

Supporting Statement
2017 Wildfires and Hurricanes Indemnity Program (2017 WHIP) and Florida
Citrus Block Grant
OMB control number-0560-0291

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is requesting an extension with no changes to the information collection request. All 2017 WHIP payments are expected to be completed by December 31, 2019 due to the funds no longer being available. FSA requested **EMERGENCY CLEARANCE** last July and requested for comments as indicated in the 60-day notice embedded in the published 2017 WHIP rule (83 FR 33795-33809). The grant for Florida (FL) was granted to Florida State to pay their eligible FL producers.

1. Circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (BBA, Pub. L 115-123) authorized \$2.36 billion in assistance for losses to crops, trees, bushes, and vine losses due to 2017 wildfires and hurricanes. FSA is implementing the provisions of the BBA by providing up to \$2 billion in assistance to eligible producers through the 2017 WHIP, and approximately \$340 million through a block grant with the State of Florida to address losses to citrus trees and production. The BBA requires all participants who receive 2017 WHIP payments to purchase crop insurance or NAP coverage for the next 2 available years, regardless of whether they had crop insurance or NAP coverage for 2017.

FSA will make an initial payment of up to 50 percent of the participant's calculated 2017 WHIP payment. By issuing initial payments, FSA can quickly provide disaster assistance to those who suffered losses while ensuring that 2017 WHIP payments do not exceed the available funding and those funds are distributed equitably amount the eligible producers. If funds remain available after the initial payment, FSA will disburse the remainder of the calculated payment amount.

In order to determine whether a producer is eligible for 2017 WHIP and to calculate a payment, a producer is required to submit FSA-890 2017, WHIP application; FSA-891, Crop Insurance and/or NAP Coverage Agreement; FSA-892, Request for an Exception to the WHIP Payment Limitation (if applicable); FSA-893, 2018 Citrus Actual Production History and Approved Yield Record (Florida Only); CCC-902, Farm Operating Plan for Payment Eligibility; FSA-578, Report of Acreage; and AD-1026, Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation Certification.

2. How, by whom, and for what purpose is information used.

The information submitted by respondents will be used by FSA and the State of Florida to determine eligibility and distribute payments to eligible producers under WHIP.

An applicant completes a FSA-890 and a continuation form of FSA-890, if necessary, in the administrative county office for all eligible crops affected by hurricanes and wildfires. The applicant is required to complete a FSA-891, Crop Insurance and/or NAP Coverage

Agreement when applying for WHIP benefits. The applicant completes FSA-892 to request an exception to the \$125,000 payment limitation. 2017 WHIP payments are subject to \$900,000 payment limitation if the applicant can prove 75% of their adjusted gross income (AGI) is derived from farming, ranching, and forestry and a CPA or attorney provides certification of compliance. A manual FSA-893 is required to be completed by the Florida citrus producers to calculate an approved yield for the 2018 crop year.

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 decisions for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of information technology to reduce burden.

Applications for 2017 WHIP must be taken through the FSA county office and entered in an automated system. The system will allow all data fields to be manually entered or will pull data from other systems to automatically populate. The system will print out the completed 2017 WHIP application that the applicant will sign. The applications are FSA-890 2017, WHIP application; FSA-891, Crop Insurance and/or NAP Coverage Agreement; FSA-892, Request for an Exception to the WHIP Payment Limitation (if applicable); FSA-893, 2018 Citrus Actual Production History and Approved Yield Record (Florida Only);

Also, 2017 WHIP applicants must have submitted the following forms to FSA to be eligible for payment: CCC-902, Farm Operating Plan for Individual or Legal Entity; AD-1026, Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation Certification; and FSA-578, Report of Acreage. Most applicants will already have FSA-578, CCC-902, CCC-926, and AD-1026 on file at the time of application; however, a percentage of applicants who have not previously participated in FSA programs may need to file these forms to become eligible.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.

There is no duplication or no similar forms exists.

5. Methods to minimize burden on small businesses or other small entities (Item 5 of OMB Form 83-I), describe any methods to minimize burden.

The information collected does not adversely impact small businesses or other small entities. There are about small businesses and entities in this request.

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

Failure to solicit applications will result in failure to provide payments to eligible producers as intended by the BBA. This is a one-time collection of information. Because of the short time period to receive applications and distribute payments and the need for county offices to complete portions of the application form, applications must be taken at county offices and entered in automated system.

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;**

None.

- **Requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**

None.

- **Requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**

None.

- **Requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;**

None.

- **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;**

None.

- **Requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**

None.

- **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**

None.

- **Requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secret, 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.**

None.

8. Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the Agency to obtain their view on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and record keeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

On July 18, 2018 (83 FR 33795-33809), FSA published a rule that embedded the 60-day notice on the new collection and inviting comments. FSA received 24 comments, but all the comments were not related to the collections.

The following individual was consulted regarding this information collection and thought the process was clear, and, had no suggestions for modification of the forms or information required.

Justin Long, GA
229-400-7381

Kyle Story, FL
563-638-1619

Larry Black, FL
863-285-7164

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents.

There is no payment or gift given to respondents.

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

All information collected is treated as confidential. FSA policy prohibits the giving out of individual information. This information is handled according to the Privacy Act and Freedom of Information Act.

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

No questions of a sensitive or personal nature are included in the application.

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

FSA estimates that up to 44,124 producers (including Florida via grant) may apply for 2017 WHIP payments.

Completing the 2017 WHIP application including the application grant for Florida is estimated to take an average of 0.70 hours per response. The annual burden for completing the application is 29,611 hours (44,124 responses x 0.70 hours).

The annual burden for this information collection package is 29,611 hours. This was calculated by adding the annual burden hours determined for the 2017 WHIP application, other required forms and recordkeeping.

Respondent cost per hour was derived by using U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment and Wages, May 2017, 11-9013 Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers. The U.S. mean household income, as measured by the Bureau of Labor, is \$38.62 hourly. The estimated cost is \$1,101,268.61 ($\$38.62 \times 28,515.50$ hours).

13. Provide an estimated of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information.

There are no capital, startup, or ongoing operation or maintenance costs associated with this information collection to respondents or record-keepers.

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

The cost of form development, printing and distribution is minimal because the form is computer generated. County employee cost per response is equal to 0.5 hours for completion of the application form multiplied by \$ 19.47 (estimated county employee average hourly wage; based 2018 General Schedule, Grade 7, Step 5). The total annualized cost to the Federal Government is \$397,489.79 ($\19.47×0.5 hours x 40,831 responses).

15. Explain the reason for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-I.

There are no program changes or adjustment to the burden hours in this request.

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

There are no plans to publish the results of 2017 WHIP or the Application Gran for Florida.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for the OMB approval of information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

FSA displayed the current OMB expiration date in all forms except for FL grant block.

18. Explain each exception statement to the certification statement identified in Item 19 on OMB Form 83-I.

FSA is able to certify compliance with all provisions under Item 19 of OMB Form 83-1.