Request for Approval under the "Generic Clearance for Questionnaire Testing and Research" (OMB Control Number: 1905-0186)

TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION: **Coal Stripping Ratio Study**

PURPOSE:

The U.S. Energy Information Administration seeks to determine if operators of surface coal mines are able to report the annual *stripping ratio* of a mine on Form EIA-7A *Annual Survey of Coal Production and Preparation.* Form EIA-7A collects coal production data from U.S. coal mining companies. This includes information on the type and status of coal operations, characteristics of coalbeds mined, recoverable reserves, productive capacity and the disposition of coal mined.

The *stripping ratio* is the ratio of waste material that needs to be excavated in order to extract some tonnage of coal. The s*tripping ratio* is a common productivity measure of a surface mining coal operation. Coal production from surface mining exceeded production from underground coal mining as a percentage of total coal production in 1999 and continues to increase as the primary mining mode that generates the most coal production each year. EIA will also check the reporting burden per response for Form EIA-7A.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS:

Respondents for this cognitive study are mine operators with surface coal mining operations that produce 25,000 or more short tons of coal per year. The total frame is approximately 300 surface mine operators. The top 50 respondents account for approximately 90% of the national surface mine production in 2018. The bottom 50 respondents account for approximately 1% of national surface mine production. EIA plans to interview respondents that are a representative distribution of this industry profile.

TYPE OF COLLECTION: (Check one)

[ ] Field Testing   [X] Cognitive Interviews
[ ] Usability Testing   [ ] Focus Groups
[ ] Pilot Surveys   [ ] Other:_____
[ ] Respondent Debriefings

CERTIFICATION:

I certify the following to be true regarding the proposed collection of information:
1. It is necessary for the proper performance of agency functions.
2. It avoids unnecessary duplication.
3. It reduces burden on small entities.
4. It uses plain, coherent, and unambiguous language that is understandable to respondents.
5. Its implementation will be consistent and compatible with current reporting and recordkeeping practices.

6. It indicates the retention periods for recordkeeping requirements.
7. It informs respondents of the information called for under 5 CFR 1320.8 (b)(3) about:
    i. Why the information is being collected;
    ii. Use of information;
    iii. Burden estimate;
    iv. Nature of response (voluntary, required for a benefit, or mandatory);
    v. Nature and extent of confidentiality; and
    vi. Need to display currently valid OMB control number
8. It was developed by an office that has planned and allocated resources for the efficient and effective management and use of the information to be collected.
9. It uses effective and efficient statistical survey methodology (if applicable).
10. It makes appropriate use of information technology.

Name: Thomas Leckey, Assistant Administrator for Energy Statistics,
       U.S. Energy Information Administration

To assist review, please provide answers to the following questions:
Personally Identifiable Information:
1. Is personally identifiable information (PII) collected? [ ] Yes [X] No
2. If Yes, will any information that is collected be included in records that are subject to the Privacy Act of 1974?   [ ] Yes [X] No
3. If Yes, has an up-to-date System of Records Notice (SORN) been published? [ ] Yes [ ] No

Gifts or Payments:
Is an incentive (e.g., money or reimbursement of expenses, token of appreciation) provided to participants? [ ] Y [X] No

BURDEN HOURS

Category of Respondent	Sample Size Goal Round 1	Sample Size Goal Round 2	Participation Time (hours)	Burden (hours)
Surface Coal Mines	20	10	1	30
Totals	**20**	10	1	**30**

ESTIMATE OF RESPONDENT BURDEN HOURS AND COST – The burden to respondents for 30 interviews is 30 hours and the cost to the respondents is estimated to be ($78.52*30) = $2,355.60. The estimate of 30 minutes for each interview is an accurate time estimate for gathering responses to the questions in the protocols. An additional 30 minutes was added to each participant's burden time to account for the time a participant may need to read the invitation, schedule the interview, prepare for the interview, and review any past reports if needed.

EIA will conduct two rounds of interviews comprising of 20 telephone interviews in the first round, then the results will be analyzed to determine if sufficient information has been collected to satisfy the research goals based on the number of interviews with operators of large and small size coal producing mines. If additional information is needed to determine if "saturation" has been reached, then EIA will conduct a 2nd round with 10 interviews.

FEDERAL COST: The estimated annual cost to the Federal government is:

Activity	Count	Time (hours)	FTE Rate	Total
Cognitive Interviews	30	4	$78.52	$9,422.40

4.0 hours of cost is allocated to the government for each interview. EIA plans for two interviewers for each interview. One interviewer conducts the interview and the other records the notes from the interview. Each interview is 2 hours of time for each interviewer. A half hour for the interview and 1.5 hour for the interviewers to prepare, de-brief each other, and record their notes and analyze data in the project spreadsheet. The estimate cost to the government for the 120 hours is $9,422.40. (120 * $78.52 = $9,422.40).

If you are conducting a focus group, survey, or plan to employ statistical methods, please provide answers to the following questions:

The selection of your targeted respondents
1. Do you have a customer list or something similar that defines the universe of potential respondents and do you have a sampling plan for selecting from this universe?

[X] Yes   [ ] No

If the answer is yes, please provide a description of both below (or attach the sampling plan)? If the answer is no, please provide a description of how you plan to identify your potential group of respondents and how you will select them?

EIA will recruit respondents to participate in this cognitive research by contacting, by email, active companies that report surface mining operations on Form EIA-7A, in the most current frame file for Form EIA-7A. Participants will comprise a sample of surface coal mining operations that produce 25,000 or more short tons of coal or per year in PADDs I, II, and IV. Respondents with surface mining operations are located in three Petroleum Administration Districts (PADD) Rocky Mountains PADD IV, Gulf Coast PADD II, Southeast subdistrict (PADD1C), and Mid-Atlantic subdistrict (PADD1B). See https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=4890 for the list of states in each PADD. EIA will conduct one round of 20 telephone interviews. EIA will conduct a second round of ten interviews if it determines that more information is needed.

Administration of the Instrument
1. How will you collect the information? (Check all that apply)
   [ ] Web-based or other forms of Social Media
   [X] Telephone
   [ ] In-person
   [ ] Mail
   [ ] Other, Explain
2. Will interviewers or facilitators be used? [X] Yes [ ] No

Please make sure that all instruments, instructions, and scripts are submitted with the request.

Instructions for completing Request for Approval under the
"Generic Clearance for Questionnaire Testing and Research"
(OMB Control Number: 1905-0186)

TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION: Provide the name of the collection that is the subject of the request. (e.g. Comment card for soliciting feedback on xxxx)

PURPOSE: Provide a brief description of the purpose of this collection and how it will be used. If this is part of a larger study or effort, please include this in your explanation.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS: Provide a brief description of the targeted group or groups for this collection of information. These groups must have experience with the program.

TYPE OF COLLECTION: Check one box. If you are requesting approval of other instruments under the generic, you must complete a form for each instrument.

CERTIFICATION: Please read the certification carefully. If you incorrectly certify, the collection will be returned as improperly submitted or it will be disapproved.

Personally Identifiable Information: Provide answers to the questions. Note: Agencies should only collect PII to the extent necessary, and they should only retain PII for the period of time that is necessary to achieve a specific objective.

Gifts or Payments: If you answer yes to the question, please describe the incentive and provide a justification for the amount.

BURDEN HOURS:
Category of Respondents: Identify who you expect the respondents to be in terms of the following categories: (1) Individuals or Households; (2) Private Sector; (3) State, local, or tribal governments; or (4) Federal Government. Only one type of respondent can be selected per row.
No. of Respondents: Provide an estimate of the Number of respondents.
Participation Time: Provide an estimate of the amount of time required for a respondent to participate (e.g. fill out a survey or participate in a focus group)
Burden: Provide the Annual burden hours: Multiply the Number of responses and the participation time and divide by 60.

FEDERAL COST: Provide an estimate of the annual cost to the Federal government.

If you are conducting a focus group, survey, or plan to employ statistical methods, please provide answers to the following questions:

The selection of your targeted respondents. Please provide a description of how you plan to identify your potential group of respondents and how you will select them. If the answer is yes, to the first question, you may provide the sampling plan in an attachment.

Administration of the Instrument: Identify how the information will be collected. More than one box may be checked. Indicate whether there will be interviewers (e.g. for surveys) or facilitators (e.g., for focus groups) used.

Submit all instruments, instructions, and scripts are submitted with the request.