

The 2017 Supporting Statement for OMB 0596-NEW

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

- 1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection had been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.**

The universe of potential respondents is the population of Non-Timber Forest Product gatherers in the United States plus land managers, land owners, landscape designers, and others who work on or have an interest in lands in the United States with Non-Timber Forest Products. Non-timber Forest Product gatherers include those who plan specific outings in order to collect Non-Timber Forest Products and those who collect Non-Timber Forest Products opportunistically while engaging in other outdoor recreation activities. Previous research suggests that this may include up to 20% of the U.S. population. The actual number of people who collect Non-Timber Forest Products in any location (neighborhood, city, region) cannot be known since much of this activity takes place in private.

Both purposive and probabilistic samples will be employed for this Information Collection. Purposive sampling will be used to reach Non-Timber Forest Product gatherers in a targeted geographic location. Recruiting and consultations with tribal governments and cultural and community organizations will identify local groups that engage in Non-Timber Forest Product gathering. Separate investigations will identify individual and organizational landowners, land managers, landscape designers, and others with an interest or stake in Non-Timber Forest Products. In some cases, all identified individuals with an interest in Non-Timber Forest Products will be approached to participate in the research.

Probabilistic sampling will be used when there is a desire to survey a representative sample of a population. For example, the research team may conduct a systematic random sample of national forest managers, public park users, or self-identified Non-Timber Forest Product gatherers who use an online social media forum related to Non-Timber Forest Product

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gathering.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:

- **Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,**
- **Estimation procedure,**
- **Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,**
- **Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures, and**
- **Any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.**

Due to the diverse nature of the Non-Timber Forest Product gathering population, we plan to use both qualitative and quantitative Information Collection methods. Qualitative methods generally rely upon small samples and collect information in open-ended formats. In these studies, samples will be of sufficient size to inform decisions about the management of lands with Non-Timber Forest Products. In contrast, quantitative methods maximize the generalizability of findings by employing large randomly-selected samples and collecting information using closed-ended response formats. Sample sizes for such collections are described below.

Three distinct data collection procedures may be employed under this package, focus groups, in-depth interview, and/or survey. Each proposed Non-Timber Forest Product information collection will develop a project-specific justification for OMB review and approval, which will outline the procedure for participant consent and provide the proposed interview or focus group guide or survey. Analytic plans (i.e., proposed statistical techniques) will be described in detail in that justification.

Surveys will be designed to take on average 15-20 minutes to complete, but no survey will take longer than 30 minutes. Interviews will be designed to take on average one hour or less. Focus groups will be designed to take 90 minutes on average. Each data collection method has well established purposes, such as focus groups ability to generate new information through interaction among participants while interview can delve more deeply into a topic with a respondent with expertise in a given situation. Each project-specific justification will describe the method(s) chosen and why. A *sample* survey is included for reference purposes.

Focus Groups

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Participants may be recruited from a specific neighborhood, city, or region, or from the population living near a specific National Forest or public park. In other cases, individuals who belong to a specific ethnic or cultural group (such as first generation immigrants from a particular country) may be recruited in order to collect information on Non-Timber Forest Products gathering by that cultural sub-group.

Participants will be recruited by the research team for the study or by local organizations working with the research team and, in some cases, by professional organizations, commercial focus group companies, and through other sources. Eligibility criteria will be established for all focus groups, and potential participants will be screened in person, using a telephone interview, or with self-administered screening form.

Focus group discussions will occur under the direction of a trained moderator. The verbal discussion will be directed in part by the moderator and in part by the comments of other participants. The moderator will address participant consent and will discuss the proposed focus group guidelines and interview format. Focus groups will be conducted in the participants' native language, in some cases with the use of a third-party translator, when needed to collect high-quality data.

In-depth interviews

Participants will be identified and recruited in accordance with the specific purpose of the study. For example, in some cases individuals will be recruited based on their profession (such as public land manager or state environment department employees) and, in the case of Non-Timber Forest Product gatherers, based on their level of experience with Non-Timber Forest Product gathering.

Similar to the focus groups, participants will be recruited by the research team for the study or by local organizations working with the research team, and in some cases by professional organizations, or through other sources. Eligibility criteria will be established for all interview participants, and potential participants will be screened using a telephone interview or self-administered screening form.

Interviews will be conducted by trained interviewers, in-person or over the telephone or via other electronic format (e.g. facetime, skype). The conversation will be directed by the interviewer, but the content and focus will depend, in part, on the responses of the interviewee. Interviews will be conducted in the participants' native language, in some cases with the use of a third-party translator, when needed.

Sample surveys

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Information collections may employ large-sample self-administered mail surveys, telephone surveys, in-person surveys, or electronic surveys. Ease of providing information will be a key factor in deciding among these options. Sampling frames will be created by a variety of methods that will include the use of commercial survey panels, publically available property tax records, civic groups with strong membership of a particular ethnic group, or other means as appropriate for the target population. Potential participants will be randomly selected from the sampling frame and screened for appropriate demographics or other characteristics as indicated by the research purpose. Surveys will be translated from English to the language(s) of the target population if needed for ease of the respondent and to gather reliable data.

Estimation procedure

All data analysis will be conducted under the advice of a statistician/data analyst as needed, and will involve estimation of descriptive statistics. Other methods (e.g., regression analysis, and various multivariate techniques) will be used as needed to answer specific questions, and as supported by the data (i.e., sufficient sample size to reliably use a given analytic technique). Linking collected data to existing data sources by non-personal identifiers (e.g., state, county, city name) will be used to increase the overall utility of a proposed data collection. When required, the planned sample sizes will also permit sub-analyses that may include analyzing knowledge, attitude, and perceptions among different populations. Corrections will be made for over/under sampling, non-response, non-standard distributions, etc.

Degree of Accuracy

Our annual report to OMB on burden will include an assessment of accuracy for studies undertaken that year.

Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures

Not applicable.

Any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

Not applicable.

3. Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the

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universe studied.

- Using bilingual and bicultural interviewers and culturally and linguistically appropriate data collection instruments.
- A token of appreciation for a respondent's time and interest may be given.
- Addressing data security and anonymity with respondents.
- Minimizing the time needed for participation in the proposed Non-Timber Forest Product study.
- Informing respondents how much time the information collection will take so that they know what to expect.
- Utilizing deadlines, reminders, and follow-ups to remind respondents and encourage participation.
- Providing easy access to survey instruments, regardless of method being used. When appropriate for the audience being studied, research instruments will be designed to be easily accessed by electronic means, from a link in an e-mail or on a website.
- Potential respondents will be informed about the importance of these Non-Timber Forest Product studies and encouraged to participate through a variety of methods, including newsletters from professional associations or community organizations and letters of support from key individuals.
- When appropriate, a dedicated toll-free number and e-mail account will be established to allow potential respondents to confirm a research activity's legitimacy, ask questions, and voice concerns.
- Over-sampling if necessary to address potential for non-response.
- Analyze data by subgroup and in comparison to population universe to assess likelihood of nonresponse bias (per Groves 2006, for example [Groves, Robert M. "Nonresponse rates and nonresponse bias in household surveys." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 70.5 (2006): 646-675.]).

- 4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of tests may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.**

Pilot Testing

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Before each Information Collection is implemented, instruments and method of data collection will be pilot tested. Lessons from the pilot test will be identified, and changes will be incorporated into the instrument and method, as necessary. All pre-tests will involve no more than nine individuals unless OMB clearance is sought for more than nine participants.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

The following individuals may be chosen to pre-test and conduct Information Collections and will be available to provide advice about the design of statistical and sampling procedures undertaken as part of these data collection activities:

John Stanovick, Mathematical Statistician, USDA Forest Service Northern Research Station. (610) 557-4024

Patrick Hurley, Chair, Department of Environmental Studies, Ursinus College – An expert on research design and a subject matter expert on the environmental and social factors that influence where people harvest Non-Timber Forest Products. (484) 762-4323

Rebecca McLain, Portland State University – An expert on research design and a subject matter expert on methods for collecting, recording, analyzing, and reporting Non-Timber Forest Product information. (971) 570-3294

Melissa Poe, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – An expert on research design and a subject matter expert on methods for collecting, recording, analyzing, and reporting Non-Timber Forest Product information. (206) 861-7610

Statisticians with the National Agricultural Statistical Service also provided peer review and input. Their primary concern was with regards to the use of focus groups:

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“Throughout the document it was mentioned that there will be 3 types of data collection methods: focus group, in-depth interviews and survey. Although the focus group may give you valuable information about the collection of non-timber products in any given community, it might not be the most practical way to collect/summarize data. The focus group can be used as part of the piloting process, to gain more knowledge about the population you are after, and then strategically draw a sample for the survey; since the final goal is to collect, analyze and publish data using statistical methods.”

We agree that using focus groups for preliminary research to build a reliable and useful survey is a sound technique. This is a tried-and-true use of focus groups. There are additional ways in which focus groups can be useful. The most important are pressing land manager questions for which more in-depth information is required or for which communication between focus group members is most likely to provide the management information required. Because this is a generic ICR, specific research protocols will be submitted to OIRA for review, allowing for a review and approval of the proposed methods for each specific research project. (Krueger, Richard A. and Mary Anne Casey. 2008. *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research* 4th Edition. SAGE Publications, Inc; 4th edition ISBN-10: 1412969476 ISBN-13: 978-1412969475 240 pages).