

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

VISITOR CENTER AND EXHIBIT SURVEYS AT THE OFFICE OF NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES AND PARTNER OUTREACH FACILITIES

OMB CONTROL No. 0648-XXXX

A. JUSTIFICATION

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

This request is for a new information collection to assist resource managers and communications/education staff at NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) in implementing program priorities. The ONMS proposes to collect information from the general public to improve visitor services, educational programming and to better communicate key messages and stewardship actions.

Up-to-date visitor opinions, participant experiences and demographics are needed to support the conservation, education and management goals of the ONMS to strengthen and improve the stewardship, sustainable use and protection of natural, cultural and historical resources under the jurisdiction of the ONMS and to satisfy legal mandates under the National Marine Sanctuaries Act (16 U.S.C. 1431 et seq). The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is authorized to conduct evaluations, such as this survey, under the American Innovation and Competitiveness Act (section 314(c)) to ensure education programs have measurable objectives and milestones as well as clear, documented metrics for evaluating its programs.

ONMS recently updated its Strategic Plan and has identified a lack of information on the effectiveness of its education, outreach and communications initiatives as they relate to sanctuary/monument visitor centers, exhibits (permanent or traveling/temporary), kiosks and educational programming conducted by its visitor centers and partner facilities. Additionally, the survey will cover questions about educational programming offered at ONMS visitor centers or partner facilities to gauge the effectiveness of the information presented. Data is currently not available to evaluate how well materials and programs are providing the public with information about the conservation, recreational, ecological, historical, cultural, archaeological, scientific, educational or aesthetic qualities of national marine sanctuaries and monuments.

2. Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used. If the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support information that will be disseminated to the public, then explain how the collection complies with all applicable Information Quality Guidelines.

General Overview

The primary focus for the survey will be to gather objective information on how successful the ONMS is in enhancing public awareness, understanding and appreciation of national marine sanctuaries and marine national monuments in the sanctuary system through ONMS and partner visitor centers, exhibits, kiosks and associated educational programs. The purpose of this information collection is to assess the view of the general public, including sanctuary/monument constituents, on education and outreach initiatives as a way to guide future

efforts. The survey will reveal visitor satisfaction, retention of key messages and demographic profiles. The information may be used to influence future exhibits, education and outreach or to determine where visitor services may need to be enhanced or reduced.

Who will use this information?

Data gathered during this collection will be used by ONMS headquarters and individual sanctuary/monument staff. The surveys will be conducted by ONMS visitor center staff, education and outreach staff, docents, interns and volunteers.

How frequently will this information be used?

Surveys will be ongoing within ONMS visitor centers or at partner venues that include an exhibit or kiosk (permanent or traveling/temporary) as well as associated educational programming about a national marine sanctuary or marine national monument managed or co-managed by the ONMS. It is anticipated the data gathered from this collection will be used on an as-needed basis throughout the year based on variable hosting timelines for traveling exhibits, temporary exhibits, etc.

For what purpose will the information be used?

The information will aid ONMS budget allocation and prioritization, strategic planning and management review processes. The data will also be used to engage with constituents and the larger community on resource protection and conservation topics. Survey results will be used by sanctuary/monument site superintendents to improve visitor services, education and outreach programs where the survey is administered. Survey responses will also aid sanctuary/monument communication and education staff in effectively communicating key messages and stewardship actions. In addition, the survey data will contribute to NOAA and DOC performance/accomplishment reports and year end summaries.

Summary of Survey Questions and Mapping Activity

Some of the questions included in this collection are similar to those submitted under OMB Approval Number 0648-0582, Expiration Date: 1/31/2012 for the Mokupapapa Discovery Center, a visitor center for Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument in Hilo, Hawaii. In some cases, questions have been slightly modified to meet the data requirements for present management purposes. The survey items can be categorized into two primary components: general information questions and demographic questions.

Compliance with Information Quality Guidelines

It is anticipated the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support publicly disseminated information. NOAA National Ocean Service, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries will retain control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with NOAA standards for confidentiality, privacy, and electronic information. See response to Question 10 of this Supporting Statement for more information on confidentiality and privacy. The information collection is designed to yield data to meet all applicable information quality guidelines. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures and a pre-dissemination review pursuant to [Section 515 of Public Law 106-554](#).

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological techniques or other forms of information technology.

Survey data collection will primarily be conducted face-to-face and will be recorded on paper forms. If

feasible, a mixed mode approach will be done with computer or kiosk assisted interviewing to improve data quality and the number of respondents reached. Surveys will also be made available using a web link.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

There are currently no efforts underway in NOAA's ONMS to systematically survey guests at ONMS visitor centers or at locations hosting an ONMS exhibit or kiosk, therefore there is no overlap of target populations. A literature review did not reveal any more recent efforts completed or underway to collect similar information.

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

Not applicable.

6. Describe the consequences to the Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.

Without this collection, a critical data gap will remain which could inhibit the ability of ONMS staff to conduct a thorough assessment of its education and communications strategies. The lack of survey data will lead to less informed strategic and budget planning processes.

7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

All data collection will be consistent with OMB guidelines.

8. Provide information on the PRA Federal Register Notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to that notice and describe the actions taken by the agency in response to those comments. Describe the 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.

A Federal Register Notice published on April 2, 2018 (83 FR 13957). No comments were received.

The surveys have been reviewed by ONMS education staff and visitor center staff. These are the people who work closely with our target population and have an understanding of the types of questions that would be most beneficial to improve visitor centers, services and educational experiences.

9. Explain any decisions to provide payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

No payments will be provided to respondents, but some sites may offer small complimentary tokens of appreciation, such as stickers or posters to visitors who complete the survey on-site.

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

Procedures have been established to protect the proprietary information provided by respondents. No personal information is being collected (i.e. names, address, SSN, e-mail, phone number, etc). Each individual respondent will be assigned an identification number in the database. Release of proprietary information is further protected by the [Freedom of Information Act](#) (5 USC 522 (b) (4)) concerning trade secrets or proprietary information, such as commercial business and financial records. All non-personal or non-proprietary information will be available for distribution.

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.

No such questions will be asked.

12. Provide an estimate in hours of the burden of the collection of information.

The affected public for this collection are the general public at large who visit an ONMS visitor center or partner facility. We expect it will require an average of a 4 minute interview/record compilation time to complete each data collection per respondent. Roughly 400 completes are needed at each location. Not all sites will have the staff or time to complete the analysis annually. On average, each site will select one to two locations annually to survey (14 sites at 1.5 locations annually). This would amount to approximately 8,400 surveys completed annually, with a burden of 560 hours, and over 3 years, this would amount to a total of 1,680 burden hours for this collection. For those who agree to do the survey, we anticipate near complete cooperation with the clear understanding that responses to the survey questions remain anonymous.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or record- keepers resulting from the collection (excluding the value of the burden hours in Question 12 above).

There will be no cost to respondents beyond burden hours.

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

Costs are expected to be minimal. Visitor centers and exhibits already have staff and that staff would be asking respondents to complete the survey. Printing costs are expected to be minimal given the brevity of the survey and electronic options available to complete the survey. The kiosks at sites or tablets may be utilized to implement the surveys, negating the need to print supplies. ONMS will utilize existing staff and interns to analyze the data. We expect each site that participates to dedicate about 40 hours to

surveying for the year and 80 hours for analysis. Half of these hours will be completed by sanctuary volunteers. Sixty hours of paid staff time, amounting to a maximum of \$4,000 in staff time per site. Across the 14 sites, the total would be \$56,000.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments.

There are no program changes or adjustments.

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

All reports will be peer reviewed per NOAA standards under the Information Quality Act and posted on the ONMS Socioeconomic Web site:

<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/science/socioeconomic>

A new page(s) will be set up on this website to provide the project report to the general public. All data and documentation will be put on CD-ROM and will be made available to the general public, subject to any masking of the data required to protect privacy.

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

Not applicable.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

Not applicable.