

1 Supporting Statement A
For Paperwork Reduction Act Submission

National Park Service Creel Survey
OMB Control Number 1024-NEW

Terms of Clearance: None.

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

Recreational fishing is allowed in over 200 NPS units, where it is authorized by federal law or where it is not specifically prohibited and does not interfere with the functions of natural aquatic or riparian habitats (36 CFR 2.3). Managers at these park units, often in cooperation with state agencies, are responsible for managing their fisheries and associated natural resources. In order to properly manage fisheries, natural resource managers need to have information about natural ecological processes affecting fish populations as well as information on fishing pressure and harvest rates that affect total numbers of fish. This information is necessary for natural resource managers to accurately assess fish populations so that they can make informed management decisions about fisheries regulations, including fishery openings and closures and bag and size limits. Currently, there is no other way to collect this information except through a creel survey.

A creel survey (also known as an angler survey) is a type of in-person survey performed by resource managers where an interviewer asks an angler questions about their fishing experience including questions such as the duration of the trip, how many fish they caught, and if they were satisfied with their experience. The interviewer may also ask about the angler's thoughts about a future management decision. Additionally, harvested fish are counted and measured.

Creel surveys are performed to gain insight into recreational angling perceptions, efforts, and harvests to inform future decision-making. Creel surveys are a valuable tool for fisheries managers to use in understanding the systems they manage and how the public interacts with them. This is a request for a service-wide creel survey to ensure that information is collected in a consistent manner across the NPS.

Legal Authorities:

54 USC §100702 - National Park Service Protection Interpretation and research in System

54 USC §100101 The National Park Service Organic Act

54 USC 100701 - Protection, Interpretation, and Research in System

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. Be specific. If this collection is a form or a questionnaire, every question needs to be justified.

This information collection is intended to create a standard creel survey that can be used by National Park Service units open to recreational fishing. Creel surveys are a common fishery management technique designed to determine the angler's catch of each species and the fishing time required to catch the fish. The objective of this collection is to educate Park managers about a park's angling population and provide information on angling's potential effects on park resources. 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 and the information collected describes angler use, fishing pressure, fish harvest, and distribution of important species of fish. Angler creel surveys are vital in monitoring and gauging the health of recreational fisheries. The information will be gathered through interviews by park staff and self-surveys and will be used to assess current fisheries regulations and fish management in a park. The NPS may use the information to provide qualitative, quantitative, or graphical descriptions of a variety of angling metrics including but not limited to angler use and fish harvest.

Although the information collected is not expected to be disseminated directly to the public, results may be used in management, technical, or general informational publications.

Question	Justification
1. Are you aware of the online creel survey?	This question will help a park gauge if anglers are using online resources and if the online survey is an effective means of collecting data.
2. Were you fishing in the park today?	Determine if they should be interviewed.
3. What is your age bracket? <18, 18-30, 31-50, >50,	Asking age can inform parks on generational shifts in fishing.
4. How many people on your boat (or in your group, if this is a land-based interview) were fishing?	Necessary to compute the total fishing effort for the boat, especially when counting/measuring all landings for the entire party.
5. Were you fishing with a guide?	May be necessary if parks do not want to survey anglers on guided trips.
6. Are you familiar with the park's fishing regulations?	Helps with identifying knowledge gaps and outreach needs related to fishing regulations.
7. Where did you find the park's fishing regulations?	Helps with identifying knowledge gaps and outreach needs related to fishing regulations.
8. Were the park fishing regulations easy to understand?	Helps with identifying knowledge gaps and outreach needs related to fishing regulations.
9. Did you buy a fishing license? From which state?	Many people who fish in parks do not need a license, and this question would help to determine this demographic. Some fishing locations can be accessed from two different states, so it would be helpful to know in which state people are purchasing their licenses.

Question	Justification
10. What date(s) were you fishing?	This provides fishing pressure information, which can be combined with the number of fish captured to determine the size of fish populations.
11. Where did you start your fishing trip?	This helps inform if anglers originated in a park and how they arrived, to determine total effort. In the case of ocean or Great Lakes parks managers can determine what port they may have originated at.
12. Which areas of the park (water body and location) did you fish today? Be as specific as possible (site name, landmarks)	This will provide information on which water body (and which specific area) was fished since each water body potentially has separate populations that need to be managed apart from those in another water body.
13. What habitat were you fishing today (flats, reef, channels, deepwater (trolling)?	Fine-tunes information on where anglers were fishing since park areas may include more than one habitat type.
14. Did you utilize a mooring buoy for your fishing activity today, and if so, which one?	Can help determine which buoys are seeing the most use (and therefore likely need the most frequent maintenance, help the park identify if/where we should consider putting more/fewer buoys), and identify areas to focus fishing debris clean-up efforts.
15. How many hours did you fish today? What time did you start? What time did you end?	This provides fishing pressure information, which can be combined with the number of fish captured to help determine the size of fish populations. Start and end times verify # of hours provided by a participant and provide information to analyze alongside catch information.
16. What fishing method did you use today? (e.g. boat, shoreline, dock, wading, etc.)	Knowing the fishing method will provide a better interpretation of harvest data and rates of success.
17. What gear type were you using? (Bait, Fly, Lure, Plug, Combination)	This question will provide managers will information on the type of gear being used which can be used to evaluate effort, the prevalence of bait used, and further insight into the type of fishing.
18. Are you aware of and using best practices for bait use and disposal?	Bait fishing is not allowed in some parks and is limited in other parks. Asking this question will gauge if anglers are aware of bait best practices and disposal considerations to prevent the introduction of non-native species.
19. What fish species were you fishing for today?	Asking the intended fish species, and later the actual fish caught will provide information on if anglers are catching the fish they sought out to fish on a given day, lending to angler satisfaction.
20. Did you harvest legal-sized fish, did you practice catch and release, or both?	This question provides information on if fish were removed from the population or not, which helps to inform population information. Some parks may be interested in catch-and-release data, particularly if it has species where only catch-and-release is permitted (no harvesting).
21. List names of fish species caught, number released, and number harvested.	This will determine the fishing pressure on a given species, including how many were removed from the current population. This will inform fishery managers on how to manage recreational fishing.
22. Can I measure your harvested fish?	Measurements may be more accurate if they are done by trained staff.

Question	Justification
23. If you measured the fish, please list the species name and the length of each fish (and whether you measured them in cm, mm, or inches)	This information helps to determine the life stage/age class of fish being harvested which will provide managers data on size distribution, population health, and fishing quality. Species data will assist managers in understanding population assemblages.
24. Where is your primary residence? City, state, country	Parks would like to know where anglers are traveling from to inform how to target any public communication regarding fishing in the park.
25. Were you satisfied, overall, with fishing on this water? Y/N	The satisfaction questions (overall fishing, numbers of fish, size of fish) will be used to provide additional information to resource managers on the angler experience and if anglers surveyed are overwhelmingly dissatisfied with their experiences, strategize on how to change this.
26. Were you satisfied with the number of fish? Y/N	The satisfaction questions (overall fishing, numbers of fish, size of fish) will be used to provide additional information to resource managers on the angler experience and if anglers surveyed are overwhelmingly dissatisfied with their experiences, strategize on how to change this.
27. Were you satisfied with the sizes of fish? Y/N	The satisfaction questions (overall fishing, numbers of fish, size of fish) will be used to provide additional information to resource managers on the angler experience and if anglers surveyed are overwhelmingly dissatisfied with their experiences, strategize on how to change this.
28. Why did you choose to fish here today (e.g. relaxation, to be with family and friends, closeness to nature, sport, food, trophy fish)?	These data would be helpful to managers, as the trend has been moving away from "Food" and "Sport" and strongly toward "Relaxation," and "To be with family and friends"
29. Would you rate yourself (generally) as an inexperienced angler, experienced angler, or expert angler?	The satisfaction questions (overall fishing, numbers of fish, size of fish) will be used to provide additional information to resource managers on the angler experience and if anglers surveyed are overwhelmingly dissatisfied with their experiences, strategize on how to change this.
30. Are you aware of best practices for cleaning boats, fishing gear, and clothing to minimize the spread of aquatic invasive species?	Asking this question will gauge if anglers are aware of best practices and disposal considerations to prevent the introduction of non-native species.
31. Would you support an incentivized harvest system (bounty) on certain species of non-native fish?	This question will help managers to make management decisions that are in line with anglers' opinions on the removal of non-native species.
32. Would you support a chemical treatment to remove non-native/invasive fish or other aquatic species and replace them with native species? (yes or no)	This question will help managers to make management decisions that are in line with anglers' opinions on the removal of non-native species.
33. Would you support a chemical treatment to remove non-native/invasive fish or other aquatic species to return this water to its natural fishless status? (yes or no)	This question will help managers to make management decisions that are in line with anglers' opinions on the removal of non-native species.

Question	Justification
34. Did you see anything concerning that should be addressed by park managers? (examples: dead fish on the shore; new invasive fish; zebra mussels or other harmful aquatic invasive species)	It is helpful for parks to receive information from anglers on what they see in the park so that the park can manage issues accordingly.
35. Would you like to include any additional information?	Anglers participating in the survey will be asked for any additional comments, which can assist in providing insight into their answers on satisfaction, effort, and any observations on aquatic invasive species, hindrances to their fishing, and overall experience.

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.

The collection of information will occur in multiple ways including

- online or paper forms,
- on-site verbal interviews,
- publicly available tablets or laptops for self-entry.

We expect that at least 75% of the collection will use online or electronic submissions that can occur at the time of the event or when the respondent returns home (at a later time/date). Online collections will vary by park unit based on internet and website availability. Depending on the park unit on-site interviews will be entered into a tablet or a paper form by an interviewer.

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.

We identified several unofficial creel surveys in use without OMB approval. This request is for a new system-wide information collection that is intended to bring all unofficial creel surveys into compliance. This request is to approve a list of survey questions that will be available for all parks that monitor angler pressure at specific NPS waterways.

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

This collection will not involve small businesses or 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.

This is a new information collection intended to replace creel surveys, throughout the system that are currently in use without OMB approval. Angling pressure and trends change over time, and therefore, any information collected in the past would not be

applicable or relevant to describe current conditions. Therefore, fishery and park managers need this information to determine fishing pressure on parks' fish stocks, which will in turn help to make appropriate management actions, such as increasing or decreasing bag limits or implementing fishing openings and closures. Without this collection, managers cannot make informed decisions regarding their fish and fisheries.

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.

There are no special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in any of the above manners. Additionally, there is no requirement for respondents to fill out and submit the questionnaire.

8. Provide information on the PRA Federal Register Notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to that notice and describe the actions taken by the agency in response to those comments. Describe the 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.

A Federal Register Notice published on December 15, 2023 (88 FR 86926) solicited public comment. No comments were received.

Fisheries biologists within the NPS were consulted on survey questionnaire design. The state of Michigan Department of Natural Resources Institute for Fisheries Research was consulted in the survey design for one of the park units, Isle Royale National Park (ISRO). The ISRO survey was circulated to park units indicating interest. The following parks were asked to provide feedback: YELL, OLYM, EVER, CAHA, BISC, SHEN, ACAD, FOMA, LACL, NPSA, MWR, IMR, and WASO/NRSS. Following additional park input, requesting a list of questions

that could be used to make park-specific surveys, questions were added to reflect potential fish management issues which helped to create a widely applicable set of survey questions.

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

This collection does not provide any gifts or payments in any form to respondents.

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

We cannot offer an assurance of confidentiality. The survey will not collect any personally identifiable information. Therefore, surveys cannot be traced back to an individual.

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.

There are no questions of a sensitive nature included in this information 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 there will be approximately 10,000 annual responses totaling 1,667 annual burden hours. We estimate the total dollar value of the annual burden hours for this collection to be \$76,915 (rounded). We used the rates listed below in accordance with the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) news release [USDL-24-1172¹](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ecec.pdf) (June 18, 2024, Employer Costs for Employee Compensation—March 2024), to calculate the total annual burden. Table 12.1 uses the hourly rate (Including benefits) for respondents in the following categories:

- Civilian workers/Individuals: \$46.14 (See BLS Table 1)

Table 12.1. Total Estimated Annualized Burden

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

Activity	Annual Number of Responses	Average Burden Hours	Total Annual Burden Hours*	Hourly Rate Incl. Benefits	\$ Value of Annual Burden Hours*
System-wide Creel Survey	10,000	10 minutes	1,667	\$46.14	\$76,915

*rounded

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

Please **DO NOT** include the labor cost (wage equivalent) of the burden hours described in Question 12.

Generally, estimates should not include purchases of equipment or services, or portions thereof, made: (a) to achieve regulatory compliance with requirements not associated with the information collection, (b) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the government, or (c) as part of customary and usual business of private practices.

Operations and maintenance costs include the costs of mailing, faxing or calling in information, making paper copies, notary costs, and electronic transmission from vessel monitoring systems. Paint and brushes for vessel and gear marking would also fall under this category. Regular maintenance of any equipment whose initial costs fall under “capital and start-up” would also belong here.

There is no annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers.

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.

We estimate that the annual cost to the Federal Government to administer this information collection is \$125,964 (rounded)

- **\$18,244** (costs per park) times **6** (participating parks) = **\$109,464**
- **\$2,750** (operational expenses) times **6** (participating parks) = **\$16,500**

To determine average hourly rates for the Federal positions identified below (Table 14.1), we used the Office of Personnel Management Salary Table [2024-RUS²](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/pdf/2024/RUS_h.pdf) to determine the hourly rates. We multiplied the hourly rate by 1.6 to account for benefits in accordance with News Release [USDL-24-1172³](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ecec.pdf) (referenced above), to estimate average hourly wages and to calculate benefits. We have averaged the estimated time it would take to perform the task.

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

³ <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ecec.pdf>

Table 14.1 Total annual cost of Federal Salaries

Personnel	Grade/ Step	Hourly Pay Rate	Hourly Rate Including Benefits (1.6 x hourly rate)	Total Hours Spent on Collection	Total Annual Salary Cost (Incl. Benefits)
Program Manager	GS 11/5	\$39.40	\$63.04	80	\$5,042
Creel Technician	GS 05/5	\$21.49	\$34.38	192	\$6,601
Creel Technician	GS 05/5	\$21.49	\$34.38	192	\$6,601
Total Salary Costs per park x 6 parks					0 \$109,464
Operational Expenses (Per Park)					
Equipment			\$750		\$4,500
Printing (GPO)			\$1,000	x 6 parks	\$6,000
Travel and Transportation			\$1,000		\$6,000
Total Expenses			\$2,750		\$16,500

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments in hour or cost burden.

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.

We do not anticipate publishing the results or findings of the Creel survey in peer-reviewed publications, outside of internal resource briefs and project reports. The results will be reported as simple frequency distributions. Availability of data to the general public will be dependent on individual park units as well as sensitivity (i.e., threatened and endangered species).

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 as required.

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.

Supporting Statement B:

There are no complex sampling methods or statistical analyses associated with this collection. All participation will be of anglers in the park during the survey day. Simple frequency distributions will be used to provide descriptive information for reports maintained at each park.