

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

30-Day Notice of Intention To Request Clearance of Collection of Information to the Office of Management and Budget; Opportunity for Public Comment

AGENCY: National Park Service, The Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13, 44 U.S.C., chapter 3507) and 5 CFR Part 1320, Reporting and Record keeping Requirements, the National Park Service invites public comments on a submitted request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to approve a request to reinstate, with change, a previously approved collection for which approval has expired (OMB #1024-0226).

The OMB has up to 60 days to approve or disapprove the requested information collection, but may respond after 30 days. Therefore, to ensure maximum consideration, OMB should receive public comments within 30 days of the date on which this notice is published in the **Federal Register**.

DATES: Public comments will be accepted on or before August 9, 2006.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments directly to the Desk Officer for the Department of the Interior (OMB #1024-0226), Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, OMB, by fax at (202) 395-6566, or by e-mail at *oir_a_docket@omb.eop.gov*. Please also mail or hand carry a copy of your comments to Cyndi Szymanski, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, National Park Service, 1849 C Street, NW., (org code 2220), Washington, DC 20240. all comments will be a matter of public record.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Cyndi Szymanski, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, National Park Service, 1849 C Street, NW., (org code 2220), Washington, DC 20240.

The National Park Service published the 60-day **Federal Register** notice to

solicit comments on this proposed information collection on March 29, 2006 on pages 15759-15760. There was one public comment received as a result of publishing in the **Federal Register** a 60-day Notice of Intention to Request Clearance of Collection of Information for this survey. Comments were also solicited from 28 past partners and two responses were received. Both respondents indicated that they had no comments so no adjustments were made to the survey.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Titles: National Park Service Partnership Assistance Programs' GPR Information Collections: Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Customer Satisfaction Survey and Federal Lands to Parks Customer Satisfaction Survey.

Form: None.

OMB Number: NPS 1024-0226.

Expiration Date: To be requested.

Type of request: Reinstatement, with change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired.

Description of need: The Government Performance and Results Act requires Federal agencies to prepare annual performance reports documenting the progress made toward achieving long-term goals. The National Park Service needs the information in the proposed collections to assess the annual progress being made toward meeting Long-term Goal IIIb2 of the National Park Service Strategic Plan. The information sought is not collected elsewhere by the Federal Government. The proposed information collections impose no data collection or record keeping burden on the potential respondents. Responding to the proposed collections is voluntary and is based on data that the respondents already collect and/or personal opinion. The National Park Service needs information to help evaluate and improve its partnership assistance programs.

Specifically two information collections will be carried out pursuant to the Government Performance and Results Act and the NPS Strategic Plan. Both of the proposed information collections are surveys of customer satisfaction of certain NPS programs and types of assistance. NPS' Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program

and Federal Lands to Parks Program will conduct surveys to assess client satisfaction with the services received and to identify needed program improvements. The NPS goal in conducting these surveys is to use the information to identify areas of strength and weakness in its recreation and conservation assistance programs, to provide an information base for improving those programs, and to provide a required performance measurement (Goal IIIb2 of the National Park Service Strategic Plan) under the Government Performance and Results Act.

Public comments are invited on: (1) The need for information including whether the information has practical utility; (2) the accuracy of the reporting burden estimate; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of information collection on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Description of respondents: The potential respondents will be all contact persons of all principal cooperating organizations and agencies which have received substantial assistance from the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program or the Federal Lands to Parks Program during the prior Fiscal Year (October 1 through September 30).

Estimated average number of respondents: 255. See the chart below for a breakdown by each information collection.

Estimated average number of responses: 150. See the chart below for a breakdown by each information collection

Estimated average burden hours per response: 10 minutes. See the chart below for a breakdown by each information collection.

Frequency of Response: One time per publication or technical assistance event.

Estimated annual reporting burden: 25 hours. See the chart below for a breakdown by each information collection.

Estimated number of:

Information collection	Respondents	Responses	Average time per response (min.)	Hours
Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program	200	120	10	20
Federal Lands to Parks Programs	55	30	10	5
Subtotal	255	150	10	25

Dated: June 27, 2006.

Leonard E. Stowe,

National Park Service Information and
Collection Clearance Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

National Park Service

Final Environment Impact Statement for Reconstruction of the Furnace Creek Water Collection System, Death Valley National Park, Inyo County, CA; Notice of Availability

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (Pub. L. 91-190, § 102(2)(c)), and the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500-1508), the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and its cooperating agency have completed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the proposed reconstruction of the Furnace Creek Water Collection System. This water collection system reconstruction project is located in the Furnace Creek area of Death Valley National Park, California. The proposed project would rebuild the outdated water collection system in the Furnace Creek area to deliver a safe and reliable potable and nonpotable water supply to the park's main visitor use area. The FEIS was prepared in accordance with the National Park Service NEPA guidelines (Director's Order 12).

Background

The National Park Service (NPS), Xanterra Parks & Resorts (Xanterra), and the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe (cooperating agency) are the primary water user groups in the Furnace Creek area. The Texas-Travertine Springs complex in the Furnace Creek area may be the most critical water resource in Death Valley National Park. This series of springs provide water for all of the human use needs in the park headquarters area. Infrastructure in this area includes the primary National Park Service administrative offices, three NPS campgrounds, two private resort/visitor services facilities owned and operated by Xanterra, and offices and residences for the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe. The Texas-Travertine Springs complex also provides water that supports a riparian area—a biological community that includes habitat for a minimum of eight endemic special-status aquatic invertebrate species—and

a biologically and culturally important mesquite bosque.

The existing water collection system was installed in the 1970's and has been unreliable, subject to failure, and is nearing the end of its useful life span. Many of the existing collection galleries have intermittently tested positive for coliform or *E. coli* bacteria, experienced unpredictable inputs of soil or organic matter, intermittently and unpredictably produced reduced volumes of water, and collected groundwater that does not meet state drinking water standards. When the system was installed approximately 30 years ago, there was an incomplete understanding of the Furnace Creek area's unique biological resource values, and water conservation strategies were not a priority.

The park proposed to rebuild the antiquated water collection system in the Furnace Creek area to deliver safe and reliable drinking water to the park's main visitor use area and provide separate delivery systems for potable and nonpotable water. As part of the redevelopment of the Furnace Creek water collection system, the proposal would include restoring historic wetland and riparian habitat and providing for the long-term conservation of species endemic to the Furnace Creek area.

Proposal and Alternatives

The Draft EIS identified and analyzed four alternatives for reconstruction of the Furnace Creek Water Collection System; these alternatives are not substantially modified in the FEIS. The first alternative, the No Action Alternative, would result in continued operation and maintenance of the existing water collection system. This alternative also composes an environmental "baseline" from which to compare the potential effects of other alternatives considered. Three "action" alternatives would primarily differ in terms of how each would provide potable water to the Furnace Creek area.

Alternative 2 would provide potable water from rebuilt collection galleries at Travertine Springs Line 3 and Line 4 and from two new groundwater wells in the Texas Springs Syncline. Alternative 2 would treat potable water using a reverse osmosis water treatment plant. Riparian water would be released from Travertine Springs Line 1 and Line 2 and from Texas Springs to restore historic wetland and riparian habitat. The restoration effort would include the incorporation of riparian water release measures that would reduce erosion and promote groundwater infiltration.

Alternative 3 (agency preferred) would provide potable water from two

to three new groundwater wells in the Texas Springs Syncline and would treat potable water using a reverse osmosis water treatment plant. Riparian water would be released from all of Travertine Springs and Texas Springs to restore historic wetland and riparian habitat. The restoration effort would include the incorporation of riparian water release measures that would reduce erosion and promote groundwater infiltration. Based on existing information and as documented in the EIS, Alternative 3 has been deemed to be the "environmentally preferable" alternative.

Alternative 4 would provide potable water from Travertine Springs Lines 2, 3, and 4 and from Texas Springs and would treat water using a reverse osmosis water treatment plant with supplemental water disinfection. Since the NPS would treat all potable water under this alternative, Travertine Springs would not require reconstruction of spring collection boxes or clearing and grubbing of vegetation from the spring water collection areas. Riparian water would be released from Travertine Springs Line 1 and from Texas Springs to restore historic wetland and riparian habitat. The restoration effort would include the incorporation of riparian water release measures that would reduce erosion and promote groundwater infiltration.

Project Planning Background

Public and agency participation has been incorporated in this conservation planning and environmental impact analysis process.

Death Valley National Park held public scoping and informal meetings in 2001 through 2004 to solicit ideas and concerns from park visitors, park staff, Native American groups, scientists, and government agencies. A Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS was published in the **Federal Register** on November 20, 2000. The NPS conducted an extensive public scoping process for the proposed reconstruction of the Furnace Creek Water Collection System that concluded on March 14, 2001. In addition to the **Federal Register** notice, information about the public scoping process was provided through local press releases, Web site postings, direct mailings, and the Furnace Creek Visitor Center newsletter.

Three public scoping meetings were held on January 30 (in Pahrump, Nevada), January 31 (in Death Valley National Park), and February 1, 2001 (in Independence, California). The purpose of these meetings was to: (1) Provide participants with an overview of existing conditions and the proposed