

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

OMB Control Number 1028-0136

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 U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is responsible for tracking the status and distribution of introduced aquatic organisms. The purpose of the bureau's Nonindigenous Aquatic Species Program is to monitor and provide information concerning the status, distribution and potential impacts of non-native aquatic organisms in a timely manner for purposes of research, management, and education. The Nonindigenous Aquatic Species (NAS) database (<http://nas.er.usgs.gov/>) housed at the USGS research facility in Gainesville, Florida, functions as a repository and central clearinghouse for accurate and spatially referenced biogeographic accounts of nonindigenous aquatic species from across the country. The NAS database was created to obtain, maintain, and disseminate information on exotic introductions and serves as a centralized source of data for aquatic invasive species in the United States. It provides a listing of collections and personal observations of aquatic invasive species at a national scale and serves as an information exchange hub for monitoring distribution, rate of dispersal, and potential range expansion of established populations. The database is available to individuals, non-government organizations, and to local, state and federal agencies to enhance awareness of exotic species introductions and facilitate decisions concerning their management.

The NAS database has historically compiled visual observation data from scholarly literature; state, federal, and local monitoring programs; museum collection databases; other on-line databases; websites; direct submissions through an online reporting form; and professional communications. The advent of environmental DNA (eDNA) methodologies represents a powerful new tool for biosurveillance and early detection of non-native organisms. Environmental DNA is genetic material derived from skin, mucus, feces, gametes, etc. of an organism that is shed into the environment. Uses of eDNA sampling methods for the management of aquatic invasive species include early detection, range delimitation, and evaluating eradication efforts, and can be performed across large spatial scales. The incorporation of eDNA detection information into the NAS database alongside visual sightings creates a centralized, integrated, and holistic overview of the distribution and spread of aquatic invasive species and advances national efforts for detection and biosurveillance.

Relevant legislation:

1. *Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990, 16 U.S.C.*

The Act established the Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force – which then formalized our program as the developer and maintainer of the national database. The Act requires the Task Force to develop and implement a program for the waters of the United States to prevent introductions and dispersal of aquatic nuisance species; to monitor, control, and study such species; and to disseminate related information. Research is to be conducted concerning:

- (a) the environmental and economic risks associated with the introduction of aquatic nuisance species into waters of the United States;*
- (b) the principal pathways by which aquatic nuisance species are introduced and dispersed;*
- (c) possible methods for the prevention, monitoring and control of aquatic nuisance species; and*
- (d) the assessment of the effectiveness of prevention, monitoring, and control methods.*

The purposes of the Act are -

- (1) to prevent unintentional introduction and dispersal of nonindigenous species* into waters of the United States through ballast water management and other requirements;*
- (2) to coordinate federally conducted, funded or authorized research, prevention control, information dissemination and other activities regarding the zebra mussel and other aquatic nuisance species**;*
- (3) to develop and carry out environmentally sound control methods to prevent, monitor and control unintentional introductions of nonindigenous species from pathways other than ballast water exchange;*
- (4) to understand and minimize economic and ecological impacts of nonindigenous aquatic nuisance species that become established, including the zebra mussel; and*
- (5) to establish a program of research and technology development and assistance to states in the management and removal of zebra mussels.*

**Nonindigenous species means any species or other viable biological material that enters an ecosystem beyond its historic range, including any such organisms transferred from one country into another.*

***Aquatic nuisance species means a nonindigenous species that threatens the diversity or abundance of native species or the ecological stability of infested waters, or commercial, agricultural, aquacultural or recreational activities dependent on such waters.*

2. Executive Order 13112 on Invasive Species (Feb 3, 1999).

Section 2 - Federal Agency Duties:

(a) Each Federal agency whose actions may affect the status of invasive species shall, to the extent practicable and permitted by law,

(1) identify such actions;

(2) subject to the availability of appropriations, and within Administration budgetary limits, use relevant programs and authorities to: (i) prevent the introduction of invasive species; (ii) detect and respond rapidly to and control populations of such species in a cost-effective and environmentally sound manner; (iii) monitor invasive species populations accurately and reliably; (iv) provide for restoration of native species and habitat conditions in ecosystems that have been invaded; (v) conduct research on invasive species and develop technologies to prevent introduction and provide for environmentally sound control of invasive species; and (vi) promote public education on invasive species and the means to address them.

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.

The information collected will be used by the USGS to document the distribution of eDNA detections of aquatic species introduced outside of their historic native range. Specifically, the NAS Database will use the information to support the following program goals, which are to:

- Develop and provide an accurate ongoing assessment of the status and distribution of nonindigenous aquatic species nationwide;
- Identify geographic gaps in knowledge of the distribution of introduced aquatic species; and
- Gain an understanding of the scope and scale of aquatic introductions in the United States.

The following information will be collected when a user completes the initial eDNA submission using the on-line form:

- 1. What is being reported?** Questions in this section include: What is the common name? What is the genus/species names (if known)? A drop-down list is available and the respondent chooses from several taxonomic categories (e.g., fish, amphibian/reptile, mollusk/crustacean, plants, or 'others') to describe what they are reporting. The USGS will use this information to categorize the type of organisms being reported.
- 2. What are the study details?** Questions in this section include the sample medium (water vs. sediment), analysis/assay type (quantitative real-time PCR vs. digital PCR), presence of positive detections, and if the submission is part of a continuing project for which the user has previously submitted eDNA data. The

USGS will use this information to determine the suitability of the eDNA dataset for inclusion into the NAS Database, and to identify if any information/metadata from previously entered datasets can be re-used for a new submission.

3. **Study dates and location?** Questions in this section include: Date range of the study? Location of the study (including a textual list of the names of states, waterbodies, parks or other managed lands, etc.)? Geographic boundaries of your study (including the ability for the user to draw a polygon or enter polygon coordinates via well-known text)
4. **Who is making the submission request?** Questions in this section include the name, e-mail, telephone number, and address of the submitter. The USGS will use this information to identify and communicate with the respondent if more information is needed about the study, and to follow-up with the submitter with a second questionnaire and data submission template if the submission meets minimum data standards. None of the personally identifiable information listed is required to submit a report. The USGS uses this information to verify valid submissions to filter out spurious entries from automated “bots” that would otherwise disrupt the system by flooding it with spam submissions and to be able to follow up on reports requiring additional information.
5. **Additional Comments?** The USGS will use this information to gather any other pertinent information that would be useful about the eDNA dataset or submission and to provide the submitter with space for additional details for which there was no accommodation in the submission form.

Data from respondents are reviewed to identify submissions that may warrant inclusion into the NAS Database, and respondents are given a secondary questionnaire to gather additional study information and a data template to facilitate data import into the database. Personally identifiable information submitted by respondents (*e.g.*, names, postal addresses, phone numbers and email addresses) are not made publicly available via the website or in related documents or publications. This information may, however, be shared with other government agencies in the study jurisdiction to facilitate any potential management action.

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 USGS NAS Database promotes the use of the eDNA submission forms as the primary conduit for incorporation of eDNA data into the database. There are no hard copy or paper forms or documents associated with this information collection: all collection will occur either online using a web browser interface and via a data template using defined column headers.

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.

Submitters will be able to self-identify if a data submission request is part of an ongoing project where data has previously been submitted to the NAS Database: using past responses to the data submission questions will reduce burden for individual submitters where available.

Additionally, the type of information that the USGS will collect through this information collection is not available through any other single source. Other than the general respondent identifying information (name, postal address, telephone number, and e-mail address), the information collected is unique and there is no duplication.

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

The collection of these data will impose no burden on small businesses or other small entities

6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

Without this information, the USGS could not as effectively or efficiently carry out the mandate of the National Invasive Species Act of 1996. Specifically, the USGS would not be able to:

- provide comprehensive information that could be used to prevent the introduction of invasive species;
- detect, respond rapidly to, and control populations of such species in a cost-effective and environmentally sound manner;
- assist in monitoring invasive species populations accurately and reliably;
- provide for restoration of native species and habitat conditions in ecosystems that have been invaded;
- conduct research on invasive species and develop technologies to prevent introduction and provide for environmentally sound control of invasive species; and
- promote public education on invasive species and the means to address them.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:

- * requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;
- * requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;

- * requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;
- * requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records, for more than three years;
- * in connection with a statistical survey that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;
- * requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;
- * that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or
- * requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets, or other confidential information, unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.

There are no 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 May 19, 2026, we published a 60-Day *Federal Register* notice (91 FR 29153). We did not receive any comments in response to that notice.

[If you are submitting the request in association with a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking,

eliminate the sentence about publication of a Federal Register notice and state that a proposed rule will be published for public comment. Please give the Regulation Identifier Number (RIN).]

Comment #1: Received from [insert name (and organization, if applicable)] on [insert date] via [insert method: email, letter, fax, etc.].

Text of comment

Agency Response to Comment #1: Insert agency/program response and any action taken.

[Section two - Include the following statement and information shown below. DO NOT include PII for any of the targeted outreach respondents in Table 8.1]

In addition to the *Federal Register* notice, we consulted with the nine (9) individuals identified in Table 8.1 who are familiar with this collection of information in order to validate our time burden estimates and asked for comments on the questions below:

Table 8.1

Organization	Title

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

Comments: [summarize the comments pertinent to this question]

Agency Response/Action Taken: [provide agency/program response/action taken to address the comments]

“The accuracy of our estimate of the burden for this collection of information”

Comments: [summarize the comments pertinent to this question]

Agency Response/Action Taken: [provide agency/program response/action taken to address the comments]

“Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected”

Comments: [summarize the comments pertinent to this question]

Agency Response/Action Taken: [provide agency/program response/action taken to address the comments]

And

“Ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents”

Comments: [summarize the comments pertinent to this question]

Agency Response/Action Taken: [provide agency/program response/action taken to address the comments]

Additional comments received during the outreach: (if you received any add'l comments – if not, you can delete this section)

Comments: [summarize the comments pertinent to this question]

Agency Response/Action Taken: [provide agency/program response/action taken to address the comments]

[Insert explanation here for any individuals you contacted as part of outreach who did not respond. You need to follow-up with them via email and/or phone call to avoid non-response bias and then indicate in your explanation the attempts you made to follow-up with the individuals to solicit feedback.]

NOTE: If you received comments other than those provided to you by the Bureau ICCO, please provide an electronic version of each comment to the Bureau ICCO to be uploaded to ROCIS.

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

We will not provide 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.

The USGS does not provide an assurance of confidentiality. The information provided by respondents will be tabulated and reported in descriptive form, as is the standard procedure for a form of this type. Names and contact information (e.g., e-mail address, postal address, and phone number) will be kept in a temporary database only for the

purpose of follow-up contact to clarify responses. Our primary purpose for collecting contact information is to follow-up with the respondents to verify the submission as a valid and reliable entry.

Our intent is to report the observations in an aggregated form (for instance, in a list of our most popular search engine queries), in partial or edited form (such as in a report summarizing the number of nonindigenous species detected in a specific geographical area), or verbatim (for example, a complete listing of the comments provided in the “additional comments” box of the form). We will not include respondent names, email addresses, or other personal identifying information in any of our public reports.

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). The records will be maintained in the appropriate Privacy Act System of Records identified as Computer Registration System (INTERIOR/USGS-18) published at 74 FR 23430 (May 19, 2009).

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.

We do not ask 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 this collection to be \$3,449 (Table 1). The estimated dollar value of the burden hours for this collection includes the nature of our respondents, *i.e.*, state, local, and tribal government natural resources agencies (this

includes university employees). This wage figure was calculated using the Bureau of Labor Statistics *Employer Costs for Employee Compensation*, USDL-26-0505, published on 3/20/2026, to determine our dollar value for burden hours. The value used is \$65.68 for state and local government responders.

Table 1. Estimated Respondent Annual Burden Hours

Participant / Activity	Number of Responses	Minute per response	Burden Hours	Dollar Value for Burden Hr
State, Local, University and Tribal / reads instructions, completes all questions and fills out data template	35	90	52.5	\$3,449
Total	35		52.5	\$3,449

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.

We have not identified any non-hour cost burden associated with this 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 estimate the total annual cost to the Federal Government is \$7,549. This includes salary and benefits for one federal employee to process the responses. We used the Office of Personnel Management Salary Table 2026-RUS to determine the hourly wage rate for a GS-12, step 4. To calculate benefits, we multiplied the hourly rate (\$47.18) by 1.6 to account for benefits, resulting in an hourly cost factor of \$75.49.

Table 3 Federal Government Expenses

Position	Grade/Step	Hourly Rate	Annual Hours	Hourly Rate w/Benefits (x 1.6)	Total Labor Value
Fishery Biologist	12/4	\$47.18	100	\$75.49	\$7,549

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

There are no changes or adjustments to report.

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.

Reported data will be periodically analyzed to examine the distribution of eDNA detections both taxonomically and spatially, and correlation between detection of eDNA and visual observations/sightings of a nonindigenous aquatic species. Because of the on-going threat posed by invasive species, there is no end date planned for this project. Introductions of nonindigenous species will most likely continue to occur and those already established in US waters will continue to expand their ranges until they reach a physical or biological limit. Over time, the USGS hopes to use these data to predict where and when these invaders will migrate to new locations. Scientific reports may be generated from such analyses. The geographic information will be published in the form of species-specific distribution maps at <http://nas.er.usgs.gov/>. These maps are

generated automatically on the website as the information is entered into the NAS Database and can be viewed by the public.

Information collected with this form will be published in internal agency reports. The standard operating procedures for review and approval of USGS publications and reports will be followed.

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.