

Supporting Statement A - OMB No. 0596-0246

US Department of Agriculture Forest Service and Caribbean Climate Hub

Post-Hurricane Research and Assessment of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Communities in the U.S. Caribbean

Note: This request is for the renewal of the previously approved information collection OMB 0596-0246, Post-Hurricane Research and Assessment of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Communities in the U.S. Caribbean. The USDA Forest Service requests approval from OMB to continue the collection of information from the individuals affected by recent hurricanes in the U.S. Caribbean.

A. Justification

- 1. Circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.**

In September 2017, two major hurricanes passed through the Caribbean, causing catastrophic damage to communities, infrastructure, farms, and forests across Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and many other island nations throughout the region. In the year since the hurricanes, there remains limited data on the effects of Hurricanes Irma and Maria on agricultural and forestry systems and the people who depend on them. Moreover, very little is known about the effectiveness of conservation practices and programs, mitigation and adaptation strategies, and economic and policy measures supported by U.S. Department of Agriculture and other Federal agencies, local government, civil society, and the private sector.

To better understand the effects of Hurricanes Irma and Maria on agriculture, forestry, and rural communities in the U.S. Caribbean and the internal and external factors that affected their vulnerabilities or resilience, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Forest Service and Caribbean Climate Hub (CCH), seek Office of Management and Budget approval to conduct focus groups and in-depth interviews to collect information from farmers, forest owners, and other agriculture and forestry community members about their experiences with, preparations for, responses to, and recovery from these storms. This collection provides vital real-time information for ongoing recovery and restoration efforts by USDA and other entities working in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, as well as valuable lessons learned for other disasters and regions.

The primary authorities for this collection are the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended, which authorizes USDA agricultural research, education, and extension programs, and the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978, which authorizes USDA Forest Service “investigations, experiments, tests, and other activities... to obtain, analyze, develop, demonstrate, and disseminate scientific information about protecting, managing, and utilizing forest and rangeland renewable resources in rural, suburban, and urban areas” (Pub. L. 95-307

Supporting Statement A for OMB 0596-0246

Post-Hurricane Research and Assessment of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Communities in the U.S. Caribbean

Sec. 3). Additional authorities that direct USDA to support agriculture and natural resources that are productive, sustainable, and provide benefits for the American public include the Rural Development Policy Act of 1980, which affirms USDA as the lead agency for rural development in the U.S. and expands the department's leadership role through which multi-state, state, sub-state, and local rural development needs, plans, and recommendations are assessed and received on a continuing basis. Additionally, the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 specifically authorizes the Forest Service to conduct research and provide expert advice on the management of forests that are outside of the National Forest system. Executive Order 12898 Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (59 FR 7629, February 16, 1994), which directs federal agencies to identify and address the disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their actions on minority and low-income populations, to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law, is also relevant to this information collection.

Information collected through this research contribute to USDA Strategic Goals, including ensuring USDA programs are delivered efficiently, effectively, and with integrity, and facilitating rural prosperity and economic development. It also contributes to Forest Service Strategic Goals of sustaining our nation's forests and delivering benefits to the public.

USDA Caribbean Climate Hub (CCH), located at and led by the USDA Forest Service International Institute of Tropical Forestry (IITF) in Río Piedras, Puerto Rico, is uniquely positioned to design, develop, and carry out this information collection. CCH is one of ten regional USDA Climate Hubs whose mission is to develop and deliver science-based, region-specific information and technologies by USDA agencies and partners, to agricultural and natural resource managers. The CCH mission is complemented by the IITF mission to develop and disseminate scientifically-based knowledge that contributes to the conservation of forests, wildlife, and watersheds of the American tropics in the context of environmental change. Results and lessons learned from this information collection benefit USDA and its partners in the U.S. Caribbean, in addition to the broader USDA Climate Hub network and other efforts across the country and their partners preparing for, responding to, and recovering from natural disasters and disturbances. CCH/IITF researchers will coordinate all components of the information collection, working across USDA and other Federal agencies, as well as with local government, university partners, and research collaborators, among others, to carry out the research and its dissemination.

Results from the proposed research will inform natural disaster and disturbance preparedness, response, and recovery efforts by USDA, Forest Service, and other Federal agencies, as well as related local government, civil society, private sector, and community efforts. In the short term, results from this information collection will be critical in informing ongoing post-hurricane recovery efforts and preparedness for the current and forthcoming hurricane seasons by USDA and its partners. In the long term, knowledge generated will contribute to reducing societal costs from disturbance processes, increasing cost-effective management, mitigation, and adaptation efforts, and supporting more resilient communities and economies in the U.S. Caribbean and broader contexts.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used.

- a. What information will be collected - reported or recorded? (If there are pieces of information that are especially burdensome in the collection, a specific explanation should be provided.)**

Supporting Statement A for OMB 0596-0246

Post-Hurricane Research and Assessment of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Communities in the U.S. Caribbean

We propose focus groups and interviews to collect information on the current state of agriculture and forestry in the U.S. Caribbean and on people's experiences, perceptions, practices, and plans associated with hurricane preparedness, response, and recovery. Through these methods, we will collect data on the following critical elements (specific questions/inquiries are included in the attached appendices):

- Farming and forestry systems (e.g., size and number of landholdings; ownership type; products produced; management practices; program participation, etc.)
- Hurricane effects on crops, livestock, forests, infrastructure, health/human life, etc.
- Hurricane preparedness; perceived effectiveness; sources of related assistance or information
- Activities/practices carried out in the past three years in agricultural / forestry systems to reduce risks or vulnerabilities to changes in disturbances and climate; perceived effectiveness in general and in relation to the recent hurricanes
- Immediate to early (first days-24 weeks) responses/coping measures or strategies implemented to address hurricane effects; perceived effectiveness; sources of related assistance or information (collected already under previous approval for 2017 hurricanes; relevant again if there are future hurricanes)
- Early to mid- term (6 – 12 months) recovery measures or strategies implemented to address hurricane effects; perceived effectiveness; sources of related assistance or information (collected already under previous approval for 2017 hurricanes; relevant again if there are future hurricanes)
- Mid- and long- term (1 – 3 years) post-disturbance plans for agriculture, forestry, rural community systems; changes in plans in response to recent hurricanes

b. From whom will the information be collected? If there are different respondent categories (e.g., loan applicant versus a bank versus an appraiser), each should be described along with the type of collection activity that applies.

Focus groups and interviews will be conducted with a non-probabilistic, purposive sample of individuals, families, and organizations involved in or associated with agriculture, forestry, and rural communities affected by Hurricanes Irma and Maria in the U.S. Caribbean. A non-probabilistic sample is necessary for this research because a complete sampling frame of the population of interest is not available for the region of interest. Although data from focus groups and in-person interviews cannot be used to make statistical generalizations about the larger population of interest with a known degree of accuracy, the variation planned across groups and individual respondents is intended to capture a broad range of characteristics and perspectives approximating the population of interest.

Available data on agriculture and forestry in the region will be used by researchers to identify major productive sectors (e.g., coffee, bananas/plantains, row crops, poultry, livestock, etc.) and supporting services (e.g., federal, local government, telecommunications, energy, etc.) and, in turn, define the range in focus groups and interviews. Researchers will use farm and forest landowner databases maintained by USDA agencies, Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture and Department of Natural and Environmental Resources, and U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture, stratifying them by these sectors or supporting services to select participants for the focus groups and interviews.

Focus Groups - Focus group participants will be chosen purposively (i.e., non-probabilistic sample) in line with the research objectives seeking a representative cross-section of the population of interest, rather

Supporting Statement A for OMB 0596-0246

Post-Hurricane Research and Assessment of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Communities in the U.S. Caribbean

than drawn from a probabilistic, random sample of the population. Focus groups will involve individuals from the coffee, banana, plantain, cacao, row crops, fruits and other tree crops, poultry, dairy, livestock, forest, energy, transportation, and other relevant sectors, as well as individuals from USDA and other federal agencies and Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands Departments of Agriculture and other local agencies, among others. Researchers will aim for 8-12 participants per focus group and a maximum of 20 focus groups across Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands for a maximum of 300 contacts over the three year approval period.

Interviews - In-depth interviews also are planned to further understand individual and community-level experiences associated with Hurricanes Irma and Maria on the ground. These interviews will be used to supplement data collected through the focus groups, conducted with individuals unable to participate in the focus groups or who prefer to participate through a one-on-one interview. A maximum of 125 in-depth interviews across Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands will be conducted.

Research participants may choose to participate voluntarily in both methods of information collection and when deemed appropriate within the research objectives and parameters (e.g., a focus group participant volunteers to provide more information about his/her experiences through an in-depth interview).

c. What will this information be used for - provide ALL uses?

The results and related analyses produced from this information collection will be used by federal, commonwealth, and local forestry, agriculture, and other agencies; land owners and managers; academics; nongovernmental organizations; and other individuals and groups interested in understanding the effects of Hurricanes Irma and Maria on agriculture, forestry, and rural communities and factors that affect and advance community recovery and resilience across the range of sectors and scales of operation in the U.S. Caribbean. In particular, information from this collection will be used by:

- Private landowners seeking effective risk mitigation/conservation practices (e.g., intercropping, agroforestry, soil conservation techniques, etc.);
- Public policy makers seeking to understand experiences with and attitudes toward natural disaster strategies and practices;
- Public officials interested in understanding community organization, resilience, and recovery related to natural disasters and disturbances
- Public land managers seeking to comply with legal mandates, develop new policies, and/or design mitigation and adaptation practices related to natural disasters on forests, other public lands, and other natural resources;
- Green infrastructure engineers interested in developing multi-functional landscapes that mitigate risks, provide resilience in the face of changing conditions, and are sustainable;
- Federal officials who produce periodic reports to meet national and international obligations related to disaster preparedness and response; and
- Academics interested in advancing scholarly work in the field of natural disaster risk reduction, preparedness, and adaptation, among others.

Findings from this research will be published in professional and academic literature to reach a broad range of stakeholders and interested parties. Data and findings also will be presented to government, private sector, and civil society organizations and actors through public meetings, academic

Supporting Statement A for OMB 0596-0246

Post-Hurricane Research and Assessment of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Communities in the U.S. Caribbean

conferences, and other venues. Additionally, data and findings will be presented to research participants (if interested or upon request) and other stakeholders in the community as appropriate.

- d. How will the information be collected (e.g., forms, non-forms, electronically, face-to-face, over the phone, over the Internet)? Does the respondent have multiple options for providing the information? If so, what are they?**

Information will be collected primarily through focus groups and in-depth interviews, following standard accepted practices, such as those established by Krueger and Casey (2009) and Patton (2002), respectively.

Focus groups - Focus groups involve semi-structured group discussions with a relatively small number of participants (8 - 12). In this case, they will be designed and conducted to stimulate in-depth conversations about people's experiences, perceptions, practices, and plans prior to, during, and after the recent hurricanes in the U.S. Caribbean. They will be held in locations and at times considered to be most convenient, comfortable, and accessible to the largest number of potential participants per group.

Focus groups will be formed based on similarities across key factors (e.g., sector of production or support, farm or landholding size, degree of impact(s) experienced) to provide a non-threatening environment and encourage open discussion. Focus groups will be large enough to yield diversity in information provided, yet small enough to create an environment where participants feel comfortable sharing their thoughts, opinions, beliefs, and experiences.

Focus groups will be led by a facilitator who uses a 'questioning route' or topic guide that serves as a roadmap for the focused discussion (Krueger and Casey 2009). The topic guide for focus group of this information collection addresses the research purpose and objectives and aligns with relevant bodies of literature and expert knowledge (Appendix I). It is designed so that the questions and statements are clear, sound, and conversational in nature and flow in a logical order. This guide is intended to engage participants in multiple ways and to make the most of the time available in each group interview. The focus group topic guide will be translated to Spanish for the focus groups in Puerto Rico, which will be conducted in Spanish.

Focus group discussions will be audio recorded to accurately capture the data and facilitate subsequent analysis of the data. Additionally, researchers will take notes of the discussion and of any non-verbal communication that may occur. Participants will be provided a confidentiality statement indicating that no personally identifiable information will be used in the reporting of results and they will be informed of the recording, if so desired, and asked to sign a consent form.

Once the focus group has concluded, the research team will conduct a 15- to 30-minute debriefing to compare notes, share highlights, and record any nonverbal communication or other pertinent information that was observed. This discussion will be recorded and included in the transcription and notes of the focus group. All information collected for each focus group will be organized in a single file and saved in a password controlled database, accessible only to the research team.

Interviews - Interviews will be used to supplement focus group data and gather information from individuals or sectors unable or preferring not to participate in the focus group method. Interviews will be conducted in person, on properties and in households of communities affected by the hurricanes, as well as in other locations where members of the population of interest meet or gather (e.g., public

Supporting Statement A for OMB 0596-0246

Post-Hurricane Research and Assessment of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Communities in the U.S. Caribbean

meetings, farmers markets). They will be conducted by a two-person team of researchers following an interview guide, which will be translated to Spanish for interviews in Puerto Rico (Appendix II).

The interview guide is similar to the focus group guide, aligning with relevant bodies of literature and expert knowledge and consists of questions and statements that are clear, conversational, and progress in a logical order. Interviews will audio-recorded to reduce the burden of response on participants, with their permission, and to accurately capture their responses and facilitate subsequent data analysis. Interviewees will be provided a statement of confidentiality protecting their anonymity in any reported results. Recorded interviews will be transcribed, digitized, organized, and maintained in the database described above. Approximately 75-100 people from the population of interest will be interviewed.

Analysis –Each focus group and interview transcript will be reviewed and coded by members of the research team, sorting comments into similar categories and placing similar labels on similar items, ideas, experiences, or perspectives. This analytical approach falls under the constant comparative method (as first developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and further developed and described by Kreuger and Casey (2009)). A common coding guide will be developed by the team for use by all team members. The team will meet regularly during the analysis phase to discuss emergent findings across data and sectors, refine coding strategies, and dialogue about major findings and possible explanations. Coded data will be summarized across sectors, themes, and variables and further analyzed to assess how often a concept, idea, experience, etc. is mentioned; how many different types of participants mentioned the same concept, idea, etc.; the range in force or intensity associated with a concept, idea, etc., among other analyses. Ultimately, through the analysis of patterns, themes, and variations in the data, the research team will generate theories and explanations about effects of the 2017 hurricanes on agriculture, forestry, and rural communities in the U.S. Caribbean and their vulnerabilities and resilience.

e. How frequently will the information be collected?

The information will be collected one time from each research participant unless follow-up contacts are needed for clarification or requested by the participant.

f. Will the information be shared with any other organizations inside or outside USDA or the government?

Record-level (raw) data will not be available outside the research team and no statistical summaries will be released that could potentially be used to identify individual respondents. Quantitative and qualitative summaries will be widely distributed through publications, on-line information sources, academic conferences, and other fora. These products will be available to public agencies, private organizations, and individuals.

g. If this is an ongoing collection, how have the collection requirements changed over time?

This is a renewal of an existing collection (0596-0246). Given the longer duration of this anticipated approved renewal, we have increased the requested burden hours from 340 hours to 452 hours, which corresponds to an expected increase in the number of respondents, not an increase in burden hour per response.

Supporting Statement A for OMB 0596-0246

Post-Hurricane Research and Assessment of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Communities in the U.S. Caribbean

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.

Focus groups and in-person interviews will be audio-recorded and notes will be kept by the researchers. Recordings and researcher note-taking reduce burden by eliminating the need for participants to write down their responses, thus shortening the discussion time. This is the standard method of data collection for this type of research and aids in capturing every response provided by the respondent. Electronic respondent reporting is not considered to be the most effective for this research and its objectives, given the focus on in-depth and detailed information from the respondents, the potentially limited familiarity with the technology required for on-line response submissions by some groups within the population of interest, and some persisting barriers to consistent internet access since the storms.

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 research team is working closely with other Federal, commonwealth, and territory agencies as well as universities and civil society organizations to monitor research related to Hurricanes Irma and Maria and their effects on agriculture, forestry, and rural communities. Additionally, in the year since the hurricanes the research team has held multiple meetings and conducted various other forms of communication and outreach with key partners, including the CCH Steering Committee, to inform them of this research project and to receive input on the research prospectus and plans. To date, no other studies of similar extent or content are known to be in progress or planned for the U.S. Caribbean. The research team will continue to collaborate with key partners on this research and keep them informed about its progress.

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

The population of interest for this research encompasses all agriculture, forestry, and rural communities affected by Hurricanes Irma or Maria in the U.S. Caribbean, which includes some small businesses. No small business will be asked to participate more than once in this collection, and researchers will limit the number of responses requested, the length of focus groups, and in-person interviews to minimize the burden on small businesses. Participation is voluntary and respondents will be informed that they are free to limit their time given to researchers or discontinue participation at any time.

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.

As discussed above, data gathered from this information collection are not available from others sources nor planned to be collected from other sources at this time. However, this information is critically important to the efficiency and effectiveness of ongoing recovery and restoration efforts by USDA and other Federal agencies, as well as related local government and civil society efforts in the region. These data also are important to longer-term efforts focused on agriculture, forestry, and rural community

Supporting Statement A for OMB 0596-0246

Post-Hurricane Research and Assessment of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Communities in the U.S. Caribbean

preparedness and resilience in the U.S. Caribbean and may lead to further research that could result in changes to, or enhancements of, the delivery of related programs, products, services, and information.

If the data described in this supporting statement are not collected, USDA and other Federal agencies may not be able to meet their legislative requirements under the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 and the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978, among several other requirements and goals as noted above. Moreover, if this information is not collected, progress on agriculture, forestry, and rural community resilience, sustainability, and disaster risk and vulnerability reduction could be measurably diminished throughout the region.

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 secret, 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.

The collection of information is conducted in a manner consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5. There are no special circumstances associated with this information collection. Although there is no requirement to respond within 30 days because participation is voluntary, due to the nature of the proposed research, respondents will typically respond in fewer than 30 days of receipt of the request to participate.

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 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 record keeping,

Supporting Statement A for OMB 0596-0246

Post-Hurricane Research and Assessment of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Communities in the U.S. Caribbean

disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

The 60-day request for public comment was published in the Federal Register on September 27, 2018, Vol. 83, No. 188, pages 48794-48795. We did not receive any comments.

The following individuals have reviewed the objectives, methods, and related materials developed for this information collection. They provided useful feedback on the research approach as well as the availability of data, clarity of instructions and record keeping, disclosure, and proposed reporting format and elements to be recorded, disclosed and reported. This feedback has been incorporated into collection materials and plans.

Edwin Almodovar, USDA, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Caribbean Area Director, San Juan, Puerto Rico, 787-281-4836

Ricardo Goenaga, USDA, Agriculture Research Service (ARS), Tropical Crops and Germplasm Research Leader, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, 787-831-3435 ext. 226

Frederick W. Cabbage, Professor, Department of Forestry and Environmental Resources, NC State University, 919-630-8928

Matt Fetter, Beth Schlein, & Lea Tims, Mathematical Statisticians, USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, 202- 690-2388 (POC David Hancock)

Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every 3 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.

Efforts to consult with potential respondents and stakeholders to obtain their views on the availability of data, clarity of instructions, simplifying data collection processes, etc., may be undertaken as part of the testing or consultations with key informants that is conducted under this approval.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than re-enumeration of contractors or grantees.

Responses are voluntary, and no payments or gifts will be provided to any respondents. A modest non-monetary incentive (such as a book) may be offered if possible and deemed appropriate. Such tokens will be nominal in value, and will be used to increase participation and to signify mutual respect between the researchers and participants.

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

Confidentiality and/or anonymity of participants and places will be assured by keeping any personal identifying information separate from information provided in focus groups and interviews or

Supporting Statement A for OMB 0596-0246

Post-Hurricane Research and Assessment of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Communities in the U.S. Caribbean

observation. A confidentiality statement will be provided in focus groups and interviews, indicating the following: "Participation in this research is voluntary. Your statements and answers to questions will be kept confidential and will be combined with those of others. The results will only be used to determine patterns and trends. No personally identifiable information will be included in the reporting of research results." The exception would be limited to instances in which individuals explicitly request to have their names associated with the information they provide.

In case of FOIA requests for specific information, we will disclose what is required by law. Personal or financial information would be kept confidential under FOIA exemptions 4 ("information that concerns business trade secrets or other confidential commercial or financial information") and 6 ("information that, if disclosed, would invade another individual's personal privacy").

- 11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or 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.**

No information of a sensitive nature will be collected or asked. Furthermore, research participants will be clearly informed that they need not provide answers to any questions which they choose not to answer for any reason, that their participation is completely voluntary, and that there is no penalty for non-participation.

- 12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated.**

- **Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form.**
 - a) **Description of the collection activity**
 - b) **Corresponding form number (if applicable)**
 - c) **Number of respondents**
 - d) **Number of responses annually per respondent,**
 - e) **Total annual responses (columns c x d)**
 - f) **Estimated hours per response**
 - g) **Total annual burden hours (columns e x f)**

See attached "Table 1" for burden hour and response data.

We estimate the total dollar value of the annual burden hours for this collection for respondents and non-respondents is \$5,579.94. We arrived at this figure by multiplying the estimated annual burden hours by \$24.69, the wage rate (including benefits) based on the Independent Sector national valuation of volunteer time for 2018. https://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time. We used this rate because this research is expected to draw people from a wide range of employments, cultural backgrounds, ages, locations, and life circumstances in the U.S. Caribbean.

Supporting Statement A for OMB 0596-0246

Post-Hurricane Research and Assessment of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Communities in the U.S. Caribbean

Record keeping burden should be addressed separately and should include columns for:

- a) Description of record keeping activity:**
- b) Number of record keepers:**
- c) Annual hours per record keeper:**
- d) Total annual record keeping hours (columns b x c):**

No record keeping is required by respondents for this information collection.

Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories.

See above

- 13. Provide estimates of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information, (do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in items 12 and 14). The cost estimates 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.**

No capital operation or maintenance costs are needed for this information collection.

- 14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Provide a description of the method used to estimate cost and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.**

The response to this question covers the actual costs the agency will incur as a result of implementing the Information Collection. The estimate should cover the entire life cycle of the collection and include costs, if applicable, for:

- **Employee labor and materials for developing, printing, storing forms**
- **Employee labor and materials for developing computer systems, screens, or reports to support the collection**
- **Employee travel costs**
- **Cost of contractor services or other reimbursements to individuals or organizations assisting in the collection of information**
- **Employee labor and materials for collecting the information**
- **Employee labor and materials for analyzing, evaluating, summarizing, and/or reporting on the collected information**

The total cost to the Federal government for implementing this information request will be approximately \$130,231 (Table 14.1). Labor costs are based on the estimated number of hours to complete each task, the grade level of the people required to complete it, and the salaries as reported in the Office of Personnel Management – 2018 Salary Tables. Other expenses were based on the proposed sample size and the prevailing costs for procuring the necessary materials, as follows:

Supporting Statement A for OMB 0596-0246

Post-Hurricane Research and Assessment of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Communities in the U.S. Caribbean

Table 14.1 Budget Summary

ACTION ITEM	PERSONNEL	GS LEVEL	ANNUAL SALARY	3-YR INFORMATION COLLECTION TOTAL
Project oversight and coordination, data analysis	Project PI	13, step 3 @20% of time	\$96,417	\$57,850
Outreach to recruit respondents, conducting interviews and focus groups, data management and analysis	Project technicians (3)	9, step 3 @33% of time	\$55,913	\$54,641
Focus groups non-salary expenses (room rental, travel within and across islands)				\$8,500
In-person interviews non-salary expenses (travel, printing)				\$6,500
Purchase of data analysis software (SPSS, NVivo)*				\$4,740
TOTAL				\$130,231

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in items 13 or 14 of OMB form 83-I.

This information collection is a renewal of a previously approved information collection. The previous information collection was approved for an annual burden of 340 hours. The annual burden for this approval is 226 hours. Annual burden was decreased given the longer timeframe of this information collection, while the total burden hours have increased to 452 to permit the collection of information from a broader range and great number of participants.

16. For collections of information whose results are planned to be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication.

Results from the analysis will be presented in narrative, tabular, graphic, and other formats and presented directly to decision-makers, practitioners, landowners, community members, and other key stakeholders, in public and scientific fora, as part of scientific peer-reviewed published papers, and in various other forms (e.g., Forest Service General Technical Report) and media (e.g., agency webpages). The presentation and dissemination of research results will aim to maximize the usage and accessibility of the research and its findings. Where requested and appropriate, presentations that summarize the data and findings will be shared with research participants and other community stakeholders.

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.

Supporting Statement A for OMB 0596-0246

Post-Hurricane Research and Assessment of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Communities in the U.S. Caribbean

The valid OMB control number and expiration date will be displayed on all Information Collection instruments. No exemption is requested.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement, "Certification Requirement for Paperwork Reduction Act."

The agency is able to certify compliance with 5 CFR 1320.