

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 29, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: F. Lamont Heppe, Jr., Director, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., STOP 1522, Room 4036 South Building, Washington, DC 20250-1522. Telephone: (202) 720-9550. FAX: (202) 720-4120.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) regulation (5 CFR part 1320) implementing provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) requires that interested members of the public and affected agencies have an opportunity to comment on information collection and recordkeeping activities (see 5 CFR 1320.8(d)). This notice identifies a new information collection that RUS is submitting to OMB for approval. Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed 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 of the proposed collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions 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 or 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, STOP 1522, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250-1522. FAX: (202)720-4120.

Title: Community Programs Guaranteed Loans.

Type of Request: New Information Collection.

Abstract: The Rural Utilities Service is authorized by Section 306 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926) to make loans to public agencies, nonprofit corporations, and Indian tribes for the development of water and wastewater disposal facilities primarily serving rural residents. The guaranteed loan program encourages lender participation and provides specific guidance in the processing and servicing of guaranteed Water and Waste Disposal loans. The guaranteed loan program is conducted through 7 CFR part 1980, subpart I.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting for this collection of information is estimated to average 14 hours per response.

Respondents: Not-for-profit institutions; State, Local or Tribal Government.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 10.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 10.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 1,352 hours.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Michele Brooks, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, at (202) 690-1078. FAX: (202) 720-4120.

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: September 22, 1999.

Christopher A. McLean,

Acting Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.
[FR Doc. 99-25180 Filed 9-27-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-U

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Rural Utilities Service****M&A Electric Power 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) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are issuing an environmental assessment with respect to the potential environmental impacts related to the construction and operation of a 69 kV electric transmission line and substation in Wayne County, Missouri. RUS may

provide financing assistance to M&A Electric Power Cooperative, Inc., for the project. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will grant a right-of-way easement across property they manage for a portion of the transmission line and the substation.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Bob Quigel, Environmental Protection Specialist, Rural Utilities Service, Engineering and Environmental Staff, Stop 1571, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-1571, telephone: (202) 720-0468. Bob's e-mail address is bquigel@rus.usda.gov. Information is also available from Tony Gott, M&A Electric Power Cooperative, Inc., Highway PP, West, Poplar Bluff, Missouri 63901, (573) 785-9651.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The project consists of the construction of a 69 kV electric transmission line and substation to be located in Wayne County, Missouri. The project will be constructed by M&A Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. The line will tie into an existing substation located near Patterson and be connected to a new substation to be constructed near Silva. The length of the transmission line is approximately 7 miles. The substation will require approximately 4 acres of land. A portion of the transmission line and the substation will be located within the Wappapello Lake Project area which is managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is a cooperating agency in the environmental review of this project.

Burns and McDonnell prepared an environmental assessment for RUS and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers which describes the project and assesses its environmental impacts. RUS and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have conducted an independent evaluation of the environmental assessment and believe that it accurately assesses the impacts of the proposed project. No significant impacts are expected as a result of the construction of the project.

The environmental assessment can be reviewed at the Piedmont Public Library, 118 West Green, Piedmont, Missouri 63957, telephone (573) 223-7036, the headquarters of M&A Electric Power Cooperative, Inc., at the address provided above, or the headquarters of RUS, at the address provided above.

Questions and comments should be sent to RUS at the address provided. RUS will accept questions and comments on the environmental assessment for at least 30 days from the date of publication of this notice.

Any final action by RUS related to the proposed project will be subject to, and