

**Project Title:** Alaska Beluga Monitoring Partnership (AKBMP) Project

**Program Office Sponsoring or Conducting this CSC Project:** Anchorage Protected Resources Division

**Authority for this CSC Project:** CCSA

**Purpose of this CSC Project:** This project is a collaboration between NOAA and several organizations that offer opportunities for volunteer citizen scientists to contribute to endangered beluga monitoring and recovery efforts in Alaska's Cook Inlet

**Type(s) of Information Collected and From Whom It Is Collected:** Voluntary citizen scientists collect information on beluga presence and absence, behavior, number of individuals, age class, and if human activity is occurring when observed. Additionally, they collect weather and human activity information even when whales are not present.

**Use of the Information:** This information helps NOAA management and researchers to: 1) evaluate the impacts on Cook Inlet belugas from anthropogenic activities with an emphasis on known feeding areas and 2) work with stakeholders to monitor vessel and small watercraft activity in areas of known importance for Cook Inlet beluga foraging. Additionally, the sighting data from our program informs section 7 consultations.

**Method(s) of Information Collection:** This CSC project collects information electronically through a Google Form and physical copies of the datasheets. Some data are submitted by email.

**Affected Public:** individuals, not-for-profit institutions, state, local, Federal government

**Estimated Average Annual Number of Participants:** 100

**Estimated Average Annual Number of Responses per Participant:** 5.9

**Estimated Average Minutes per Response:** 241

**Estimated Average Annual Burden Hours:** 2,365

**Estimated Total Annual Cost to Participants in this CSC Project:** \$0

**Estimated Average Annual Costs to the Federal Government:** \$55,400

**Estimated Average Annual Number of Federal Government Employees (FTEs):** 0.00

**Recruitment and Retention Methods for Voluntary Participants (SSA item 1):** The program coordinator will continue engagement with current volunteers throughout the year through updates and data sharing with newsletters and social media. Additionally, year-round the coordinator will work with partners for outreach into Cook Inlet communities to recruit new volunteers through promotion and advertising. Flyers will be shared the month before the season for targeting new volunteers for that season. Local media and networks are utilized to advertise for new volunteers the month before the season starts and during the season. Outreach talks and festivals are utilized in the offseason to promote the program.

**Gifts or Payments (SSA Item 9):** We do not plan to provide a gift or payment to the voluntary participants.

**Annual and Multi-Year Schedules (SSA Item 16):**

Spring monitoring season is March – May  
Report for spring season will be complete by September  
Fall monitoring season is August – November  
Report for spring season will be complete by March  
Recruitment for volunteers will happen year round

**Display OMB Control No. and Expiration Date (SSA Item 17):** This information will be provided when individuals sign up to participate in this CSC project.

**Statistical Methods:** This CSC project will not employ statistical methods.

**Approval for Pretesting:** This CSC project will not require additional pretesting with more than nine members of the public.

**Supplemental Documents:** There are four supplemental documents for this CSC project. They are as follows:

1. Beluga Log (data entry form)
2. Session Log (data entry form)
3. Monitoring Key that includes site names and defines sighting conditions, the Beaufort scale, and beluga behavior.
4. Volunteer Monitoring Protocol

**CERTIFICATION:** I certify the following are true.

1. The collection is voluntary.
2. The collection is low-burden for respondents and low-cost for the Federal Government.
3. The collection is non-controversial and does not raise issues of concern to other federal agencies.
4. The collection will not include highly influential scientific information, which is information NOAA or OMB determines: (i) could have a potential impact of more than \$500 million in any year, or (ii) is novel, controversial, or precedent setting or has significant interagency interest.
5. The collection complies with 5 CFR 1320.9 and the related provisions of 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3).
6. The collection will provide qualitative and quantitative data that help inform scientific research and monitoring, validate models or tools, support STEM learning, and enhance the quantity and quality of data collected to support NOAA's mission.

Name: Madison Kosma