Supporting Statement A for
Paperwork Reduction Act Submission

Revealing Opportunities for Local-Level Stakeholder Engagement and Social Science Inquiry in Landscape Conservation Design
OMB Control Number 1018-XXXX

Terms of Clearance. This is a new collection.

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

The proposed information collection will support the work of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) (launched under Secretarial Order 3289) in their efforts to develop and implement socio-politically feasible Landscape Conservation Design (LCD). Our information collection is supported by Executive Order 13707, Using Behavioral Science Insights to Better Serve the American People (September 15, 2015), which recognizes the benefits of the inclusion of behavioral sciences in the design of Federal Government policies and programs. Our information collection is also supported by the National Wildlife Refuge Improvement Act of 1997 (16 USC 668dd as amended by Public Law 105-57), which seeks to maintain the biological integrity, diversity, and environmental health of the Refuge System and recognizes wildlife-dependent recreational uses of Refuges, when compatible, as appropriate and legitimate public uses of the Refuge System. As conservation recommendations offered by LCDs will impact management of wildlife resources within Refuges, it will be advantageous to collect information that may encourage public involvement in resource conservation decision.

The LCD approach faces significant socio-political and technical challenges. These are driven primarily by the fact that human communities— with their diverse values, interests, and resources— are embedded components of landscapes prioritized for conservation. Such social-ecological landscapes contain heterogeneous mosaics of land uses and ownership types. LCC partners typically manage discrete, non-contiguous parcels and mobile resources, and have administrative authority over only a fraction of the LCD landscape. Conservation design architects and LCC partners thus face a daunting task: how to facilitate scaling down ecosystem-level goals for conservation (i.e., LCD) into management plans that can be effectively implemented across complex social-ecological systems.

Literature and case studies indicating that engaging local stakeholders (i.e., communities, governments, resource-based industries, individual landowners, and resource users potentially impacted by or with the power to impact conservation actions) in conservation planning and implementation processes is an integral step in developing socio-politically feasible conservation efforts. However, while members of the LCC community recognize and value the role of local stakeholders in broad-scale conservation efforts, local-level stakeholder engagement and social science integration have not yet been institutionalized in LCD. Lacking systematic assessments, questions remain as to what, when, and where social data (including information related to the values, interests, preferences, behaviors, and knowledge of local stakeholders) and public engagement (i.e., the direct participation of local stakeholders in information sharing and decision making) would be most valuable in LCD processes, and how they could be most effectively incorporated. We propose that human dimensions research (involving various forms of social science inquiry across diverse disciplines) can contribute to answering these questions.

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

The purpose of this information collection is to use qualitative methods to reveal and examine the role of local stakeholder engagement and social data integration in LCD, and associated planning and implementation processes. This will be achieved through semi-structured interviews (both face-to-face and over the phone) conducted with conservation partners and local stakeholders involved in (or potentially involved in) developing LCD and implementing management planning informed by LCD. The purpose of these interviews is to help us understand (1) how and by whom LCDs are being developed, (2) how local stakeholder engagement and social data have been used to inform the development and implementation of LCDs, (3) the relative benefits and drawbacks of these engagement and integration efforts, and (4) recommendations for how future LCD efforts may incorporate local stakeholder engagement and social data into conservation design processes. This portion of the inquiry will rely exclusively on qualitative methods; no statistical methods will be used nor will any statistical information be derived.

Based on our findings, we intend to provide LCC partners with tools to guide human dimensions inquiry and resultant considerations during future LCD efforts. These products will directly support Goal 4; Objective 2 of the LCC Network's 2014 Strategic Plan for achieving collaborative conservation. This objective states that a priority of the LCC Network is to "support, use, and fund social science approaches and human dimensions of conservation work to assess, understand, and effectively engage new partners and to assess the needs of on-the-ground users of LCC information."

Findings of this information collection will directly benefit LCC partners in their efforts to plan and implement socio-politically feasible and publically accountable landscape-level Conservation Designs. Our findings will provide insight into how a variety of LCDs have sought to fit Conservation Designs to the socio-political landscape through consideration of local-level community and key stakeholder traits (e.g., values, interests, preferences, behaviors, and knowledge). Our analysis will also highlight lessons learned from these experiences and suggestions for how future LCD efforts may strategically design and adapt their stakeholder engagement and social data collection efforts.

This information collection is intended to inform the development of a subsequent survey that will further elucidate the potential role of local stakeholders in LCD development. If that survey is developed, this ICR will be revised and a supporting statement B will be added with the appropriate statistical justifications performed.

Our initial inquiry will use a multiple case study approach (wherein we focus on three to four LCD efforts currently underway) and will employ semi-structured interviews with 90 non-federal employees. Interview participants will include LCD process leaders, LCD partners involved in the development of case study LCDs, and case study LCD product end-users. A respondent may choose between participating in face-to-face or phone-based semi-structured interviews. This information collection is a one-time event and interview participation is voluntary.

A. Case Studies:

We will conduct semi-structured interviews with 45 non-federal employees directly involved in the development of case study LCDs. These include LCD case study Process Leaders and LCD Partners.

A.1) LCD Process Leaders:

Within each LCD initiative, we will first interview LCD process leaders. Based on our current understanding of LCD case studies, we anticipate that process leaders will include representatives of natural resource management agencies and environmentally focused organizations and NGOs.

A.2) LCD Partners:

We will also conduct semi-structured interviews with conservation partners from each case study site who are directly involved in—but who are not the leaders of— case study LCD development. These conservation partners will likely be members of LCD core teams or subcommittees. Interview participants will be selected such that we may capture the perspectives of representatives from a range of organizations, agencies, and groups, all of whom are involved in LCD decision-making. Interview participants will likely include representatives of natural resource management agencies and organizations, environmental NGOs, and alternative stakeholder groups.

Interviews with LCD Process Leaders and Partners are intended to gather insights and recommendations concerning:

- How the administrative and governance processes associated with developing LCDs function, and who is or may be included in LCD decision-processes.
- The roles local stakeholders and social data do and may play within LCD decision-making processes, and the relative benefits, drawbacks, and challenges associated with their inclusion.
- How LCD products (i.e., geospatially explicit design products and recommendations to guide conservation planning) are being and may be developed, how and by whom these products are being or may be used, and how local stakeholder participation during LCD product development may impact these products' utility.

A.3) LCD Product End-Users

Semi-structured interviews will also be conducted with 30 intended end-users of LCD products. These end-users may include landowners, local natural resource conservation practitioners, administrators of public lands or land trusts, or municipal-level environmental commissioners or planners who are or may potentially use tools, recommendations, and other products of the LCD process to inform their management planning. We will identify end-users through the chain referral technique, wherein we ask LCD partners to refer us to agencies, organizations, and groups identified as current or potential future LCD product end-users. End-user interviews will seek to elucidate:

- End-users' needs and interests related to natural resource management planning,
- End-users' familiarity with LCD,
- If and how end-users have been engaged in the LCD process, and how their engagement has influenced LCD development,
- How they have or might use LCD products to inform their management planning and implementation efforts, and
- How future LCD efforts might engage and solicit insights from local stakeholders (such as these end-users).

B. Non-Case Study LCD Leaders
To ensure we collect data from a diversity of LCD efforts concerning their engagement with local stakeholders and utilization of social data during LCD development, we will also conduct semi-structured interviews with 15 LCD process leaders involved in the administration and coordination of LCD efforts not included in our case studies. These LCD efforts will be selected to maximize geographic range and socio-political diversity of sites where LCD is taking place. These process leaders will be asked the same questions asked of case study LCD Process Leaders.

Drawing on findings from our literature review and empirical analysis, we will develop a qualitative model indicating when, where, and through what mechanisms (of local stakeholder engagement or social data integration) local social considerations may be most effectively and appropriately incorporated into LCD design and implementation processes. This model, along with insights gained through case studies, will be used to produce a comprehensive series of human dimensions-related guidelines for the LCD process. These will be presented in a peer-reviewed practitioners' guide for human dimensions integration in LCD. This practitioners' guide will be made freely available to the LCD community of practice. LCC partners may draw on recommendations and insights offered in the practitioners' guide, including best-practice recommendations and tradeoffs to consider, to inform their decisions related to stakeholder engagement and social data integration during LCD development. Our qualitative model for human dimensions integration in LCD, along with insights gathered through this information collection effort, will also be presented in manuscripts targeted for publication in broadly accessible, peer-reviewed journals. These manuscripts are intended for use by organizations, agencies, and groups focused on developing and implementing landscape-level conservation.

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.].

Information will be gathered through face-to-face and phone-based semi-structured interviews. These interviews will be recorded using a digital audio recorder. These data collection methods were chosen to elicit in-depth responses to qualitative questions. This information is best gathered in a personal interview format, by researchers trained in qualitative methods and interview techniques. Other technological means are not suitable for efficiently and accurately collecting this qualitative information. Thus, information collection will not involve the use of any alternative automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Upon completion of interview transcription, audio recordings of interview will be destroyed**.** No names will be attached to any written or recorded description of or commentary by interview subjects.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

A search of the literature, including "grey" literature, together with conversations with LCC coordinators and LCD program leaders, revealed this information collection involves no unnecessary duplication of existing information.

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

Interviews may be conducted with small business owners such as land trust managers, as these groups may be identified as intended end-users of LCD products. We will minimize the length of semi-structured interviews with small business owners by only requesting the minimum information needed to understand (1) their management priorities and preferences, (2) how they would use LCD products in their management efforts, (3) how they were involved in or represented during, or might want to be involved in or represented during the development of LCDs, and (4) recommendations for how future LCD efforts might engage and solicit insights from local stakeholders. We expect these interviews to last no more than one hour. Through minimizing the length of interviews and providing flexibility of the mode of information collection (a choice between semi-structured interviews conducted face-to-face or over the phone), time burden to small business owners and entities will be minimized.

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.**

This information collection is intended to enhance the LCD community of practice's ability to develop conservation designs with the greatest utility, appeal, and accountability to local stakeholders, including intended end-users of LCD products. Lacking systematic assessments, questions remain as to what, when, and where social data (including information related to the values, interests, and knowledge of local stakeholders) and stakeholder engagement (meaning the direct participation of local stakeholders in information sharing and decision making) would be most valuable in LCD processes. Without this information collection, there would remain significant gaps in the LCD community's knowledge of best practices for developing LCD and promoting the implementation of planning and management efforts that help meet landscape-level conservation priorities.

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.**

There are no circumstances that require us to collect this information in a manner that is 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 May 19, 2016, we published in the Federal Register (1018-XXXX; Document Citation 81 FR 31654) a notice of our intent to request that OMB approve this information collection. In that notice, we solicited comments for 60 days, ending on July 18, 2016. We received two comments in which the commenter objected to the collection of this information, but did not specifically address the information collection requirements. We did not make any changes to our requirements as a result of these comments.

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

We will not provide gifts or payments to respondents.

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

Information derived from this interview is confidential. All notes and audio-recordings from this interview will be locked in a secure filing cabinet. No names will be attached to any written descriptions of or commentary by interview subjects, and no Personally Identifiable Information (PII) will be collected. In accordance with OMB guidance as provided in “Guidance on Agency Survey and Statistical Information Collections” (January 20, 2006), respondents will be informed during the reading of the oral informed consent script that their participation in the interview will be confidential.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are considered private.

We will not ask questions of a sensitive nature.

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

We estimate that 90 non-federal respondents will submit approximately 90 responses totaling an estimated 105 (rounded) burden hours. We estimate the annual dollar value of the burden hours to be $4,390 (rounded). We used information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics USDL-16-1150, June 9, 2016 (Employer Costs for Employee Compensation-March 2016) to estimate average hourly total compensation costs:

- Individuals – We used the total compensation costs for civilian workers from Table 2, which states an hourly rate of $33.94.

- Private Sector – We used the total compensation costs for all private industry workers from Table 11, which states an hourly rate of $ $37.73.

- State and Local Government – We used the total compensation costs for all state and local government workers from Table 4, which states an hourly rate of $45.23.

Table 1. Annual Public Burden Costs

ACTIVITY	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	NO. OF ANNUAL RESPONSES	COMPLETION TIME PER RESPONSE (10 minutes for initial contact + 60-minute interview)	TOTAL ANNUAL BURDEN HOURS*	TOTAL COMPENSATION HOURLY RATE/TOTAL COMPENSATION HOURLY RATE PER RESPONSE*	$ VALUE OF ANNUAL BURDEN HOURS*
Complete Interview - Individuals	5	5	70 minutes	6	$33.94/$39.37	$199.00
Complete Interview - Private Sector	35	35	70 minutes	41	$37.73/$44.14	$1,545.00
Complete Interview – State, Local & Tribal Govt	50	50	70 minutes	58	$45.23/$52.92	$2,646.00
*Total	90	90		105		$4,390.00

*All numbers are rounded

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 associated with this collection.

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

The total Federal cost to administer these interviews is $75,375 (rounded). This includes $68,052 for Cornell researchers' salaries, travel costs during case studies, transcription services, and publication costs. It also includes $7,323 (rounded) in Fish and Wildlife Service salary costs for two US Fish and Wildlife Employees and one US Fish and Wildlife Service contractor to inform and guide project coordination, administration, and deliverable review. We used the Office of Personnel Management Salary Table for 2016 to determine average hourly Federal wages. In accordance with BLS news release USDL-16-1150, June 9, 2016, we multiplied individual hourly wages for the Federal employees by 1.6. Project coordination, administration, and review will be done in coordination with a project contact team consisting of one administrator and one contractor within the Human Dimensions Branch of the National Wildlife Refuge System as well as an administrator within the Office of Science Applications in Service's Region 7.

Table 2. Federal Staff Costs

Action	Position and Grade	Hourly Rate	Hourly Rate incl. benefits (1.6 x hourly pay rate for Fed emp & 1.4 for contract emp)	Total Annual Hours	Annual Cost (rounded)
Project coordination, administration, and deliverable review	Fish and Wildlife Administrator GS 15 Step 7 (AK)	$73.87	$118.19	30	$3,545.76
	Fish and Wildlife Administrator GS 14 Step 6 (Denver, CO)	$59.97	$95.95	30	$2,878.56
	US Fish and Wildlife Contractor	$29.95*		30	$898.50
Total					**$7,323 (rounded)**

*based on an annual wage of $62,500

Table 3. Costs Associated with Information Collection

Operational Expenses	Costs Per Submission	Total Annual Costs (Over the 1 Year of the Study)
Researcher Salaries	$45,206	$45,206
Case Study Travel Costs	$14,666	$14,666
Interview Transcription Services	$6,180	$6,180
Publication Costs	$2,000	$2,000
Total	**$68,052**	**$68,052**

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

This is a new information collection.

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

Based on data gathered during this information collection, Cornell University will prepare a peer-reviewed practitioners' guide for human dimensions integration in Landscape Conservation Design. This practitioners' guide will be freely accessible to the LCD community of Practice by January 2018. Cornell University and US Fish and Wildlife Service Staff will also collaborate on future publications based on this information collection. These future publications will be targeted at both peer-reviewed journals and more informal forums, such as HD.gov blogs, which will also be peer-reviewed.

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.

The expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection will be displayed in introductory emails to potential interview participants.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.