



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Geological Survey

[Docket No. USGS-2025-0006; OMB Control Number 1028-0082;

GX25LB00TZ901]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Revisions to the U.S. Geological Survey's Bird Banding and Marking Permit Application

AGENCY: U.S. Geological Survey, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of information collection; request for comment.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is proposing to renew an information collection with early revisions.

DATES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or **before [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*].**

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by one of the following methods:

- Internet: <https://www.regulations.gov>. Search for and submit comments on Docket No. USGS-2025-0006.
- U.S. Mail: USGS, Information Collections Clearance Officer, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, MS 159, Reston, VA 20192.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Antonio Celis-Murillo by email at acelis-murillo@usgs.gov, or by telephone at 301-497-5808. Individuals in the United States who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability may dial 711 (TTY, TDD, or TeleBraille) to access telecommunications relay services. Individuals outside the United States should use the relay services offered within their country to make international calls to the point-of-contact in the United States.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In accordance with the PRA of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*) and 5 CFR 1320.8(d)(1), all information collections require approval under the PRA.

As part of our continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burdens, we invite the public and other Federal agencies to comment on new, proposed, revised, and continuing collections of information. This helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. It also helps the public understand our information collection requirements and provide the requested data in the desired format.

We are especially interested in public comment addressing the following:

(1) Whether or not the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether or not the information will have practical utility;

(2) The accuracy of our estimate of the burden for this collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

(3) Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(4) How the agency might minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, *e.g.*, permitting electronic submission of response.

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 ICR. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personally identifiable information (PII) in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your PII—may be made publicly available at any time. While you

can ask us in your comment to withhold your PII from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Abstract: Bird banding is a vital scientific and management tool that allows researchers to monitor migratory bird populations, estimate survival and harvest rates, and track long-term ecological trends. Under the authority of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. § 703-12), the U.S. Department of the Interior delegates oversight of the national bird banding program to the USGS. This responsibility resides within the Bird Banding Laboratory (BBL) at the Eastern Ecological Science Center, which oversees more than 9,000 federally permitted banders and manages the national database of banding and encounter records. The success of this program depends on effective coordination between permitted banders and individuals who later encounter marked birds, ensuring that critical data remain available for long-term scientific analysis. The data are used by varying interest groups that depend on these data to reach effective management decisions and achieve collaborative outcomes for bird-related challenges.

To meet these requirements, the BBL collects information such as the Federal Bird Banding and Marking Permit Application and other forms. With the proposed revisions to information collection control #1028-0082, the BBL aims to provide essential clarity, enhance efficiency, and eliminate duplication, thereby further reducing the administrative burden for both the public and the USGS.

Current information collection control #1028-0082: In addition to the standardized information required by 50 CFR 13.12, the current Bird Banding and Marking Permit Application requirements include submission of the following information:

- 1) Height, Weight, Hair Color, Eye Color, Gender (Male/Female).
- 2) Type of Permit.
- 3) Current and previous federal migratory permits possessed, previously possessed,

or pending.

- 4) If blood sampling is being requested, the master permit holder and permit number of the person requiring permission, species, site of the blood draw or technique, the volume of blood, why is blood sampling needed, how it will be used, and the applicant's qualifications for such blood sampling.
- 5) If feather sampling is being requested, the master permit holder and permit number of the person requiring permission, species, what feathers and how many are needed, why is feather sampling needed, how it will be used, and the applicant's qualifications for feather sampling.
- 6) Species proposed to band or mark based on groups.
- 7) Trapping techniques proposed: mist nets, rocket nets, and cannon nets, or list of other intended techniques.
- 8) Auxiliary marking being requested and the master permit holder and permit number of the person requiring permission, species, techniques used, type of marker used, why are aux markers needed, how it will they be used, and the applicant's qualifications for feather sampling.
- 9) Description of what an applicant hopes to accomplish by banding birds.
- 10) References – names, email, addresses in which whom the BBL may consult with regarding an applicant's qualifications.

Proposed revisions to information collection control #1028-0082: In the proposed early revisions to information collection control #1028-0082, we removed outdated or irrelevant questions, consolidated several inquiries to strengthen the scientific justification for banding and marking, and eliminated the application checklist to reduce redundant information requests. Specifically, the following revisions are proposed:

- 1) Type of Permit. We removed "Renewal Permit" as this is outdated information. Renewals are submitted by permitted banders through the Bander Portal and do

not require this form. We added the options, of “Master Station,” “Master Personal,” and “Change in Responsible Individual” to this section. These options were consolidated from other sections to provide clarity to the BBL on the type of permit being requested.

- 2) (NEW) Applicant Type. A section on Applicant Type, was added to provide clarity to the BBL and ensure consistency with the program’s database. Applicant Types include Federal, State, Tribal, Local Government, Non-governmental Organization, University, Avocational Biologist, Business, and Other.
- 3) Personal information such as Height, Weight, Hair Color, Eye Color were removed from the application. This information is irrelevant to BBL permitting.
- 4) Gender was modified to Sex and added an option for “undisclosed.”
- 5) Contact Information. We consolidated home and business addresses into one address section. The applicant is now only required to provide one address to the BBL for correspondence and have the option to include an organization, if applicable.
- 6) Species. We eliminated the pre-selected species groups and instead allow the applicant to list their proposed species groups or individual species for banding.
- 7) Capture techniques. We eliminated the pre-selected techniques and instead allow the applicant to list their proposed capture techniques.
- 8) Auxiliary marking. We removed requests for information in this section that were redundant. Species, techniques, and purposes for auxiliary marking are already required as part of the applicant’s Comprehensive Project Description as part of the scientific justification for banding and marking. An applicant’s skills and qualifications for auxiliary marking are already required as part of their banding resume.
- 9) Blood and Feather Sampling. We removed requests for information in this section

that were redundant. Species, techniques, and purposes for blood and feather sampling are already required as part of the applicant's Comprehensive Project Description as part of the scientific justification for banding and marking. An applicant's skills and qualifications for blood and feather sampling are already required as part of their banding resume.

10) (NEW) Biological Sampling. We added a new section that allows an applicant to request other types of biological sampling that would be completed as part of banding or marking birds. Species, techniques, and purposes for additional biological sampling are now required as part of the applicant's Comprehensive Project Description as part of the scientific justification for banding and marking. An applicant's skills and qualifications for additional biological sampling are now required as part of their banding resume.

11) Removed section. Description of what an applicant hopes to accomplish by banding birds. We replaced this section with a yes/no option if the applicant has included a Comprehensive Project Description as part of their application package. The Comprehensive Project Description should include all the necessary details for the BBL to properly evaluate a proposal as a scientifically justifiable banding or marking project.

11) (NEW) Banding Resume. We added a yes/no option if the applicant has included a banding resume as part of their application package and that that it should include previous bird banding and marking experiences for the BBL to properly evaluate an applicant's skills and formal training for capturing and banding or marking of birds.

12) References. We modified the References section to simply state that three letters of recommendation must be received by the BBL before any application will be considered and that a minimum of two references should be from a bird bander

that has worked directly with the applicant and can confirm their experience and abilities. Applicants no longer need to provide names, emails, addresses as that information is redundant to the information provided by their references who submit letters of recommendation.

- 13) (NEW) Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). This section was added to the application to protect applicants that are not covered by the Privacy Act and allow for the identification of any information that should be considered privileged and confidential business information to the USGS to meet its responsibility under FOIA. This section is informational and does not require any additional input or effort from the applicant.

Copies of the draft forms are available to the public by submitting a request to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer using one of the methods identified in

ADDRESSES.

Title of Collection: Bird Banding and Marking Permit Application

OMB Control Number: 1028-0082

Form Number: None

Type of Review: Revision of a currently approved collection

Respondents/Affected Public: General Public

Total Estimated Number of Annual Respondents: 80

Total Estimated Number of Annual Responses: 80

Estimated Completion Time per Response: up to 30 minutes

Total Estimated Number of Annual Burden Hours: 80 responses/40 hours.

Respondent's Obligation: Voluntary

Frequency of Collection: On occasion

Total Estimated Annual Non-hour Burden Cost: We have not identified any

“non-hour cost” burdens associated with this collection of information

An agency 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.

The authority for this action is the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.).

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USGS Bird Banding Laboratory.

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