Step-by-step guide to the Abbreviated NOAA Environmental Compliance Questionnaire

Please note: The Sea Grant program is responsible for ensuring that the information in the abbreviated NOAA Environmental Compliance Questionnaire is filled out correctly. It is the responsibility of the program to review materials submitted by subaward applicants and ensure that the questionnaire provides an adequate level of detail. Please use this guide below to determine if an adequate level of detail has been provided for each question. If an applicant states that a permit is needed, ensure a copy of the full permit is submitted with the questionnaire (as required per the permit question).

Please refer to the Notice of Funding Opportunity for when/how the Abbreviated NOAA Environmental Compliance Questionnaire must be completed and submitted with your application package.

---Proposed Activity---

1. *Describe the proposed activity including: the purpose, objectives, and goals.*
    - Short paragraph (5-6 sentences) on the overarching purpose and goal of the activities. DO NOT copy and paste the entire project narrative. This is more akin to an abstract and should be focused on the 'activities' funded under this award.
    - Ensure that the description of the activities includes a brief overview of the methodology and research areas.
2. *Is the proposed activity a continuation or part of an ongoing activity?*
    - If no, state "No."
    - If yes, describe any changes to the activity. Provide all appropriate materials from previous years as an attachment.
3. *Describe sampling, collecting, or observation protocols and operational procedures.*
    - Succinctly describe methodology. DO NOT just copy the information from the proposal.
    - If the research is solely lab-based, state this explicitly.
    - If the research is being conducted on previously collected samples (not part of this award/application) please state this explicitly.
    - If this research involves collecting information from people (i.e. socioeconomic research, surveys, workshops, polling, etc), please describe the protocols/methods used to collect the data.
    - If fieldwork is taking place, briefly describe:
        i. The location of the fieldwork.
        ii. The timeline of work.
        iii. The activities being performed.
        iv. The materials being used (i.e. cages, trawls, nets, etc).
        v. The species and number of organisms being handled.
4. *Will the proposed activity require the cataloging and compiling of sources of socioeconomic data?*
    - If no, state "No."
    - If yes, briefly explain how socio economic data will be collected and compiled.
5. *Does the proposed activity consist solely of software research and manipulation?*
    - If no, state "No."
    - If yes, briefly describe the modeling/statistical work in 1-2 sentences.
6. *Does the proposed activity utilize a new or untested scientific technology or method?*
    - If no, state "No."
    - If yes, briefly describe the new method.

7. *What amount (total numbers and/or weight) of fish or invertebrates are proposed to be caught?*
    - If you do not plan to collect fish/invertebrates, state this explicitly.
    - If you plan to collect fish/invertebrates:
        i. List the species (estimate).
        ii. The number of individuals from each species (estimate).
        iii. The age/weight of the individuals (if known).
        iv. The fate of the individuals (will they be tagged, sacrificed, released, etc).
8. *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.*
    - If you suspect that non-target species may be found in the sampling area:
        i. List the species (estimate).
        ii. The number of individuals that may be caught from each species (estimate).
        iii. The age/weight of the individuals (if known).
        iv. The fate of the individuals (will they be tagged, sacrificed, released, etc).
9. *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?*
    - If no, state "No."
    - If yes, you please list the species and provide adequate details about the introduced species.
10. *Describe the processing methods to be used to conduct the research.*
    - Briefly explain what you will do with your environmental samples in 2-3 sentences. This should include all post processing information.

---Location---

1. *Describe the proposed activity locations, 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.*
    - Name the water body or habitat where the research will occur.
    - Include the approximate coordinates.
2. *Is the location of the proposed activity in a previously undisturbed area?*
    - If no, state "No."
    - If yes, explain how your research could affect the area.
3. *Are there pre-existing or ongoing uses at the location of the proposed activity?*
    - Describe how the research area is normally used (i.e. commercial boating/fishing, recreational boating/fishing, passenger ferries, tourism, subsistence hunting, tribal activities, aquaculture, etc).
4. *Describe the characteristics of the location of the proposed activity.*
    - State explicitly if your research will occur in a:
        i. National Marine Sanctuary.
        ii. National Estuarine Research Reserve.
        iii. National Park.
        iv. National Wildlife Refuge System
        v. A different federally-protected area.
        vi. A state/local version of the above
        vii. National Register of Historic Places.
        viii. National Historic Landmark.
        ix. National Monument.
        x. Federally-recognized Tribal or Native Hawaiian land.

- State if your research will occur in Essential Fish Habitat designated under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.
- State if your research will occur in areas with critical habitat for Endangered Species Act-listed species and include a list of the ESA species in that area.
- State if your research will alter the natural landscape or viewshed.

5. *Are minority or low-income communities located in the area of the proposed activity?*
    - If no, state "No."
    - If yes, state how your research will impact these communities (this answer can include benefits provided to these communities).

---Project Partners, Permits, and Consultations---

1. 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.
    - Provide a list of research partners. This list can range from permitting authorities to local businesses.
2. 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 not, state "Permits are not required to conduct this research."
    - If yes, provide the following:
        i. A list of all permits needed and their permitting authority
        ii. The status of each permit
        iii. A copy of each permit (if you have them)

---Safety---

1. *Describe potential unique or unknown risks to human health or the environment from the proposed activity.*
    - If none, state "None."
    - If safety risks exist:
        i. State any potential risks to safety that researchers will undertake.
        ii. Describe the protocols that will be used to minimize the safety risks.
2. *Describe the potential to generate, use, store, transport, or dispose of hazardous or toxic substances.*
    - If none, state "None."
    - If hazardous substances will be handled:
        i. List any hazardous substances (i.e. lab chemicals, sewage, toxins, etc) that will be used or generated while conducting the research.
        ii. List any hazardous substances that may be uncovered/disturbed while conducting the research.
        iii. Describe the protocols that will be used to ensure safe handling and disposal of hazardous substances; this can include a link or reference to university health and safety protocols that will be followed as part of laboratory and/or field work.