

# Rules and Regulations

Federal Register

Vol. 61, No. 245

Thursday, December 19, 1996

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains regulatory documents having general applicability and legal effect, most of which are keyed to and codified in the Code of Federal Regulations, which is published under 50 titles pursuant to 44 U.S.C. 1510.

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Natural Resources Conservation Service

#### 7 CFR Part 651

#### Acquisition of Real Property Regulations

**AGENCY:** Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Final rule.

**SUMMARY:** The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is removing obsolete regulations from the Code of Federal Regulations. This action removes the regulations found at 7 CFR part 651 concerning the acquisition of real property under federally-assisted programs.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** December 19, 1996.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Peter Zeck (202) 690-4860.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Executive Order 12866

This document does not meet the criteria for a significant regulatory action as specified in E.O. 12866.

#### Regulatory Flexibility Act

It has been determined that the Regulatory Flexibility Act is not applicable to this rule because NRCS is not required by 5 U.S.C. 553 or any other provision of law to publish a notice of proposed rulemaking with respect to the subject matter of this rule.

#### Environmental Evaluation

This final rule will have no significant effect on the human environment, and therefore an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required.

#### Paperwork Reduction Act

This rule does not contain reporting or recordkeeping requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act.

#### Background

Pursuant to the Administration effort to review existing agency regulations and remove unnecessary regulations from the Code of Federal Regulations, the NRCS has determined that the regulations found at 7 CFR part 651, "Acquisition of Real Property Under Federally-Assisted Programs," are unnecessary because the regulations address matters of internal agency policy and duplicate, in part, regulations found elsewhere in the Code of Federal Regulations. The removal of this part will not have any effect on the public, any private enterprise, or any Government agency. This action will result in the removal of obsolete regulations from the CFR.

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 651

Real Property, Technical Assistance.

#### PART 651—[REMOVED]

In consideration of the above under the authority of 7 U.S.C. 4601-4655, 7 CFR part 651 is removed.

Signed at Washington, D.C. on December 5, 1996.

Paul Johnson,

Chief, Natural Resources Conservation Service.

[FR Doc. 96-32193 Filed 12-18-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-16-M

#### Rural Utilities Service

#### 7 CFR Parts 1710, 1714, 1717, and 1786

RIN 0572-AB24

#### RUS Policies on Mergers and Consolidations of Electric Borrowers

**AGENCY:** Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Final rule.

**SUMMARY:** The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is streamlining its regulations through amendments that are intended to encourage electric borrowers to merge, consolidate, or enter into similar arrangements that benefit borrowers and rural communities and are consistent with the interests of the Government as a secured lender. These amendments are part of an ongoing RUS project to modernize agency policies and procedures in order to provide borrowers with the flexibility they need to continue providing reliable electric service at reasonable cost in rural areas,

while maintaining the integrity of Government loans.

**DATES:** This rule is effective January 21, 1997.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Sue Arnold, Financial Analyst, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service, Room 2230-S, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 1522, Washington, DC 20250-1522. Telephone: 202-720-0736. FAX: 202-720-4120. E-mail: sarnold@rus.usda.gov.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is taking this regulatory action as part of the National Performance Review program to eliminate unnecessary regulations and improve those that remain in force. This regulatory action has been determined to be significant for the purposes of Executive Order 12866, Regulatory Planning and Review, and, therefore has been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The Administrator of RUS has determined that a rule relating to the RUS electric loan program is not a rule as defined in the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) for which RUS published a general notice of proposed rulemaking pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b), or any other law. Therefore, the Regulatory Flexibility Act does not apply to this proposed rule. The Administrator of RUS has determined that this rule will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment as defined by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.). Therefore, this action does not require an environmental impact statement or assessment. This rule is excluded from the scope of Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Consultation, which may require consultation with State and local officials. A Notice of Final Rule titled Department Programs and Activities Excluded from Executive Order 12372 (50 FR 47034) exempts RUS electric loans and loan guarantees from coverage under this Order. This rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform. RUS has determined that this rule meets the applicable standards provided in Sec. 3 of the Executive Order.

The program described by this rule is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Programs under number 10.850 Rural Electrification Loans and Loan Guarantees. This catalog is