

**1SUPPORTING STATEMENT A
FOR PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSION**

OMB Control Number 1028-0137

Terms of Clearance: None

Justification

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

The Arctic Rivers Project (ARP) is a National Science Foundation funded project that is employing a co-production of knowledge methodology to assist Alaska Native and First Nation communities with climate adaptation planning. The ARP is providing new, smaller scale dynamically downscaled climate data with modeling efforts that can be applied to river ice travel and fish bioenergetics. Through the Indigenous Advisory Council (composed of Alaska Natives and First Nations), members have developed co-production protocols, selected emission scenarios and the time frame of climate projections thought to be most useful to residents of the study area. Participation of Alaska Natives and First Nations will be greatly expanded during the upcoming Arctic Rivers Summit through a variety of participatory research exercises and discussion. The evaluation of this project is an essential demonstration of our co-production methodology that will ascertain how much participants felt that they could direct the research process and the usefulness of products produced by the research for planning purposes. 43 U.S.C. 31a, Organic Act of March 3, 1879, authorizes the USGS to conduct this research. 15 U.S.C. 2901-2908 The National Climate Program Act of 1978 establishes the USGCRP aimed at understanding and responding to global change.

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 evaluation was used once by the USGS, University and non-profit scientists, and Indigenous participants of the project to assess the project process and its usefulness to participants. A summary of the evaluation was provided to project participants. Peer-reviewed manuscripts and other scientific communication products were prepared that reference the evaluation. The collection was in the form of a questionnaire that could be filled out electronically or handwritten. The following are the questions that were used with their justifications.

Arctic Rivers Summit – Pre-summit survey questions:

Overall Justification: The Arctic Rivers Summit took place during the first week of December 2022. We conducted a pre-summit survey and a post-summit survey to determine the

community of participants that attended the summit, if their goals for the summit were met, and how familiar they were with the concepts of co-production and free, prior and informed consent.

Justification-Question 1

We wanted to understand who the attendees of the Arctic Rivers Summit were that included their roles and geographic communities.

1. Are you attending the summit as a representative of any of the following (please select all that apply)?

- Alaska Native Village
- First Nation Community
- State or Provincial agency
- Federal Agency
- Academic Institution
- Tribal or Aboriginal Non-Profit Organization
- Non-Profit Organization
- Other (Please fill in)

[if respondent chooses “Alaska Native Village” or “First Nation Community” they are routed to the 1a and 1b; if they select any other choices they route to question 1c]

1.a. What community are you representing at the Summit?

Open response

1.b. What role do you have in that community? (*Please choose all that apply*)

- Community member
- Tribal Council or First Nation Government member
- Employee of a First Nation or Tribal Government
- Elder
- Youth
- City employee
- Alaska Village corporation employee
- Alaska Regional corporation employee
- Indigenous organization employee
- Other (please fill in)

1.c. Please describe your role at [state/federal/academic institution – this will autofill based on their response to question 1]

Open response

Justification-Question 2

We were trying to ascertain why the participants were interested in the summit and what they were hoping to learn at the Arctic Rivers Summit.

2. What are your goals for attending the summit?

(Please select all that apply)

- Learn more about climate science

- Learn about adaptation strategies from other communities
- Learn about climate impacts from other communities
- Learn about funding opportunities from other communities
- Learn how to be involved in the Arctic Rivers Project
- Guide the science of the Arctic Rivers Project
- Network with other communities and scientists
- Share my knowledge and experiences
- Identify actions and strategies to adapt to climate change
- Other (please describe)

Justification-Questions 3-4

We wanted to assess use of the Summit website, and how it met or failed to meet participants' expectations.

3. Did you review the Arctic Rivers Summit website before attending the summit?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

[if yes routes to 4a -c, if no and unsure route to 5]

4.a. What parts of the Summit website did you find useful?

Open response

4.b. What was missing from the Summit website?

Open response

4.c. How could the Summit website be improved?

Open response

Justification-Questions 5-8

We wanted to assess how familiar participants were with the concept of co-production, one of its key tenets (Free, Prior and Informed Consent), if they reviewed the co-production protocols (developed with the Indigenous Advisory Council), and if there were any comments they might have regarding the protocols.

5. Have you heard of the term knowledge co-production?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

[Yes and unsure route to 5a, no routes to 6]

5.a. What does knowledge co-production mean to you?

Open response

6. Have you heard of free, prior, and informed consent?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

[Yes and unsure route to 6a, no routes to 7]

6a. What does free prior, and informed consent mean to you?

Open response

7. Have you reviewed the Arctic Rivers Project co-production protocols? (These were provided on the Arctic Rivers Summit website.)

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

[Yes and unsure route to 7a no routes to 8]

7a. What feedback do you have for the knowledge co-production protocols?

8. Is there anything else you would like us to know?

Arctic Rivers Summit - Post-summit survey questions

Justification for questions 1-14.

For this set of questions, we wanted to assess participants' reaction to and if they learned anything at the summit. Did the summit meet their expectations? Did they know more about the Arctic Rivers project, knowledge co-production, the IAC than at the beginning of their participation? Were the activities (mapping, swot, plenaries) at the Summit beneficial? What could we do different or better if we held another summit? How would they, or wouldn't they, use the products coming out of the summit? Did they or their community want to participate in future activities (fish and ice models, interviews storylines)? Would they like to be a co-author on any of the products? Each of these questions represented a metric of how successful the co-production process was, and how it could be improved. The final question represented a metric of their sustained engagement with the project. For continued engagement with the project, we asked for their contact information.

Description:

The following questionnaire tried to evaluate how you, personally, felt the Arctic Rivers Summit, and all of its parts, were either beneficial or failed to meet your expectations. We asked your opinion of the Arctic Rivers Summit, and all of its parts.

1. Do you agree with any of the following statements as a result of attending the Summit?

(Please select all that apply)

- I learned more about climate science
- I learned from other communities about adaptation strategies
- I learned about climate impacts from other communities
- I learned about funding opportunities from other communities
- I learned how to be involved in the Arctic Rivers Project
- I provided guidance for the science in the Arctic Rivers Project
- I networked with other communities and scientists
- I shared my knowledge and experiences
- Worked with others to identify actions and strategies to adapt to climate change
- I shared my knowledge on how to best communicate results and products of the Arctic

- Rivers Project
- Other (please describe)

2. Are there other topics you would have liked to hear more about at the Summit?

Open Response

3. If we were to have a future meeting, how would you like that meeting structured?

- Similar to this meeting
- Opportunity to submit abstracts and present research
- Opportunity to host or attend workgroup sessions
- Opportunity to host or attend training sessions
- Opportunity to submit session ideas
- Opportunity to brainstorm other research/project ideas
- Other ideas (please describe)

4. What parts of the Arctic Rivers Summit did you think worked well? (Please select all that apply)

- Participatory mapping – ice (yes/no/ unsure)
- Participatory mapping – fish
- Inform the modeling: Climate
- Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT) breakout session
- Tour of the Native Villages at the Alaska Native Heritage Center
- Elders share Session
- Weaving together Indigenous Knowledge and Western Science for Management Session
- Status of Arctic Rivers Session
- Arctic Rivers Project Overview Session
- Networking with other communities
- Networking with scientists
- Other?

4a. Please describe what you liked about the above activities. Please feel free to provide any other feedback on what you think worked well

5. What parts of the Arctic Rivers Summit needed extra attention or could have been improved? (Please select all that apply)

- Participatory mapping – ice (yes/no/unsure)
- Participatory mapping – fish
- Inform the modeling: Climate
- Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats breakout session
- Tour of the Native Villages
- Elders share Session
- Weaving together Indigenous Knowledge and Western Science for Management Session
- Status of Arctic Rivers Session
- Arctic Rivers Project Overview Session

- Networking with other communities
- Networking with scientists
- Other?

5a. Please describe how we could improve the above activities and please feel free to provide any other feedback on ways the Summit could have been improved

6. What did you learn from other summit attendees? (Please select all that apply)
Can you identify from whom you learned? No/Yes: Community member, Agency representative, Project member, Scientist, other)

- Climate science
- Climate impacts
- Adaptation strategies
- Key contacts (scientific programs, grants programs, other communities),
- Indigenous Knowledge
- Potential funding opportunities
- Public comment opportunities
- Other (please describe)

7. Now that you have attended the Summit, has your understanding of knowledge co-production changed?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

[Yes and unsure route to 7a, no routes to 8]

7.a. How has your understanding of knowledge co-production changed?

Open response

8. Now that you have attended the Summit, has your understanding of free, prior, and informed consent changed?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

[Yes and unsure route to 8a, no routes to 9]

8a. What do you consider to be key components of free, prior, and informed consent?

Open response

9. Do you feel that you were adequately informed ahead of time about the knowledge you were asked to share during the Summit?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

[No and unsure route to 9a, yes routes to 10]

9a. How could we have better informed you of how you would be asked to share knowledge?
Open response

10. Do you feel that you fully understand how the knowledge you shared will be used?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

[No and unsure route to 10a., yes routes to 11]

10a. How could we improve your understanding of how your knowledge will be used?
Open response

11. Do you feel that you fully understand how the knowledge you shared will be protected?

[No and unsure route to 11a., yes routes to 12]

11a. How could we improve your understanding of how the knowledge you shared will be protected?
Open response

12. Which of the following would you or your community like to participate in? (Please select all that apply)

- Fish
- Ice
- Storylines
- None of the above
- Not sure

[All responses except “no” route to 12a.]

12a Would you please provide your contact information so that we can discuss further opportunities referenced in the previous question?

- Name
- Phone number
- Email address

12. Would you like to contribute to any of the products coming out of the summit?

- Arctic Rivers Summit Proceedings (Yes/No/Unsure)
- Arctic Rivers Project Inform the Modeling Report
- Arctic Rivers Summit Action Plan
- Other (please describe)

[All responses except “no” route to 12a. unless they have already provided contact information in which case this 12a is skipped]

12a Please provide your contact information

- Name

- Phone number
- Email address

13. Who else (individual or organization) do you think would benefit from participating in the ARP?

Open response

14. What else would you like to share with us?

Open response

Project evaluation

Justification Qs 1-4

This question sought to understand which participant engagement methods were taken advantage of during the project. We also wanted to know how participants became involved with the project and whether their goals of participating in the project were met.

1. In what ways did you participate in the Arctic Rivers Project? (Please select all that apply)

- Attended a project webinar
- Served on the Indigenous Advisory Council
- Participated in the Summit
- Community liaison
- Completed survey on climate modeling
- Helped with data collection
- Participated in an interview
- Shared knowledge and experiences
- Other (please describe)

1. How did you hear about the Arctic Rivers Project?

Open response

2. Why did you want to participate in the Arctic Rivers Project? Were your goals met?

Open Response

2. Have you interacted with the Indigenous Advisory Council?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

[No and unsure route to 5., yes routes to 4a]

4a. Please describe how you interacted with the Indigenous Advisory Council

Open response

Justification Qs-5-6: With these questions, we were trying to assess what project participants knew about the Co-Production Protocols and any feedback participants might have.

Instructions:

The following questions are about how the project engaged in knowledge co-production with you and your community. Knowledge co-production is often defined as a process that brings together Indigenous knowledge and western science to generate new knowledge and understandings of the world that would likely not be achieved through the application of only one knowledge system. Co-production of knowledge emphasizes the importance of attaining equity in research relationships.

3. While developing the Co-Production Protocols with the Indigenous Advisory Council, they identified the following guiding principles. In your opinion, how effective was the Arctic Rivers Project at the following: (On a scale of 1(not effective) to 5(very effective) (include a “not sure or did not observe” choice)

- Establishing effective communication with you and your community
- Meaningfully involving indigenous participants throughout the entire process
- Including and protecting indigenous knowledge throughout the project
- Practicing cultural awareness and education
- Sharing the decision-making process
- Equalizing power dynamics between the community and the scientists
- Giving back to the community and practicing reciprocity
- Stewarding the environment and community
- Being anti-racist

4. How could the project do more to follow the guiding principles?

Open Response

7. Do you feel that you were able to influence the direction of the ARP?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Justification Qs 8-Assesment of climate science knowledge and if participant felt that the ARP increased this knowledge.

8. The following question asks you to rate your own understanding of certain concepts covered by the Arctic Rivers Project. Please rate the following on a scale of 1-5...It then asks if the ARP helped to increase your understanding? (Yes, No)

- How much did you know about climate change impacts on your community before your participation in the Arctic Rivers Project?
- How well do you understand what a climate model is?
- How well do you understand what a fish model is?
- How well do you understand what a river ice model is?
- How well do you understand what climate projections are?
- How well do you understand what climate scenarios are?
- How well do you understand what climate change storylines are?

Justification Questions 9-15: Sought to understand what participants thought about the participatory activities within the project and how they might use that information in a planning process.

9. How much did you learn from the discussion of scenarios and projections for your community?

Open response

10. Did you learn any additional information about climate change impacts by participating in the Arctic Rivers Project? If so, what?

Open response

11. Did your community install sensors for the project?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

(If Yes, then 11a, if No or Unsure then 12)

11a. How will your community use the sensor data?

12. Did your community participate in informing the river ice models?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

(If Yes, then 12a, if No or Unsure then 13)

12a. How will your community use the river ice models?

13. Did your community participate in informing the fish models?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

(If Yes, then 13a, if No or Unsure then 14)

13a. How will your community use the fish models?

14. Did you feel that the construction of storylines was useful for your community?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

(If Yes, then 14a, if No or Unsure then 15)

14a. How might your community use a storyline?

Open response

Justification Q16- We wanted to understand what project participants thought were the best ways to communicate with communities that participated in the project. We were also interested in assessing if project participants thought they would use the products from the ARP.

16. The following questions are attempting to understand if you will be able to use products and communications from the Arctic Rivers Project.

- What do you believe are the most effective ways to communicate the results of the project with other communities?

Open response

- Do you think the products that come from the ARP will be useful for community planning? (Yes/No/Unsure)
- Do you think you will use any modeling products from the Arctic Rivers Project? (Yes/No/Unsure)
- How easy do you think it will be to use the modeling products from the Arctic Rivers Project?

Open Response

17. What kind of products would you like to see come from the ARP?

- Webinars
- Conference Presentations
- Reports
- Executive Summaries
- Web pages
- Peer-reviewed scientific journal articles
- Data sets
- Decision support tools
- Other (please describe)

18. Do you feel that you were able to guide the production of the ARP products (i.e., reports, articles, presentations, websites, etc.)?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

19. Do you feel that the knowledge you shared with the project will be used in the products that come from the ARP?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

20. Do you feel that you were able to contribute to the ARP in a meaningful way for your community?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

(If Yes, then 20a, if No or Unsure then 21)

20a. How will your community use data and products from the ARP?

Open Response

Thinking about your interactions with the project team and the proposed outcomes of the Arctic Rivers Project, would you continue to work with the ARP? Why or why not?

Open response

21. Is there anything else you would like us to know?

Open response

22. Please provide your contact information so that we may follow up with you if we have any questions about your responses.

- Name
- community
- phone
- email

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 Evaluation survey will be administered electronically using either Microsoft Forms or the survey software Qualtrics. This will facilitate ease of administration on the part of the research team and reduce the burden of response for 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.

Describe your efforts to identify other collections (under other OMB control numbers or collections by other agencies, etc.) that may be gathering the same or similar information. If the same or similar information is available, describe why you cannot use or modify it for the purposes described in item 2 above.

There is no duplication. This evaluation is specific to the Arctic Rivers Project co-production methodology and its products to be used for climate adaptation planning. Co-production of knowledge is more likely to be used by decision-makers (Jasanoff 2004, van Kerkhoff and Lebel 2015, and Wall et al., 2016), or in the case of this project community planners or agency representatives. Traditional tools for evaluating scientific research have largely produced evaluations for the research community rather than decision-makers (Bello et al., 2011, Cash et al., 2003, Wall et al., 2015) Co-production of knowledge evaluation frameworks can identify which research methods best facilitate research and stakeholder collaborative, meaningful,

evidence-based decision making (Wall et al., 2015). While there is no duplication, this evaluation will contribute to the broader research and stakeholder communities within the field of co-production. The research team will present evidence that evaluation should be a component of the co-production process to assess stakeholder participation and science to support decision making.

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

If the collection will have a significant impact on small entities such as small businesses, organizations, or government bodies, describe the methods used to minimize the burden on them.

This collection of information will not impact 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.

Address both parts of the question: not conducting the collection AND doing it less frequently. Generally one or two paragraphs are sufficient.

This information collection is part of a federally funded study (National Science Foundation Award Number: 1928189). If this information is not collected the objectives of this study will not be met. Furthermore, this information collection supports the objectives of [Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act](#) as signed into law on December 2, 1980 (Public Law 96-487, 94 Stat. 2371).

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.**

If the ICR contains surveys or censuses or employs statistical methods (see questions #5 and #6 above), then a Supporting Statement B is required. If the collection is not consistent with OMB guidelines, you must thoroughly explain the need for any inconsistencies.

None of these special circumstances apply.

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 30, 2026, we published a 60-Day Federal Register notice (91 FR 23301). We received the following comment

Comment #1: Received from Krystal Lapp, Northern Alaska Environmental Center

May 10, 2026

Submitted via Federal Register

Re: Agency Information Collection Activities; Evaluation of the Arctic Rivers Project U.S. Geological Survey OMB Control Number: 1028-0136

To Whom It May Concern:

The Northern Alaska Environmental Center (NAEC) appreciates the opportunity to submit comments on the U.S. Geological Survey's proposed renewal of the information collection for the Evaluation of the Arctic Rivers Project.

NAEC supports renewal of this information collection. Arctic river systems are experiencing rapid climate-driven change, and continued evaluation of the Arctic Rivers Project is necessary

to ensure that its science, tools, and communications remain useful to Alaska Native Tribes, Tribal organizations, Indigenous Knowledge holders, rural communities, resource managers, and conservation partners. We offer the following comments in response to the specific questions identified in the Federal Register notice.

1. Necessity and practical utility of the information collection

The collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of USGS's functions and has clear practical utility. The Arctic Rivers Project addresses issues of direct importance to Arctic communities and ecosystems, including changing hydrology, river ice, erosion, permafrost thaw, fish habitat, water quality, and subsistence impacts. Interviews, surveys, and polls can help USGS understand whether the project's products are relevant, accessible, and useful to those most affected by Arctic river change.

This information collection is particularly important because scientific products are most effective when they are shaped by the needs and lived experiences of the communities, Tribes, and organizations that may use them. Evaluation should help USGS determine not only whether outreach occurred, but whether the project is improving decision-making, supporting climate adaptation, and responding to community-identified priorities.

2. Accuracy of the burden estimate

USGS estimates that each response will take approximately 30 minutes. That estimate may be reasonable for a short survey or poll, but it may underestimate the time needed for meaningful participation by Tribal governments, Tribal organizations, and community-based experts. Respondents may need time to review project materials, consult with leadership or staff, consider sensitive cultural or subsistence information, and determine what information can appropriately be shared. NAEC recommends that USGS distinguish between the expected burden for short surveys, polls, and more detailed semi-structured interviews. The agency should also recognize that Tribal staff, community experts, and Indigenous Knowledge holders are often asked to participate in many federal information-gathering processes, and their time should be treated as an expert contribution.

3. Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected

USGS can enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected by using plain-language questions, clearly explaining how responses will be used, and ensuring that participants understand whether and how their feedback may influence future project direction. Evaluation questions should ask whether the Arctic Rivers Project is useful in practice, including whether its products support community planning, subsistence protection, watershed stewardship, fish and wildlife management, climate adaptation, and communication with decision-makers.

USGS should also ensure that the evaluation respects Tribal sovereignty, Indigenous Knowledge, and Indigenous data sovereignty. Participants should receive clear information about confidentiality, consent, treatment of sensitive cultural or subsistence information, and any opportunities for review before information is summarized or shared publicly. Where appropriate, USGS should work with Tribal partners to shape evaluation questions and interpret results.

4. Ways to minimize the burden on respondents

USGS should minimize respondent burden by offering multiple ways to participate, including electronic surveys, phone or video interviews, written responses, and community-preferred formats. The agency should allow flexible scheduling, provide questions in advance, avoid duplicative requests, and tailor questions to the respondent's role and familiarity with the project. To reduce burden and improve participation, USGS should provide concise background materials, plain-language summaries, and clear instructions. Where appropriate, the agency

should consider compensation, honoraria, or other support for Tribal representatives, community experts, and Indigenous Knowledge holders whose time and expertise are essential to a meaningful evaluation.

NAEC supports approval of this information collection. Continued evaluation of the Arctic Rivers Project can strengthen community-centered science, improve communication, and ensure that the project remains responsive to the needs of Arctic communities and ecosystems. USGS should use the evaluation results to improve the practical utility, accessibility, and accountability of the Arctic Rivers Project, while respecting Tribal sovereignty, Indigenous Knowledge, and the time and expertise of Arctic communities.

Sincerely,

Krystal Lapp, Interim Executive Director

Agency Response to Comment #1: Dear Krystal Lapp,

Thank you for submitting a comment in response to our federal register notice regarding our information collection activity evaluating the Arctic Rivers Project. We appreciate your support of our information collection and positive response to our efforts. Regarding your feedback on the accuracy of our burden estimates we agree that in some cases meaningful participation by Tribal governments and organizations can require additional time. This information collection is targeted to individuals that have participated in our project previously and we feel the burden estimate accurately reflects the time it will take for them to respond to our survey. We agree with your suggestions on ways to minimize respondent burden by offering multiple ways to participate. Unfortunately, at this time we are unable to amend the ways in which we will collect information as that would require a revised Information Collection Request however, we will apply your advice about this and compensation to future information collection requests.

Again, thank you for taking the time to review and comment on our information collection activity.

Best regards,

Nicole Herman-Mercer

In addition to the *Federal Register* notice, we consulted with a variety of subject matter experts in the fields of anthropology, evaluation, co-production, and engagement with arctic Indigenous communities to ensure the completeness, understandability, and conciseness of our information collection instruments. Subject matter experts felt that the instructions were clear and that the data collected by this survey would be relevant for assessing the quality of engagement, leadership and skill building within this project and will be useful for other projects doing similar work in the Arctic. Subject matter experts did not feel that the survey placed undue burden on the respondents because of the importance of the responses and the small time commitment associated with responding. The titles of those individuals are provided in the table above.

Table 8.1

Professor, Department of Anthropology University of Nevada, Las Vegas	Research Scientist, Anthropologist National Snow and Ice Data Center
Associate Professor, Technical and Scientific	University Co-Director Alaska Climate

Communication and Director Center for Sustainable Engagement in the Arctic Virginia Tech	Adaptation Science Center
Senior Research Scientist Arizona Institute for Resilience and Associate Director for Evaluation and Learning Climate Assessment for the Southwest University of Arizona	

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

Payments or gifts are generally not permissible. If you are proposing to do so, provide a thorough explanation, including a justification for this action, description and monetary value of the item, and basis for the decision to take such action.

There will be no payment or gift made to respondents.

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

The USGS does not provide an 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).

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.

Respondents will not be asked questions of a sensitive nature.

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.

We estimate the total dollar value of the annual burden hours for this collection to be \$96,653 (rounded). We used the Bureau of Labor Statistics news release [USDL-20-0451](#), March 17, 2017, Employer Costs for Employee Compensation—December 2016, to calculate the total annual burden. Table 1 lists the hourly rates for all workers as:

- Individuals – \$37.10, including benefits.
- Private Sector – \$34.72, including benefits.
- Government – \$52.14, including benefits.

We are using the Bureau of Labor Statistics *Employer Costs for Employee Compensation*, [USDL-22-1892](#), published on 09/20/22, to determine our dollar value for burden hours. The value used is \$41.03 for public respondents. State and local government employer costs averaged \$55.47 per hour worked.

Table 12.1 Respondent Burden

Participant / Activity	Number of Responses	Minute per response	Burden Hours	Dollar Value for Burden Hr
Public individual reads announcement or instructions and completes survey- Pre Summit, Post Summit, and Evaluation	100	30	50	\$2782
Subtotal				\$2782
State, Local govt reads announcement or instructions and completes survey- Pre Summit, Post Summit, and Evaluation	50	30	25	\$1304
Subtotal	150		75	\$1304

Total				\$4085
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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.)

- * The cost estimate 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, maintenance, and purchase of services component. The estimates should take into account costs associated with generating, maintaining, and disclosing or providing the information (including filing fees paid for form processing). Include descriptions of methods used to estimate major cost factors including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital equipment, the discount rate(s), and the time period over which costs will be incurred. Capital and start-up costs include, among other items, preparations for collecting information such as purchasing computers and software; monitoring, sampling, drilling and testing equipment; and record storage facilities.
- * If cost estimates are expected to vary widely, agencies should present ranges of cost burdens and explain the reasons for the variance. The cost of purchasing or contracting out information collection services should be a part of this cost burden estimate. In developing cost burden estimates, agencies may consult with a sample of respondents (fewer than 10), utilize the 60-day pre-OMB submission public comment process and use existing economic or regulatory impact analysis associated with the rulemaking containing the information collection, as appropriate.
- * Generally, estimates should not include purchases of equipment or services, or portions thereof, made: (1) prior to October 1, 1995, (2) to achieve regulatory compliance with requirements not associated with the information collection, (3) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the Government, or (4) as part of customary and usual business or private practices.

There is no non-hour cost burden associated with the collection

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 used the Office of Personnel Management Salary Table 2026 Denver locality to determine the hourly wage rate for a GS-14, step 2. We used the Office of Personnel Management Salary Table 2026 Rest of the United States locality to determine the hourly wage rate for a GS-13, step 5. To calculate benefits, we multiplied the hourly rate by 1.6 to account for benefits, resulting in an hourly cost factor (see below). The total cost to the government associated with this collection

of information is \$19,287.52 (rounded).

Table 3: Federal Government Expenses: \$16,287.52 (entering survey into electronic form, emailing survey and reminders, analyzing results, producing reports and data releases)

Position	Grade / Step	Hourly Rate	Annual Hrs	Fully Loaded Hr Rate	Total Labor Value
Research Social Scientist	14/2	\$69.44	80	\$111.10	\$8,888.32
Research Coordinator	13/5	\$57.80	80	\$92.49	\$7,399.20
				Total	\$16,287.52

Table 4 Other Federal Government Expenses

Journal publication costs	\$3,000
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15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments in hour or cost burden.

This is a request for a renewal for an information collection, adjustments in hour and cost burden have been made consistent with inflation and pay raises.

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 anticipate publishing the findings of this information collection as a scientific journal article – with accompanying U. S. Geological Survey data release via the Science base online platform, a summary report for participating communities, and presentations at various conferences targeted to Indigenous Alaskan environmental professionals (Alaska Forum on the Environment [AFE], Alaska Tribal Conference on Environmental Management [ATCEM]) and scientific conferences (American Geophysical Union [AGU]).

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 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.

