

Supporting Statement A for Paperwork Reduction Act Submission

Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge Bear Viewing Survey OMB Control Number 1018-XXXX

Terms of Clearance. None. This is a new collection.

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

The National Wildlife Refuge Improvement Act of 1997, which amended the National Wildlife Refuge Administration Act (16 U.S.C. 668dd-668ee), guides planning and management of the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS) by:

1. Identifying six priority wildlife-dependent recreational uses and providing a process for ensuring that these and other activities do not conflict with the management purpose and goals of each refuge.

Wildlife viewing and photography are two of these priority activities. While viewing and photography opportunities exist on the Kodiak Refuge, there are currently insufficient tools in place to evaluate the social appropriateness and compatibility of these uses. Furthermore, as public demand for bear viewing increases (Brown Bear Management Strategy. 2000. Alaska Board of Game and Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Wildlife Conservation. Douglas.), opportunities for increased access need to be objectively evaluated for acceptability and compatibility.

2. Requiring that each refuge develop a comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) by 2012. A refuge CCP outlines goals, objectives, and management strategies for the refuge. It provides a vision and describes desired future conditions for the refuge.

The Kodiak Refuge's current Comprehensive Conservation Plan calls for the utilization of "rigorous social science" to "assess the nature of available visitor experiences, significant influences on those experiences, and public acceptability of potential changes to those experiences prior to developing the viewing program at O'Malley (or any other new sites) or modifying the [bear viewing] program at the Frazer fish pass site" (Comprehensive Conservation Plan 2007). The proposed survey was created and will be administered through rigorous social science methodology in partnership with the Sociology Department at Utah State University.

The Kodiak Refuge's most recent Public Use Management Plan was published in 1993. As a new plan is developed to address rapidly changing physical and social environments, objective social science data is needed to accompany natural science data to create a plan that accurately addresses the public demands and biological needs of the Refuge. The proposed survey will evaluate the effectiveness of current bear viewing opportunities, and the type of experience visitors seek in the Kodiak Refuge.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used.

The proposed information collection will be administered through a two-phase survey that will minimize onsite burden hours on the public. Phase I will invite all members of the public over the age of 18 who participate in bear viewing on the Kodiak Refuge to fill out a brief survey card regarding their viewing location on the Refuge, satisfaction, and willingness to complete a more indepth survey. Participants can voluntarily provide an email address on these cards to participate in Phase II, which is an online survey conducted with Qualtrics software.

The online survey asks questions about trip expectations and satisfaction, number of bears seen, self-reported changes in attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge towards bears and habitat, and demographic information questions on gender, age, level of education, and place of residency to examine trends based on these factors. Demographic questions do not provide enough information to identify specific individuals, and reporting will simply represent group demographic trends. All participants will answer a standard set of survey questions with one section specific to where they traveled on the Refuge. All responses will be received through Qualtrics software and imported into SPSS software for statistical analysis.

The collected information will be used to quantify learning outcomes of the different bear viewing opportunities offered on the Refuge, determine the type of experience that visitors seek on the Refuge, and direct Refuge management decisions on the possible creation of future bear viewing sites or the restructuring of current models to best align with the Refuge's founding purpose of protecting bears and habitat.

The full survey will only be offered online. There may be some visitors who do not have Internet access to complete the survey, which contributes to a non-response error (when there is a difference in characteristics among participants who choose to respond and the targeted members of the population who choose not to participate or cannot participate in the chosen method). While providing a mail survey option could potentially be more inclusive to the whole population, budget, time, and international restrictions for visitors from other countries make a mail survey infeasible for the scope of this study. Additionally, in the first National Wildlife Refuge Survey conducted across 52 wildlife refuges in the United States in 2010, 40% of respondents who initially indicated preference for a mail survey ended up completing the survey online, which suggests that visitors may have more comfort with online methods than they initially indicate (Sexton, N. R., Miller, H. M., & Dietsch, A. M. 2011. Appropriate uses and considerations for online surveying in human dimensions research. *Human Dimensions of Wildlife*, 16(3), 154-163.). The clientele who can afford to travel to the refuge suggests a level of social affluence that could be correlated with ease of access to the Internet. Initial survey cards will indicate how many visitors are unable to participate in the online survey due to lack of internet access, and if this number exceeds 10% of the total population, methods will need to be reevaluated for future studies. Finally, the original survey cards allow for comparison of online survey data based on viewing location and residency to account for non-response among these group categories.

Participants who choose to participate in the full survey will contribute information twice: first onsite with the short survey card (expected to take 1-2 minutes), and second via email for the online survey (expected to take 10-15 minutes). Completed survey cards will be collected every two weeks to collect email addresses and send out the next wave of online surveys from July-August, so that all participants should receive an online invitation within 2-3 weeks of their onsite visit to the Refuge (allowing for travel time home).

Raw survey data will not be shared with anyone outside the Service and the 3-person Utah State University advisory committee assisting with the project. A public report revealing key trends in visitor use will be released to the public and key stakeholders groups upon completion of the study. Results will not contain any individual or identifying information.

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].

Electronic submission for the primary survey measurement tool will be the only means of submission. This information collection will be made available to the public over the Internet in an anonymous and confidential manner. Initial survey cards will indicate the percentage of visitors who are unable to participate in the online survey due to lack of internet access, and if this exceeds 10%, methods will need to be altered for future studies.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

The only Kodiak-specific study comparable to the proposed one is Recreation Use and Visitor Experience on the Karluk River: A Comparative Study 2002-2004 (Nielsen, E.A., Bauder, P. & Lewis A., 2005). This study is specific to one isolated area of the Refuge, and again does not address the specific needs and outcomes for visitors specific to bear viewing. The Kodiak Refuge CCP specifically calls for social science that addresses possible changes to bear viewing opportunities across the Refuge.

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

Both commercial air taxi operators and private guides and lodge owners will be integral in distributing initial survey cards to the bear viewing public since the vast expanses of the Refuge and lack of a single entrance point make it impossible for Refuge staff or researchers to contact all bear viewers. These operators have agreed to distribute survey cards to clients. Collected cards will be placed in sealed envelopes that Refuge staff will collect in 2-week intervals to minimize the burden on community partners.

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

A failure to collect this information would result in a failure to comply with the procedures outlined by the Kodiak Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan. Additionally, as the public demand for bear viewing continues to rapidly grow, the Kodiak Refuge would fail to have a management plan that utilizes science to address visitor expectations, impacts, and outcomes. As the only national wildlife refuge with such a significant concentration of brown bears, the Kodiak Refuge should be setting the example for sustainable and educational bear viewing.

The information is collected over a two-month time span (the primary bear viewing season on the Refuge) and the 2-3 week waves of survey distribution is crucial for ensuring reasonable

travel time for visitors without letting too much time lapse to recall trip details. Contacting all visitors who provide an email address is necessary to ensure a valid sample size. Conducting the survey less frequently would severely threaten the scientific validity of this study.

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

There are no circumstances that require the information be collected in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

8. If applicable, 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.

On November 3, 2015, we published in the Federal Register (80 FR 67784) a notice soliciting public comment on this information collection for 60 days. The comment period ended on January 4, 2016. We received the following comments:

Comment: The first comment from an individual protested the entire survey and stated that the national survey conducted across the country every 5 years already contributes to Government overreach and misspending of tax dollars without preserving wildlife.

Response: The National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated recreation, conducted every 5 years, does not address the Kodiak-specific questions of this study. The proposed study will provide information that allows Kodiak Refuge Management to make informed decisions on how to facilitate bear viewing in a way that protects bear populations while creating positive educational experiences for visitors.

Comment: The second comment from the State of Alaska ANILCA Implementation Program generally supported the proposed information collection to better inform decisionmakers and rejuvenate quality bear viewing on the refuge. The commenter made three suggestions:

- Consult with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and other stakeholders in the development of the survey.
- Consider surveying all refuge visitors rather than just bear viewers to provide a more holistic view of refuge usage.
- Conduct the survey onsite for higher response rates and more accurate recall among participants.

Response: We thank the ANILCA Implementation Program for their comments. Throughout survey development, we conducted interviews with stakeholders to address key concerns and issues to be addressed in the survey. This included the Alaska Department of Fish and Game area biologist for the Kodiak Archipelago, the Kodiak Brown Bear Center (owned and operated by the Koniag Native Corporation), and commercial air taxi operators and guides. We sincerely

appreciate the insights from all of these groups. Unfortunately, surveying all refuge visitors is not within financial and time feasibility of the current study. While hunting and fishing patterns are well understood due to the purchase of licenses and close regulation in partnership with the State of Alaska, an equally detailed understanding of bear viewing activity and satisfaction is lacking, making it the current priority for social science research. Finally, the primary survey is being conducted online instead of onsite due to affordability, logistics (weather on Kodiak is often not conducive to sitting outside for 10-20 minutes to complete a printed survey in wind and rain), and proven success with past online surveys. Our intent is to minimize onsite burden hours for visitors traveling from around the world for expensive and sometimes short viewing experiences.

Persons outside the service who contributed ideas for survey content and message include:

Nathan Svoboda Area Wildlife Biologist – Kodiak Archipelago Alaska Department of Fish and Game Nathan.svoboda@alaska.gov	Dr. Richard Krannich Utah State University Department of Sociology Richard.krannich@usu.edu
Harry and Brigid Dodge Kodiak Treks dodge@ptialaska.net	Dick and Sam Rohrer Rohrer Bear Camp rohrerbear@alaska.com
Kyle and Glen Eaton Kingfisher Aviation Kyle@kingfisheraviation.com	Roland Ruoss and Jo Murphy Seahawk Air jo@seahawkair.com

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

We will not make any payment 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.

We do not provide any assurance of confidentiality. Each participant contacted will be advised that the survey will be conducted in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a). Visitors will not be asked to write their names on the initial postcard or questionnaires, and will be assured that their names or identifications will not be associated with online questionnaire results.

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 survey does not include any questions of sensitive nature.

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

The total number of burden hours for the proposed, one-time data collection is estimated to be 234 annual burden hours consisting of 2,250 total responses including both phases of the survey. The initial survey cards used to collect email addresses take 1-2 minutes to complete, and we expect approximately 1,520 responses. From this we hope to distribute approximately 1,216 online questionnaires. If a 60% response rate is achieved for the online portion, 730 responses taking a conservative average of 15 minutes each will result in 182.5 online burden hours, in addition to 50.6 burden hours for onsite survey cards.

ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	COMPLETION TIME PER RESPONSE	TOTAL ANNUAL BURDEN HOURS	\$ VALUE OF ANNUAL BURDEN HOURS
Initial Contact	1,520	2 minutes	51	
Online Survey	730	15 minutes	183	
TOTALS	2,250		234	\$7,857.52

We estimate the total dollar value of the annual burden hours for this collection to be \$7,958 (rounded). We used BLS Bulletin USDL-16-0463 (<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ecec.pdf>) to estimate hourly wages and benefits. Table 1 lists a total compensation hourly rate of \$33.58 for all workers.

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

There is no nonhour cost burden to respondents. There is no fee for completing the survey or any other costs associated with responding to this survey.

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

The total estimated cost to the Federal Government for survey administration and data collection is \$3,869 (salary and printing). This includes salary costs for a GS-5 seasonal ranger to dedicate to card collection and initial data analysis (120 hours) and printing costs. We estimate that the total salary costs will be \$3,689 (120 hours * \$30.74 rounded). The hourly rate for a GS-5/step 5 in the State of Alaska is \$19.21 (OPM Salary Table 2016-AK), which was multiplied by 1.6 to calculate benefits, resulting in an hourly cost of \$30.74. The remaining data analysis of online responses and report writing will be conducted by a graduate student at Utah State University at no additional cost to the Federal Government.

Printing Cost: \$180.

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

This is a new collection.

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

A final report will be published by the Kodiak Refuge for public viewing that summarizes key findings and possible management implications. Findings will also be incorporated into a Master's thesis that will be published by Utah State University.

July and August 2016: Survey cards are distributed to bear viewers (Email invitations to the online survey will be sent 2-3 weeks after cards are received)

August 2016: Preliminary data analysis using survey card data

September 16, 2016: Cutoff for accepting online survey responses

October-November 2016: Analysis of online data and reporting

December 2016: Official Refuge report released with key findings

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 on the survey forms.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.