

currently valid OMB control number. The OMB control number for this collection of information is 1018-0049.

Under the authority of the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669-669i), the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 777-777l), the Anadromous Fish Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 757a-757g), the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), the Clean Vessel Act (16 U.S.C. 777c), the Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act (16 U.S.C. 777g-1), and the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 3951-3956), we administer several grant programs. We use the information collected in grant applications and agreements to make awards under these grant programs. The

information collected on the grant applications and agreements helps us determine whether the estimated cost of the grant project is reasonable, the cost sharing is consistent with the applicable program statutes, and sufficient Federal funds are available for obligation. The State or other grantee uses the grant application forms and agreements to request funds and identify proposed cost sharing. Grantees complete an Amendment to Grant Agreement to request a change to a previously approved Grant Agreement. We use the Amendment to Grant Agreement to revise a previous funding obligation or otherwise document the approval of a revision. The Grant Agreement and Amendment to Grant Agreement that we will submit to OMB for approval are

modified slightly to lessen the burden on the public and to make them easier for the Service to use.

Title: Grant Agreement and Amendment to Grant Agreement.

OMB Approval Number: 1018-0049.

Service Form Number(s): 3-1552 (Grant Agreement) and 3-1591 (Amendment to Grant Agreement).

Frequency of Collection: Annually.

Description of Respondents: State, territorial (the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa), and local governments, and others receiving grant funds.

Total Annual Burden:

Form name	Completion time per form (hours)	Annual number of respondents	Annual hour burden
Grant Agreement	1	3500	3500
Amendment to Grant Agreement	1	1750	1750
Totals		5250	5250 hours

We invite 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 our estimate of the burden of the collection of information; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of collection of information on respondents, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Dated: April 30, 2003.

Matt Hogan,

Acting Director, Fish and Wildlife Service

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Guidance for the Establishment, Use, and Operation of Conservation Banks

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, are announcing availability of guidance for the establishment, use, and operation of

conservation banks. Conservation banks are a tool to offset adverse impacts to species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. The purpose of this guidance is to help Service personnel evaluate and approve conservation banks in the context of fulfilling the purposes of the Endangered Species Act.

ADDRESSES: You can obtain an electronic copy of the guidance from the Fish and Wildlife Service's Web site at "<http://endangered.fws.gov>". You can also request a copy of the guidance by contacting the Division of Consultation, Habitat Conservation Planning, Recovery and State Grants, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 420, Arlington, Virginia 22203 (Telephone 703/358-2171, Facsimile 703/358-1735).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Patrick Leonard, Chief, Division of Consultation, Habitat Conservation Planning, Recovery and State Grants, Fish and Wildlife Service (Telephone 703/358-2171, Facsimile 703/358-1735).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A conservation bank is a parcel of land containing natural resource values that are conserved and managed in perpetuity for listed species and used to offset impacts to the comparable resource values on non-bank lands occurring elsewhere. The bank is

specifically managed and protected by the banker or designee for its natural resource values. The values of the natural resources are translated into quantified "credits." The bank owner sells habitat "credits" to parties that need to compensate for the environmental impacts of their activities. A conservation bank is a free-market enterprise that offers landowners economic incentives to protect natural resources, saves developers time and money by providing them with certainty of pre-approved compensation lands, and provides long-term protection of habitat. Conservation banking creates a collaborative incentive based approach where habitat for listed species is treated as an asset rather than a liability.

The Service has already entered into several agreements with landowners to establish conservation banks, mainly in the southwest and the southeast areas of the country. We believe that guidance will help establish conservation banks in other parts of the country. Please refer to the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice for information on how to obtain a copy of the guidance.

Authority: The authority for this action is the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Dated: April 25, 2003.

Matt Hogan,

Acting Director, Fish and Wildlife Service.

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