

discussion leading to the identification of a strategic focus for the Committee.

In addition to the Advisory Committee meeting, a field trip for Advisory Committee members will take place the previous day, Thursday, September 23, 1999. Members will tour portions of the Baker Lake basin on the Mt. Baker Ranger District, commencing at 9 a.m. at the Mt. Baker District Office, 2105 State Route 20, in Sedro Woolley, Washington, and ending back at the same Office about 4:30 p.m. The purpose of the trip is to: (1) Explore the complexity of National Forest natural resource management; (2) emphasize the integration of forest management activities among federal and non-federal entities; (3) introduce the nature of an "Urban Forest" and its ties to Puget Sound growth; and (4) introduce the idea of a more strategic view of resource management and advice to the Forest. All Western Washington Cascades Provincial Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public. Interested citizens are encouraged to attend. Interested citizens are also welcome to join the September 23 field trip; however, they must provide their own transportation.

The Provincial Advisory Committee provides advice regarding ecosystem management for federal lands within the Western Washington Cascades Province, as well as advice and recommendations to promote better integration of forest management activities among federal and non-federal entities. The Advisory Committee is a key element of implementation of the Northwest Forest Plan.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Direct questions regarding this meeting to Penny Sundblad, Province Liaison, USDA Forest Service, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, Mt. Baker Ranger District, 2105 State Route 20, Sedro Woolley, Washington 98284 (360-856-5700, Extension 321).

Dated: August 30, 1999.

John Phipps,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 99-23150 Filed 9-3-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Information Collection Activity; Comment Request

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, as amended), the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) invites comments on this information collection for which RUS intends to request approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by November 8, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: F. Lamont Heppe, Jr., Program Development & Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, USDA, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., STOP 1522, Room 4034 South Building, Washington, DC 20250-1522. Telephone: (202) 720-0736. FAX: (202) 720-4120.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Seismic Safety of New Building Construction.

OMB Control Number: 0572-0099.

Type of Request: Reinstatement with change of previously approved information collection.

Abstract: The Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977 (42 U.S.C. 7701 *et seq.*) was enacted to reduce risks to life and property through the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP). The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is designated as the agency with the primary responsibility to plan and coordinate the NEHRP. This program includes the development and implementation of feasible design and construction methods to make structures earthquake resistant. Executive Order 12699 of January 5, 1990, Seismic Safety of Federal and Federally Assisted or Regulated New Building Construction, requires that measures to assure seismic safety be imposed on federally assisted new building construction.

Title 7 Part 1792, Subpart C, Seismic Safety of Federally assisted New Building Construction, identifies acceptable seismic standards which must be employed in new building construction funded by loans, grants, or guarantees made by RUS or the Rural Telephone Bank (RTB) or through lien accommodations or subordinations approved by RUS or RTB. This subpart implements and explains the provisions of the loan contract utilized by the RUS for both electric and telecommunications borrowers and by the RTB for its telecommunications borrowers requiring construction certifications affirming compliance with the standards.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information

is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response.

Respondents: Small business or organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,000.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.2.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 800.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Bob Turner, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, at (202) 720-0696.

Comments are invited on (a) Whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumption used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques on other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to F. Lamont Heppe, Jr., Director, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Stop 1522, Room 4034 South Building, Washington, D.C. 20250-1522.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: August 31, 1999.

Wally Beyer,

Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.

[FR Doc. 99-23186 Filed 9-3-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. and Plains Electric Generation and Transmission Cooperative, Inc.; Notice of Availability of an Environmental Assessment

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of availability of an environmental assessment.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is issuing an Environmental Assessment (EA) with respect to the potential environmental impacts related to the