§ 3431.4 Solicitation of stakeholder input.

The Secretary will solicit stakeholder input on the process and procedures used to designate veterinarian shortage situations prior to the publication of the solicitation for nomination of veterinarian shortage situations. A notice may be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER, on the Agency’s Web site, or other appropriate format or forum. This request for stakeholder input may include the solicitation of input on the administration of VMLRP and its impact on meeting critical veterinarian shortage situations. All comments will be made available and accessible to the public.

§ 3431.5 Solicitation of veterinarian shortage situations.

(a) General. The Secretary will follow the procedures described in this part to solicit veterinarian shortage situations as the term is defined in §3431.3.

(b) Solicitation. The Secretary will publish a solicitation for nomination of veterinarian shortage situations in the FEDERAL REGISTER, on the Agency’s Web site, or other appropriate format or forum.

(c) Frequency. Contingent on the availability of funds, the Secretary will normally publish a solicitation on an annual basis. However, the Secretary reserves the right to solicit veterinarian shortage situations every two or three years, as appropriate.

(d) Content. The solicitation will describe the nomination process, the review criteria and process, and include the form used to submit a nomination. The solicitation may specify the maximum number of nominations that may be submitted by each State animal health official.

(e) Nominations. Nominations shall identify the veterinarian shortage situation and address the criteria in the nomination form which may include the objectives of the position, the activities of the position, and the risk posed if the position is not secured.

(f) Nominating Official. The State animal health official in each State is the person responsible for submitting and certifying veterinarian shortage situations within the State to NIFA officials. It is strongly recommended that the State animal health official of each State involve the leading health animal experts in the State in the nomination process.

§ 3431.6 Review of nominations.

(a) Peer panel. State shortage situations nominations will be evaluated by a peer panel of experts in animal health convened by the Secretary. The