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Secretary.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[OEI-2002-0011; FRL-7469-4]

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission of EPA ICR No. 2083.01 to OMB for Review and Approval; Comment Request

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), this document announces that the following Information Collection Request (ICR) has been forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval: Estimating the Value of Improvements to Coastal Waters—A Pilot Study of A Coastal Water Valuation Survey. The ICR describes the nature of the information collection and its estimated burden and cost.

DATES: Additional comments may be submitted on or before April 18, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Follow the detailed instructions in **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Nicole Owens, National Center for Environmental Economics, Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Mail Code 1809T, Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460; telephone number: (202) 566-2302; fax number: (202) 566-2338; e-mail address: owens.nicole@epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: EPA has submitted the following ICR to OMB for review and approval according to the procedures prescribed in 5 CFR 1320.12. On June 28, 2002 (67 FR 43592), EPA sought comments on this ICR pursuant to 5 CFR 1320.8(d). EPA received no comments.

EPA has established a public docket for this ICR under Docket ID No. OEI 2002-0011, which is available for public viewing at the Office of Environmental Information (OEI) Docket in the EPA Docket Center (EPA/DC), EPA West, Room B102, 1301 Constitution Ave., NW., Washington, DC. The EPA Docket Center Public Reading Room is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. The telephone number for the

Reading Room is (202) 566-1744, and the telephone number for the OEI Docket is (202) 566-1752. An electronic version of the public docket is available through EPA Dockets (EDOCKET) at <http://www.epa.gov/edocket>. Use EDOCKET to submit or view public comments, access the index listing of the contents of the public docket, and to access those documents in the public docket that are available electronically. Once in the system, select "search," then key in the docket ID number identified above.

Any comments related to this ICR should be submitted to EPA and OMB within 30 days of this notice, and according to the following detailed instructions: (1) Submit your comments to EPA online using EDOCKET (our preferred method), by e-mail to oei.docket@epa.gov, or by mail to: EPA Docket Center, Environmental Protection Agency, Mailcode: 28221T, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460, and (2) Mail your comments to OMB at: Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Attention: Desk Officer for EPA, 725 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20503.

EPA's policy is that public comments, whether submitted electronically or in paper, will be made available for public viewing in EDOCKET as EPA receives them and without change, unless the comment contains copyrighted material, CBI, or other information whose public disclosure is restricted by statute. When EPA identifies a comment containing copyrighted material, EPA will provide a reference to that material in the version of the comment that is placed in EDOCKET. The entire printed comment, including the copyrighted material, will be available in the public docket. Although identified as an item in the official docket, information claimed as CBI, or whose disclosure is otherwise restricted by statute, is not included in the official public docket, and will not be available for public viewing in EDOCKET. For further information about the electronic docket, see EPA's **Federal Register** notice describing the electronic docket at 67 FR 38102 (May 31, 2002), or go to <http://www.epa.gov/edocket>.

Title: Estimating the Value of Improvements to Coastal Waters—A Pilot Study of A Coastal Valuation Survey (EPA ICR Number 2083.01). This is a request for a new collection.

Abstract: This Information Collection Request (ICR) is for a pilot survey being conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) National Center for Environmental Economics

(NCEE). The purpose of the pilot survey is to conduct research on and test various aspects of a computerized stated preference survey designed to estimate willingness to pay for water quality improvements in coastal waters. Specifically, we will:

- Test the quality and effectiveness of the computerized survey instrument in yielding robust estimates for both use and non-use values of improvements to coastal water quality;
- Test the effect of the use of color in computerized survey instruments;
- Test the appropriateness of the design values used in the choice questions;
- Test the effect of a \$5 incentive on the response rate;
- Test the effectiveness of the survey administration mode for periodic, panel surveys, and
- Test the effectiveness of the survey administration mode for environmental surveys.

The subject of the survey was chosen for a variety of reasons. First, at this time, no suitable information exists that will allow the estimation of the benefits of statewide or national changes in coastal water quality. Existing studies focus on estimating recreational (use) values for very specific reaches of coastal waters, thus limiting the use of the resulting estimates for benefit transfer and ignoring non-use values completely (e.g., Parsons et al. (2000) and Koaru, 1995). Second, the results of this survey will complement those from an ongoing freshwater quality survey (USEPA, 2000). Currently, States, tribes, and other jurisdictions measure water quality by determining if water bodies are clean enough to support basic uses, such as swimming, fishing, and aquatic life. In keeping with these definitions of water quality, the survey will provide estimates of willingness to pay (WTP) for more fishable and swimmable coastal and estuarine waters as well as healthier marine and estuarine aquatic environments. In the valuation portion of the survey, respondents will be asked a series of five questions in which they are asked to compare two programs with the status quo. The programs each affect water quality for the various uses in different ways and cost varying amounts to implement. Analysis of the resulting data will yield WTP estimates for improvements to each of the attributes.

Further development of the survey cannot be completed without a pilot survey. The pilot survey will take place in California using a computerized survey instrument. The survey instrument is specific to the state of California and, depending upon the results of the pilot survey, may be used