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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS--R7--MB--2013—N077]

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Information Collection Request Sent to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Approval; Alaska Migratory Bird Subsistence Harvest Household Survey

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: We (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) have sent an Information Collection Request (ICR) to OMB for review and approval. We summarize the ICR below and describe the nature of the collection and the estimated burden and cost. This information collection is scheduled to expire on April 30, 2013. We may not conduct or sponsor and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. However, under OMB regulations, we may continue to conduct or sponsor this information collection while it is pending at OMB.

DATES: You must submit comments on or before [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: Send your comments and suggestions on this information collection to the Desk Officer for the Department of the Interior at OMB--OIRA at 202--395--5806 (fax) or OIRA_Submission@omb.eop.gov (email). Please provide a copy of your comments to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS 2042-PDM, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203 (mail), or hope_grey@fws.gov (email). Please include "1018--0124" in the subject line of your comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request additional information about this ICR, contact Hope Grey at hope_grey@fws.gov (email) or 703--358--2482 (telephone). You may review the ICR online at <http://www.reginfo.gov>. Follow the instructions to review Department of the Interior collections under review by OMB.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

OMB Control Number: 1018--0124.

Title: Alaska Migratory Bird Subsistence Harvest Household Survey.

Service Form Number(s): 3--2380, 3--2381--1, 3--2381--2, 3--2381--3, and 3--2381--4.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Description of Respondents: Households within subsistence eligible areas of Alaska (Alaska Peninsula, Kodiak Archipelago, Aleutian Islands, and areas north and west of the Alaska Range).

Respondent's Obligation: Voluntary.

Frequency of Collection: Annually for Tracking Sheet and Household Consent; three times annually for Harvest Report.

ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	COMPLETION TIME PER RESPONSE	TOTAL ANNUAL BURDEN HOURS
3---2380--Tracking Sheet and Household Consent	2,760	2,760	5 minutes	230
3--2381--1 thru 3-2381--4---Harvest Report (three seasonal sheets)	2,300	6,900	5 minutes	575
Totals	5,060	9,660		805

Abstract: The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (16 U.S.C. 703--712) and the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 (16 U.S.C. 742d) designate the Department of the Interior as the key agency responsible for managing migratory bird populations that frequent the United States and for setting harvest regulations that allow for the conservation of those populations. These responsibilities include gathering accurate geographical and temporal data on various characteristics of migratory bird harvest. We use harvest data to review regulation proposals and to issue harvest regulations.

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act Protocol Amendment (1995) (Amendment) provides for the customary and traditional use of migratory birds and their eggs for subsistence use by indigenous inhabitants of Alaska. The Amendment states that its intent is not to cause significant increases in the take of species of migratory birds relative to their continental population sizes. A submittal letter from the Department

of State to the White House (May 20, 1996) accompanied the Amendment and specified the need for harvest monitoring. The submittal letter stated that the Service, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG), and Alaska Native organizations would collect harvest information cooperatively within the subsistence eligible areas. Harvest survey data help to ensure that customary and traditional subsistence uses of migratory birds and their eggs by indigenous inhabitants of Alaska do not significantly increase the take of species of migratory birds relative to their continental population sizes.

Between 1989 and 2004, we monitored subsistence harvest of migratory birds using annual household surveys in the Yukon--Kuskokwim Delta, which is the region of highest subsistence bird harvest in the State of Alaska. In 2004, we began monitoring subsistence harvest of migratory birds in subsistence eligible areas Statewide. The Statewide harvest assessment program helps to track trends and changes in levels of harvest. The harvest assessment program relies on collaboration among the Service, the ADFG, and a number of Alaska Native organizations.

We gather information on the annual subsistence harvest of about 60 bird species/species categories (ducks, geese, swans, cranes, upland game birds, seabirds, shorebirds, and grebes, and loons) in the subsistence eligible areas of Alaska. The survey covers 11 regions of Alaska, which are further divided into 29 subregions. We survey the regions and villages in a rotation schedule to

accommodate budget constraints and to minimize respondent burden. The survey covers spring, summer, and fall harvest in most regions.

In collaboration with Alaska Native organizations, we hire local resident surveyors to collect the harvest information. The surveyors list all households in the villages to be surveyed and provide survey information and harvest report forms to randomly selected households that have agreed to participate in the survey. To ensure anonymity of harvest information, we identify households by a numeric code. The surveyor visits households three times during the survey year. At the first household visit, the surveyor explains the survey purposes and invites household participation. The surveyor returns at the end of the season of most harvest and at the end of the two other seasons combined to help the household complete the harvest report form.

We have designed the survey methods to streamline procedures and reduce respondent burden. We plan to use two forms for household participation:

- FWS Form 3--2380 (Tracking Sheet and Household Consent). The surveyor visits each household selected to participate in the survey to provide information on the objectives and to obtain household consent to participate. The surveyor uses this form to record consent and track subsequent visits for completion of harvest reports.

- FWS Forms 3--2381--1, 3--2381--2, 3--2381--3, and 3--2381--4 (Harvest Report). The Harvest Report has drawings of bird species most commonly available for harvest in the different regions of Alaska with fields for writing down the numbers of birds and eggs taken. There are four versions of this form: Interior Alaska, North Slope, Southern Coastal Alaska, and Western Alaska. This form has a sheet for each season surveyed, and each sheet has fields for the household code, community name, harvest year, date of completion, and comments.

Comments: On October 25, 2012, we published in the *Federal Register* (75 FR 65201) a notice of our intent to request that OMB renew approval for this information collection. In that notice, we solicited comments for 60 days, ending on December 24, 2012. We received one comment. The commenter stated that migratory birds should not be hunted, that people extensively lie in harvest reports, and, therefore, this survey is a waste of taxpayer dollars. Traditionally, harvest and sharing of wild fish, caribou, moose, marine mammals, and birds have been (and still are) the core of the diet, social organization, and spiritual life of Alaska Native cultures. The large majority of these villages are in remote, non-roaded areas, and subsistence harvests play an important role in food security. Subsistence harvest surveys allow Alaska Native people to actively engage as stakeholders in the management and conservation of the wildlife resources they rely upon. We believe the vast majority of the information provided in this survey is honest and truthful. Harvest survey data are used to assess and adjust hunting regulations that help protect the birds and sustainable hunting opportunities. Taxpayer dollars invested in harvest surveys help

protect birds that people rely upon for food and for the enjoyment by present and future generations of both hunters and non-hunters. We did not make any changes to the information collection requirements.

We again invite comments concerning this information collection on:

- Whether or not the collection of information is necessary, including whether or not the information will have practical utility;
- The accuracy of our estimate of the burden for this collection of information;
- Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- Ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents.

Comments that you submit in response to this notice are a matter of public record. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment, including your personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask OMB in your comment to withhold

your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that it will be done.

Dated: March 27, 2013

Tina A. Campbell,
Chief, Division of Policy and Directives Management,
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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