

## ABBREVIATED NOAA ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions: Answer EVERY question in the yellow square below it.

Questions are selected from the full 62-question NOAA Environmental Compliance Questionnaire (available at [www.nepa.noaa.gov](http://www.nepa.noaa.gov)), as such questions are not in numerical order.

Grant number and/or Project ID (if available)
Project Title
NEPA Worksheet Socioeconomics Example
Name and contact information for the person completing this form
Rebecca Certner (rebecca.certner@noaa.gov)
State Sea Grant Program
National Sea Grant Office
<b><u>PROPOSED ACTIVITY</u></b>
Describe the proposed activity, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The purpose, objectives, and goals</li></ul>
This project addresses attitudes about beach litter on the Delaware seashore. We aim to determine differences in perception of beach cleanliness based on a number of factors including time of year, resident status (resident or tourist), age, gender, and socioeconomic status. We will distribute surveys to people on the boardwalks of three popular Delaware beaches from May through October of 2021. The following Summer, survey results will be presented to the public at three community centers upon completion of the study.
Is the proposed activity a continuation or part of an ongoing activity? If yes, then: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe any changes to the proposed activity since it was initiated, including progress toward achieving its objectives/goals; and</li><li>• Provide any additional information, previous environmental review documents, and/or reports from previous years.</li></ul>
No.

Describe sampling, collecting, or observation protocols and operational procedures
From May through October 2021, two teams of two researchers will travel to three Delaware beaches (Bethany Beach, Dewey Beach, and Rehoboth Beach) three days a month (including weekends) to perform voluntary intercept surveys with visitors about beach litter. The survey will contain demographic questions (i.e. resident status, age, gender, socioeconomic status, etc) but no PII. Researchers will ask participants a series of no more than 15 questions about their perceptions of beach litter and beach cleanliness. Data collected from these surveys will be input into qualitative data analysis software, such as NVivo, to be coded and analyzed for recurrent patterns and themes in support of the research objectives. Survey results will be processed and analyzed at the University of Southern Delaware. In the Summer of 2022, researchers will present the survey results to the public at

the town halls of the three locations.

Will the proposed activity require the cataloging and compiling of sources of socioeconomic data? If yes, then please explain.

Yes, we will be compiling socioeconomic data in the form of a comprehensive, in-person survey. However, we will not collect any PII and all survey participants will be assigned a number to protect their private information.

Does the proposed activity consist solely of software research and manipulation? If yes, please explain.

No.

Does the proposed activity utilize a new or untested scientific technology or method? If yes, then describe briefly the technological process or methodology and potential environmental effects of the proposed activity.

No.

What amount (total numbers and/or weight) of fish or invertebrates are proposed to be caught? What is the size (weight, length, and age class) of each species targeted for capture?

None.

List non-target species that may occur in the proposed sampling area and specify how many of each non-targeted species are expected to be caught.

None.

Will the proposed activity introduce genetically modified organisms, species bred for specific traits (e.g. disease resistant stocks), or non-indigenous species into an area?

No.

Describe the processing methods to be used to conduct the research.

As aforementioned, data collected from the surveys will be input into qualitative data analysis software, such as NVivo, to be coded and analyzed for recurrent patterns and themes in support of the research objectives. This project's research design and survey instrument will be subject to (or receive approval from) the University of Southern Delaware's Institutional Review Board in accordance with university policies pertaining to human subject research.

#### LOCATION

Describe the proposed activity location, including, if available and appropriate, geographic coordinates (latitude, longitude in DD MM.MMM), river mile markers, etc. for all distinct phases of the proposed activity.

Surveys will be distributed, filled-out, and collected at three locations on the Delaware shore: Bethany Beach (38.5396 N, 75.0552 W), Dewey Beach (38.6929 N, 75.0746 W), and Rehoboth Beach (38.7209 N, 75.0760 W). Researchers will find volunteer survey participants on the boardwalks of these beaches.

Data analysis will be conducted at the University of Southern Delaware in Dagsboro, DE.

Survey results will be presented at Bethany Beach Town Hall, Dewey Beach Town Hall, and Rehoboth Beach City Hall.

Is the location of the proposed activity in a previously undisturbed area? If yes, then explain if the proposed activity would degrade or disturb the previously undisturbed area.

No.

Are there pre-existing or ongoing uses at the location of the proposed activity? If yes, then describe and explain the pre-existing or ongoing uses at the location of the proposed activity or, if not known, describe how pre-existing/ongoing uses will be determined.

All three Delaware beaches are popular tourist locations during the summer months. Normal beach activities (swimming, sunbathing, snacking, etc) are common as well as recreational boating and fishing. University of Southern Delaware is a university and is used for typical school-related activities. The town halls (Bethany Beach and Dewey Beach) and the city hall (Rehoboth Beach) are used for municipal activities.

Describe the characteristics of the location of the proposed activity by:

- indicating whether it includes unique geographic areas of notable recreational, ecological, scientific, cultural, historical, scenic, economic, or aesthetic importance;
- describing any anticipated changes over time to the natural landscape and/or viewshed that would result from the proposed activity;
- listing any ecologically significant or critical areas in the location of the proposed activity, including areas that are normally inundated by water or areas within the 100- year flood plain;
- essential fish habitat and habitat areas of particular concern designated under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act;
- listing any critical habitat areas for Endangered Species Act-listed species;
- listing any marine protected areas or national marine sanctuaries in the location of the proposed activity;
- listing any part of refuge lands, wild or scenic rivers, wetlands, or prime/unique farmland in the location of the proposed activity;
- listing any properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, National Historic Landmarks, or National Monuments; and
- listing any religious or cultural sites of any Federally recognized Indian Tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations in the proposed activity area.

Our study locations do not include any areas covered by the above regulations. Although we are distributing the survey close to the shoreline, we will not leave the boardwalks. All three locations have heavily trafficked boardwalks which are already highly impacted by human use. Data analysis and presentation of survey results will all take place indoors so there is no chance for these activities to impact the environment.

Are minority or low-income communities located in the area of the proposed activity? If yes, then describe how the minority or low-income communities may be impacted by the proposed activity.

It is possible that survey participants will be minorities and/or low-income individuals. They are impacted by the opportunity to participate in the study, to attend the public presentations, and to give feedback on the results at the public meetings. Results from these studies may ultimately be used to shape policy that benefits these communities.

**PROJECT PARTNERS, PERMITS AND CONSULTATIONS**

List all other interested or affected Federal, state, and local agencies, Native American tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations, non-governmental organizations, and private individuals which may potentially be interested and/or affected by the action.

Partners include the towns of Bethany Beach, Dewey Beach, and the city of Rehoboth Beach. The Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control is also interested in our research and has expressed support for this project.

Are Federal, state, or local permits, authorizations, waivers, determinations, or consultations required for the proposed activity to comply with all applicable environmental laws and regulations? If yes, then:

- list and provide the status of all required Federal, state, or local permits, authorizations, waivers, determinations, conditions, and consultations, as applicable; and
- provide copies of all required Federal, state, or local permits, authorizations, waivers, or determinations that you have secured.

No permits are required.

### **SAFETY**

Describe potential unique or unknown risks to human health or the environment from the proposed activity.

None.

Describe the potential to generate, use, store, transport, or dispose of hazardous or toxic substances. Please include the following:

- a list of any hazardous substances (as defined by 29 C.F.R. 1910.120(a)(3)) that will be involved in this project and any hazardous wastes (as defined by 40 C.F.R. 261.3) that may be generated during the proposed activity;
- any hazardous contaminants that may be uncovered and/or disturbed by the proposed activity; and
- a list of the procedures/protocols that will be followed to ensure safe handling of hazardous substances and proper disposal of all hazardous wastes.

None.