



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Washington D.C. 20240



In Reply Refer To:
FWS/ASCI/076651

Ms. Sharon Block
Acting Administrator
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Ms. Block:

Pursuant to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) procedures established at 5 C.F.R. Part 1320, Controlling Paperwork Burdens on the Public, I request that the proposed information collection, "*High-Level Survey to Assess Current Capacity to Manage Wildlife Diseases by State, Tribal, and Territorial Governments Under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021*", OMB Control No. 1018-New, be processed as an Emergency Clearance Request per 5 C.F.R. §1320.13, Emergency Processing.

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA; Public Law 117-2, Section 6003(3), March 11, 2021) directs the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) to make financial assistance available "for research and extension activities to strengthen early detection, rapid response, and science-based management to address wildlife disease outbreaks before they become pandemics and strengthen capacity for wildlife health monitoring to enhance early detection of diseases that have capacity to jump the species barrier and pose a risk in the United States". The purpose of this one-time survey is to provide a snapshot of agencies' current capacity to conduct surveillance for and manage wildlife diseases. The survey is needed to establish a baseline understanding of national readiness and to inform development of the financial assistance program required by the legislation.

The Service has determined that this information must be collected before the timelines established under Part 1320 of the regulations and that this information is essential to meet the timelines specified in ARPA. The use of normal clearance processes is likely to prevent timely implementation of the baseline survey designed to establish a picture of national readiness in the face of zoonotic disease prior to the beginning of the Zoonotic Disease Initiative grant program.

Sincerely,

Martha Williams
Director