

¹Supporting Statement A

National Land Remote Sensing Education, Outreach and Research Activity

OMB Control Number 1028-0085

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.**

The National Land Imaging (NLI) Program of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Core Science Systems Mission Area, is soliciting applications from qualified Educational Institutions, State and Local Governments, Native American organizations and Non-profit Organizations (NPOs) for a National Land Remote Sensing Education, Outreach and Research Activity (NLRSEORA). This effort involves the development of a U.S. national consortium in building the capability to receive, process and archive remotely-sensed data for the purpose of providing access to academic institutions and State organizations in a ready-to-use format, and to expand the science of remote sensing through education, research / applications development and outreach in areas such as environmental monitoring, climate adaptation and mitigation science, natural resource management and disaster analysis.

Land Remote Sensing Policy Act – 15 USC 82, signed October 28, 1992, authorizes and encourages the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture to conduct programs of research and development in the applications of remote sensing, using funds appropriated for such purposes.

- 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.

Respondents are submitting proposals to acquire funding for a National (U.S.) program to promote the uses of space-based remote sensing data and technologies through education and outreach at the State and local levels and through university-based collaborative research projects. The information collected will ensure that sufficient and relevant information is available to evaluate and select a proposal for funding. A panel of USGS Core Science Systems managers and scientists will review each proposal to evaluate the technical merit, requirements, and priorities identified in the Program's call for proposals.

The interim and final reports will be used by the USGS NLRSEORA Program Coordinator and senior leadership at USGS to evaluate current-year success and to inform the public (through public presentations and similar means) of USGS-NLRSEORA Program successes and areas that need improvement.

The NLRSEORA will use Standard Forms 424, 424a, and 424b (USGS has submitted requests to use these Common Forms and those requests are approved by OMB). Applicants will submit proposals for funding in response to Notices of Funding Availability that we publish on Grants.gov and our Program web pages. Applicants submit a proposal through Grants.gov. We collect the following information under each Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA):

- A. Proposal Information Summary. This summary is mandatory for all proposals.
 - B. Abstract. The abstract shall be no longer than one single-spaced page. It shall include identification of the problem, a summary of the approach, project objectives, anticipated results, and the implications of the project results.
 - C. Detailed Budget. The detailed proposed budget shall be keyed to the Budget Summary. Non-Federal funds available to support the project may be reflected in the detailed budget or the SF-424, as appropriate.
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.**

For the FY23 funding cycle, all proposals must be submitted electronically via Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>). Hard copy/paper submissions will not be accepted.

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.**

Due to the unique nature of the program and authorizing legislation, no other Federal agency collects this information. No duplication will occur.

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

We have made efforts to keep the amount of information requested to a minimum for all of our applicants. The information has to be sufficient to fulfill the requirements of the authorizing statutes, as well as sufficient to make a competitive funding decision. We do not believe the amount of information requested will have a significant impact on small entities, as they will be providing the minimum amount of information needed to compete for financial assistance under these programs.

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 or collecting the information less frequently would hinder universities and State organizations from maximizing use of USGS remotely-sensed data and products. Additionally, such failure would result in a lost opportunity to expand remote sensing science through education, research / applications development and outreach in areas such as environmental monitoring, climate adaptation research, natural resource management and disaster analysis.

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 circumstances that require us to collect the information in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

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.

The 60-day FRN was published May 18, 2021, 86 FR 26934, announcing that we would submit this information collection to OMB for approval. The notice provides a 60-day public comment period ending on July 19, 2021. We did not receive any comments in response to this notice.

In addition to our Federal Register Notice, we solicited comments from several subject matter experts about the clarity of instruction, the annual hour burden for the application materials and the interim and final reports.

All respondents said that the application instructions were clear and reported that the time estimates to complete the application and prepare the interim and final reports seemed sufficient and did not suggest any adjustments.

Table 1 Commenters on the survey or announcement

Hydrologic Remote Sensing Branch Water Mission Area U.S. Geological Survey Kearneysville, WV	Remote Sensing Program Geospatial Management Office U.S. Forest Service Washington, DC.
Integrated Science and Applications Branch Earth Resources Observation & Science Center U.S. Geological Survey	National Land Imaging Program Core Science Systems Mission Area U.S. Geological Survey Reston, VA

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

No payments or gifts are provided other than the remuneration of grantees.

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

No assurance of confidentiality is given to respondents. We will protect information from respondents considered proprietary under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) and its implementing regulations (43 CFR part 2), and under regulations at 30 CFR 250.197, "Data and information to be made available to the public or for limited inspection." We intend to release the project abstracts and primary investigators for awarded / funded projects only.

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.

No question of a "sensitive" nature will be asked.

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.**

Our estimates are based on our own knowledge plus the outreach described in item 8. We expect to receive approximately 5 applications to complete, totaling 120 burden hours. We anticipate

awarding one (1) grant per year. The award recipient will be required to submit the following reports: an interim Annual Progress report to the designated USGS Project Officer within 90 days of the end of the project period and a final report on or before 90 working days after the expiration of the agreement. We estimate that it will take approximately 24 hours to complete and submit each report per year. We estimate that the total annual burden for this collection will be 120 hours.

Table 2 was created using information from Bureau of Labor Statistics USDL-21-1094, Employer Costs for Employee Compensation, published June 17, 2021 <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/eccec.pdf>. BLS reported employee compensation for Private Industry averaged \$39.01 per hour and for state and local government employees averaged \$53.68 per hour. These values include benefits and overtime.

Table 2 Respondent burden

Participant / Activity	Number of Responses	Minute per response	Burden Hours	Dollar Value for Burden Hr
Public individual reads announcement or instructions	3	120 minutes	6 hours	\$234
Public individual completes survey	3	1,320 minutes	66 hours	\$2,575
Subtotal			72 hours	\$2809
State, Local govt reads announcement or instructions	2	120 minutes	4 hours	\$215
State, Local govt completes survey	2	1,320 minutes	44 hours	\$2,362
Subtotal	2		48 hours	\$2,577
Total	5		120 hours	\$5,386

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.

There is no non-hour cost burden to applicants under this collection. There is no fee for application, nor any fees associated with application requirements.

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 annual cost to the Federal Government is \$11,552. This includes publication costs and salary and benefits for five federal employees to process the responses. We used the Office of Personnel Management Salary Table, https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/pdf/2021/DCB_h.pdf to determine the hourly rate (Table 3 below). We multiplied the hourly rate by 1.6 to account for benefits (as implied by the BLS news release USDL-21-1094).

Table 3 Federal Government Expenses

Position	Grade/Step	Hourly Rate	Annual Hrs	Fully Loaded Hr Rate (x 1.6)	Total Labor Value
Program Activity Coordinator	12/10	\$54.32	40	\$86.91	\$3,746
Grants Contracting Officer	14/6	\$68.50	32	\$109.60	\$3,507
Peer Review Panelist	13/8	\$61.28	10	\$98.05	\$981
Peer Review Panelist	14/8	\$72.41	10	\$115.86	\$1159
Peer Review Panelist	14/8	\$72.41	10	\$115.86	\$1159
		TOTALS	102		\$10,552

Table 4 Other Federal Government Expenses

Journal publication costs	\$1,000
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15. **Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments in hour or cost burden.**

The number of individuals to submit an application has been changed to 5 applicants based on the experience gathered from previous years.

- 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.**

An announcement for the next five-year grant covering this activity is anticipated to be published in the final quarter of FY23 for the award covering the estimated period of September 18, 2023, through September 17, 2028. There are no complex analytical techniques used to evaluate this collection of information.

- 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.**

Not applicable. We will display the expiration date.

- 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.