



Baucum, Madonna <madonna\_baucum@fws.gov>

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## Comments on IC, Migratory Bird Surveys, 1018-0023

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**Cline, Mason, DGF** <Mason.Cline@state.nm.us>

Mon, Apr 24, 2017 at 11:52 AM

To: "madonna\_baucum@fws.gov" <madonna\_baucum@fws.gov>

Service Information Collection Clearance Officer:

Attached, please find a comment letter on the proposed IC for Migratory Bird Surveys from the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. Please let me know that this letter is received and if you have any questions.

Best regards,

Mason Cline, Ph.D.

Bird Program Manager

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

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**NMDGF\_comment\_letter\_1018-0023.pdf**

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April 17, 2017  
Service Information Collection Clearance Officer  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
MS:BPHC, 5275 Leesburg Pike  
Falls Church, VA 22041-3803

RE: Proposed Information Collection; Migratory Bird Surveys (Federal Register Vol. 82, No. 36, February 17, 2017, Page 11603)

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (Department) supports the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for approval of information collection for migratory bird surveys (50 CFR 20.20; OMB Control Number: 1018-0023). The Department fully supports continuation of these surveys, including the Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program (HIP), the Migratory Bird Hunter Survey, Parts Collection Survey, and the Sandhill Crane Survey. Below are specific comments on the invited subjects.

**Regarding whether or not the collection of information is necessary, including whether or not the information will have practical utility:**

The estimates of hunters and harvests obtained from this information collection are critical to the proper management of migratory game bird populations in New Mexico and throughout North America. The information obtained from these surveys allows for informed decision making when setting and adjusting migratory bird hunting regulations. In this way, this information is critical for establishing appropriate harvest levels, maximizing migratory game bird hunter participation and opportunity, and sustaining bird populations at desired levels. Without this information collection, unfavorable migratory game bird hunting regulations could be selected for New Mexico and other states. Selecting regulations that overharvest migratory game birds could result in decreased population numbers, a subsequent decrease in hunting recreation opportunity, and a decrease in local economic expenditures within New Mexico. Alternatively, selecting regulations that are too conservative could result in reduced hunter opportunity as well. Thus, the Department believes these surveys are absolutely necessary and provide good, practical utility.

**Regarding the accuracy of our estimate of the burden for this collection of information:**

These surveys are voluntary and the Department does not believe they cause significant burden on respondents. The Department believes that the estimate of burden for this information collection is accurate based on our experience with migratory game bird hunters in New Mexico.

**Regarding ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected:**

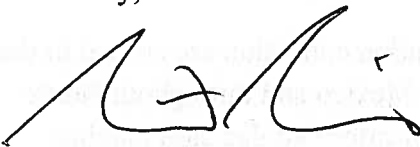
The Department believes that these surveys are currently conducted in an appropriate manner and that this information collection allows for both accurate and usable estimates of both migratory game bird hunters and their harvests. Further, this information collection allows New Mexico to evaluate Departmental decisions regarding hunting season selections within the USFWS's established federal migratory game bird hunting frameworks.

**Regarding ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents:**

The Department believes that these surveys do not cause a significant burden on respondents. Currently, this information collection approach provides the only means to collect these data in a systematic, statistically-valid approach. However, we encourage critical examination of these current methods to reduce respondent burden wherever possible. That stated, any changes to this information collection would require appropriate levels of funding and resources for sampling design and development, proper implementation, and ensuring reliability and usability of resulting data.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment and support the OMB's approval of the USFWS's Migratory Bird Surveys (OMB Control Number: 1018-0023).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stewart Liley', with a stylized, cursive script.

Stewart Liley  
Chief, Wildlife Management Division