

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
Natural Resource Damage Assessment Restoration Project Information Sheet
OMB Control No. 0648-0497

Abstract

This request is for an extension of the current information collection.

The purpose of this information collection is to assist state and federal Natural Resource Trustees in more efficiently carrying out the restoration planning phase of Natural Resource Damage Assessments (NRDA), in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, 42 U.S.C. 4321-4370d; and other federal and local statutes and regulations as applicable. The NRDA Restoration Project Information Sheet is designed to facilitate the collection of information on existing, planned, or proposed restoration projects. This information will be used by the Natural Resource Trustees to develop potential restoration alternatives for natural resource injuries and service losses requiring restoration, during the restoration planning phase of the NRDA process. This information is provided by the public on a voluntary basis. The information provided benefits the public by informing the NRDA restoration process. However, there are no individual benefits that depend on the submission of information. Individuals can update the information as needed, but there is no required update frequency.

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.

The purpose of the collection of this information is to assist state and federal Natural Resource Trustees in more efficiently carrying out the restoration planning phase of Natural Resource Damage Assessments (NRDA), in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)¹, 42 U.S.C. 4321-4370d, and other federal and local statutes and regulations as applicable. Currently, when a release or substantial threat of release of oil occurs and an NRDA is conducted, state and federal Natural Resource Trustees carry out three phases: pre-assessment, restoration planning, and restoration implementation. Traditionally, the restoration planning phase is time-consuming and expensive because Trustees must contact numerous government agencies, as well as private groups, non-governmental organizations and non-profit organizations to develop a list of restoration project alternatives for each incident, a requirement before selecting suitable projects(s) to compensate the public and environment for lost services and resources. Restoration project information sheets facilitate the collection of information on a

¹ <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/USCODE-2024-title42/USCODE-2024-title42-chap55-sec4321>

continual basis, thereby significantly shortening the time needed to generate a list of restoration alternatives following each incident. By reducing the time needed to conduct the restoration planning phase of a NRDA, the entire NRDA process becomes more efficient and habitat restoration projects will be implemented sooner.

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.

The Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) Restoration Project Information Sheet gathers details on existing, planned, or proposed habitat restoration projects within specific regional areas.

Information is collected through two primary channels to ensure accessibility:

- **Online Web Form:** Directly populates and stores submitted project details into a centralized database.
- **Hard-Copy Document:** A printed version distributed at in-person meetings or provided upon request to members of the public as an alternative to the web form.

Both formats collect standardized information across six key areas:

- **Contact Information:** Project manager details including name, title, address, organization, phone/fax numbers, email, and website URL.
- **Project Details:** Basic details such as project title, size, cost, and geographic location (Parish/County, watershed, latitude/longitude).
- **Categories:** Categorical classifications for project types, target habitats, and resource benefits.
- **Project Status:** Progress updates on key development phases, including land/resource acquisition, planning and design, and permitting.
- **Description & Benefits:** Comprehensive background information on the site and anticipated environmental outcomes.
- **Project Partners:** Information on supporting entities, including partner names, contact details, and their specific contributions (e.g., funding, technical assistance, planning).

The collected data is maintained on an ongoing basis by NOAA staff and partnering federal and state agencies.

- **Incident Response & Restoration:** Following an oil spill or threat of a release, agency staff query the database to identify suitable restoration projects that can compensate the public and environment for resource injuries.
- **Public Access & Inquiry:** Information is publicly accessible at <http://www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/> and <http://www.darrp.noaa.gov/>. Non-profit organizations and members of the public can also search the repository for potential

projects, with query frequency varying based on incident frequency and public interest.

NOAA Fisheries will retain control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with NOAA standards for confidentiality, privacy, and electronic information. See Question 10 for information about confidentiality. The information collection is designed to yield information that meets all applicable information quality guidelines. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures and pre-dissemination review pursuant to [Section 515 of Public Law 106-554](#).

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.

The Natural Resource Damage Assessment Restoration Project Information Sheet will be provided to government agencies, private organizations, non-governmental organizations, and the general public as an online web form and as hard copy. It is available from the internet at <http://www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/> and <https://darrp.noaa.gov/>. Hard copies are provided at in-person events and upon request to those who do not wish to use the online form. Approximately 99% of submissions are electronic.

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 Question 2.

NOAA staff regularly review federal, state, and regional databases and consult with interagency Natural Resource Trustee partners (including state environmental agencies, the Department of the Interior, and local restoration groups) to identify potential overlaps in data collection. While other agencies or non-profit entities maintain databases for specific grant applications or localized conservation efforts, these collections are designed for narrow program-specific eligibility rather than broader Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) restoration planning. Existing datasets cannot be used or modified for this purpose because they do not capture the standardized project attributes required for NRDA evaluations—such as specific resource/service injury linkable metrics, site-specific GIS coordinates, current project readiness status, and partner contributions tailored to oil spill or chemical release compensation. Consequently, no other federal or state collection gathers this specific set of restoration project alternatives in a centralized, publicly accessible system. Collecting this information directly ensures a standardized, incident-ready repository that prevents duplicative outreach to local organizations every time an oil spill or release occurs.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe

any methods used to minimize burden.

The required information is basic in scope and is not expected to create a burden or hardship for small entities. Clear help text and field descriptions are included to guide submitters through the context and requirements for each entry. Accordingly, no separate compliance standards have been established based on entity size.

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

If this collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, it would severely compromise NOAA's core mission under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Oil Pollution Act to restore natural resources injured by oil spills and hazardous waste releases.

Specifically, the absence or reduction of this information collection would result in:

- **Inability to Deliver Program Benefits Efficiently:** Without an active, continuous repository of proposed restoration projects, state and federal Natural Resource Trustees would be forced to execute ad-hoc, incident-by-incident outreach following every spill. This would delay the restoration planning phase by months or years, directly postponing the implementation of ecological restoration and delaying public benefits such as recovered coastal habitats, enhanced fisheries, and restored recreational access.
- **Impairment of GPRA Performance Objectives:** NOAA's Damage Assessment, Remediation, and Restoration Program (DARRP) tracks strategic agency targets under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)—specifically performance metrics measuring '**Acres of Habitat Restored**' and '**Stream Miles Opened to Fish Passage**'. Delaying project selection directly slows project implementation, preventing NOAA from meeting its annual GPRA performance benchmarks and reporting requirements.
- **Increased Administrative Burden & Costs:** Less frequent collection would increase the operational cost of NRDA assessments by requiring redundant outreach efforts across government agencies and non-governmental entities for every incident.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

There are no special circumstances for this information collection.

OMB Guidelines

- Requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;

Respondents are never required to report information to the agency; their submission is purely voluntary.

- Requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;

Respondents are never required to respond to a collection of information.

- Requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;

Respondents are not required to submit any documents with the information collection.

- Requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;

Respondents are not required to retain any records.

- 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;

This information collection is not connected to a statistical survey.

- Requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB; This information collection does not require the use of statistical data classification.

- 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;

This information collection does not include a pledge of confidentiality.

- 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.

Respondents are not required to submit any proprietary or confidential information.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publications 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 describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

A Federal Register Notice published on March 20, 2026 (91 FR 13593) solicited public comment on this renewal request. No public comments were received.

In addition to the Federal Register notice, NMFS proactively conducted outreach to key external stakeholders—including fishery participants, industry representatives, and regional partners—to obtain their views on the availability of data, the frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping requirements, the reporting formats, and the specific data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported. Stakeholders expressed no concerns or objections regarding the burden or utility of the collection, and no formal public comments were received.

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

Neither payments nor gifts will be provided to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy. If the collection requires a system of records notice (SORN) or privacy impact assessment (PIA), those should be cited and described here.

The information collection does not request any proprietary or confidential information and no confidentiality is provided.

Consistent with OMB's guidance implementing the Privacy Act of 1974, "an agency record-keeping system on firms it regulates may contain "records" (i.e., personal information) about officers of the firm incident to evaluating the firm's performance. Even though these are clearly "records" under the "control of" an agency, they would not be considered part of a system as defined by the Act unless the agency accessed them by reference to a personal identifier (name, etc.). That is, if these hypothetical "records" are never retrieved except by reference to company identifier or some other nonpersonal indexing scheme (e.g., type of firm) they are not a part of a system of records." NOAA believes that this guidance speaks directly to this scenario and suggests that while the information system certainly will collect and maintain personally identifiable information (PII), they are not maintained in a system of records.

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

This information collection does not involve information of a sensitive nature.

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

The total three-year burden for this information collection is projected at 300 hours, which averages to 100 burden hours annually. Roughly 100 respondents are expected to submit completed Natural Resource Damage Assessment Restoration Project Information Sheets each year, with an average submission rate of 1 to 2 sheets per respondent for individual projects. This results in an estimated 300 initial annual responses. With each response taking approximately 20 minutes to complete, the total initial burden accounts for 100 hours.

Additionally, respondents may update their entries in the database at any time. It is anticipated that approximately 49% of entries (44 submissions) will be updated each year. Assuming an update duration of 10 minutes per submission, this adds 7 burden hours annually.

Combining initial submissions and updates, the overall scope of this collection comprises:

- **Total Annual Responses:** 344 responses (300 initial submissions plus 44 updates).
- **Total Burden Hours:** 107 hours (100 hours for initial submissions plus 7 hours for updates).
- **Estimated Labor Costs:** Totaling \$3,588.78 (\$3,354.00 for initial submissions and \$234.78 for updates), based on an estimated average hourly wage of \$33.54 [U.S. Dept. of Labor, 2025*].

All 344 annual submissions are expected to be transmitted via the web-based data entry portal. The collected information serves to inform restoration practitioners across all relevant areas, including the submitting parties. Consequently, the burden associated with data collection is anticipated to be offset—and potentially exceeded—by the benefits gained from open access to project data.

*U.S. Department of Labor – Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2025. National Employment and Wage Estimates United States, September 9, 2026.
https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_nat.htm#00-0000.

Information Collection	Type of Respondent (e.g., Occupational Title)	# of Respondent s/year (a)	Annual # of Responses / Respondent (b)	Total # of Annual Responses (c) = (a) x (b)	Burden Hrs / Response (d)	Total Annual Burden Hrs (e) = (c) x (d)	Hourly Wage Rate (for Type of Respondent) (f)	Total Annual Wage Burden Costs (g) = (e) x (f)
Natural Resource Damage Assessment Restoration Project Information Sheet		100*	3.44	344	0.311	107	\$33.54	\$3,589
Natural Resource Damage Assessment Restoration Project Information Sheet Submission	All Occupations (00-0000)	100	3	300	20 min (0.333 hrs)	100	\$33.54	\$3,354
Project Information Sheet Updates	All Occupations (00-0000)	*	1	44	10 min (0.1667 hrs)	7	\$33.54	\$235
Totals				344		107		\$3,589

13. Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden already reflected on the burden worksheet).

There are no capital costs or operating and maintenance costs associated with this information 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.

One full-time employee (FTE) will devote approximately 7% of his/her time annually for oversight, QA/QC, and data imports. One contractor will devote 5% of his/her time to implementing changes and maintaining the application. With an annual average salary of \$174,543 for a ZP-3/3 FTE at 7% time (\$12,218), and an annual salary for a contractor of \$165,000 at 5% time (\$8,250), the annualized cost to the Federal government to conduct this information collection is estimated to be \$20,468. No significant equipment, overhead, printing or other costs should be involved with the processing of this information collection.

The Commerce Alternative Personnel System (CAPS) pay tables² for the Rest of U.S. locality rates were used to determine the base salary for the Federal Worker. The Rest of U.S. locality was used since NOAA staff are geographically dispersed. The upper bound for Interval 3 of the Pay Band was used as the base salary and a multiplier of 1.5 was used to calculate the loaded salary.

Cost Descriptions	Grade/Step	Loaded Salary /Cost	% of Effort	Fringe (if Applicable)	Total Cost to Government
Federal Oversight, QA/QC, Data import	ZP-3 / 3	\$174,543	7%		\$12,218
Contractor Cost		\$165,000	5%	0	\$8,250
Travel					0
Other Costs:					0
TOTAL					\$20,468

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in ROCIS.

There have been no changes to the information collection since the last OMB approval.

² <https://www.commerce.gov/sites/default/files/2026-01/CAPS%20Standard%20Pay%20Tables%202026.pdf>

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.

It is anticipated that the information collected will be disseminated to the public. NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service will retain control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with NOAA standards for confidentiality, privacy, and electronic information. See response to Question 10 of this Supporting Statement for more information on confidentiality and privacy. The information collection is designed to yield data that meet all applicable information quality guidelines. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures, and a pre-dissemination review pursuant to Section 515 of Public Law 106-554.

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 agency plans to display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection on all instruments.

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

The agency certifies compliance with [5 CFR 1320.9](#) and the related provisions of [5 CFR 1320.8\(b\)\(3\)](#).