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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FW-HQ-ES-2015-N120; 4500030113]

Proposed Information Collection; Policy for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts When Making Listing Decisions (PECE)

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: We (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) will ask the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to approve the information collection (IC) described below. As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 and as part of our continuing efforts to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, we invite the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on this IC. This IC is scheduled to expire on August 31, 2015. 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.

DATES: To ensure that we are able to consider your comments on this IC, we must receive them by **[INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

ADDRESSES: Send your comments on the IC to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS BPHC, 5275 Leesburg Pike,

Falls Church, VA 22041–3803 (mail); or hope_grey@fws.gov (email). Please include “1018–0119” in the subject line of your comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request additional information about this IC, contact Hope Grey at hope_grey@fws.gov (email) or 703–358–2482 (telephone).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract. Section 4 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) specifies the process by which we can list species as threatened or endangered. When we consider whether or not to list a species, the ESA requires us to take into account the efforts being made by any State or any political subdivision of a State to protect such species. We also take into account the efforts being made by other entities. States or other entities often formalize conservation efforts in conservation agreements, conservation plans, management plans, or similar documents. The conservation efforts recommended or called for in such documents could prevent some species from becoming so imperiled that they meet the definition of a threatened or endangered species under the ESA.

The Policy for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts When Making Listing Decisions (PECE) (68 FR 15100, March 28, 2003) encourages the development of conservation agreements/plans and provides certainty about the standard that an individual conservation effort must meet in order for us to consider whether it contributes to forming a basis for making a decision about the listing of a species. PECE applies to “formalized conservation efforts” that have not been implemented

or have been implemented but have not yet demonstrated if they are effective at the time of a listing decision.

Under PECE, formalized conservation efforts are defined as conservation efforts (specific actions, activities, or programs designed to eliminate or reduce threats or otherwise improve the status of a species) identified in a conservation agreement, conservation plan, management plan, or similar document. To assist us in evaluating a formalized conservation effort under PECE, we collect information such as conservation plans, monitoring results, or progress reports. The development of such agreements/plans is voluntary. There is no requirement that the individual conservation efforts included in such documents be designed to meet the standard in PECE. The PECE policy is posted on our Candidate Conservation Web site at <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/pdf/PECE-final.pdf>.

II. Data

OMB Control Number: 1018–0119.

Title: Policy for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts When Making Listing Decisions (PECE).

Service Form Number: None.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Description of Respondents: Primarily State, local, or tribal governments. However, individuals, businesses, and not-for-profit organizations could develop agreements/plans or may agree to implement certain conservation efforts identified in a State agreement/plan.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to obtain or retain a benefit.

Frequency of Collection: On occasion.

ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	COMPLETION TIME PER RESPONSE	TOTAL ANNUAL BURDEN HOURS
Original Agreement	4	4	2,000	8,000
Monitoring	7	7	600	4,200
Reporting	7	7	120	840
TOTALS	18	18		13,040

Estimated Annual Nonhour Burden Cost: None.

III. Comments

We 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. We will include or summarize each comment in our request to OMB to approve this IC. 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 us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Dated: June 15, 2015.

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

Billing Code 4310–55

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