

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
External Needs Assessment for NOAA Education Products and Programs
OMB Control No. 0648-0784

SUPPORTING STATEMENT PART A -

Abstract

The purpose of this data collection is to provide a better assessment of formal and informal educators' needs for multimedia materials for use with their students and audiences that convey NOAA's mission, vision, goals, and objectives. The data collection consists of a short multi-question survey which will provide more in-depth information for NOAA to use as it develops new multimedia and products and distance learning programs. Revisions have been made to some of the questions in the original needs assessment mechanism to clarify and expand on the types of answers we were receiving from respondents. Some questions were deleted as they were determined to no longer be needed - as changes in technology rendered the questions obsolete, or the information gleaned from these questions was determined not to add sufficiently to the goals and objectives of the survey.

- 1. Explain the 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.**

The NOAA Office of Education is sponsoring a brief and voluntary multi-question survey to assess the multimedia and distance learning needs of formal and informal educators for their students and audiences. In developing multimedia and distance learning resources and programs that convey NOAA's science, service and stewardship, the agency must ensure that these efforts are of the highest quality and meet the needs of formal and informal educators across the United States. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to identify the types of educational multimedia products and programs of the greatest need and highest interest of these educators. By conducting a broad survey of external educators to gather this information, budget expenditures will be used optimally to develop appropriate products and programs most desired by educators to support and enhance ocean and Earth sciences, as well as increase STEM subject literacy throughout our nation.

The primary authority to conduct these activities is The America COMPETES Act, 33 U.S.C. §§ 893-893B, which directs NOAA to conduct, develop, support, promote, and coordinate formal and informal educational activities at all levels to enhance public awareness and understanding of ocean, coastal, Great Lakes, and atmospheric science.

The analysis of the data from the original survey mechanism indicated that additional and clarifying information was needed to ensure that all the goals and objectives of the needs assessment process would be met. In addition, over the three years since the original survey

mechanism was developed, technology usage has changed dramatically in the classroom and for remote learning due to the Covid-19 Pandemic - which created an unprecedented need for virtual programs across the nation. For these reasons the NOAA Office of Education is proposing a revision of the existing survey mechanism to better understand the current and future needs of educators, their students and audiences, as they integrate new pedagogic processes and technologies into their teaching and learning.

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.

Item #	Requirement	Statute	Regulation	Form #	Needs and Uses
1	The America COMPETES Act	33 U.S.C.	§§ 893-893B	NA	Used by the BUREAU to collect data from educators to create educational programs and products.

The revised education multimedia and distance learning needs assessment consists of 21 multiple choice questions divided into two sections. The first section, questions 1-12, requests information about the educator’s current state of teaching, as well as the types and use of multimedia resources they would like NOAA to create for their students or audiences e.g. formal/informal; grade band; in-person/virtual/hybrid; etc. The second section, questions 13-21, requests information about the types and use of multimedia resources educators would like NOAA to create for their own professional development, as well as the length of time of those products, the time zone that they live in, and best time of day for educators to receive live professional development opportunities.

The information collected will be used by NOAA education and communications staff across the Agency in the development of appropriate multimedia products and programs most desired by educators to support and enhance ocean and Earth sciences, as well as increase STEM subject literacy throughout our nation.

The information will be collected via a voluntary secure online survey, primarily distributed through the following three mechanisms:

1. Through NOAA and formal NOAA partner education listservs distributed to subscribers via email no more than twice a year.
2. By NOAA staff and volunteers at conferences, workshops, and other venues hosting formal and informal educators. These events typically occur on an annual basis.
3. At the end of select NOAA and NOAA partner webinar series. Links to the survey will be advertised no more than twice a year on each selected webinar series.

The information collected will only be used for internal purposes. The data will be shared with members of the NOAA Education Council, NOAA Line Office communications staff, and NOAA multimedia developers aligned with the NOAA Studio.

This data collection mechanism is a revision of the existing NOAA Education Multimedia Needs Assessment Survey and is meant to clarify and expand on the types of answers we had received from respondents' answers. Some questions were deleted as they were determined to no longer be needed - as changes in technology rendered the questions obsolete, or the information gleaned from these questions was determined not to add sufficiently to the goals and objectives of the survey.

- 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.**

The voluntary needs assessment mechanism will be distributed via email with a link to a Google form as part of the NOAA Google suite of resources. The voluntary needs assessment may also be distributed in person by providing a direct link to the Google form. It may also be distributed in very limited quantities in paper format when individuals may not have access to the Internet.

- 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 Question 2.**

When using NOAA and NOAA partner education listservs there will be a search for any duplicate email addresses. Response duplication may occur on a small scale if an individual is registered under multiple email addresses. All attempts will be made to identify and remove duplicative information from the database. Prior to the development of this assessment it was determined that no data of the nature we are looking to obtain had been collected by Federal Agencies engaging in the development of ocean and Earth science multimedia and distance learning resources or programs e.g. NASA.

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

No small businesses or other small entities will be involved.

- 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.**

If this survey information is not collected at least once a year, then the planning and use of human and financial resources in the development of appropriate products and programs most needed and desired by educators to support and enhance ocean and Earth sciences, and related STEM subject literacy throughout our nation will be hampered and not used optimally.

- 7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.**

There are no special circumstances for this data collection effort.

- Respondents will not be required to report information to the agency more often than quarterly.
- Respondents will not be required to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it.
- Respondents will not be required to submit more than an original and two copies of any document
- Respondents will not be required to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;
- This data collection effort is designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;
- This data collection effort will not require the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;
- This data collection effort will not require any pledges of confidentiality that are not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, or 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.
- This data collection effort will not require respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets, or other confidential information of any kind.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publications 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.

A PRA Federal Register Notice was published on Friday, July 23, 2021 (86 FR 38988 2021-0723) and solicited public comments. No pertinent comments were received.

Survey questions and processes for the initial needs assessment survey were developed and vetted in consultation with other Federal Agencies and nonfederal partners outside the agency. With this revision of the survey questions, education evaluation specialists within NOAA were consulted to succinctly clarify questions and ensure that the data received would offer the optimal desired information. Information requested and collected included: feedback on the types of questions to be asked, clarity of both the questions and of the survey instructions, format of questions, availability of data, recommended frequency of data collection, and other general comments.

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

No payment of gifts will be provided to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy. If the collection requires a systems of records notice (SORN) or privacy impact assessment (PIA), those should be cited and

described here.

This data collection mechanism is completely voluntary and anonymous. No personal identifying information will be collected. Only email addresses will be collected to identify and remove duplicative information. All duplicative information found will be purged from all records. All email addresses will be deleted following identification and removal of duplicative information.

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.

There are no questions of a sensitive nature included as part of this data collection.

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

Information Collection	Type of Respondent (e.g., Teacher)	# of Respondents per year (a)	Annual # of Responses / Respondents (b)	Total # of Annual Responses (c) = (a) x (b)	Burden Hours / Response (d)	Total Annual Burden Hours (e) = (c) x (d)	Hourly Wage Rate (for Type of Respondent) (f)	Total Annual Wage Burden Costs (g) = (e) x (f)
Survey Questions	Educators	1,200	1	1,200	5 mins	100 hours	Avg =\$30.00	\$2,490.00
Totals				1,200		100		\$2,490.00

<https://www.bls.gov/bls/blswage.htm>

There will be approximately 1,200 respondents per year with one response each. The survey should take each respondent approximately 5 minutes to complete, totaling approximately 100 burden hours.

13. Provide an estimate for 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 already reflected on the burden worksheet).

There is no annual cost burden for respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection of the information.

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.

Cost Descriptions	Grade/Step	Loaded Salary /Cost	% of Effort	Fringe (if Applicable)	Total Cost to Government
Federal Oversight					
Other Federal Positions	ZA3				\$.,1520.00
Contractor Cost					
Travel					
Other Costs:					
TOTAL					1,530.

The total estimate of annualized costs to the Federal Government is **\$1,520.00**.

The low annualized costs to the Federal government are due to the following factors:

- The vast majority of potential respondents will be contacted via email.
- Data collection and analysis will be done using the NOAA Google suite of products, i.e. Google Forms and Google Sheets. The Google suite of products automatically provides the basic statistical output needed for this effort.

The majority of the estimated annualized costs will consist of one FTE’s time to distribute the voluntary needs assessment survey via email, review the data to determine trends and interest areas of the respondents, and search for and remove duplicative information. With the ubiquity of Internet access, it is estimated that a maximum of only 100 copies of the needs assessment survey will be distributed on paper per year, with the data manually transcribed into the database. Paper copies of the survey will be handed directly to and collected from educators at conferences or workshops where internet access is unavailable - so no mailing costs will be incurred. Estimated annualized costs are as follows:

- \$ 65.00/hour** - Hourly rate of one FTE
- \$ 65.00** - Distributing needs assessment via email (1 hour x \$65.00/hour)
- \$650.00** - Preparing, distributing, collecting, transcribing data from paper needs assessment forms (10 hours x \$65.00/hour)
- \$ 5.00** - Paper costs for 100 forms/year @ 3 pages/form (one ream of 8.5” x 11” paper)
- \$150.00** - Copying costs for 100 forms/year @ 3 pages/form (.5¢ per page b+w x 300 pages)
- \$650.00** - Data review, search and removal of duplicative information. (10 hours x \$65/hour)
- \$1,520.00** - **Total estimate of annualized costs to the Federal Government**

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in ROCIS.

Changes to the collection reflect a change in the estimated number of responses expected. This is based on the number of actual responses received during the first survey.

Information Collection	Respondents		Responses		Burden Hours		Reason for change or adjustment
	Current Renewal / Revision	Previous Renewal / Revision	Current Renewal / Revision	Previous Renewal / Revision	Current Renewal / Revision	Previous Renewal / Revision	
Number of responses collected	1200	1000	1200	1000	100	83	The Justification for this difference is that the original number of respondents and responses was a best guess at the onset of the collection. The current number reflects the number of responses actually received during the first survey.
Total for Collection	1200	1000	1200	1000	100	83	
Difference	200		200		17		

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.

Results from this information collection will not be published, it will only be used internally by NOAA staff.

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.

The agency plans to display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection on all instruments.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in “Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions.”

The agency certifies compliance with [5 CFR 1320.9](#) and the related provisions of [5 CFR 1320.8\(b\)\(3\)](#).