



## PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW AND CLEARANCE PROCESS FOR NPS-SPONSORED PUBLIC SURVEYS



The scope of the Programmatic Review and Clearance Process for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys is limited and will only include individual surveys of park visitors, potential park visitors, and residents of communities near parks. Use of the programmatic review will be limited to non-controversial surveys of park visitors, potential park visitors, and/or residents of communities near parks that are not likely to include topics of significant interest in the review process. Additionally, this process is limited to non-controversial information collections that do not attract attention to significant, sensitive, or political issues. Examples of significant, sensitive, or political issues include: seeking opinions regarding political figures; obtaining citizen feedback related to high-visibility or high-impact issues like the reintroduction of wolves in Yellowstone National Park, the delisting of specific Endangered Species, or drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

**SUBMISSION DATE: 10-19-2020**

**PROJECT TITLE:** National Park Service Angler Creel Survey

**ABSTRACT: (not to exceed 150 words)**

Fisheries managers rely on creel surveys to gather biological information, monitor trends, and assess angler satisfaction. The surveys are also used to estimate the number and size of fish caught by species, to help determine the total harvest in terms of yield. Angler Creel surveys are vital in monitoring and gauging the health of recreational fisheries.

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR CONTACT INFORMATION:**

NAME: Lynette Potvin  
TITLE: Ecologist  
AFFILIATION: Isle Royal National Park  
ADDRESS: 800 East Lakeshore Drive, Houghton MI 49931  
EMAIL: lynette\_potvin@nps.gov      PHONE: 906-231-2271

**PARK OR PROGRAM LIAISON CONTACT INFORMATION:**

NAME: Lynette Potvin  
TITLE: Ecologist  
AFFILIATION: Isle Royal National Park  
ADDRESS: 800 East Lakeshore Drive, Houghton MI 49931  
EMAIL: lynette\_potvin@nps.gov      PHONE: 906-231-2271

**PROJECT INFORMATION:**

**Where will the collection take place? NPS park units open to recreational and sports fishing**

**Sampling Period Start Date: 4/1/2021**

**Sampling Period End Date: 5/31/2023**

**Type of Information Collection Instrument: (Check ALL that Apply)**

- Mail-Back Questionnaire      • On-Site Questionnaire       Telephone Survey  
• Face-to-Face Interview       Focus Groups       Other (List)

Will an electronic device be used to collect information?     No    • Yes – Type of Device: Desktop computer, tablet, phone

**SURVEY JUSTIFICATION:**

*Social science research in support of park planning and management is mandated in the NPS Management Policies 2006 (Section 8.11.1, "Social Science Studies"). The NPS pursues a policy that facilitates social science studies in support of the NPS mission to protect resources and enhance the enjoyment of present and future generations (National Park Service Act of 1916, 38 Stat 535, 16 USC 1, et seq.). NPS policy mandates that social science research will be used to provide an understanding of park visitors, the non-visiting public, gateway communities and regions, and human interactions with park resources. Such studies are needed to provide a scientific basis for park planning and development.*

Angler creel surveys are one of the most common recreational fishery management tools used to determine harvest in recreational fisheries. The objectives of the survey are to provide information on fishing pressure, catch and harvest, angler demographics, and visitor satisfaction. When statistically combined with periodic counts of angler numbers, this information can be used to estimate total angler participation, catch rate, and total sport harvests of important species.

The term creel survey is applied to sampling surveys that target recreational anglers. The name comes from the woven wooden basket, or creel, that freshwater anglers use to hold captured fish while they continue fishing. Traditionally, the survey is conducted on-site at access points along the water and the angler is asked about the fish species that have been targeted, the numbers of each species caught and released, and the time spent fishing. These data are used to estimate the total catch and effort for that recreational fishery in order to manage its harvest. Additionally, other measures such as catch per unit effort are used to assess qualities of the fishery that lead to angler satisfaction with his/her recreational experience.

Angling opportunities exist in over 170 NPS units and fish communities that include numerous species of interest to anglers. Authorized by 36 CFR 2.3 individual parks and regions, along with state agencies, are responsible for managing their fisheries and associated natural resources. This information collection is intended to create a standard Angler Creel Survey that can be used by NPS park units open to recreational and sports fishing.

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## SURVEY METHODOLOGY

### (A) Respondent Universe:

All adults (18 years of age and older) visiting the National Park Service units open to recreational fishing from 4/1/2021 to 5/31/2023 during daylight hours (8 am to 7 pm)

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### (B) Sampling Plan / Procedures:

National Park Service units are open to angling 365 days a year. There will be no attempt to randomize or stratify this sample. We are solely interested in gathering data about the type and location of all fish captured. We are not interested in comparing visitor characteristics or behaviors (other than catch and release of fish).

Creel surveys will be conducted throughout the year between 10 AM to 8 PM at dedicated-access sites in participating parks. Between 500 and 1,000 surveys (per park) are scheduled annually on randomly selected weekdays and weekend days. Boat-ramp and wet-slip sites will be surveyed in proportion to the amount of fishing activity occurring at each: Busy sites get surveyed more often than idle ones. This design results in about 14,000 sportfishing interviews each year.

The self-administered on-line survey will be used to collect the information for this study. The instruction for completing the survey will be given to each visitor upon receiving the park Fishing Guidelines and Regulations. Each person fishing in the park is required to obtain a copy of the guidelines and regulations.

The survey is intended to be completed on-line any time after the fishing trip.

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### (C) Instrument Administration:

The Creel Survey will only be available electronically accessible on the park website. The completed survey will automatically be transferred to each park's fishery biologist via email. The fishery biologist will review the information and enter the data into the MS Access angler creel database. Information to be collected will include:

- Date
- Location fished
- State where the fishermen is from
- Time started
- Time ended
- Catch and release
- Number of fish released
- Number of fish kept
- Species and length of fish kept
- Was Interview conducted in the field

**(D) Expected Response Rate / Confidence Level:**

Approximately 800,000 visitors participate as anglers each year. We believe that 40% (n=320,000) of will be contacted and that 26% (n=83,200) will actually complete the on-line survey.

**Table 1. Anticipated Response Rates**

Number of Potential Contacts	Total Number of Visitor Contacts	Completed Onsite Surveys 26%	Soft Refusals 74%	Completed Non-Response Surveys (1% of soft refusals)	Hard Refusals (99% of soft refusals)	Margin of Error
800,000	320,000	83,200	239,800	2,398	237,402	5%

**(E) Strategies for dealing with potential non-response bias:**

To address of non-response bias, we will include a “field interview” code on the survey. This will be completed by all anglers contacted in the field by seasonal staff. Park staff will randomly survey 30 anglers per month for four months during the sampling period. Park seasonal staff will ask the anglers if they are aware of the online survey. If they are aware, we ask them to complete the survey and ask that they check the “field interview” box to acknowledge that they were interviewed while on-site. If they indicate that they are not aware of the online survey, we will ask them to complete and ask that they check the “field interview” box to acknowledge that they were interviewed by GRSM seasonal while on-site. At the end of the four-month period, we will assess non-bias response by comparing local and non-local anglers to determine any bias in the collection.

Questions:

1. “Are you aware of our online angler creel survey form?”  
If **YES**, go to Step 2.  
If **NO**, the staff will tell the angler about the online survey and inform them of the two ways they could access that survey 1) by using the link located with our information they received along with the fishing regulations or 2) by searching ‘creel survey’ on the creel website. Go to Step 2.
2. Ask the angler to complete the survey and to indicate that they were interviewed in the field by checking the appropriate box on survey.

**(F) Description of any pre-testing and peer review of the methods and/or instrument:**

This survey will follow the standard method for roving creel surveys outlined by Angler Survey Methods and Their Applications in Fisheries Management (Pollock et al. 1994). This method is well established and has been previously successfully implemented on the Bartlett River from 1996 through 1998 (Soiseth and Smikrud 2005)

The survey instrument was pre-tested with a small sample of on-site visitor at Great Smokey Mountain National Park. The instrument was revised to remove questions that seemed redundant and did not provide additional value

to the survey. The survey questions were also updated to correct grammatical errors and to include the non-response bias questions.

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## BURDEN ESTIMATES:

During each sampling year, we plan to approach at least 320,000 anglers in participating parks. With an anticipated response rate of 26%, we expect to receive 83,200 total responses for this survey each year.

We expect that the initial contact time will be at least one minute per person plus an additional 10 minutes to complete the creel survey (annual burden: 83,200 x 11 minutes = 15,308 hours). We expect that 74% (n= 239,800) visitors will refuse to participate and for those refusal and we ask them to answer the three questions that will be used for the non-response check. We anticipate that 1% (n=2,398) will agree to answer the non-response bias questions.

The total burden for this collection is 16,055 hours.

**Table 2. Burden Estimates**

	Responses	Completion Time * (minutes)	Burden Hours (rounded up)
Total number of online responses	83,200	11	15,308
Total number contacted in the field	2,398	2	747
Total burden requested under this ICR:	0		0

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## REPORTING PLAN:

An annual report will be produced summarizing the online survey and angler creel results using the NPS Natural Resources Data Series (NRDS) report format (<http://www.nature.nps.gov/publications/nrpm/index.cfm?tab=2#reports>). The summary report will be posted as a link to the angler creel survey site so anglers can see how that year's data compares to previous years data. The results will also be reported via numerous public meetings regularly conducted by the park fishery biologist. A copy of the report will be submitted to the NPS Social Science Division as required by the NPS Programmatic Approval Process.

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## NOTICES

### Privacy Act Statement

**General:** This information is provided pursuant to Public Law 93-579 (Privacy Act of 1974), December 21, 1984, for individuals completing this form.

**Authority:** National Park Service Research mandate (54 USC 100702)

**Purpose and Uses:** This information will be used by The NPS Information Collections Coordinator to ensure appropriate documentation of information collections conducted in areas managed by or that are sponsored by the National Park Service.

**Effects of Nondisclosure:** Providing information is mandatory to submit Information Collection Requests to Programmatic Review Process.

### Paperwork Reduction Act Statement

We are collecting this information subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501) and is authorized by the National Park Service Research mandate (54 USC 100702). This information will be used by The NPS Information Collections Coordinator to ensure appropriate documentation of information collections conducted in areas managed by or that are sponsored by the National Park Service. All parts of the form must be completed in order for your request to be considered. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to, this or any other Federal agency-sponsored information collection unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. OMB has reviewed and approved The National Park Service Programmatic Review Process and assigned OMB Control Number 1024-0224.

### Estimated Burden Statement

Public Reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 60 minutes per collection, including the time it takes for reviewing instructions, gathering information and completing and reviewing the form. This time does not include the editorial time required to finalize the submission. Comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form should be sent to the Information Collection Clearance Coordinator, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Dr., Fort Collins, CO 80525.