

Supporting Statement
A Survey of Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage
Management Methods
OMB Control Number 0579-XXXX

Part A

A. Justification

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.

This is a new information collection request.

Under the Act of March 2, 1931 (7 U.S.C. 8351), the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to conduct a program of wildlife services with respect to injurious animal species and take any action the Secretary considers necessary in conducting the program. Additionally, the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to conduct activities to control nuisance mammals and birds (except for urban rodent control) and those mammals and bird species that are reservoirs for zoonotic disease. This authority has been delegated to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Wildlife Services (WS). Two responsibilities of the Deputy Administrator of WS are to assist Federal, State, local, and foreign agencies and individuals regarding wildlife damage and control and conduct research to develop wildlife damage management methods (7 CFR 371.6).

Depredation of livestock by large predators, such as wolves, bears, and mountain lions, is a significant source of human-wildlife conflict and economic losses in the US. Protecting livestock from predators is a complex and challenging endeavor, with each situation requiring an evaluation of relevant legal, social, economic, biological, and technical aspects. While no single management technique is appropriate in every situation, various stakeholder groups are increasingly calling for the use of nonlethal predator damage management techniques. Following successful lobbying efforts by Defenders of Wildlife and the Natural Resources Defense Council, Congress has appropriated millions of dollars to WS since 2020 to support the use of nonlethal predator damage management methods. WS is using the money to test several nonlethal predator damage management methods on livestock operations in 12 states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

This submission is a request for approval to initiate the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study, an information collection by APHIS that will be conducted on an annual basis. Each year, APHIS would like to conduct a survey of livestock producers who 1) experienced livestock loss from predators, 2) worked with WS to try and mitigate losses, and 3) allowed WS State Directors to share their contact information within APHIS. This survey would measure respondents' perceptions of predator damage management methods and their willingness to continue using such methods. The

Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study will support the following objectives:

1. Identify livestock producers' perceptions of predators (i.e., wolves, black bears, grizzly bears, and mountain lions) and predator damage management methods;
2. Describe livestock producers' attitudes toward predators and the management options they use to mitigate predator damage on their livestock operations; and
3. Identify ways to improve and evaluate existing and future predator damage management efforts.

Human Dimension studies offer a comprehensible way to understand the thoughts and opinions of target populations and can inform education and communication efforts (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). By studying livestock producers' attitudes toward predators and predator damage management, APHIS will be able to better understand livestock producers' behavior and meet their needs by improving WS programs. The information collected from this effort will be used to improve WS Nonlethal Initiative programs and inform WS nonlethal predator damage management. This study is also critical to identify any barriers to the continued use of nonlethal predator damage management methods and determining whether livestock producers' (referred to herein as the "respondents") attitudes towards predators and nonlethal predator damage management have changed. We anticipate that, among other things, results of the study may inform whether nonlethal predator damage management methods are a viable and acceptable alternative to the use of methods which result in the death of large predators from the perspective of the respondents.

APHIS aims to attain a 46 percent response rate or a minimum of 90 responses from approximately 200 respondents per year. Respondents will receive a cover letter with the OMB control number and expiration date, a hyperlink or shortened link to an electronic multi-item questionnaire, a unique code to access the questionnaire, the amount of time estimated to complete the questionnaire, privacy information for this study, the APHIS WS National Wildlife Resource Center (NWRC) Human Dimensions Unit investigators' contact information, and instructions on how to access the questionnaire. When a respondent enters the Predator Damage Management Questionnaire, they will then be asked to consent to completing the questionnaire by clicking the "Next" button on the first screen. Participation in this study is voluntary; it is up to the individual respondents to decide whether it is desirable to partake, and there are no consequences if a respondent declines to participate in this study.

The data collected through the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study will be analyzed and organized into descriptive/statistical reports. All data and metadata collected under this study and used in peer-reviewed publications will be made publicly accessible in a data repository per the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Departmental Regulation 1020-006. Additionally, results will be shared internally within the APHIS WS as well as externally through open access or subscription-based journals.

APHIS requests this information collection request be approved for 3 years.

2. Indicate how, by whom, how frequently, 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.

Data collected, analyzed, and interpreted from the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study will be disseminated to a variety of constituents, including within APHIS WS and open access or subscription-based journals. Additionally, all data and metadata collected and used in peer-reviewed publications will be made publicly accessible in a data repository per the USDA Departmental Regulation 1020-006.

APHIS will use the data collected to:

- Analyze how cooperators conceptualize losses from predators (i.e., animals missing vs. animal carcasses found vs. confirmed kills);
- Identify any correlations between frequency of communication, trust, and acceptance of nonlethal predator damage management methods suggested by WS;
- Provide input into WS Nonlethal Initiative programs as well as predator damage management policy and outreach; and
- Help inform policy by providing scientifically accurate data.

Predator Damage Management Pre-Survey Postcard; 7 U.S.C. 8351, 7 U.S.C. 8353, and 7 CFR 371.6; Business and Individual

Beginning September 2025, an annual pre-survey postcard (Appendix A) and instructions (Appendix B) will be mailed to WS State Directors and WS field staff stationed in the 12 states in which nonlethal predator damage management is taking place (i.e., Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming). WS field staff will deliver the pre-survey postcards to each respondent (Business or Individual) receiving predator damage management services from WS Nonlethal Initiative programs or will contact them via email or phone to let them know about the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study and explain the importance of the survey (Table 1). WS field staff will then obtain either the email address (preferred) or mailing address of respondents who are willing to participate in the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study. WS field staff or WS State Directors will enter the respondents' names, names of respondents' livestock operations, respondents' mailing addresses, and respondents' email addresses into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet (example in Appendix C), which will be housed in a shared APHIS WS Teams file.

For respondents who do not have an email address, do not have access to the internet, or are unwilling to take the questionnaire online, a mailing survey packet will be sent and include a printed version of the multi-item questionnaire and a postage-paid return envelope. Any respondent who indicates to the WS field staff that they do not wish to participate in the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods survey will not be contacted by APHIS regarding this study.

Predator Damage Management Cover Letters, Predator Damage Management Questionnaire, and Predator Damage Management Auto-Response Email; 7 U.S.C. 8351, 7 U.S.C. 8353, and 7 CFR 371.6; Business and Individual

Each October, an initial survey packet will be sent to respondents either via email or mail (depending on the respondent's provided method of contact) (Table 1). The email survey packet will contain an email cover letter (Appendix D) with the OMB control number and expiration date, a hyperlink to the electronic multi-item questionnaire hosted in Qualtrics (a cloud-based experience management platform that helps researchers build and distribute web-based questionnaires as well as collect and analyze data), a unique code to access the questionnaire, the amount of time estimated to complete the questionnaire, privacy information for this study, and the Human Dimensions Unit investigators' contact information. The mailing survey packet will contain a push-to-web cover letter (Appendix E) with the OMB control number and expiration date, a shortened link to the electronic multi-item questionnaire, a unique code to access the questionnaire, the amount of time estimated to complete the questionnaire, privacy information for this study, the Human Dimensions Unit investigators' contact information, and instructions on how to access the questionnaire.

When a respondent enters the Predator Damage Management Questionnaire, they will be taken to an informed consent statement (Appendix F), which will provide the respondent with the complete information about the requirements and data protections regarding their potential participation in the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study. If the respondent consents to the opportunity to participate, they will indicate their consent by clicking the "Next" button and start the questionnaire (Appendix G).

One week after the initial survey packet is emailed/mailed to respondents, a follow-up survey packet containing a second email cover letter (Appendix H) or a second push-to-web cover letter (Appendix I) will be sent to nonrespondents. If a respondent does not respond to the initial survey packet or first follow-up survey packet, they will then receive a second follow-up survey packet two weeks after the first follow-up. The second follow-up survey packet for respondents who opted for email will consist of the same information as prior email cover letters (Appendix J). However, the second mailing follow-up packet will contain another push-to-web cover letter (Appendix K) as well as a printed version of the questionnaire (Appendix L) and a postage-paid return envelope. If a respondent does not respond to the second follow-up survey packet, a third follow-up survey packet with an email cover letter (Appendix M) or a push-to-web cover letter (Appendix N) with printed questionnaire will be sent two weeks after the second follow-up (Table 1).

If a respondent requires help at any point during the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study, they may contact the Human Dimensions Unit investigators. Additionally, a specific email address (HDSurveys@usda.gov) will be provided in all cover letters for respondents having trouble accessing the Predator Damage Management Questionnaire. When a respondent emails this email address, they will receive an automatic response (Appendix O), which will provide an estimated amount of time it will take for a Human Dimensions Unit investigator to respond as well as a hyperlink to the Predator Damage Management Questionnaire.

Predator Damage Management Nonresponse Email, Predator Damage Management Nonresponse Letter, and Predator Damage Management Nonresponse Postcard; 7 U.S.C. 8351, 7 U.S.C. 8353, and 7 CFR 371.6; Business and Individual

After another week or two, if a respondent does not respond to the initial survey packet or any of the follow-up survey packets, they will be sent a nonresponse email (Appendix P) or a nonresponse letter with the link to the electronic multi-item questionnaire and a unique code to access the questionnaire (Appendix Q) and a nonresponse postage-paid postcard (Appendix R) (Table 1). The nonresponse email and nonresponse postcard will consist of two questions from the Predator Damage Management Questionnaire:

- “Before Wildlife Services provided you with nonlethal predator damage management assistance, how interested were you in using nonlethal predator damage management methods on your livestock operation?”
- “After receiving nonlethal predator damage management assistance from Wildlife Services, how interested were you in continuing to use nonlethal predator damage management methods on your livestock operation?”

Table 1: Distribution timetable for survey material.

Email Survey Packet	Timeframe	Mailing Survey Packet
Pre-Survey Postcard (distributed by WS field staff)	2-3 Weeks Prior to Survey	Pre-Survey Postcard (distributed by WS field staff)
Initial Survey Packet with Electronic Multi-Item Questionnaire Hyperlink	Week 1	Initial Survey Packet with Push-to-Web Instructions
First Follow-up Survey Packet with Electronic Multi-Item Questionnaire Hyperlink	Week 2	First Follow-up Survey Packet with Push-to-Web Instructions
Second Follow-up Survey Packet with Electronic Multi-Item Questionnaire Hyperlink	Week 4	Second Follow-up Survey Packet with Printed Multi-Item Questionnaire and Postage-Paid Return Envelope
Third Follow-up Survey Packet with Electronic Multi-Item Questionnaire Hyperlink	Week 6	Third Follow-up Survey Packet with Printed Multi-Item Questionnaire and Postage-Paid Return Envelope
Nonresponse Email	Week 7 or 8	Nonresponse Letter with Push-to-Web Instructions and Nonresponse Postage-Paid Postcard

After the data has been collected, APHIS will validate the data. The complete data set will be stored securely on password protected computers and a secure server while completed printed questionnaires will be stored securely in a locked office at the NWRC, a facility with 24-hour security.

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.

APHIS makes every effort to comply with the E-Government Act, 2002 (E-Gov) and to provide for alternative submission of information collections.

For the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study, APHIS will administer survey packets to respondents via email, which will contain a hyperlink to the Predator Damage Management Questionnaire that is hosted in Qualtrics, or via mail using USPS (depending on the respondent's provided method of contact). It is estimated that approximately 75 percent of respondents will opt to receive the hyperlink to the electronic questionnaire in Qualtrics via email. Respondents who opt for the mailing survey packet will receive two push-to-web cover letters containing a shortened link to the Predator Damage Management Questionnaire in Qualtrics prior to receiving a printed version. APHIS is expecting approximately 90 responses annually to the questionnaire.

APHIS anticipates 75 percent of the responses will be submitted electronically. The URL for the questionnaire, which will be hosted in Qualtrics, has not yet been created.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purpose(s) described in item 2 above.

Every effort has been made to avoid duplication. There are similar data collected, however, those do not meet the agency's need.

Literature searches for existing data relevant to the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study have been performed. Available data were reviewed and compiled from all known sources. Sources reviewed were produced from a terms search of peer-reviewed publications listed in Google Scholar. These data included extensive information related to predator damage management, nonlethal predator damage management, perceptions of predators, and perceptions of nonlethal predator damage management. However, there are no other studies that investigate livestock producers' perceptions of predator damage management services provided by the WS and their willingness to continue using such methods.

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

It is estimated that 95 percent of the respondents receiving predator damage management services through the WS Nonlethal Initiative programs are small businesses. The Predator Damage Management Questionnaire is designed to collect the minimum amount of data required from a minimum number of respondents to ensure statistically and scientifically valid data. This is done by both tailoring the information requested on the questionnaire as well as building in skip and routing logic to request specific information only from the subsets of the respondent group from which the information is needed. In addition, respondents may skip any question they do not wish to answer. This is a voluntary study; it is at the discretion of the respondent to decide whether it is desirable for them to partake, and there are no consequences if a respondent declines to participate in this study.

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.

Responses to the activities in this information collection request are voluntary for this ongoing information collection request.

Human Dimension studies offer a comprehensible way to understand a population's perceptions and help inform education and communication efforts (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). One of the goals of the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study is to evaluate support for the WS Nonlethal Initiative by measuring the respondents' perceptions of predator damage management methods and their willingness to continue using such methods. This information will help the WS meet respondents' needs related to predator damage management and improve predator damage management method implementations. This information is also critical to improving WS Nonlethal Initiative programs, identifying any barriers to the continued use of nonlethal predator damage management methods, and determining whether livestock producers' attitudes towards predators and nonlethal predator damage management have changed because of their participation in the WS Nonlethal Initiative. In the absence of this research, little will be known about respondents' perspectives on predator damage management methods and if the WS Nonlethal Initiative aligns with respondents' needs, which could lead to less effective predator damage management.

7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the general information collection guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5

- **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 3 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 secret, 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.**

No special circumstances exist that would require this collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the general information collection guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.

8. 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 form, and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB.

The following people were consulted during the planning and coordination of the study regarding the Predator Damage Management Questionnaire:

Shawn Cantrell
 Vice President of Species Conservation & Coexistence
 Defenders of Wildlife
 Phone: 202-682-9400
 Email: SCANTRELL@defenders.org

Amy McNamara
 Freshwater Ecosystems Strategist, Nature
 Natural Resources Defense Council
 Phone: 406-581-7962
 Email: aMcNamara@nrdc.org

Cat Urbigit

Livestock Producer
Phone: NA
Email: catu2@mac.com

These three experts provided suggestions for minor word changes and additional questions we may wish to include in the Predator Damage Management Questionnaire. The Human Dimensions Unit applied the suggestions that best fit the goals and objectives of the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study.

Additionally, a USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) review was requested for this information collection request on June 24, 2024. A review by Jeffrey Hunt (202-720-5359) was received on July 1, 2024, and consisted of 5 comments for 3 appendix files (Appendix S). In response, the Human Dimensions Unit applied the recommended corrections and notes to the 3 appendix files as well as added an explanation and reference to the supporting statements about why we are studying respondents' perceptions.

APHIS published in the Federal Register on October 21, 2024 (see 89 FRN 84109) a 60-day public comment notice for this information collection request. We received 38 comments, including 2 duplicates. Additionally, out of the 36 unique comments we received, 8 were anonymous. Most (21 comments) were supportive of the study, while 2 were unsupportive. However, 30 of the comments (including the 2 unsupportive comments) did not provide feedback toward the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study's purpose or methods, but rather reflected on current predator damage management in their state or in general.

Six comments provided feedback toward the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study. These comments were from the Idaho Farm Bureau Federation, Royce Schwenkfelder (SS Cattle Company), F. Philip Davis (Davis Cattle Co., Inc.), Idaho Wool Growers Association, Idaho Cattle Association, and a joint letter from The Humane Society of the United States and Humane Society Legislative Fund. The suggestions made within the 6 comments comprised of:

- Expanding the survey's respondents to include livestock trade associations, animal damage control districts, state wildlife management agencies, state departments of agriculture, and livestock producers who either utilized WS services during the past decade or have not used WS services for predator damage management;
- Assessing the effectiveness of both lethal and non-lethal control methods in reducing livestock losses;
- Analyzing complementary efforts at the state level;
- Gathering information about livestock loss investigations and compensation-related efforts;
- Gathering information about livestock carcass mitigation (e.g., burial, removal, lye treatment);
- Providing livestock producers the opportunity to answer in open form text to allow livestock producers to elaborate on explicit examples;

- Communicating only general trends and findings communicated to departments and teams, with no specifics relating to individual producers or operations being shared or disseminated; and
- Allowing alternative response methods and a sufficiently long response period to ensure participation from as many producers as possible.

Based on the suggestions provided by the commenters, the Human Dimensions Unit has determined that further changes are not necessary for the scope of the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study and contacted the commenters via mail to thank them for their comments (Appendix T - Y). The Human Dimensions Unit also provided the commenters detailed information related to their suggestions and the study to address any further concerns.

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

APHIS will provide no payments or gifts to respondents.

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

Information collected for the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods survey will not be protected by the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (CIPSEA). However, APHIS will protect the privacy of the information collected through the means and processes below. APHIS will use the information acquired from the respondents for statistical purposes only.

APHIS will have knowledge of the respondent's identity, connected with questionnaire information. All questionnaires, data, and reports will refer to the respondent by an alpha-numeric code, which is assigned by APHIS. APHIS will destroy the link between respondent and alpha-numeric code once data collection, entry, validation, and report dissemination are complete. APHIS will not link survey information with respondent name or contact information. All completed questionnaires received by APHIS will be stored securely in a locked office at the NWRC, a facility with 24-hour security, or on password protected computers and a secure server accessible only to the Human Dimensions Unit investigators.

APHIS will release study results based on summary estimates and results from statistical analyses to protect the privacy of individual respondents. All data and metadata collected and used in peer-reviewed publications will be made available to the public per the USDA Departmental Regulation 1020-006. While every effort will be made to ensure respondents' privacy, it is possible that information could be released as required by a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. However, names, addresses, and personal information will not be linked with any survey information provided in response to such a request. Access to individual data files is restricted in order to maintain respondents' privacy.

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.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval

The Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study has been developed in accordance with Federal, State, and local guidelines to ensure that the rights and privacy of respondents are protected and maintained. An IRB determination of “exempt” has been obtained from Sterling IRB (Appendix Z). Respondents will be provided a phone number and email for the Human Dimensions Unit investigators should they have any questions or concerns about the study or their rights as a respondent.

Sensitive Questions

In general, none of the questions asked in the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study are of a sensitive nature. However, questions will include some basic demographic information (e.g., year born), which respondents may prefer not to answer. To avoid fear of disclosure of potentially sensitive information, like age, respondents will be informed of the applicable privacy safeguards. In addition, respondents are not required to answer these questions to submit a completed questionnaire.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated.

- **Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in item 13 of OMB form 83-I.**

See APHIS 71. APHIS estimates there will be an annual total of 265 hours of burden (140 estimated hours of burden for respondents and 125 hours for non-respondents) to complete the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study. The survey will be distributed to an estimated annual number of respondents of 200. The respondents include livestock producers who 1) experienced livestock loss from predators, 2) worked with WS to try and mitigate losses, and 3) allowed WS State Directors to share their contact information within APHIS. Out of the 200 annual respondents, APHIS estimates 196 respondents will respond annually to at least one activity item, with APHIS receiving an estimated 463 annual responses to all activities (i.e., pre-survey, questionnaire, non-response email/postcard). Additionally, APHIS also estimates receiving approximately 1,145 annual non-responses to all

activities. This totals to 1,608 annual responses for the Livestock Producer Perceptions of Predators and Predator Damage Management Methods study.

• **Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using the correct wage rate categories.**

The estimated annualized cost to respondents is \$7,276, computed by multiplying the estimated average hourly wage (\$19.22) by the total number of burden hours (265), and then multiplying the product (\$5,093) by 1.4286 to capture benefit costs. The wage for respondents was obtained from the US DOL Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment and Wages (news release [USDL-24-0628](#) released April 2024). According to DOL BLS news release [USDL-24-0485](#) (released March 2024), employee benefits account for 30 percent of employee costs, and wages account for the remaining 70 percent. Total costs can be calculated as a function of wages using a multiplier of 1.4286.

13. Provide estimates of the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden in items 12 and 14). The cost estimates should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component (annualized over its expected useful life); and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component.

There are no capital/start-up costs or ongoing operations and maintenance costs for respondents or record keepers associated with this information collection.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Provide a description of the method used to estimate cost and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

See APHIS 79. The estimated cost to the Federal Government is \$42,432.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-I.

This is a new information collection request. The agency is requesting 200 respondents, 265 burden hours, and 1,608 total annual responses added to the OMB burden inventory.

16. For collections of information whose results are planned to be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication.

Information from this survey will be summarized immediately following the collection, editing, and validation of the data. Data will be stored as CVS and/or Excel files, and statistical calculations will be performed, e.g., descriptive statistics. SPSS Statistics or R software will be used to analyze the data.

These analyses will be published in one or more articles in peer-reviewed journals. Additionally, all data collected in this study and used in peer-revised publications will be made available to the public per the USDA Departmental Regulation 1020-006.

Table 2: Project timetable.

Activity	Time Scheduled
Mail pre-survey postcards to WS Field Staff	Day 1-14; September
Email and mail invitation sent to respondents	Day 14-67; October-December
Data collection	Day 14-67; October-December
Nonresponse check	Day 67-88; December
Completed survey	Day 88-93; December-January
Validation	Day 93-103; January
Data analysis	Day 103-198; January-March
Reports and/or peer-review manuscripts	Day 198-422; March-October

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.

The OMB approval expiration date will be displayed on all survey material, including postcards, cover letters, questionnaires, and nonresponse letters.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in the “Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act.”

APHIS is able to certify compliance with all provisions in the Paperwork Reduction Act.

References:

Ajzen, I., & Fishbein, M. (1980). Understanding attitudes and predicting social behavior. Prentice-Hall.