

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approval under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act,
- State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources tideland permit and lease or easement, and
- State of Alaska, Department of Environmental Conservation authorization under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act.

#### Public Comment

Federal, State, and local agencies, potential contractors, and other individuals or organizations who may be interested in, or affected by, the decision are invited to participate in the scoping process. This process will include:

1. Identification of potential issues;
2. Identification of issues to be analyzed in depth;
3. Determination of potential cooperating agencies and assignment of responsibility; and
4. Examination of various alternatives.

The Forest Supervisor will hold public meetings during the planning process. Interested people are invited to comment. The comment period on the Draft EIS will be 45 days from the date the Notice of Availability appears in the Federal Register.

The Forest Service believes, at this early stage, it is important to give reviewers notice of several draft environmental impact statements must structure their participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of the draft environmental impact statements must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal so it is meaningful and alerts an agency to the reviewer's position and contentions (*Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 533 [1978]). Also, environmental objections that could have been raised at the Draft EIS stage may be waived if not raised until after the completion of the final environmental impact statement or dismissed by the courts (*City of Angoon v. Hodel*, 803 F.2d 1016, 1022 [9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1986] and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 [E.D. Wis. 1980]). Because of these court rulings, it is very important that those interested in this proposed action participate by the close of the 45 day comment period so substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service at the time when we can meaningfully consider them and respond to them in the final environmental impact statement.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and

concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft environmental impact statement should be as specific as possible. It is helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft environmental impact statement. Comments may also address the adequacy of the draft environmental impact statement or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the statement. Reviewers may wish to refer to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environment Policy Act in 40 CFR 1503.3 while addressing these points.

The responsible official for the decision is Abigail R. Kimbell, Forest Supervisor, Stikine Area, Tongass National Forest, Alaska Region, Petersburg, Alaska.

Dated: January 13, 1997.

Abigail R. Kimbell,

*Forest Supervisor.*

[FR Doc. 97-2120 Filed 1-28-97; 8:45 am]

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#### Rural Housing Service

##### Refinancing Community Facilities Loans

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

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This Notice describes the Rural Housing Service (RHS) Community Facilities (CF) loan program refinancing policies, informs commercial lenders of the availability of a list of eligible CF borrowers who have the potential to refinance outstanding debt, and invites cooperative and private credit sources to participate in refinancing loans. This action ensures that CF loan program borrowers are aware of lenders that are willing to provide reasonable rates and terms for refinancing. The intended effect of this action is to increase the number of cooperative or private credit sources which are actively involved with RHS's refinancing efforts.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Chadwick O. Parker, Loan Specialist, Rural Housing Service, USDA, Room 6314, South Agriculture Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, D.C. 20250, Telephone: (202) 720-1502.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Program Affected

This action affects the RHS program listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic

Assistance as 10.766 Community Facilities Loans.

#### Discussion of Notice

The RHS CF loan program provides credit to public entities such as municipalities, counties, special-purpose districts, Indian tribes, and nonprofit corporations. Eligible CF loan purposes are to construct, enlarge, extend, or otherwise improve community facilities providing essential services. The loan program is administered in a manner which ensures that it does not compete with credit available from private sources. Loan agreements require financially capable borrowers to refinance debts owed to the RHS when other credit is available at reasonable rates and terms from a cooperative or private credit source.

The RHS would like to further develop its public/private partnerships while enhancing its refinancing efforts. As part of these efforts, each Rural Development State Office, which administers the CF loan program in the field, will maintain a current listing of borrowers who have the potential to refinance. The RHS will also maintain a national list on its World Wide Web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/agency/rhs/cf/cf.htm>.

The RHS will develop a unified database of lenders interested in this refinancing initiative as part of their ongoing effort to establish a stronger alliance with private sector lenders. The RHS requests that interested lenders contact the State Office in each State where they have active lending operations.

Dated: January 21, 1997.

Jan Shadburn,

*Acting Administrator, Rural Housing Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Bureau of the Census

[Docket No. 961213356-6356-01]

RIN 0607-XX25

#### Census Tract Program for Census 2000—Proposed Criteria

**AGENCY:** Bureau of the Census, Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed program revisions and request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** Census tracts are relatively permanent small-area geographic divisions of a county or statistically