

Supporting Statement A
National Park Service Survey of Educators

OMB Control Number: 1024-NEW

Terms of Clearance: None. This is a new collection.

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection.

From its founding more than a century ago, the National Park Service (NPS) has been authorized to collect information that will “improve the ability of the Service to provide state-of-the-art management, protection, and interpretation of, and research on, the resources of the System” (54 U.S.C. 100701). Furthermore, 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.

The NPS Interpretation, Education, and Volunteers Directorate’s mission is to advance the NPS mission by providing memorable educational and recreational experiences that will help the public understand the meaning and relevance of park resources and foster the development of a sense of stewardship. Specifically, there is a pressing need for research to understand the NPS’s role and value within the broader education system. NPS policy mandates that social science research be used to provide a scientific basis for education program planning and development. *NPS Director’s Order 6 Section 6.2* outlines the requirements for NPS curriculum-based education programs, including that teachers be involved in the planning and development of activities, as well as the NPS having methods and criteria for evaluating program effectiveness.

In response to these circumstances and to fulfill its legal and administrative obligations, the NPS is proposing this new information collection request, *The National Park Service Survey of Educators*. The data generated through this study is needed by NPS leadership in the Interpretation, Education, and Volunteers Directorate and park managers. It will enable them to

align with and understand the requirements of teachers, students, and families regarding formal and informal education in and with national parks. This need is particularly pronounced given the profound impacts and transformations on the education system brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Given the evolving landscape of education, marked by changes in practice, standards, technology use, and student engagement principles, the NPS must engage with and listen to its intended professional audience. This engagement ensures that the NPS remains responsive to emerging opportunities and barriers, aligns its content with updated educational standards and practices, stays connected to the education profession's innovations, and develops resource-based content that aligns with school curricula while addressing post-pandemic student development. The information collected in this study will serve as the foundation for the development and delivery of education programs that ensure NPS content remains pertinent, accessible, and aligned with the NPS's educational mission and directives, while also being inclusive and responsive to its audience.

Legal and Administrative Justifications:

- ***National Park Service and Related Programs: Protection, interpretation, and research in System (formerly The National Park Service Act of 1916)*** (54 USC 100701.)
- ***National Park Service Omnibus Management Act of 1998*** (Pub. L. 105-391; Section 5911)
- ***NPS Management Policies 2006*** (Section 8.11.1, "Social Science Studies" and Section 7.5.5, "Evaluation of Interpretation and Education Effectiveness")
- ***NPS Directors Order 6*** (Section 6.2 Curriculum-based Educational Programs)

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.

The results from this collection will be used by the NPS Washington Education Office to develop standards, strategies, and policies for the NPS Education Programs. The findings will allow the NPS to better align funding and philanthropic priorities and facilitate sound decision-making for onsite education programming, teacher development, distance learning tools, and future digital investments. Additionally, the data and results will be shared with regional managers and field practitioners, such that findings may be directly applied to operational decisions. This study will

survey teachers who have participated in an NPS Education Program(s); this data will provide needed information regarding the constraints surrounding educator participation and opportunities for growth, pivots, and investments to enhance the effectiveness and reach of NPS education programming. NPS leaders and managers across the Service will use this data to understand and identify what is relevant content related to standards, and perceptions of current offerings, and to inform future strategic planning based on existing gaps and changing societal needs.

Justification Survey Questions

Table 2.1 contains the questions and justifications for the survey instrument.

Table 2.1: Survey Question Justifications

Survey Questions	
Questions	Justification
Q1: Do you teach or have you taught 3 rd , 4 th , or 5 th grade in the past five years? (Check all that apply.)	This is a screening question that will be used to determine survey eligibility. We included 5 years because teachers often switch grades at the elementary level.
Q2: The NPS offers a range of different education programs. Please indicate which programs have you participated in before.	Used to determine the type of NPS Education Programs the teacher has participated in to understand which programs are most popular.
Q3: How did you first hear about the NPS Education Programs?	Used to determine the information sources used to learn about programming. This information will be used by managers and planners to hone communications/messaging surrounding educational offerings.
Q4: Of the NPS Education Programs you have participated in in the past five years, please select up to TWO that you feel you are most familiar with.	Used to narrow down the type of Education Program so respondents can provide feedback specific to those.

Q5a: Below is a list of reasons that may influence your participation in on-site NPS Education Programs. In the first column labeled "Importance," please indicate how important each item is in your participation in on-site NPS Education Programs. In the second column, labeled "Effectiveness," please rate how effective on-site NPS Educational Programs have been at achieving each item.	Q 5a-5c will be used to assess the importance and effectiveness of various outcomes of Education Programs. This information will be used by the NPS to better understand the most and least important reasons for educators to participate in the programs and to prioritize resources accordingly.
Q5b: Below is a list of reasons that may influence your participation in online and virtual NPS Education Programs. In the first column labeled "Importance," please indicate how important each item is in your participation in on-site NPS Education Programs. In the second column, labeled "Effectiveness," please rate how effective on-site NPS Educational Programs have been at achieving each item.	
Q5c: Below is a list of reasons that may influence why you would arrange for an NPS ranger to visit your classroom. In the first column labeled "Importance," please indicate how important each item is in your participation in on-site NPS Education Programs. In the second column, labeled "Effectiveness," please rate how effective on-site NPS Education Programs have been at achieving each item.	
Q6a-c: Please select the number that best represents your level of agreement with each statement below.	This will be used to assess the level of agreement with various outcomes among teachers participating in NPS Education Programs. This information will be used by the NPS to prioritize resources for future efforts.
Q7: Are there students' learning outcomes from the NPS Education Programs you participated in that cannot be achieved in other field trips? If so, please describe them below.	The responses to this question will be used to assess the unique student outcomes from NPS Education Programs to help prioritize where the program should focus its efforts.
Q8a-8c: To what extent do each of the following items pose a challenge to your participation in an on-site NPS Education Program?	Will be used to assess the challenges to participate in NPS Education Programs. This information will be used by the NPS to better understand constraining factors for educators to participate in the programs and explore opportunities to address their concerns to encourage participation.
Q9: What NPS Education Programs are you most interested in participating in in the future?	Will be used to determine educator interests, so parks/programs can tailor offerings to meet educators' needs/interests.
Q10: Considering your potential future participation in a field trip to an NPS site, indicate the importance of the following resources in supporting your engagement.	Will be used to assess the importance of the resources that the NPS provides to teachers in order to prioritize resources for future efforts.

Q11: In your opinion, what is the most effective way to inform educators about NPS programming?	Will be used to inform communication strategies to reach educators according to their expressed preferences.
Q12: Have you participated in professional development programs provided by the NPS for teachers in the past five years?	Q12 and Q13 will be used to establish foundational information regarding the teacher's professional development experience and preferences to guide NPS education planning regarding professional development offerings.
Q13: Which of the following professional development opportunities would make you most likely to participate in NPS educational programs?	
Q14: In your opinion, what do you think is the ideal role of the NPS in educating students?	Will be used to understand teachers' preferences regarding NPS's role in the greater education system to inform future NPS education planning.
Q15: At what type of school do you teach?	Will be used to develop a baseline understanding of respondents' schools to explore similarities and differences across these characteristics.
Q16: Is your school considered Title 1?	
Q17: What is your school's setting?	
Q18: What is the zip code for your school?	
Q19: What is your age?	Will be used to characterize the population of respondents in the sample. This information will be used to understand the diversity of the teachers. These variables are also used to monitor and assess response patterns and to explore differences in teacher populations.
Q20: What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?	
Q21: What is your gender?	
Q22: What is your race and/or ethnicity?	

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.

This survey will be 100% electronic. The online survey will be administered using Qualtrics. The survey will be 508 compliant and allow for easy access by respondents.

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.

There is no known duplication of efforts. While individual NPS units do occasionally conduct site-specific surveys to evaluate educational programs, the data currently available is insufficient for generalizing findings across all national parks units in the System. Further, these studies are not approved for aggregation. Individual parks may conduct separate, specialized visitor research; however, such studies would not be compatible for comparison to this study's results.

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

This collection will have no impact on small businesses or other small entities.

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.

Given that NPS policy mandates that social science research be used to provide an understanding of education programs, the proposed study is needed to provide a scientific basis for educational planning and development. Without this data, there is a lack of comprehensive understanding of how well the NPS System is serving the public through education programs, which is in direct opposition to the NPS Policy requiring the agency to work with teachers to plan, develop, and provide curriculum-based education programs, as well as providing opportunities for teachers to evaluate these offerings (*NPS Director's Order 6 Section 6.2*). Without this information, the NPS programs may not be meeting the needs of educators and limit the number of students who could potentially learn directly from their public lands, reducing the overall impact of the NPS education programs.

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.*

This request contains no special circumstances.

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.

On April 20, 2023, we published a 60-day Federal Register Notice (88 FR 24439). The notice announced our intended submission to OMB for approval and solicited public comment. No comments were received.

In addition to the Federal Register notice, we consulted with nine graduate students in the College of Forestry and Conservation from the University of Montana. The students were selected because they all have experience with similar surveys and studies with public land agencies. All nine individuals reviewed and timed the survey to validate our time burden estimates and were asked to provide comments on the questions below.

1. *“Whether or not the collection of information is necessary, including whether or not the information will have practical utility; whether there are any questions they felt were unnecessary”*

Commenter 3: For questions 5, 6, and 8, specializing the suite of responses for these questions to the different types of NPS Education Programs that teachers have participated in or are interested in participating in the future will make the survey findings most useful.

Agency Response/Action Taken: Three versions of responses were created that are specified to the context of the NPS Education Program (field trip, ranger in classroom, or virtual program) to ensure all response options are relevant to the types of education programs (see versions a-c of survey questions).

Commenter 5: For Q5a-c, in reference to “giving my student an opportunity to learn about Indigenous cultures,” while I can imagine this might apply sometimes, I’m not sure what you will do with these data. This will only be occasionally relevant in some parks.

Agency Response/Action Taken: In discussions with the NPS Education Program staff, we felt this was an important item to keep in the survey to glean this information where it is relevant.

Commenter 6: For Q7, why ask this? Couldn’t another field trip accomplish the same thing? Sort of depends upon the site and program.

Agency Response/Action Taken: Changed wording to explicitly ask what learning outcomes could not have been achieved in other field trip settings.

2. “What is your estimate of the amount of time it takes to complete each form in order to verify the accuracy of our estimate of the burden for this collection of information?”

Commenter 6: The survey reviewers timed themselves taking the survey and were within a 2-minute range. The average time was 10 minutes. This confirmed the accuracy of the estimate of the burden for teachers.

Agency Response/Action Taken: No action was needed as the estimate of burden was ten minutes or less.

3. “Do you have any suggestions for us on ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected?”

Commenter 2: For Q10, what are “resource kits?” Will teachers know what this means?

Agency Response/Action Taken: Removed “resource kits” as an option.

Commenter 3: For Q8 a-c, I thought the Likert scale for challenges was a bit weird, as the phrases are presented not as a challenge in itself but as a statement (e.g., the transportation cost is too high). It is understandable, but I wonder if it would make sense to switch to the level of agreement. Or switch the way some of the phrases are constructed.

Agency Response/Action Taken: Revised the statements so they are all phrased as challenges and are consistent in wording.

Commenter 8: For Q5a-c, I like “influence” more and think you should use that word throughout the survey.

Agency Response/Action Taken: Changed to “influence participation.”

Commenter 9: For Q6a-c, there are a lot of selection options in this scale, maybe narrow down to 5 points.

Agency Response/Action Taken: Reduced scale to 5 points.

Commenter 3: For Q5a-c, the phrase “underlie your participation” was a little confusing to me.

Agency Response/Action Taken: Changed wording to “may influence your participation.”

Commenter 4: For Q3, for all of the questions about future participation, I would want to know: What types of programs would they be most interested in participating in in the future?

Agency Response/Action Taken: Reworded questions to what programs they are most interested in.

Commenter 9: For Q5a-c, I think you may need some more explicit directions here. For example, “In the first column, labeled “Importance,” please indicate how important each item has been to your decision to participate in on-site NPS Education Programs. In the second column, labeled “Effectiveness,” please rate how effective the on-site NPS Education Programs that you have attended have been at achieving each item, on average.”

Agency Response/Action Taken: Revised wording in the anchor question to be more explicit about the importance and effectiveness of each item for the education program they participated in.

Commenter 1: For Q5a-c, in reference to “learning objectives,” this is rather vague. Does this mean personal objectives? Curriculum standards? Personal goals for students?

Agency Response/Action Taken: Changed to “addressing my learning objectives” to “achieve curriculum standards.”

Commenter 6: For Q5c, you could rephrase this as “why you arranged for an NPS ranger to visit your classroom” in the anchor question.

Agency Response/Action Taken: Changed the anchor of the question to “influence your decision to invite an NPS ranger to visit your classroom.”

Commenter 2: For Q5a-c, consider deleting “level of depth” in wording.

Agency Response/Action Taken: Deleted “level of depth”

Commenter 5: For Q8a-c, the anchor for question does not align with the wording of question items for challenging.

Agency Response/Action Taken: Revised the statements so they are all phrased as challenges and are consistent in wording.

Commenter 8: For Q8a-c, combine the barriers question with items in separate questions that are facilitators to participation.

Agency Response/Action Taken: We combined this question with another question from a previous version of the survey to improve the flow of the survey and still address the suite of barriers.

Commenter 1: For Q13, checking only one doesn't make sense here, as I would imagine most would ALSO check the continuing education credit box.

Agency Response/Action Taken: Changed to "check all that apply."

Commenter 7: For Q14, I wouldn't be able to tell whether you wanted me to answer something like "field trips" or something like "supplementing my curriculum" or "providing real-world examples for what I teach in my class."

Agency Response/Action Taken: This was a question discussed with the NPS staff as important so have kept it in the survey but clarified the wording.

Commenter 9: For Q20, for the highest level of education, I doubt you need the parentheticals with examples after each degree.

Agency Response/Action Taken: We kept the degrees but took out the parentheses with examples of degrees.

4. "Any ideas you might suggest which would minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents?"

Commenter 5: Reviewers collectively did not think it was a large time commitment and teachers can choose to not answer any questions or stop taking the survey at any time. Additionally, teachers can take the survey at their convenience.

Agency Response/Action Taken: No action was taken or needed as the reviewers did not think there was any unnecessary burden and that steps had been implemented to reduce the burden for the respondent.

9. Explain any decisions to provide any payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

There are no payments or gifts associated with this collection.

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

The degree of anonymity of responses will be described to respondents in the initial email introducing the survey (included as a supplemental document in ROCIS). This anonymity includes that no personally identifiable information will be collected and respondents' names will never be connected to their reported responses. In Qualtrics, there is a setting that will prevent the association between responses and email addresses.

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.

No questions of a sensitive nature will be asked as part of this collection.

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. Instead, this cost should be included under item 13.**

We estimate that we will receive **1,463** completed responses totaling **187** burden hours. We estimate that the dollar value of the annual burden hours is **\$12,961**.

We plan to contact 3,078 teachers to participate in this collection. We anticipate receiving a total of 1,463 completed responses (924 completed surveys and 539 completed non-response surveys) for a total burden of 187 hours (Table 12.1).

Within the text of the email invitations and reminders, potential respondents will be asked the following question: "Are you willing to take part in this 10-minute survey?" followed by "yes" or "no" response options. Clicking "yes" takes participants to the full survey and clicking "no" takes respondents to the 3 non-response questions. We expect that 30% (n=924 (rounded up)) of teachers will click "yes" and complete the full survey. The survey will take 10 minutes to complete, plus an additional minute to read the invitation, resulting in a total burden of 169 hours for the educator survey.

Of the 2,154 teachers who refuse to complete the full survey, we expect that 25% (n=539) will click the "no" button in the email invitation and go on to complete the non-response survey

which will take 2 minutes to complete (including time to read the email and answer the three questions), resulting in a total non-response burden of 18 hours.

Of the 3,078 teachers contacted, we anticipate that 1,615 will completely refuse to participate (hard refusals). The burden for hard refusals is considered to be de minimis and is not calculated in the table below.

We used the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) News Release USDL-[23-2567](#), December 15, 2023, Employer Costs for Employee Compensation— - September 2023¹, to calculate the total annual burden. We used the costs in Table 2 to calculate the total compensation rate (average per hour) including benefits listed for “Primary and Secondary Teachers.” resulting in an hourly rate of \$69.31.

Table 12.1. Estimated annual respondent burden*

Activity	No. of Respondents	Completion Time (minutes)*	Burden (hours)	Hourly Rate Including Benefits	\$ Value of Annual Burden Hours
Educator Survey	924	11	169	\$69.31	\$11,713
Non-response Survey	539	2	18	\$69.31	\$1,248
Total	1,463		187		\$12,961

* The calculations in this table are rounded to match ROCIS.

13. Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information.

There is no non-hour cost burden associated with the collection of this information.

14. Provide estimates of annualized costs 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 to administer this information collection is \$102,139. This includes the cost of salaries and benefits for the federal employee administering this information collection (Table 14.1) and the operational expenses (Table 14.2). We used the Office of Personnel Management Salary Table 2024-DCB² to determine the hourly wages for

¹ <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ecec.pdf>

² https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/-wages/salary-tables/pdf/2024/DCB_h.pdf

the Federal employees associated with this collection. We multiplied the hourly wage by 1.6 to account for benefits in accordance with the Bureau of Labor Statistics News Release referenced above.

Table 11.1: Annualized Federal Employee Salaries and Benefits

Position	Grade/Step	Hourly Rate	Hourly Rate incl. benefits (1.6 x hourly pay rate)*	Estimated time per task (hours)	Annual Cost
Education Strategist	13/5	\$64.06	\$103	25	\$2,575
Deputy Associate Director	15/5	\$89.04	\$143	35	\$5,005
Totals				140	07,580

*Rounded to the nearest dollar

The operational expenses (Error: Reference source not found.2) for this collection are approximately **\$94,559** which includes contracted services. (\$93,559) and other reimbursable expenses (\$1,000).

Table 14.2: Operational Expenses

Contracted Services	Estimated Costs
Senior Project Director	\$6,453
Graphics Specialist	\$6,852
Economist	\$9,383
Social Science Specialist 1	\$28,148
Social Science Specialist 2	\$28,148
Senior Social Scientist	\$5,724
Data Entry Specialist	\$3,271
Project Coordinator	\$5,580
Reimbursable Expenses (misc. office supplies)	\$1,000
TOTAL	\$94,559

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

This is a new collection.

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.

Reports for this study will be published in accordance with the Natural Resources Report Series template publishing standards and be inclusive of descriptive statistics, frequencies and percentages, and averages of appropriate questions. Analyses of Variance (ANOVAs), t-Tests, and chi-square tests will be used to test for differences between groups.

This project is slated to begin with data collection in the fall of 2024. Principal investigators will prepare a final report by June 2025 for the NPS that summarizes results. The final report will be accompanied by a final presentation to the NPS. The research team may also publish findings in an academic journal that can reach a broader audience of researchers.

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.

We will display the OMB control number and expiration date on the information collection instruments.

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.