

SUPPORTING STATEMENT – PART A  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Recreation Use and Expenditure Surveys - OMB 0710-XXXX

1. Need for the Information Collection

Authority for this collection is based on the following. 42 U.S.C. 1962-2, Congressional statement of objectives. 16 U.S.C. 460d, The Flood Control Act of 1944, as amended Section 4, authorized the Chief of Engineers “to construct, maintain, and operate public park and recreational facilities at water resources development projects under the control of the Secretary of the Army, and to permit the construction, maintenance, and operation of such facilities.” It provides for the projects to be open to the public for recreational purposes, and provides for access to and from areas along the shores in the public interest. Recreation as a project purpose was established under the Federal Water Project Recreation Act of 1965 (Public Law 89-72, 16 U.S.C. 460(L)(12)-460(L)(21)), as amended. Section 2(a) specified benefits for recreation be included in the economic analysis of contemplated projects. 33 U.S.C. 652, Upper Mississippi River Management authorizes implementation of recreational projects and assessment of economic benefits generated by recreational activities in the system. The joint federal/non-Federal sharing of financial responsibilities for the development, enhancement and management of recreation and fish and wildlife resources was authorized under the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-662, 33 U.S.C. 2215) and the Water Resources Development Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-640, 33 U.S.C. 2320). Senate Document No. 97, 87th Congress, 2nd, Session. (1964): Policies, Standards, and Procedures in the Formulation, Evaluation, and Review of Plans for use and Development of Water and Related Land Resources.

USACE policies (<http://www.publications.usace.army.mil/>) on recreation planning and information collection are included in the following. ER 1130-2-550/EP 1130-2-550, Recreation Operations and Maintenance Policies/Procedures; EP 1130-2-540, Environmental Stewardship Operations and Maintenance Procedures; and ER 1165-2-400, Recreation Planning, Development and Management Policies. (See attachment: USACE Policies). USACE recreation planning and information collection policies are summarized as follows. Recreation areas were initially developed to two-thirds of expected ultimate potential. Master plans are maintained/updated to meet ultimate potential, achieve maximum consistency with authorized plans, and insure that future development responsive to current recreation and resource management policies. Projected future use is predicted by regional use models, specific site use models, attendance at similar projects, or capacity of the project where excess demand can be demonstrated. Estimation of economic impacts such as travel cost, contingent valuation, unit day values are updated annually. Survey data are critical to inform periodic updates to these plans and estimated values.

A key measure of recreational use is visitation. Variations of the visitor surveys to estimate the attendance at Corps of Engineers Water Resources Projects (Corps Projects) have been used for more than 30 years. The USACE primarily uses counting devices to account for vehicular and pedestrian access. Surveys are conducted for the purposes of developing conversion multipliers

**The 2016 Supporting Statement Part A for OMB 0710-XXXX**  
**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE or COE)**  
**Recreation Use and Visitor Surveys**

for traffic counting devices' numeric readings into estimates of recreation use. The Visitation Estimation and Reporting System (VERS) is the Corps visitation estimation and reporting system. The component of VERS that deals with the survey instrument(s), has historically been known as Traffic-Stop Surveys or Direct Data Entry System (DDES) and is now called the Recreation Use and Expenditure Surveys.

By their nature, recreation services are provided for the public and the use of social science techniques and surveys is needed to monitor use and quality of services provided to the public. Recreation use surveys at Corps Projects were begun nationally in 1962 at the direction of the Chief of Engineers. Data collections were used in existing planning processes and utilized to improve the administration of operating projects. Estimates of visitation and data from recreation use surveys are inputs to the recreation component of the USACE Civil Works Regional Economic System Program and recreation industry economic models using IMPLAN System data and software that are common in the recreation industry.

Additional data from recreation visitors is needed to refine the visitation estimation factors that are applied to vehicle meters (described in more detail in Supporting Statement B). The survey instrument, sampling design and information collection procedures were used in 2011-2013 under OMB Control # 0710-0001. Data collection under this new information collection request will utilize the same sampling design and information collection procedures. Minor adjustments in question wording and logic have been made to the on-site Recreation Use Survey based on feedback from data collections and analysis of responses from 2011-2013; documented in Attachment 11. These changes do not reduce the average response time for the survey. No changes have been made to the abbreviated bus/bike survey or the follow-up Expenditure Survey questions or logic. No data collection efforts have been made using these instruments and methodology since 2013.

2. Use of the Information

Respondents are vehicles or bike parties that exit recreation areas found at USACE Civil Works Water Resource Projects. Exiting vehicles are alerted to the presence of a survey team through signs, traffic control devices, and the presence of an interviewer. As vehicles exit drivers are requested to stop by the interviewer, asked to voluntarily participate in a survey about their time in the recreation area, and presented with a card (Attachment 1) providing the Privacy Statement, Agency Disclosure, OMB control number/expiration, and website with additional information about the survey.

The onsite survey is presented to the respondent by oral interview with data collected directly on a computer by the interviewer during the interaction. Only the interviewer sees the survey questions. The computer provides both the interviewer's script/questions and fields to enter responses. The interviewer enters the respondents answer on the computer. In the event a bus or bike party exits the recreation area, an abbreviated version of the survey is presented to the

**The 2016 Supporting Statement Part A for OMB 0710-XXXX**  
**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE or COE)**  
**Recreation Use and Visitor Surveys**

respondent by the interviewer. Attachment 2 and Attachment 3 provide the script, questions, response options, and logic associated with the survey.

Individuals participating in the full survey are asked if they would be willing to volunteer and participate in a follow-up survey to provide additional information about their visit to the recreation area and region. Volunteers provide an e-mail address which is then used to send an e-mail with a link to the follow-up Survey (Attachments 4, the question bank, and 5, screenshots from the online survey). The e-mail (Attachment 6) sent to the follow-up survey volunteers includes a Privacy Act Statement, Agency Disclosure, OMB control number/expiration, and points of contact for the survey. This is a web based survey that is completed online.

Interviews may be collected by USACE staff, volunteers or contractors. The computers used for surveys are maintained by the Engineer Research Development Center (ERDC) are only utilized for the purpose of the survey data collection. For the onsite survey, data is stored on the survey computer. On a weekly basis, the computer is backed up and that file transferred to the Institute for Water Resources (IWR). Records volunteering to participate in the follow-up economic survey and that provided an e-mail address are extracted and transferred to the Contractor performing the web based follow-up survey. At the conclusion of the survey season, onsite survey e-mail addresses are stripped from the dataset and the data is processed by ERDC and used to create values in the visitation estimation modeling framework. At the conclusion of the survey season, e-mail addresses are stripped from the web based follow-up economic survey data and the data is processed by the contractor and used to create variables for use in the USACE Regional Economic System Model (RECONS, an IMPLAN model).

The information from the surveys is used for many purposes, including to identify, quantify and evaluate recreation use and expenditures for planning, feasibility studies, environmental assessments, environmental impact statements, development of visitation models, and estimates of economic impacts for both existing water resource projects and proposed water resource development. Some specific uses of this survey include:

- The development of visitor use characterizations for evaluation in the conversion of traffic meter readings to estimates of recreation use for the purpose of reporting to OMB.
- The understanding of use characteristics of visitors for application in recreation area performance and efficiency ratings.
- The development of spending estimates and regional economic impacts via the RECONS model.
- Evaluation of water safety issues in regards to total fatalities as a function of total attendance.
- Provision of estimates of use and use characterizations for partnership initiatives, for example, chamber of commerce and other non-Federal partnerships interested in providing and supporting recreation opportunity on or near the water resource project.

3. Use of Information Technology

**The 2016 Supporting Statement Part A for OMB 0710-XXXX**  
**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE or COE)**  
**Recreation Use and Visitor Surveys**

There are two components of the Recreation Use and Visitor Surveys, an onsite and an online version. The onsite version of the instrument is implemented by surveys conducted at the exit of the recreation area. The onsite instrument is delivered via an interviewer with data collected directly on a computer. The computer-based program allows for logic and range errors to be conducted onsite. The logic directs the order of questions that are appropriate based on recreation area and the visitors responses, thereby eliminating questions unrelated to that visitor and reducing burden. 100% of the onsite surveys are collected electronically with data entered directly into a computer via the interviewer.

Visitors that volunteer to do the onsite survey are asked at the end of the questioning, if they would be part of a follow-up web based survey (i.e. the online instrument). An email address is provided by willing participants and they are sent an e-mail message with a link to the website with the follow-up expenditure survey. The online version also uses logic to limited questions that are appropriate for the visitor based on the recreation area visited, responses to the onsite survey and responses within the web-based survey instrument. Questions in this instrument are more data associated with economic impact estimation. Respondent burden is reduced through the application of this online technology to allow only necessary questions to be asked/displayed. 100% of the follow-up survey is collected electronically with data entered by the respondent via a web-based survey.

4. Non-duplication

The information obtained through this collection is unique and is not already available for use or adaptation from another cleared source.

5. Burden on Small Business

This information collection does not impose a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small businesses or entities.

6. Less Frequent Collection

A minimal sampling framework allows use-data to model visitation estimates across the country. The sampling allows the Corps to calculate variance estimates from key variables in the collected data. The minimum amount of sampling needed to compute variance estimates is proposed. This is described in more detail in Supporting Document B.

7. Paperwork Reduction Act Guidelines

This collection of information does not require collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the guidelines delineated in 5 CFR 1320.5(d)(2).

8. Consultation and Public Comments

**The 2016 Supporting Statement Part A for OMB 0710-XXXX**  
**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE or COE)**  
**Recreation Use and Visitor Surveys**

Part A: PUBLIC NOTICE

A 60-day Federal Register Notice for the collection was published on Thursday, September 1, 2016. The 60-day FRN citation is 81 FRN 60348. No comments were received during the 60-day comment period.

A 30-Day Federal Register Notice for the collection published on Tuesday, January 24, 2017. The 30-Day FRN citation is 82 FRN 8179.

Part B: CONSULTATION

The main constructs of the survey were developed by in 1979 by Mischon and Wyatt in Technical report R-79-1 and Coughlin, Berry and Cohen in Technical Report R-78-1. The survey tool and methodologies were further refined in 1992 with the implementation of the Visitation Estimation and Reporting System (VERS) where visitor data was collected using methodology similar that current practice. Training in 1992 was developed in conjunction with USACE Huntsville Division with input from USACE ERDC staff. The methodology used in 2011-2013 and to be utilized under this request was developed by USACE ERDC and IWR staff in consultation with faculty from Michigan State University (MSU) for use in 2011-2013. The questionnaires were evaluated by MSU in 2011 and only minor wording and logic changes have occurred to the onsite Recreation Use survey (see Attachment 11). Additional consultation on training and delivery methodology was conducted with Margaret Patrella, Social Scientist with the US DOT Volpe Center, during FY2016.

9. Gifts or Payment

No payments or gifts are being offered to respondents as an incentive to participate in the collection.

10. Confidentiality

Due to the interview format of the onsite survey, the respondent does not see any survey form. The OMB control number/expiration, Privacy Statement, Agency Disclosure and website for additional information is presented to respondent via a hand out. This information is printed on card stock offered to the respondent at the time of the survey (Attachment 1). Individuals that volunteer to participate in the follow-up survey receive an e-mail (Attachment 6) that contains the OMB control number/expiration, privacy statement, agency disclosure and points of contact. The OMB control number and expiration data is displayed on each screen of the web-based follow-up survey.

**The 2016 Supporting Statement Part A for OMB 0710-XXXX**  
**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE or COE)**  
**Recreation Use and Visitor Surveys**

The questions asked during the survey are primarily an assessment of the recreation visit of the vehicle occupants. Only descriptive information on the party collected, from either survey, are zip code, age range, income range, gender, race/ethnicity, military service and disability status. At the end of the instrument we ask these volunteer respondents to volunteer once again for a secondary online expenditure survey to describe additional information and expenses associated with their trip. E-mail addresses are requested for the purposes of the follow-up expenditure survey and the e-mail addresses are scrubbed from all records following the data collection effort during the data review and cleaning process.

A draft copy of the Systems of Records Notice (A1105 CE “Recreational Use and Expenditure Survey”) has been provided with this package for OMB’s review (Attachment 7). A draft copy of the Privacy Impact Assessment (Recreation\_Use\_Surveys\_PIA\_20160415) has been provided with this package for OMB’s review (Attachment 8).

Records are maintained until agency determines that they are no longer needed for administrative, legal, audit, or other operational purposes, but not longer than 6 years. Paper records are destroyed by tearing, burning, melting, chemical decomposition, pulping, pulverizing, shredding, or mutilation. Electronic records and media are destroyed by overwriting, degaussing, disintegration, pulverization, burning, melting, incineration, shredding or sanding.

11. Sensitive Questions

In the onsite survey, respondents are asked if anyone in the vehicle may have difficulty in walking, hearing, etc. The purpose of the question is to determine estimates of the visiting population that are eligible for the America the Beautiful Access Pass. With the passage of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (June 2014) the Corps became eligible to sell America the Beautiful interagency recreation passes which include separate passes for senior adults and individuals with disabilities. All responses are optional and voluntary. Surveyors may provide additional information explaining the need for the question, explaining eligibility for the Access pass program. The question does not violate the Privacy Act.

Also in the onsite survey, respondents are asked if they would be willing to volunteer to participate in a web-based follow-up survey. In agreeing to do so, the respondent provides their e-mail address. This information is used solely for the purpose of sending them an e-mail with a link to a web based survey. At the conclusion of the data collection effort, the e-mail address is scrubbed from the data set. The draft Privacy Impact Assessment (Attachment 8) addresses handling of this information.

The web-based follow-up survey includes race and ethnicity questions. Research in the field of recreation has shown differences in recreation preferences, activity participation and expenditures among socio-economic groups. A technical report produced by the USDA Forest Service in 2008 (PSW-GTR-210, [http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/publications/documents/psw\\_gtr210/](http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/publications/documents/psw_gtr210/)) documents the growing body of

**The 2016 Supporting Statement Part A for OMB 0710-XXXX**  
**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE or COE)**  
**Recreation Use and Visitor Surveys**

literature related to diversity in recreation users and trends that can be used by land managers to adapt services to more diverse visiting populations and improve access to federal land while still meeting natural resource missions.

12. Respondent Burden, and its Labor Costs

The respondent burden was estimated by analyzing response time data from surveys conducted in 2011-2013. In the past information collection effort, both surveys were conducted via computer allowing for timestamps to be utilized to calculate the average response time, response rates, and document respondent counts. Those calculations were applied to the intended information collection effort under this request to develop burden estimates.

Information collection in 2011-2013 resulted in 66340 responses to the Recreation Use Survey (of which 453 were the abbreviated bus/bike survey) and 1389 completed responses to the follow-up Expenditure survey. The response time estimate for this request is based on the time stamp data (average time to complete) from past effort using these instruments and has been rounded up to 5 minutes, 2 minutes and 11 minutes respectively. The planned information collection effort under this request is reduced from previous years since the additional data to be collected will refine the model, not form the foundation. The average of 21962 responses per year to the full Recreation Use Survey was reduced by 15%. Bus/bike intercepts varied widely from park to park, max at one park was 25 intercepts. An estimate of 450 abbreviated bus bike surveys will cover possible maximum bus/bike intercepts. Since four years have passed since the survey was last conducted, an assumption has been made that additional visitors will have e-mail and be willing to participate in the follow-up survey in addition to improved surveyor training related to entering and repeating the e-mail back to the visitor as they type. In 2013, about 15 % of the respondents to the onsite survey indicated they were willing to provide an e-mail for the follow-up survey, but 25% of that total provided a phony address or it was entered inaccurately by the interviewer. Under this request, we estimate that 23% will be willing to provide an e-mail for the follow-up survey and have estimated the respondents at 2050.

a. Estimation of Respondent Burden

**1.1 Recreation Use Survey**

- a. Number of Respondents: 18600
- b. Number of Responses per Respondent: 1
- c. Number of Total Annual Responses: 18600
- d. Response Time: 5 minutes
- e. Respondent Burden Hours: 1550.00

**1.2 Abbreviated Bus/Bike Survey**

**The 2016 Supporting Statement Part A for OMB 0710-XXXX**  
**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE or COE)**  
**Recreation Use and Visitor Surveys**

- a. Number of Respondents: 450
- b. Number of Responses per Respondent: 1
- c. Number of Total Annual Responses: 450
- d. Response Time: 2 minutes
- e. Respondent Burden Hours: 15.00

**1.3 Follow-up Economic Survey**

(this survey taken by a subset of the respondents to 1.1 Recreation Use Survey)

- a. Number of Respondents: 2050
- b. Number of Responses per Respondent: 1
- c. Number of Total Annual Responses: 2050
- d. Response Time: 11minutes
- e. Respondent Burden Hours: 375.83

**2. Total Submission Burden**

- a. Total Number of Respondents: 19,050\*
- b. Total Number of Annual Responses: 21,100
- c. Total Respondent Burden Hours: 1,941

*\*Respondents from 1.3 omitted as they are included in 1.1*

b. Labor Cost of Respondent Burden

Visitors to USACE recreation areas come from a variety of occupations that cannot be defined in advance of the survey. The labor cost burden is calculated with the median hourly wage of all occupations as reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in their National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates ([http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_nat.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_nat.htm)). The reported value was \$17.40 at the time this supporting document was written.

**1.1 Recreation Use Survey**

- a. Number of Total Annual Responses: 18600
- b. Response Time: 5 minutes
- c. Respondent Hourly Wage: \$17.40
- d. Labor Burden Per Response: \$1.45
- e. Total Labor Burden: \$26,970.00

**1.2 Abbreviated Bus/Bike Survey**

- a. Number of Total Annual Responses: 450
- b. Response Time: 2 minutes
- c. Respondent Hourly Wage: \$17.40
- d. Labor Burden Per Response: \$0.58
- e. Total Labor Burden: \$261.00

**1.3 Follow-up Economic Survey**



**The 2016 Supporting Statement Part A for OMB 0710-XXXX**  
**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE or COE)**  
**Recreation Use and Visitor Surveys**

*(this survey taken by a subset of the respondents to 1.1 Recreation Use Survey)*

- a. Number of Total Annual Responses: 2050
- b. Response Time: 11 minutes
- c. Respondent Hourly Wage: \$17.40
- d. Labor Burden Per Response: \$3.19
- e. Total Labor Burden: \$6,539.50

**2. Overall Labor Burden**

- a. Total Number of Annual Responses: 21,100
- b. Total Labor Burden \$33,770.50

13. Respondent Costs Other Than Burden Hour Costs

There are no annualized costs to respondents other than the labor burden costs addressed in Section 12 of this document to complete this collection.

14. Cost to the Federal Government

a. Labor Cost to the Federal Government

**1.1 Recreation Use Survey**

- a. Number Total Annual Responses: 18600
- b. Processing Time per Response: 0.08 hours
- c. Hourly Wage of Worker(s) Processing Responses: \$13.54
- d. Cost to Process Each Response: \$1.08
- e. Total Cost to Process Responses: \$20,147.52

**1.2 Abbreviated Bus/Bike Survey**

- a. Number Total Annual Responses: 450
- b. Processing Time per Response: 0.03 hours
- c. Hourly Wage of Worker(s) Processing Responses: \$13.54
- d. Cost to Process Each Response: \$0.41
- e. Total Cost to Process Responses: \$182.79

**1.3 Follow-up Economic Survey**

*(this survey taken by a subset of the respondents to 1.1 Recreation Use Survey)*

- a. Number Total Annual Responses: 2050
- b. Processing Time per Response: 0.08 hours
- c. Hourly Wage of Worker(s) Processing Responses: \$13.54
- d. Cost to Process Each Response: \$1.08
- e. Total Cost to Process Responses: \$2,220.56

**2. Overall Labor Burden to Federal Government**

**The 2016 Supporting Statement Part A for OMB 0710-XXXX**  
**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE or COE)**  
**Recreation Use and Visitor Surveys**

- a. Total Number of Annual Responses: 21100
- b. Total Labor Burden: \$22,550.87

**b. Operation and Maintenance Costs**

- a. Equipment: \$102,150.00
- b. Printing: \$420.00
- c. Postage: \$5,400.00
- d. Software Purchases: \$0
- e. Licensing Costs: \$0
- f. Other: \$555,000.00

Equipment includes technology for both surveys, traffic control and personal protective equipment associated with the onsite survey. Printing costs include survey interviewer training supplies and the cards provided to the respondent with privacy statement, agency disclosure, and control number/expiration. Postage costs are incurred associated with shipping survey equipment and other supplies. Other Costs includes travel is associated with interviewer and oversight personnel getting to and around the regions where surveys are delivered. Other Costs also includes survey management and oversight costs.

- 1. Total Operational and Maintenance Costs: \$662,970.00
- 2. Total Labor Cost to the Federal Government: \$22,550.87
- 3. Total cost to the Federal Government: \$685,520.87

15. **Reasons for Change in Burden**

This is a new collection with a new associated burden.

16. **Publication of Results**

The raw data is summarized then further processed to produce variables for use in visitation modeling; the raw data is not published. USACE uses vehicle counters to record access to recreation areas. Without the surveys, the vehicle counts cannot be accurately translated into estimates of visits, length of stay and activities. Refinements to improve the estimates of use will drive recommendations for future study needs. Data collected in 2011-2013 was used to establish the meter calibration factors and related visitor statistics used for visitation estimation with results released beginning in late FY2016. Survey efforts under this collection will provide additional data for the refinement of the modeling effort and improvements to the estimates.

Data collection is planned for the peak use and shoulder recreational seasons over the three years covered by the clearance. Data cleaning and conversion to visitation modeling variables takes approximately 6 months (described in more detail in Supporting Statement B). These variables are located in the Visitation Estimation and Reporting System (VERS) and are used to produce annual visitation estimates on an ongoing basis.

**The 2016 Supporting Statement Part A for OMB 0710-XXXX**  
**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE or COE)**  
**Recreation Use and Visitor Surveys**

Resulting visitation estimates are stored in Operations & Maintenance Business Information Link (OMBIL; the USACE operations database of record) and reported via USACE's Value to the Nation website (www.corpsresults.us) in combination with other recreation data. Resulting visitation and economic impact estimates are shared with Federal Interagency Council on Outdoor Recreation (FICOR) and reported periodically in combination with similar data from other Federal Land Management Agencies (National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and Forest Service).

17. Non-Display of OMB Expiration Date

Because the instrument is on a computer that is not visible to the public, a card is provided to the respondent with OMB Control Number, agency disclosure, a privacy statement and website where they can see additional information on the data collection effort (Attachment 1). OMB Control number and expiration date is shown on the follow-up Economic Survey (Attachment 5 and Attachment 6). We are not seeking approval to omit the display of the expiration date of the OMB approval on the collection instrument.

18. Exceptions to "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Submissions"

We are not requesting any exemptions to the provisions stated in 5 CFR 1320.9