This document is scheduled to be published in the Federal Register on 2026-11-16 and available online at **https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2026-23302**, and on **https://govinfo.gov**

E 3410-34-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2026-1189]

Notice of Request for Approval of a New Information Collection; Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza: Administration of Vaccine in Zoos

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Request for approval of a new information collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's intention to request approval of a new information collection for implementation of vaccination for highly pathogenic avian influenza in zoos and animal sanctuaries.

DATES: We will consider all comments that we receive on or before [Insert date 60 days after date of publication in the *Federal Register*].

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

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to www.regulations.gov. Enter APHIS-2026-1189 in the Search field. Select the Documents tab, then select the Comment button in the list of documents.
- Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery: Send your comment to Docket No. APHIS-2026-1189, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, 5601 Sunnyside Ave., #AP760, Beltsville, MD 20705.

Supporting documents and any comments we receive on this docket may be viewed at www.regulations.gov or in our reading room, which is in room 1620 of the USDA South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC. Normal reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 799-7039 before coming.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information on the effort to support HPAI vaccination in zoos and animal sanctuaries, contact Dr. Steven Rekant, Public Health Veterinary Medical Officer, APHIS, Veterinary Services, Strategy and Policy, 5601 Sunnyside Ave., Beltsville, MD 20705; (971) 263-3734; Steven.rekant@usda.gov. For more information on the information collection reporting process, contact Ms. Sheniqua Harris, APHIS' Paperwork Reduction Act Coordinator, at (301) 851-2528 or email APHIS.PRA@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza: Administration of Vaccine in Zoos.

OMB Control Number: 0579-XXXX.

Type of Request: Approval of a new information collection.

Abstract: Under the Animal Health Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 8301 *et seq.*), the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to protect the health of U.S. livestock by preventing the introduction and interstate spread of serious diseases and pests of livestock and for eradicating such diseases from the United States when feasible. This authority has been delegated to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS).

Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) is an extremely infectious and fatal form of avian influenza, particularly in poultry. An HPAI outbreak can have significant consequences for livestock, wildlife, and producers' livelihoods, as well as significant impacts on international trade (especially in poultry and poultry products).

APHIS is expanding its efforts to combat HPAI with vaccination by initiating a program to cooperate with State animal health officials to allow zoos and similar facilities to vaccinate animals in their care against HPAI. This program establishes conditions for zoos and animal sanctuaries to receive and administer vaccine; the information collected will enable APHIS and State animal health officials to determine facility eligibility and ensure that vaccination activities are conducted safely and in compliance with Federal and State requirements.

To participate, facilities must submit an HPAI Vaccination Plan demonstrating compliance with APHIS criteria, including oversight by a USDA-accredited Category II veterinarian; appropriate recordkeeping and individual animal identification; adequate biosecurity; and separation of vaccinated animals from specified domestic poultry species. The plan must justify the need for vaccination, describe vaccine administration and inventory control procedures, outline biosecurity protocols, animal identification, document veterinary monitoring, describe medical recordkeeping, and address procedures for animal transfers or disposition.

Once approved, facilities may obtain licensed HPAI vaccine from manufacturers, who are required to maintain shipment records. Facilities must retain detailed vaccination and inventory records, conduct required testing through National Animal Health Laboratory Network laboratories, submit annual reports, and provide a final summary report upon completion of vaccination activities. Failure to comply with requirements may result in suspension or revocation of authorization.

We are asking the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to approve our use of these information collection activities for 3 years.

The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments from the public (as well as affected agencies) concerning our information collection. These comments will help us:

(1) Evaluate 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) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the burden of the collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

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

(4) Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, through use, as appropriate, of automated, electronic, mechanical, and other collection technologies; e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

Estimate of burden: The public burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.043 hours per response.

Respondents: Facility management personnel at zoos and animal sanctuaries, accredited veterinarians, nonprofit wildlife facilities, and State animal health authorities, as well as vaccine manufacturers responsible for shipment recordkeeping.

Estimated annual number of respondents: 160.

Estimated annual number of responses per respondent: 6

Estimated annual number of responses: 960.

Estimated total annual burden on respondents: 1,001 hours. (Due to averaging, the total annual burden hours may not equal the product of the annual number of responses multiplied by the reporting burden per response.)

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Done in Washington, DC, this 21st day of October 2026.

Kelly Moore,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 2026-23302 Filed: 11/13/2026 8:45 am; Publication Date: 11/16/2026]