

1SUPPORTING STATEMENT A

U.S. Department of the Interior

U.S. Geological Survey

USGS Generic Clearance for Hazard-Related Incident Data Collection

OMB Control Number 1028-NEW

Terms of Clearance:

Not Applicable - New Collection.

Justification

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

The mission of the U.S. Geological Survey is to serve the Nation by providing reliable scientific information to describe and understand the Earth; minimize loss of life and property from natural disasters (e.g., 42 U.S.C. 5121; 5132 Disaster Relief Act of 1974, Section 202(a)); manage water, biological, energy, and mineral resources (e.g., 42 U.S.C. 300(f); 42 U.S.C. 2021(b); 42 U.S.C. 4321); and enhance and protect our quality of life (e.g., 42 U.S.C. 7701; USGS, SM 120.1.2). Regarding hazard events, the USGS provides information needed by its customers before, during, and after hazard events to minimize the loss of life and property. Hazards include, but are not limited to, earthquakes (42 U.S.C. 7701), volcanoes (43 U.S.C. 31k), landslides (43 U.S.C. 3102; P.L. 116-323; H.R. 8810), geomagnetic (solar) storms, floods, drought, coastal erosion, tsunamis, wildland fire, wildlife disease, and other biological and chemical threats (USGS, SM 120.1.3.A). Part of the USGS's function is to communicate with emergency managers, public safety officials, and others during hazard events and to conduct post-crisis analysis (USGS, SM 120.1.3.A.6-7). With this in mind, the USGS proposes to conduct a number of data collection efforts within the topic areas of hazards preparedness, response, and recovery studies and community resilience and sustainability. These efforts include studies of specific disaster events (e.g., wildfire, hurricane, earthquake, volcano, landslide, tsunami, geomagnetic (i.e., space weather), and flood); assessments of the effectiveness of USGS science to meet the needs of emergency managers, public safety officials, and others; and evaluations of the usability and utility of USGS natural hazard-related guidance or other products.

These data collection efforts may be either qualitative or quantitative in nature or may consist of mixed methods. Additionally, data may be collected via a variety of means, including but not limited to electronic or social media, direct or indirect observation (i.e., in person video and audio collections), interviews, questionnaires, and focus groups. The USGS will limit its inquiries to data collections that solicit strictly voluntary opinions or responses. The data collected will be used to decrease negative impacts of hazard events on society, improve the flow of actionable information to emergency managers and public safety officers, and, in turn, increase community resilience within the United States.

The USGS utilizes this clearance to conduct research in support of the topic areas of natural

hazard-related disaster studies and community resilience. This type of research is directly related to a range of hazards that are unpredictable in their number and scale during a given year. Additionally, some hazard events may require multiple studies resulting in multiple collections. Therefore, in light of the uncertainties regarding the frequency and extent of severe hazard events, the USGS is requesting the ICR annual response allotment be set at 4,500 responses and the ICR annual hours allotment at 2,000 hours.

The USGS will collect this information by electronic means, when possible, as well as by mail, fax, telephone, technical discussions, and in-person interviews. The USGS may also utilize observational techniques to collect this information.

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 is a new collection. USGS proposes to conduct a number of data collection efforts within the topic areas of natural disaster and community resilience and preparedness, including studies of specific natural disaster events (e.g., earthquakes, volcanoes, landslides, geomagnetic (solar) storms, floods, drought, coastal erosion, tsunamis, wildland fire, wildlife disease, and other biological and chemical threats), assessments of community resilience and sustainability, and evaluations of the usability and utility of USGS guidance or other products. For example, one study may assess the usefulness, usability, timeliness, and responsiveness of USGS science and scientists as they collaborated with emergency managers, civil defense authorities, local community members, and others in response to the eruption of a volcano. Another example may include the study of disaster impacts to community members due to a large-scale landslide event. These data collection efforts may be either qualitative or quantitative in nature or may consist of mixed methods. Additionally, data may be collected via a variety of means, including but not limited to electronic or social media, direct or indirect observation (i.e., in person, video and audio collections), interviews, questionnaires, and focus groups. USGS will limit its inquiries to data collections that solicit voluntary responses. The results of the data collected can be used in research efforts aimed to decrease negative impacts of hazards on society, and, in turn, to increase community resilience within the U.S. communities.

For each proposed request using the generic clearance, USGS will submit the actual collection instrument and related documents (letters, emails to respondents, scripts, etc.), as well as proposed statistical methods to be employed to OMB along with responses to the following questions, which will be considered an abbreviated supporting statement:

- 1. Explain who will be surveyed and why the group is appropriate to survey.**
- 2. Explain how the survey was developed including consultation with interested parties, pretesting, and responses to suggestions for improvement.**
- 3. Explain how the study will be conducted, how customers will be sampled if fewer than all customers will be surveyed, expected response rate, and actions your agency plans to take to improve the response rate.**
- 4. Describe how the results of the study will be analyzed and used to generalize the results to the entire customer population.**

In general, the data collected will be used by USGS researchers to better understand community resilience, preparedness, related planning processes, response and sustainability, actionable usability of USGS data, as well as to plan the direction of future research and guidelines. The surveys and other empirical data collections may include involvement from the following members of the public: emergency managers and civil defense authorities; individuals or households; first responders; weather forecasters; members of the media; water, power, transportation, and communications infrastructure operators; businesses or other for profit organizations; not-for-profit institutions; educational institutions; medical institutions; Regional, State, Local, or Tribal Government; Federal government; standards-making bodies; and professional associations.

The data collected will not be directly disseminated to the public in raw form, but aspects or portions of the information collected may be released and used to support research published in various journals, papers, reports, presentations, and guidance documents.

This information collection and dissemination will comply with the USGS Fundamental Science Practices (USGS SM 502.1). Quality will be ensured and established at levels appropriate to the nature and timeliness of the information to be disseminated and will include all pre-release peer reviews, as required by the USGS Fundamental Science Practices.

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.

Whenever possible, information technology will be used to reduce the burden on solicited individuals. In addition to traditional data collection methods, USGS will, whenever appropriate, offer electronic response options.

The planned use of transactional and electronic web-based (and, when appropriate, mobile app-based) surveys will substantially contribute to increasing the number of projected responses and reducing the associated burden hours. Regarding surveys, we expect that respondents will reply electronically (a small number might have limited access to the internet, especially in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, so will be surveyed in-person or through mail-in versions of the survey). Interviews and other qualitative interpersonal data collection methods will be conducted either face-to-face or via a digital communication platform (e.g., Teams, Zoom, Google Chat, etc.) in order to reduce the burden on participants.

All forms will be made available in a format for public printing.

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.

USGS has an internal review process that will examine each survey or data collection effort to be conducted under the generic clearance—to prevent internal duplication of effort and to ensure that appropriate data collection instruments are developed. Through this review process, USGS will, to the greatest extent possible, centralize the administration of its data collections

related to particular natural disasters. This will provide for a more consistent and comprehensive approach. While there may be other surveys or data collections that become the subject of separate clearance requests, USGS is confident that the procedures in place ensure that there will be no duplication within USGS-directed research.

The surveys and other empirical data collections may include involvement from the following members of the public: emergency managers and civil defense authorities; individuals or households; first responders; weather forecasters; members of the media; water, power, transportation, and communications infrastructure operators; businesses or other for profit organizations; not-for-profit institutions; educational institutions; medical institutions; Regional, State, Local or Tribal Government; Federal government; standards-making bodies; and professional associations. These entities should only respond to questionnaires once when the data to be collected will constitute a cross-sectional data set.

Given the nature of resilience and the long timeframe associated with community resilience planning there may be some duplication of responses when a longitudinal study is undertaken. Such studies will serve to provide valuable insights to the understanding of the recovery process, which is intricately linked to resilience planning.

Individuals participating in these types of data collection efforts may be asked to sign an informed consent document (meaning participants are informed of the data collection and are providing their consent to participate). Longitudinal studies may require that an individual be surveyed more than once for a given tool over a period pre- or post-disaster event. If relevant, USGS will provide an example of the consent form that will be provided to each possible respondent. This consent form will be provided as a supplemental document for the submission package for each data collection effort under this clearance.

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

Some small businesses and other small entities may be involved in these efforts; however, USGS will keep the burden to them as well as on any business, organization, or individual to a minimum by asking for responses/participation on a strictly voluntary basis and by asking for the minimum amount of information needed to evaluate the future direction and scope of USGS research.

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.

If USGS does not conduct the proposed data collection to support this research, progress on community resilience, sustainability, and reducing the impact of disasters will be greatly diminished. Additionally, results from these data collections may lead to further research that could result in changes to, or enhancements of, the delivery of products, services, and information, as well as identifying high-priority items for improvement or inclusion in the suite of products, services, and programs USGS provides for community resilience, disaster response, and hazard mitigation. Specific examples include actionable data delivery to emergency managers during responses to and recovery from natural hazard incidents as well as improved guidance and tools on community resilience to inform planning, preparedness, and mitigation efforts.

If these surveys and other data collections were conducted less frequently or not conducted, USGS researchers would lack important information that may hinder the future direction and scope of USGS research as well as impacting efforts to meet USGS's mission. Outputs from these studies are likely to lead to a reduction in costs incurred to U.S. communities due the benefits to the U.S. public, such as more effective and efficient community resilience and recovery planning processes.

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.

The data collection conducted under this generic clearance will be conducted in accordance with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5. There are no circumstances that require us to collect the information in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

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 August 1, 2024, USGS published a 60-Day Federal Register notice (89 FR 62778). The 60-Day FRN comment period expired on September 30, 2024. USGS did not receive any comments in response to that notice.

No consultation was conducted because this is for a Generic PRA approval. As noted above (Question Number 2), for each proposed request using the generic clearance, USGS will submit the actual collection instrument and related documents (letters, emails to respondents, scripts, etc.), including documentation of consultations inside and outside of the agency.

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

USGS will not provide any payment or gift to respondents for any written, verbal, electronic, or other survey participation and responses.

However, if respondents must leave their home or place of business to travel to a specific location to participate in an information collection conducted in a "laboratory"-type setting or an office-setting (such as in-depth interviews, usability testing, etc.) under this clearance they may receive a small stipend to offset the cost of travel expenses.

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

We do not provide any assurances of confidentiality; however, the Department of the Interior is required under Section 208 of the E-Government Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-347, 44 U.S.C. Chapter 36) to conduct a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) before developing or initiating new information collections that use information technology that collects, maintains, or disseminates personally identifiable information (PII). After reviewing the PIA submitted for the experimental population data collection, the Service Privacy Act Officer determined that a Systems of Records Notice is not required for this collection. The collection is not considered to be a Privacy Act system of records because it is not keyed to individuals and because of the limited nature of the PII collected and its limited use in the conduct of program operations (copy of PIA attached in ROCIS). The information collected is protected in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 and the Freedom of Information Act. We collect the name, address, and phone number of the reporting party in order to have this information in case we have follow-up questions regarding the reports of species covered in 50 CFR 17.84.

The Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. § 552a (3)) only requires a Privacy Act Statement when collecting personal information that will be placed or stored in a system of records. If a determination is made to collect Personally Identifiable Information (PII), under each individual information collection request, USGS will conduct a Privacy Threshold Analysis in coordination with the USGS Bureau Associate Privacy Officer and describe the appropriate System of Records Notice (SORN). In this case, we do not provide any assurance of confidentiality. Information is collected and protected in accordance with the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. § 552a) and the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552). We will maintain the information in a secure System of Records (DOI LEARN (Department-wide Learning Management System) - Interior, DOI-16, 70 FR 58230).

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as

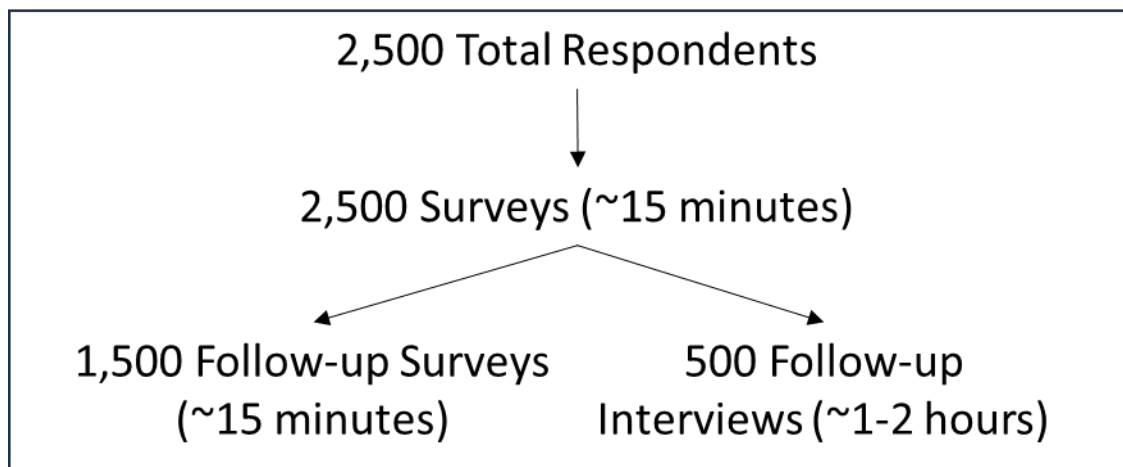
sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

Not applicable – no sensitive data will be collected.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

The USGS utilizes this clearance to conduct research in support of topic areas of natural hazard-related disaster studies and community resilience. This type of research is directly related to a range of hazards that are unpredictable in their number and scale during a given year. Additionally, some hazard events may require multiple studies resulting in multiple collections. Therefore, in light of the uncertainties regarding the frequency and extent of severe hazard events, the USGS is requesting the ICR annual response allotment be set at 4,500 responses and the ICR annual hours allotment at 2,000 hours.

This ICR is based on a total estimated number of annual respondents of 2,500. The 4,500 responses are based on the need to do follow-up surveys and interviews with respondents. As such, the ICR annual response allotment of 4,500 is based on the following calculation: 2,500 15-minute surveys with the original respondent pool of 2,500; 1,500 15-minute follow-up surveys with the original respondent pool of 2,500; 500 (up to) 2-hour follow-up interviews with the original respondent pool of 2,500.



The ICR annual hours allotment is set at 2,000 hours based on the following calculations:

- 2,500 initial surveys X 15 minutes each = 625 hours
- 1,500 follow-up surveys X 15 minutes each = 375 hours
- 500 follow-up interviews X 2 hours each = 1,000 hours

Type of Data Collection	Number of Instances of Data Collection (annual response allotment)	Duration of Each Collection	Total Hours (annual hours allotment)
Initial Survey	2,500	.25 hours	625

Follow-up Survey Sample	1,500	.25 hours	375
Follow-up Interviews	500	2 hours	1,000
Totals	4,500	N/A	2,000

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual non-hour cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden already reflected in item 12.)

There are no costs to the respondents.

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.

This is an umbrella submission. This Generic Clearance will involve USGS employees that will devote a portion of their time, aside from normal duties, to plan, coordinate, administer, or monitor the overall types of individual information collections to be conducted. USGS will describe individual cost estimates for each individual information collection request made. For example, if USGS determines that a Contractor will be involved in the collection efforts, those specific costs will be described.

As an estimate, the total Federal cost to administer each implementation of the PRA application for a single disaster incident will include survey development, interviews, analysis, and writing a report. While the scope of each effort is highly variable, each has an estimated cost of \$39,986 (rounded). This includes \$23,486 (rounded) in US Geological Survey salary costs to inform and guide project coordination, administration, and deliverable review. These estimated costs are based on a single, relatively small or moderately sized incident (<200 surveys and ~15 in-depth interviews). These estimates can be scaled up for larger incidents (e.g., a large earthquake or volcanic eruption). Project coordination, administration, and review will be done in coordination with the incident assigned staff, Hazards Response Executive Committee, and Responsible Executive for the incident.

We used the Office of Personnel Management Salary Table [2025-DEN](#) (Denver-Aurora, CO) to determine average hourly Federal wages. In accordance with BLS News Release [USDL-25-0335](#), March 14, 2025, Employer Costs for Employee Compensation—December 2024, we multiplied individual hourly wages for the Federal employees by 1.618 to calculate the fully burdened hourly rate shown below in Table 14.1.

Table 14.1 – USGS Salary/Benefits

Action	Position and Grade	Hourly Rate	Fully Burdened Hourly Rate (Incl. Benefits)	Total Annual Hours	Total Annual Cost
Development & Deployment of Survey	Geographer GS 11/05	\$ 44.77	\$ 72.44	16	\$1159.04
	Science Coordinator GS 13/05	63.81	103.24	8	825.92
Contacting Respondents/Interviews	Geographer GS 11/05	44.77	72.44	40	2897.60

(assume 15, 2 hours each per incident)	Science Coordinator GS 13/05	63.81	103.24	16	1651.84
Analysis	Geographer GS 11/05	44.77	72.44	80	5795.20
	Science Coordinator GS 13/05	63.81	103.24	40	4129.60
Report Writing and Review	Geographer GS 11/05	44.77	72.44	40	2897.60
	Science Coordinator GS 13/05	63.81	103.24	40	4129.60
Total					\$ 23,486.40

Table 14.2 – Other Costs

Action	Costs Per	Total
Travel to the Disaster area (optional)	\$4,000 per person per trip	\$12,000
Publication Formatting	\$4,500 per report	\$4,500
Researcher Salaries	\$ 23,486.40	\$ 23,486.40
Total cost of collection per incident		\$39,986.40

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.

The results of these data collections will help to further and improve science data provision and science prioritization regarding natural hazards in order to reduce the impacts of hazards on the nation. Results may be used in papers published in research journals and presented at conferences. Findings from the data collection activities may also be published in books, compendia, and reports, and USGS publications. Results may be disseminated to USGS staff, key policy and management officials, and both public and private stakeholders. There will be no attribution to individuals in the analyzed data.

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.

All written and electronic material will display the OMB Control Number and current expiration date of the OMB approval on appropriate materials.

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.