is estimated at \$1.00 per landholder multiplied by 127 landholders (the average number of landholders per district) which is about \$127. It should be noted that this figure represents cost to the average district; because districts vary widely in size, their costs related to this ICR will also vary widely. This cost applies to all 177 districts; therefore, the total annual cost to the districts is estimated at

about \$154,273 (rounded) (\$877.25 per district multiplied by 177 districts). This represents a net decrease of \$4,387 from the most recently approved ICR, and is consistent with our expectations based on the number of districts that in the last two years (a) fulfilled their contractual project construction cost obligations to Reclamation, (b) were legislatively exempted, or (c) voluntarily completed requirements in order to be exempt from the acreage limitation provisions of Federal reclamation law.

- b. If cost estimates are expected to vary widely, agencies should present ranges of cost burdens and explain the reasons for the variance. The cost of purchasing or contracting out information collection services should be a part of this cost burden estimate. In developing cost burden estimates, agencies may consult with a sample of respondents (fewer than 10), utilize the 60-day pre-OMB submission public comment process and use existing economic or regulatory impact analysis associated with the rulemaking containing the information collection, as appropriate.**

Cost estimates will not vary.

- c. Generally, estimates should not include purchases of equipment or services, or portions thereof, made: (1) prior to October 1, 1995, (2) to achieve regulatory compliance with requirements not associated with the information collection, (3) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the government, or (4) as part of customary and usual business or private practices.**

Cost estimates do not include these purchases.

**14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.**

Annual cost to the Federal Government is estimated as follows:

Item	Costs
Printing	\$11,000
Personnel	\$20,895 (500 person-hours x \$41.79 per hour)*
Miscellaneous administrative costs	\$ 625
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$32,520</b>

\* Wage rate figure is based on the following:

- The average grade level of staff included in this cost estimate is GS-11 step 5.
- The 2015 hourly base wage for a GS-11 step 5 Federal employee is \$27.86\*
- The total hourly wage with benefits is \$41.79 (\$27.86 base wage x 1.5\*\* benefits multiplier)
- This represents an increase of \$410 since 2012.

\* Information was obtained from the Office of Personal Management ([https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/pdf/2015/GS\\_h.pdf](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/pdf/2015/GS_h.pdf))

\*\* Bureau of Labor Statistics news release USDL-15-0386, March 11, 2015  
Civilian workers, by occupational and industry group (farming), December 2014  
Table 2 (<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ecec.pdf>)

**15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments in hour or cost burden.**

We are not reporting through this document any program change. We are reporting a change due to agency adjustment, which is a net decrease in the hour burden of the ICR budget of 280 hours, and \$4,901 in cost burden from the most recently approved ICR. Based on the number of current contracts, approximately 177 districts are required to submit summary forms. This total decreased by 5 districts. This is consistent with our expectations based on the numbers of districts that in the last two years (a) fulfilled their contractual project construction cost obligations to Reclamation, (b) were legislatively exempted, or (c) voluntarily completed requirements in order to be exempt from the acreage limitation provisions of Federal reclamation law.

**16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.**

The results of this ICR are not intended for publication.

**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.**

Reclamation is requesting an exemption to not display the expiration date of OMB approval of the form. Because these forms are to be submitted annually, Reclamation would like to print the year to which the forms apply on the forms and instructions. If Reclamation also displays the OMB expiration date on the forms, we feel it may confuse the respondents as to which date reflects the water year and therefore signifies a current form. This is a particular problem because before 1996, Reclamation did not print the year for which the form was applicable, and the districts relied solely on the OMB expiration date to determine if it was using a current form. This exemption request has been continuously granted since it was first approved as part of the approval process completed in 1996 and 1997.

Additionally, although the current OMB approval for this ICR does not expire until June 30, 2016, we are initiating this approval request now because the forms in this ICR must have a new approval date by September 2015. The following is a discussion of the two main reasons why approval of the ICR must proceed now, instead of later this year.

The forms in this ICR must be printed in the fall of 2015: Contractual irrigation seasons typically correspond to the calendar year. Based on their customary practices, districts may begin as early as the fall of 2015 to summarize the data landholders submit to the districts on their RRA forms for the 2016 irrigation season (i.e., the forms approved under OMB approval number 1006-0005). Depending on a district's contract, the 2016 irrigation season may actually start in 2015, similarly to how the Federal government's fiscal year begins with the last quarter of the previous calendar year. As discussed in item 3 above, the districts that have a contract to deliver Reclamation irrigation water possess sole discretion over whether they have the ability or desire to pursue the electronic options available such as developing substitute forms in word processing, database, and spreadsheet files. In almost all cases, districts instead choose to annually order from Reclamation a quantity of printed hard copies of the forms in this ICR that will be sufficient for their needs in the upcoming irrigation season. Based on district requests for printed hard copies, Reclamation has appropriate quantities of the forms in this ICR printed by a contracted printer in late summer of the year prior to when the forms will be required. Therefore, for the 2016 irrigation season, OMB approval for the 2016 forms must be obtained now so the 2016 forms can be printed and distributed to the districts by early fall of 2015 (this year).

The June 30, 2016, expiration date places an undue burden on water districts to discern which 2016 RRA forms expire on June 30, 2016, and which do not: Although landholders begin to submit forms for the 2016 irrigation season to the water districts as early as the fall of 2015, forms for the 2016 water year are submitted to the water district at **any time** through the end of the 2016 irrigation season for multiple reasons. Districts are therefore completing the summary forms in this ICR throughout the irrigation season. Reclamation cannot allow water districts to possess forms that expire in the middle of the 2016 irrigation

season (currently, June 30, 2016). The burden on districts for monitoring use of expired forms is eliminated if Reclamation requests renewal of approval for the forms in this ICR now. This will ensure that all 2016 RRA forms printed and distributed to water districts by Reclamation have a new OMB approval expiration date that does not fall in the middle of the 2016 irrigation season when the forms in this ICR are at their peak of use.

In the past, Reclamation has requested from OMB an expiration date of December 31<sup>st</sup> of the applicable calendar year, in order to allow the OMB expiration date to coincide with the end of the calendar year, by which time most irrigation seasons have also ended. For example, in the most recent ICR approval request for RRA forms corresponding to the 2014 and 2015 irrigation seasons, Reclamation requested an OMB approval expiration date of December 31, 2015. Although Reclamation's December 31<sup>st</sup> expiration date request had been granted for many prior OMB approvals, the December 31, 2015, expiration date request for the ICR corresponding to the 2014 and 2015 RRA forms was denied. The resulting June 30, 2016, expiration date caused much confusion for the water district staff who are able to see OMB expiration dates for information collections on the Internet. The expiration date that fell in the middle of an irrigation season raised several questions, such as whether districts will have to submit two summary forms in a given year (one before the OMB expiration date, and one after).

As such, Reclamation would like to again request that the OMB approval expiration date for the forms in this ICR be set for December 31, 2017 (instead of the typical three years, which would generate a July/August 2018 date). This December 31, 2017, date will have the forms expiring after the typical 2017 irrigation seasons have ended, and will also ensure there is no mid-season 2018 expiration date visible to the public that will cause confusion. If this approval expiration date request is granted, it will apply to the RRA forms for the 2016 and 2017 water years, thereby shortening the usual 3-year OMB approval timeframe in the interest of preserving the correlation of the forms in this ICR to the water years to which they will apply. Another request for OMB approval will be initiated for this ICR in advance of forms being required for the 2018 and 2019 irrigation seasons, due to the timing of typical irrigation seasons and the forms' printing schedule as explained above.

**18. Explain each exception to the topics of the certification statement identified in "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions."**

No exceptions to the certification statement are being requested.

# **ATTACHMENT 1**

List of information collection questions and justifications