

## Supporting Statement A

### Onshore Geophysical Exploration (43 CFR Part 3150 and 36 CFR Parts 228 and 251)

OMB Control Number 1004-0162

**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.**

This information collection pertains to onshore geophysical exploration on Federal lands. Geophysical techniques involve measurements at the surface that enable operators to detect or infer the presence and position of economically useful sub-surface geological deposits.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) uses this collection of information to regulate geophysical exploration for oil and gas on lands it manages. The U.S. Forest Service (FS or Forest Service) uses this collection of information to regulate geophysical exploration for various types of minerals, including oil and gas, on lands it manages.

The BLM on occasion also regulates oil and gas geophysical exploration on Federal lands when:

- An agency of the Department of Defense refers an application for geophysical exploration to the BLM (see 43 CFR 3153.1); or
- In accordance with an interagency agreement between the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and the BLM, an application is received for a project that would cross BOR lands (see BLM Manual 3150.5).

The BLM and the FS collect information on geophysical exploration in accordance with the following authorities:

- (1) Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended (30 U.S.C. 181, et seq.);
- (2) Mineral Leasing Act of 1947 (30 U.S.C. 351 - 359);
- (3) Federal Land Policy and Management Act (43 U.S.C. 1701 - 1787);
- (4) National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 - 4347);
- (5) Regulations at 43 CFR Part 3150 (BLM); and
- (6) Regulations at 36 CFR Parts 228 and Part 251 (FS).

The BLM and FS use the information in order to manage geophysical exploration operations that are under their respective jurisdictions.

**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.**

### ***Overview***

The respondents for this collection of information are “operators.” An “operator,” within the meaning of this information collection request, is a business that seeks to conduct geophysical exploration on Federal lands.

Control number 1004-0162 includes the following information-collection activities:

- Notice of Intent and Authorization to Conduct Geophysical Operation / Outside Alaska;
- Notice of Intent and Authorization to Conduct Geophysical Operation / Alaska;
- Notice of Completion of Geophysical Exploration Operations; and
- Data and Information Obtained in Carrying Out Exploration Plan (Alaska only)

The appropriate Federal agency or agencies are available to apprise operators of practices and procedures to be followed prior to commencing geophysical operations on BLM or FS lands. For example, if the holder of a BLM oil and gas lease wants to conduct geophysical exploration under the terms of the lease, such exploration may be considered a lease operation. In these circumstances, the operator may have the option of submitting either a Sundry Notice (approved under OMB control number 1004-0137) or a Notice of Intent and Authorization to Conduct Geophysical Operation (control number 1004-0162).

Where sub-surface minerals are Federally owned and the surface is owned privately or by a non-Federal government, no authorization is necessary from the Federal Government to conduct geophysical exploration operations. However, in these cases, operators must work with surface owners to obtain access to their lands.

The BLM and the FS use the information in this collection to ensure a thorough, accurate, and timely review of the proposed geophysical activity to:

- (29920) Determine that geophysical operations activities are conducted in a manner consistent with the regulations, local land use plans, and environmental assessments;
- (29921) Maintain an accurate account of geophysical operations on jurisdictional lands;
- (29922) Identify operational points of contact; and
- (29923) Identify who is to be held accountable if there is environmental and/or surface resource damage.

This request covers the following information-collection activities.

***Notice of Intent and Authorization to Conduct Geophysical Operation (BLM Form 3150-4 / FS Form 2800-16) / Outside Alaska***

An operator must submit this form:

- To the BLM before conducting operations on BLM administered lands;
- To the FS before conducting operations on National Forest System lands; or
- Both agencies before conducting operations that overlap lands managed by both agencies.

This form includes standard terms and conditions. In addition, the BLM and/or the FS may attach additional terms and conditions.

The surface-management agency usually conducts a pre-work field conference before approving geophysical exploration. The conference provides a means for the operator and the Federal Government to reach a consensus about the conditions under which operations may be conducted, thus alleviating the need for additional telephone calls and letters. If a pre-work conference is held, the Notice of Intent is completed and signed at the conference.

The information resulting from this activity enables the BLM and the FS to determine whether the requested geophysical exploration is consistent with their respective statutory obligations, and to develop appropriate terms and conditions for any approved operations.

The BLM and the FS propose to revise the title of the form “Notice of Intent and Authorization to Conduct Oil and Gas Geophysical Exploration Operations” by removing the words “Oil and Gas.” The FS uses this form to collect information on geophysical exploration for various minerals, including oil and gas under 36 CFR Parts 228 and 251. The revised title would improve the accuracy and usefulness of this form.

The BLM and the FS propose to revise the Terms and Conditions as follows:

- At Number 4, from “entering upon the public lands”, to “entering upon lands managed by the Agency”, because this is a shared form between the BLM and the FS;
- At Number 5, by removing the repetitive language of “with it” from the condition; and
- At Number 9, by removing the repetitive language of “must” from the condition.

The BLM and the FS propose to revise the Notices by updating legal cites and Privacy Act provisions.

Other proposed revisions are included in the following description of the information required in the form:

Lessee or operator, lessee or operator contact (replaces “lessee or operator representative,” since sometimes the contact is not an employee of the lessee or operator), the geophysical company, and the geophysical exploration project representative (replaces “geophysical co. representative,” since sometimes the project’s representative is a third party rather than an employee of the operator or the geophysical company) along with street address, city, state, ZIP code, phone number, and email address for the lessee or operator, and for the geophysical company — The BLM and the FS need this information in order to communicate with the responsible parties.

New section on bond information — The BLM and the FS need to determine that the applicant is conducting operations under a satisfactory bond (see 43 CFR Subpart 3154). The form will identify the name of the geophysical exploration bond holder (i.e., usually the geophysical company, but can be the operator), which agency holds the bond (BLM or the Forest Service), the bond number, and the bound amount.

Party chief / field operations point of contact, along with phone number, and email address —The BLM and the FS must be able to determine the person with whom to communicate locally.

A separate Plan of Operations is attached addressing Items 1 – 5 below. (Yes or No). — This question enables the BLM and the FS to locate the following items:

1. Location description and maps: Give the general land description of the lands involved, limited to Meridian, Township, Range, and Section(s) or metes and bounds as appropriate. You must also submit an electronic map (in PDF) with a minimum scale of one-half inch per mile showing the general area and project location. We recommend a PDF version of a 7 1/2-minute USGS quadrangle or the scale commonly used in the area. In addition, you must submit GIS data in a locally projected Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) North American Datum (NAD) 1983 ESRI shape file or geodatabase format (e.g., UTM zone 13N NAD83). Maps and GIS data must include clearly attributed locations of operations and facilities, including staging areas, access routes to and within the project area, source and receiver point locations and lines, shot point locations, surface ownership, Federal minerals, and any Federal lands under lease. You must identify separately the number of Federal surface, state surface, fee surface, and other surface acres within the project area, and the estimated acreage of surface disturbance — The specifications for the required

map and GIS data are comparable to those used by BLM and FS, and enable the agencies to be able to identify, for environmental purposes, the exact location of the proposed activity. The following clarifying revisions to this section improve the accuracy and usefulness of the form:

- The sentence that begins “Maps and GIS data . . .” revises a sentence in the approved form that reads, “For seismic operations, your data must include clearly attributed locations of operations and facilities, including staging areas, access routes to and within the project area, source and receiver point locations and lines, shot point locations, surface ownership, and any Federal lands under lease.”
  - The sentence that begins “You must identify . . .” revises a sentence that reads as follows in the approved form: “You must identify the number of acres within the project areas by Federal surface (by agency), state surface, fee surface, and other, and the estimated acreage of surface disturbance.”
2. Do you hold any Federal lease within the project area? (Yes or No) (If yes, indicate location and lease numbers on an attached map.) There is no fee for operations conducted on your Federal lease (outside of Alaska) — This information enables the BLM and the FS to determine the status of the lands that are involved and thus determine their statutory obligations.
  3. If you are proposing seismic exploration, how many miles of source line (2-D), or acres (d-D) (to the nearest 10 acres) of survey are on: a. your Federal lease b. other Federal lands — The BLM and the FS use this information to complete environmental analyses, which is required by law.
  4. Identify the date of commencement of operations, how long the project is expected to last, and any critical timeframes associated with the project - The BLM and the FS require the date to determine when the operations are expected to start. The BLM or FS can then begin to plan compliance checks.
  5. Identify the type of operation by technique and method - The BLM and the FS must anticipate any environmental impacts that can be identified. The operator already has the information available as part of the specifications for the work that is scheduled to be performed. This item includes the following details:

Identify the type and amount of explosive; shotpoint pattern; shothole depth; number of source points per mile and provide a diagram if the charge is a multi-hole pattern - The BLM and the FS require this information to determine any anticipated environmental impacts the operations cause, as NEPA requires. The operator already has the information as part of the

specifications.

***Notice of Intent and Authorization to Conduct Geophysical Operation (BLM Form 3150-4/FS Form 2800-16) / Alaska***

The same form is used for locations within Alaska. The only difference is the \$25 filing fee (see 43 CFR 3000.12) that applies to a Notice of Intent for geophysical operations within Alaska. That fee does not apply to a Notice of Intent for any other location.

***Notice of Completion of Geophysical Exploration Operations (BLM 3150-5/FS 2800-16a)***

An operator who has conducted geophysical operations must submit this form upon completion of operations, including any required reclamation.

The BLM and the FS propose to revise the title of the form “Notice of Completion of Oil and Gas Geophysical Exploration Operations” by removing the words “Oil and Gas.” The FS uses this form to collect information on geophysical exploration for various minerals, including oil and gas, under 36 CFR Parts 228 and 251. The revised title would improve the accuracy and usefulness of this form.

The BLM and the FS propose to revise the Notices by updating legal cites and Privacy Act provisions.

Other proposed revisions are included in the following description of the information required in the form:

The BLM and the FS use the information to determine when oil and gas exploration operations are completed so the area can be inspected for compliance with the terms and conditions of the Notice of Intent and release of the bond.

The BLM and the FS require the operator to:

NOI [stands for Notice of Intent] case file no. and project name — The BLM and the FS need this information in order to compare the Notice of Intent with the Notice of Completion.

Identify the lessee or operator, the geophysical company, as well as the following information for both: street address, city, State, ZIP code, phone number, and email address — The BLM and the FS need this information in order to communicate with the responsible parties.

Identify the lands, line locations, source points, and routes that were used for activities if different than described on the Notice of Intent. The language in the section has been updated to read “Maps and GIS data must include clearly attributed locations of operations and facilities planned in the NOI and any deviations from the NOI in the actual access routes

to and within the project area, source and receiver point locations and lines, and source point locations used in your geophysical operations. Maps and data must also include surface ownership, Federal minerals, and any Federal lands under lease. Explain reasons for deviations from the original NOI — The BLM and the FS use this information to perform inspections expeditiously to determine that the operator is in compliance with the terms and conditions of the notice to conduct operations. The information is also necessary to determine if the BLM and the FS can release the bond.

Attach maps indicating exact location of geophysical line and shot point — The BLM and the FS use this information to make on-the-ground inspections to identify the exact location of the project performed by a specific company to ensure compliance with NEPA requirements. This information is readily available, since the operator surveys and stakes the actual location of the line on the ground.

Describe how the shot holes were plugged - This information is necessary only if a shot hole is drilled.

Include copy of “Hole Plugging Log” describing each shot hole, including whether holes were wet or dry, the static water level, flowing holes, breached or carved holes, or lost hole locations — The BLM and the FS require the log only if requested. It may be used for State compliance purposes and Federal coordination. The log is sometimes part of local agreements if the geophysical line crosses different types of ownership boundaries (private or state lands in addition to public lands).

Describe any surface disturbance, disturbance locations, and any reclamation — The BLM and the FS use this information to make on-the-ground inspections.

### ***Data and Information Obtained in Carrying Out Exploration Plan (Alaska only)***

In addition to the Notice of Completion, an operator who has conducted geophysical explorations in Alaska must submit all data and information obtained in carrying out the terms and conditions for exploration that the operator reviewed and signed at the pre-work conference mentioned above. This information enables the BLM and the FS to verify the operator’s compliance with all terms and conditions.

- 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.**

The approved forms are electronically available to the public in fillable, printable format on BLM’s Forms Web site at <https://www.blm.gov/services/electronic-forms>. The proposed forms,

if approved will replace the approved forms.

In the electronic format, respondents may complete the application portion of BLM Form 3150-4 / FS Form 2800-16 (Notice of Intent and Authorization to Conduct Geophysical Exploration Operations), and the totality of BLM Form 3150-5 / FS Form 2800-16a (Notice of Completion of Geophysical Exploration Operations). If the respondents choose to submit their forms electronically, they may do so by scanning and then emailing them to the appropriate agency office. The requested information is unique to each applicant/operator and to each specific operation because respondents are operators who apply to conduct geophysical activities on an as-needed basis.

**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 BLM and the FS have combined their Notices of Intent into one form (with different form numbers for each agency). They have also combined their Notices of Completion into one form. Combining the BLM and FS individual forms into BLM / FS forms helps to ensure consistent management of geophysical operations whether on BLM or FS lands. It also facilitates authorizing projects that extend over lands under both jurisdictions, since the BLM and the FS use the same information and process.

The BLM and the FS collect and use the information to maintain an accurate account of operations conducted on public lands and reference for accountability if there is damage to the lands. Geophysical operations are unique events, and each proposed operation is different, varying by location, equipment, or operator, for example. No duplication of information occurs, and there is no similar information already available to assess a new proposal. The information can only be supplied by the entity proposing to conduct geophysical exploration operations on the lands involved and is not available from any other data source.

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

The collection will not have a significant impact on small entities. The forms are simple to complete, and the BLM's State and Field Offices provide maps and land descriptions for use by small businesses and individuals. Each State Office and District Office has a public room set aside that is equipped with computers, copying facilities, and land plats for the use of those who wish to verify land descriptions. The information the BLM and the FS require is limited to the minimum necessary to maintain a record of who conducts operations on the lands. For the FS, individual operators and companies have the option of completing a Notice when identifying their proposed geophysical operations, or they may supply the information in a different format, such as a letter. However, use of the standardized interagency forms reduces the paperwork and procedural burdens on individual operators and companies.



**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.**

Failure to collect the information would leave the BLM and the FS with no knowledge of who is conducting geophysical exploration operations on Federal lands or where such operations are taking place. This lack of information would prevent the BLM and the FS from meeting their statutorily mandated responsibilities for responsible management of Federal lands.

The BLM and the FS developed the forms in this collection for the convenience of applicants and to facilitate processing the information by the BLM and the FS. The applicant determines the frequency of when to submit the form or information. Uniform, case-by-case data submission and recordation may help identify unnecessary government requirements and permit better forecasting of future workloads.

Use of the interagency forms facilitates orderly and consistent respondent information. Through standardization of the data that the BLM and the FS collect utilizing these forms, the applicants will better understand FS and BLM requirements for permit review and approval. Also, the agencies will be able to better track and administer the geophysical permits and activities the BLM and the FS authorize. Use of the forms produces an improved data base inventory that provides current and reliable public information. Finally, it provides better information for planning and formulating budgets.

**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 special circumstances that require this collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the guidelines. The BLM and the FS do not exceed the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.

- 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.**

**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.**

**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.**

On March 2, 2018 the BLM published the required 60-day notice in the Federal Register (83 FR 9025), and the comment period ended May 1, 2018. The BLM received no comments.

During the approval period, the BLM consulted via email with the three respondents listed below, to obtain their views on the availability of data; frequency of collection; the clarity of instructions; the recordkeeping, disclosure, and reporting formats; and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

- Project Manager  
Denbury Onshore LLC  
Plano, TX
- Project Managers  
Zonge International Inc.  
Reno, NV
- Project Manager  
West Bay Exploration  
Traverse City, MI

The persons that were consulted did not provide any suggested changes to the forms.

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

The BLM and the FS do not provide payments or gifts to the respondents.

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

The BLM and the FS maintain confidentiality for one year after the Notice of Completion is filed, if requested by the operator. Otherwise, the BLM and the FS protect confidentiality to the extent consistent with the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552).

**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.**

The BLM and the FS do not ask respondents questions of a sensitive nature.

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

- \* **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.**
- \* **If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens.**
- \* **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 total estimated hour burdens are 23 responses, 17.67 hours, and \$1233.37 annually.

Table 12-1, below, shows our estimate of the hourly cost burdens for respondents. The mean hourly wages for Table 12-1 were determined using national Bureau of Labor Statistics data at: [http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_nat.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_nat.htm).

The benefits multiplier of 1.4 is supported by information at <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecec.nr0.htm>.

**Table 12-1  
Hourly Cost Calculation**

<b>A. Occupational Category</b>	<b>B. Mean Hourly Wage</b>	<b>C. Estimated Cost Per Hour (Column B x 1.4)</b>
Mining and Geological Engineers, Including Mining Safety Engineers 17-2151	\$49.86	\$69.80

The estimated annual reporting burdens for this collection are shown below in Table 12-2:

**Table 12-2  
Estimates of Hour and Cost Burdens**

<b>A. Type of Response</b>	<b>B. Number of Responses</b>	<b>C. Time Per Response</b>	<b>D. Total Hours (Column B x Column C)</b>	<b>E. Dollar Equivalent (Column D x \$69.80)</b>
Notice of Intent and Request to Conduct Geophysical Exploration Operations / Outside Alaska 43 CFR 3151.1 BLM Form 3150-4 / FS Form 2800-16	13 (10 to BLM and 3 to FS)	1 hour	13	\$907.40
Notice of Intent and Request to Conduct Geophysical Exploration Operations / Alaska 43 CFR 3152.1, 3152.3, 3152.4, and 3152.5 BLM Form 3150-4	1	1 hour	1	\$69.80

A. Type of Response	B. Number of Responses	C. Time Per Response	D. Total Hours (Column B x Column C)	E. Dollar Equivalent (Column D x \$69.80)
Notice of Completion of Geophysical Exploration Operations 43 CFR 3151.2 and 3152.7 BLM Form 3150-5 / FS Form 2800-16a	8 (8 to BLM and 0 to FS)	20 minutes	2.67	\$186.37
Data and Information Obtained in Carrying Out Exploration Plan (Alaska only) 43 CFR 3152.6	1	1 hour	1	\$69.80
Totals	23	—	17.67	\$1,233.37

The costs to respondents are for time spent compiling data, researching information, and completing the information collection. Geophysical contractors generally maintain the required information in their own records, are familiar with geophysical field work, and are familiar with the applicable regulations and statutes.

**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.)**

- \* 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.
- \* 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.

- \* **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.**

Respondents are not required to purchase additional computer hardware or software to comply with these information collection requirements. Regulations at 43 CFR 3000.12, 3152.1, and 3152.3 require a filing fee for the information collection activity titled, “Notice of Intent and Request to Conduct Geophysical Exploration Operations / Alaska.”

While the BLM updates many cost recovery fees annually, the BLM interprets section 365 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Pub. L. 109-58) as prohibiting an increase of the \$25 fee that applies to geophysical exploration permits. See 70 FR 58854 – 58855. The total non-hour burden for this control number is estimated to be \$25 annually (1 notice x \$25 per notice).

**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.**

The total estimated Federal burden is 23 responses, 207 hours, and \$13,941.45 annually.

The hourly cost to the Federal Government is based on the data at: [https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/pdf/2018/RUS\\_h.pdf](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/pdf/2018/RUS_h.pdf).

The benefits multiplier of 1.6 is implied by information at <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecec.nr0.htm>.

**Table 14 -1  
Hourly Cost Calculations**

<b>A. Position</b>	<b>B. Pay Grade</b>	<b>C. Hourly Pay Rate (\$/hour)</b>	<b>D. Hourly Rate with Benefits (Column C x 1.6)</b>	<b>E. Percent of the Information Collection Completed by Each Occupation</b>	<b>F. Weighted Average Cost Per Hour (Column D x Column E)</b>
Manager	GS-14, Step 1	\$49.40	\$79.04	30%	\$23.71
Supervisor, Petroleum Engineer, and / or Geologist	GS-13, Step 1	\$41.81	\$66.90	40%	\$26.76
Surface Use Specialist	GS-12, Step 1	\$35.16	\$56.26	30%	\$16.88
<b>Total Weighted Average: \$67.35</b>					

Table 14-2, below, shows the estimated annual Federal costs for each aspect of the collection. The estimated processing time is based on the BLM's experience and includes conducting field inspections; on-the ground environmental analyses, which include monitoring endangered species sites and archeological sites; conducting archeological surveys; and determining reclamation measures. The weighted average hourly wage is shown at Table 14-1, above.

**Table 14-2  
Estimated Annual Cost to the Government**

<b>A. Type of Response</b>	<b>B. Number of Responses</b>	<b>C. Time Per Response</b>	<b>D. Total Hours (Column B x Column C)</b>	<b>E. Dollar Equivalent (Column D x \$67.35)</b>
Notice of Intent and Request to Conduct Geophysical Exploration Operations / Outside Alaska 43 CFR 3151.1 BLM Form 3150-4 / FS Form 2800-16	13  (10 to BLM and 3 to FS)	9 hours	117	\$7,879.95

<b>A. Type of Response</b>	<b>B. Number of Responses</b>	<b>C. Time Per Response</b>	<b>D. Total Hours (Column B x Column C)</b>	<b>E. Dollar Equivalent (Column D x \$67.35)</b>
Notice of Intent and Request to Conduct Geophysical Exploration Operations / Alaska 43 CFR 3152.1, 3152.3, 3152.4, and 3152.5 BLM Form 3150-4	1	9 hours	9	\$606.15
Notice of Completion of Geophysical Exploration Operations 43 CFR 3151.2 and 3152.7 BLM Form 3150-5 / FS Form 2800-16a	8 (8 to BLM and 0 to FS)	9 hours	72	\$4,849.20
Data and Information Obtained in Carrying Out Exploration Plan (Alaska only) 43 CFR 3152.6	1	9 hours	9	\$606.15
Totals	23	—	207	\$13,941.45

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

***Program Changes***

The proposed changes to the Notice of Intent and Notice of Completion do not change hour or cost burdens. The BLM and the FS believe that the changes improve the accuracy and usefulness of the forms.

***Adjustments***

The adjustments in hour burden are due to changes in the estimated number of responses, as follows:

Notice of Intent and Request to Conduct Geophysical Exploration Operations / Outside Alaska:

The number of responses has been adjusted downward by 32, from 45 to 13. This adjustment results in a downward adjustment by 32 hours for this activity, from 45 to 13.

Notice of Completion of Geophysical Exploration Operations: The number of responses has been adjusted downward by 45, from 53 to 8. This adjustment results in a downward adjustment



by 15 hours for this activity, from 17.67 to 2.67 hours.

Cumulatively, the estimated number of responses has been reduced by 77, from 100 to 23. The hour burden has been reduced by 47 hours, from 64.67 hours to 17.67 hours.

**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 data the BLM and the FS collect as a result of this information collection will not be published for statistical use. The NEPA process will make information in each form available to the public. For the FS, the Management Attainment Reporting will include information from the forms.

**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.**

BLM will display the expiration date of the OMB approval.

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

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.