

1SUPPORTING STATEMENT
Spongy Moth Identification Worksheet
0579-0104

TERMS OF CLEARANCE: “Before this ICR is renewed, the agency should review the respondent and burden estimates to ensure they reflect the most reasonable and robust data available.” There is not a direct reporting requirement for the PPQ 377. However, there is correlation between those who should complete the checklist and those who move out of the quarantine areas. APHIS collaborated with the United States Postal Service to estimate the number of “change of address” forms submitted annually by individuals within the quarantine areas and used this estimate for the number of individual respondents preparing PPQ 377. This is further discussed in question 15.

This information collection was previously titled “Gypsy Moth Identification Worksheet”, but the pest has since been renamed “Spongy Moth”.

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), is responsible for preventing the entry of plant diseases or insect pests from entering into the United States, preventing the spread of plant pests and noxious weeds not widely distributed in the United States, and eradicating those imported pests when eradication is feasible.

Under the Plant Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 7701 – et seq.), the Secretary of Agriculture, either independently or in cooperation with the States, is authorized to carry out operations or measures to detect, eradicate, suppress, control, prevent, or retard the spread of plant pests new to the United States or not widely distributed throughout the United States. Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ), a program within APHIS is responsible for implementing the intent of this Act and does so through the enforcement of its Domestic Quarantine Regulations contained in Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 301.

The spongy moth (SM) regulations (7 CFR §§ 301.45 through 301.45-12, referred to as the regulations) restrict the interstate movement of regulated articles from quarantined areas to prevent the artificial spread of the SM to noninfested areas of the United States.

PPQ engages in detection surveys to monitor the presence of the European subspecies of SM and the to detect any instance of the flighted spongy moth complex (FSMC).

The SM is one of the most destructive pests of fruit and ornamental trees as well as hardwood forests. First introduced into the United States in Medford, Massachusetts in 1869, the SM has gradually spread to infest the entire northeastern portion of the country.

Heavily infested areas are inundated with actively crawling larvae, which cover trees, fences, vehicles, and houses during their search for food. Entire areas may be stripped of all foliage, often resulting in heavy damage to trees. This damage can have long lasting effects, depriving wildlife of food and shelter, and severely limiting the recreational value of forested areas. The FSMC includes two exotic subspecies that are closely related to the European variety already established in the United States. While the FSMC has been introduced into the United States on several different occasions, it is currently not established in this country.

Due to significant behavioral differences, this strain is considered to pose an even greater threat to trees and forested areas. Unlike the flightless European female adult SM, FSMC female adults are capable of strong directed flight between mating and egg deposition, significantly increasing their ability to spread and become widely established within a short period of time.

In addition to this risk, FSMC larvae feed on a much wider variety of hosts, allowing them to exploit more areas and cause more damage than the SM. In order to determine the presence and extent of a SM or a FSMC infestation, APHIS sets traps in high-risk areas to collect specimens. Once an infestation is identified, control and eradication work (usually involving State cooperation) is initiated to eliminate the moths.

Since the SM and the **FSMC** are strains of the same species, they cannot be visually distinguished from each other. APHIS' SM Identification Worksheet, and the information collected on it, is needed to clearly identify and track specific specimens that are sent to the Otis Laboratory for identification tests based on DNA analysis. Based on the DNA tests conducted at Otis, APHIS can evaluate the true pest risk and take appropriate action.

Checking the SM traps and recording information on the SM Identification Worksheet are information collection activities that are vital to APHIS' ability to monitor, detect, and eradicate SM infestations.

APHIS is asking OMB to approve, for 3 additional years, its use of these activities in connection with APHIS' efforts ability to monitor, detect, and eradicate SM infestations.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.

APHIS uses the following information activities to restrict the interstate movement of regulated articles from quarantined areas to prevent the artificial spread of the SM to non-infested areas of the United States.

Specimens for Determination (PPQ Form 391); (7 CFR 301.45-2); (State)

APHIS personnel, with the assistance from the State Department of Agriculture personnel, check traps for the presence of SM. If moths or other suspicious insects are found in the trap, they are sent to the APHIS laboratory at the Otis Methods Development Center so that they can be correctly identified.

The specimens are accompanied by the PPQ 391, Specimens for Determination, worksheet. The worksheet enables both Federal and State regulatory officials to identify and track specific specimens through the DNA identification tests conducted by APHIS laboratories.

If a specimen were submitted without the accompanying worksheet, laboratory personnel would have no way of knowing who submitted the specimen or where it was collected. The specimen would be meaningless.

Information on the worksheet includes the name of the submitter, the submitter's agency, the date collected, the trap number, the trap's location (including the nearest port of entry), the number of specimens in the trap, and the date the specimen was sent to the laboratory.

Surveys for the SM are conducted throughout all areas not known to be infested with the SM. Surveys for the FSMC are conducted at sites that APHIS considers to be high risk for an FSMC incursion, including international seaports as well as the two known areas of previous incursions (the Pacific Northwest ports and waterways in Oregon and Washington), and the Carolina coastal area between Wilmington, North Carolina and Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Spongy Moth Checklist and Record of Your Self-Inspection (PPQ Form 377 or PPQ Form 377A); (7 CFR 301.45-4(a)); (Individual)

(This activity and the Self-home Inspection activity were merged.)

Any individual moving from a SM quarantine area to a non-quarantine area between the months of April and August must inspect his/her outdoor household items for the SM using the PPQ Form 377 checklist (or its replacement in development, PPQ Form 377A) and remove all life stages before moving.

Individuals may use the self-inspection checklist or hire a qualified certified applicator by contacting the state office to inspect outdoor household articles. If a qualified certified applicator performs the inspection, the individual must obtain a copy of the completed, signed checklist.

Recordkeeping for Spongy Moth Checklist and Record of Your Self-Inspection (previously Recordkeeping of Self-Inspection); (7 CFR 301.45-4(a)); (Individual)

A signed copy of the completed, checklist must accompany the vehicle driver(s) moving the individual's household goods in case USDA or State officials request it during the move.

Moving Industry Notifying Homeowner; (7 CFR 301.45-4(a)); (Business)

A moving company may choose to notify the person moving of the regulation requiring the PPQ 377 when they are moving from an infested area of SM to a non-infested area. The moving company may provide the inspection and associated recordkeeping as a service to the homeowner.

13. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also, describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

PPQ Form 391, Specimens for Determination, must physically accompany the plant pest or pathogen being sent for identification. This form may be completed and downloaded from the APHIS website https://www.aphis.usda.gov/library/forms/pdf/PPQ_Form_391.pdf.

PPQ Form 377, Spongy Moth Checklist Record of Your Self-Inspection, may be downloaded from APHIS Forms Library web site <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/library/forms/pdf/ppq377.pdf> or completed online https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/planthealth/plant-pest-and-disease-programs/pests-and-diseases/sa_insects/spongy-moth/checklist-spongy-moth. The form may be electronically signed, and in digital format, is acceptable for presentation to State and Federal officials under all circumstances. APHIS is developing a less cumbersome version of the form (PPQ 377A) to streamline the user experience for certification and anticipates fielding it in the next twelve months.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purpose described in item 2 above.

The information APHIS collects is exclusive to its mission of protecting the United States from incursion by exotic agricultural pests and is not available from any other source.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden.

APHIS estimates that 98 percent of the total respondents are small entities. The information APHIS collects is the minimum needed to restrict the interstate movement of regulated articles from quarantined areas to prevent the artificial spread of the SM to non-infested areas of the United States.

6. Describe the consequences to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

The SM has been damaging Northeastern forests for more than 100 years. The FSMC, which APHIS considers an even greater threat, has the potential to devastate forests, woodlands, and residential landscapes over a much larger range.

APHIS must conduct its SM survey activities on a continuous basis to prevent an incursion of FSMC, and to prevent the further spread of the SM. APHIS estimates that if the FSMC were able to successfully establish itself in the United States, economic losses could exceed \$1 billion during the next 40 years.

7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the general information collection guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.

- **requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**
- **requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**

Some SM traps must be checked biweekly, others may be checked less frequently. Due to the nature of the insect pests APHIS is monitoring, survey activities must be conducted at this intensity level if APHIS' monitoring program is to be successful.

The Insect Collection Worksheet is completed only when traps are found to contain specimens.

According to Title 7, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 301.45-4(a), any individual moving from a SM quarantine area to a non-quarantine area between the months of April and August must inspect his/her outdoor household items for the SM and remove all life stages before moving.

- **requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**
- **requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;**
- **in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;**
- **requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**
- **that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or**
- **requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secret, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.**

No other special circumstances exist that would require this collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the general information collection guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.

8. Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting form, and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB.

Productive consultations concerning our information collection activities were made with the following individuals by telephone to discuss the information collection activities associated with the Spongy Moth Identification Worksheet and Checklist. We discussed the nature of the insect pests APHIS is monitoring and the survey activities which must be conducted at this intensity level if APHIS' monitoring program is to be successful. They had no recommendations for improving this information collection.

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On Friday, February 12, 2021, APHIS published in the Federal Register (86 FR 9319), a 60-day notice seeking public comments on its plans to request a 3-year approval of this collection of information. No comments were received from the public. However, there was a comment received during the 30-day comment period from a concern citizen, but her comment has no impact to the purpose of the collection or to slow the spread of the spongy moth.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than re-enumeration of contractors or grantees.

This information collection activity involves no payments (other than appropriate, program-related payments) or gifts to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

No additional assurance of confidentiality is provided with this information collection. Any and all information obtained in this collection shall not be disclosed except in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552a.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and others that are considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

This information collection activity asks no questions of a personal or sensitive nature.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated.

- **Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in Item 13 of OMB Form 83-1.**

See APHIS Form 71 for hour burden estimates. APHIS collaborated with the United States Post Office to estimate the number of change of address forms submitted annually by individuals within the quarantine areas and used this estimate for the number of individual respondents preparing PPQ 377.

- **Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories.**

APHIS estimates the total annualized cost to the respondents to be \$156,689,549. APHIS arrived at this figure by multiplying the hours of estimated response time (2,711,543) by the estimated average hourly wage of the above respondents (\$39.88) and then multiplying the result by 1.449 to capture benefit costs.

The average hourly salary wage has been corrected in this renewal. The average hourly rates used to calculate the estimate are \$53.47 for state and local government employees; \$39.10 for transportation inspectors (SOCC 53-6051); and \$27.07 for individuals (SOCC 00-0000). The rates were found at the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics websites; <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecec.htm> and https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_stru.htm.

According to DOL BLS news release USDL-21-0437 released March 18, 2021, employee benefits account for 31 percent of employee costs, and wages account for the remaining 69 percent. Mathematically, total costs can be calculated as a function of wages using a multiplier of 1.449.

13. Provide estimates of the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information (do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in items 12 and 14). The cost estimates should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component annualized over its expected useful life; and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component.

There is zero annual cost burden associated with capital and start-up costs, maintenance costs, and purchase of services in connection with this program.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Provide a description of the method used to estimate cost and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

See APHIS Form 79. The estimated cost for the Federal Government is \$123,292.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-1.

	Requested	Program Change Due to New Statute	Program Change Due to Agency Discretion	Change Due to Adjustment in Agency Estimate	Change Due to Potential Violation of the PRA	Previously Approved
Annual Number of Responses	7,500,250	0	0	0	0	7,500,250
Annual Time Burden (Hr)	2,711,543	0	0	0	0	2,711,543

There are no changes in estimates or burden for this request for renewal. Two activities, Spongy Moth Checklist and Record of Your Self-Inspection (PPQ Form 377), and Self-home Inspection, have been combined into one activity. APHIS collaborated with the United States Postal Service to estimate the number of “change of address” forms submitted annually by individuals within the quarantine areas and used this estimate for the number of individual respondents preparing PPQ 377. Although the quarantine expanded by 5 counties since 2021: 2 counties in WI (2021), 2 counties in Illinois (2022), 1 county in Wisconsin (2023), this has not affected the burden and the estimate is correct. The program is currently working on updating the web pages to use the new common name spongy moth and removing reference to gypsy moth in current program documents, including the online checklist form.

APHIS is designing an online interface to simplify the mandatory briefing and inspection affirmation. The PPQ 377A is in development to replace the PPQ 377.

16. For collections of information whose results are planned to be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication.

APHIS has no plans to tabulate or publish the information it collects. However, results of DNA identification analysis are widely distributed using electronic mail via the PPQ and SM bulletin boards.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

APHIS requests not to display the OMB approval expiration date on the forms. The PPQ 391 is used in two information collection requests with different approval expiration dates, and the PPQ 377 is available in different media such as PDF or an online reporting system. Moving companies might not download and use the most current versions of the forms and an expiration date would sow confusion on the form's validity in the field.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in the "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act."

APHIS is able to certify compliance with all the provisions under the Act.

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods.

Statistical methods are not used in this information collection.