DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Information Collection Renewal To Be Submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Approval Under the Paperwork Reduction Act

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of information collection; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The collection of information listed below has been submitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for renewal under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. Copies of the specific information collection requirements, related forms, and explanatory material may be obtained by contacting the Service’s Information Collection Clearance Officer at the address provided below.

DATES: Consideration will be given to all comments received on or before August 21, 2000. OMB has up to 60 days to
approve or disapprove information collection but may respond after 30 days. Therefore, to ensure maximum consideration OMB should receive public comments by August 21, 2000.

ADDRESS: Comments and suggestions on the requirements should be sent to the Office of Management and Budget, Attention: Department of the Interior Desk Officer, 725 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20503, and to Rebecca Mullin, Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS 222–ARLSQ, 1849 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20240.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request a copy of the draft of the information collection request, explanatory information and related forms contact Rebecca A. Mullin at 703/358–2287, or electronically to rmullin@fws.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: We submitted the following proposed information collection clearance requirement to OMB for review and approval under the Paper work Reduction Act of 1005 (Pub. L. 104–13). OMB has up to 60 days to approve or disapprove information collection. To ensure maximum consideration, OMB should receive public comments by insert 30 days from date of publication. We may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. We previously published a 60-day notice inviting public comment on this information collection in the Federal Register on May 9, 2000 (65 FR 26849). Only one public comment on the previous notice was received as of June 19, 2000. The Service’s response is discussed below:

Issue: The Ornithological Society commented that the wildlife-watching section does not go into adequate detail, specifically that the data on the amount of birding activity and related economic activity were insufficient.

Service Response: Past National Surveys have focused on wildlife watching around the home (residential) and more than a mile from home (nonresidential). The Service has provided participation and trip-related expenditure estimates for nonresidential wildlife (including, but not only, birds) watching and participation estimates for residential bird watching and feeding. With all these data revolving around the recreational enjoyment of birds, there was no one estimate for the overall number of bird watchers. The Service is addressing this issue in the 2001 Survey. This will include questions on the nonresidential observation of birds and the residential observation of birds, which will enable the Service to provide estimates of the total number of bird watchers at both the national level and the state level. The Service has added questions on the number of species the bird watcher can identify and whether or not the bird watcher has a birding list. As for the expenditures of bird watchers, the Service addresses the wildlife-watching expenditure section the same as the hunting and fishing expenditure sections, which means the Service gets expenditures by type of activity (residential, nonresidential, freshwater, saltwater, big game, small game, etc., not by species sought.

This notice provides an additional 30 days in which to comment on the following information.

The Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 777–777K), and the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669–699i) authorize the Service to provide grants annually to the States for projects to support sport and wildlife management and restoration, including the acquisition and improvement of aquatic resources, fishing access, fish stocking, and the acquisition and improvement of wildlife management areas, facilities, and access. Grants also are provided for aquatic education and hunter education, maintenance of completed projects, and research into the problems affecting fish and wildlife resources. Those projects help ensure that the American people have adequate opportunities for wildlife-related recreation. To carry out its responsibilities, the Service has sponsored national surveys of fishing and hunting at about 5-year intervals since 1955. The Bureau of the Census conducts the Survey for the Service. The survey data are needed to allow the Service to effectively administer the Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Grant Programs, and to help States develop project proposals and conservation programs that meet the needs of their populations. The Survey collects information on the number of people participating in wildlife-related recreation, the number of days and expenditures spent on those activities. Survey data are needed to provide comparable state level information on existing recreation demands and to provide a basis for projecting future demands to effectively meet the needs of the American people. The information is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of existing programs in meeting those needs, formulate new policies, assist in setting and support budget proposals and legislation for the benefit of sport fish and wildlife restoration. Data are needed to evaluate the status and trends of recreational uses, as well as the values and benefits, of fish and wildlife resources. The comprehensive comparable state-level data provided by the Survey are not available from other sources.

We invite your comments on: (1) Whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of the agency’s estimate of the burden of the collection information; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents.

Title: 2001 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation.

Approved Number: 1018–0088.

Service Form Number(s): N/A.

Description and Use:

Whether the collection of information is needed by the Federal and State fish and wildlife agencies responsible for administering the Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration grant programs. Accordingly, the 2001 Survey will be a comprehensive data base of fish and wildlife-related recreation activities and expenditures. It will include the number of persons participating in different types of activities such as freshwater, saltwater, and Great Lakes fishing; and big game, small game, migratory bird, and other animal hunting. Wildlife watching (non-consumptive activities) include wildlife observation, feeding, and photographing around the home and on trips away from home.

Information is collected on days of participation, the species of animals sought, and how much money was spent on trips and for equipment. Information on the characteristics of participants will include age, income, sex, education, race, and residency. The
Survey data has State level reliability. Federal and State fish and wildlife agencies use information from the Survey as a basis to formulate management and policy decisions related to sport fish and wildlife restoration. Participation patterns and trend information assist in identifying present and future needs and demands. The information is used for planning the acquisition, development, and enhancement of fish and wildlife resources for the benefit of wildlife-related recreation. Data on expenditures, economic evaluation, and participation are used by land managing agencies to assess the value of fish and wildlife-related uses of natural resources. Expenditure information is used by states to estimate the economic impact of wildlife-related recreation expenditures on their economies and to support the dedication of tax revenues to support fish and wildlife restoration programs. The information collected on resident saltwater fishing will assist coastal States in determining the proper ratio for allocating funds between freshwater and saltwater projects as required by the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act, as amended. The information is not readily available elsewhere because few States have saltwater licenses or conduct their own surveys. If the Survey data were not available it would impair the ability of those States to meet their obligations under the Act.

In summary, the information collection is needed to assist the Fish and Wildlife Service and the State fish and wildlife agencies in administering the Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration grant programs. The Survey will provide up-to-date information on the uses and demands for wildlife-related recreation resources, trends in the uses of those resources, and a basis for developing and evaluating programs and projects to meet existing and future needs. The information collection is subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act requirements for such activity, which includes soliciting comments from the general public regarding the nature and burden imposed by the collection.

Frequency of Collection: Household screen interviews and the first detailed interviews will be conducted April–June 2001. The second detailed interviews will be conducted September–October 2001. The third and last detailed interviews will be conducted January–March 2002.

Description of Respondents: Individuals.

Estimated Completion Time: We estimate the average completion time per respondent to be about 7 minutes for the screen and 15 minutes for the detailed interviews. A respondent will average 2 interviews during the survey period. Total estimated respondent burden hours for all respondents are 27,000 hours.

Number of Respondents: It is estimated that there will be 80,000 total respondents.

Rebecca Mullin,
Fish and Wildlife Service Information Collection Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Fish and Wildlife Service

Availability of an Environmental Assessment and Receipt of Applications for Incidental Take Permits for the Assessment District 161 Habitat Conservation Plan in Western Riverside County, California

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability and receipt of applications.

SUMMARY: Three public agencies and nine private entities (the Applicants) have applied to the Fish and Wildlife Service for incidental take permits pursuant to section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. The Applicants are: Metropolitan Water District of Southern California; Rancho California Water District; Murrieta Valley Unified School District; Obed Properties, Incorporated; Winchester 700, Limited Liability Company; Pulte Homes Corporation; Butterfield Development Company, Incorporated; Hill Country, Limited; Bue Communities, Limited Liability Company; Crown Meadows Limited Partnership; Parcel Five, Incorporated; and SDI Communities, Limited Liability Company. We anticipate a future application from the County of Riverside; however, we do not intend to publish a separate notice for receipt of that application because the Assessment District 161 Habitat Conservation Plan (District Plan) and our Environmental Assessment comprehensively address all applications. The Applicants request a 30-year permit that would authorize take of 21 covered species (4 listed species, and 17 unlisted species should they be listed during the term of the permit). Take would be incidental to otherwise lawful activities associated with urban development of 2,028 acres of habitat in western Riverside County, California.

We request comments from the public on the permit applications, and our Environmental Assessment, which are available for review. The permit applications include the proposed District Plan and an accompanying Implementing Agreement (legal contract). The District Plan describes the proposed project, the measures that the Applicants would undertake to minimize and mitigate take of the covered species, and the management program proposed for the conserved habitat.

We provide this notice pursuant to section 10(a) of the Endangered Species Act and National Environmental Policy Act regulations (40 CFR 1506.6). All comments that we receive, including names and addresses, will become part of the official administrative record and may be made available to the public.

DATES: We must receive your written comments on or before September 19, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Mr. Ken Berg, Field Supervisor, Fish and Wildlife Service, 2730 Loker Avenue West, Carlsbad, California 92008; facsimile (760) 431–5902.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Karin Cleary-Rose, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, or Ms. Michelle Shaughnessy, Supervisory Fish and Wildlife Biologist, at the above address or call (760) 431–9440.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Availability of Documents
You may obtain copies of these documents for review by contacting the above office (see ADDRESSES). Documents also will be available for public inspection, by appointment, during normal business hours at the above address and at the following libraries: City of Murrieta Library, 39589 Los Alamos Road, Murrieta, California; and Temecula Branch Library, 41000 County Center Drive, Temecula, California.

Background
Section 9 of the Endangered Species Act and Federal regulation prohibit the “take” of fish or wildlife species listed as endangered or threatened, respectively. Take of listed fish or wildlife is defined under the Act to include kill, harm, or harass. The Service may, under limited circumstances, issue permits to authorize incidental take; i.e., take that is incidental to, and not the purpose of, the carrying out of an otherwise lawful activity. Regulations governing