

form allows borrowers to keep RUS up-to-date of any changes in signature authority and controls the release of funds only to authorized borrower representatives.

*Estimate of Burden:* Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 0.1 of an hour per response.

*Respondents:* Small businesses and organizations.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 450.

*Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent:* 1.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:* 45.

Copies of this information collection, and related form and instructions, 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 respondents, including the use of automated 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, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Stop 1522, Room 4034 South Building, Washington, DC 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: December 14, 1999.

**Christopher A. McLean,**

*Acting Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.*  
[FR Doc. 99-33056 Filed 12-20-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-P

## 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 February 22, 2000.

**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, D.C. 20250-1522. Telephone: (202) 720-0736. FAX: (202) 720-4120.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

*Title:* Request for Release of Lien and/or Approval of Sale.

*OMB Control Number:* 0572-0041.

*Type of Request:* Reinstatement without change of previously approved information collection.

*Abstract:* The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) makes mortgage loans and loan guarantees to electric and telecommunications systems to provide and improve electric and telecommunications service in rural areas pursuant to the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, as amended (7 U.S.C. 901 *et seq.*) (RE Act). All current and future capital assets of RUS borrowers are ordinarily mortgaged or pledged to the Federal Government as security for RUS loans. Assets include tangible and intangible utility plant, non-utility property, construction in progress, and materials, supplies, and equipment normally used in a telecommunications system. The RE Act and the various security instruments, e.g., the RUS mortgage, limit the rights of a RUS borrower to dispose of its capital assets.

The RUS Form 793, Request for Release of Lien and/or Approval of Sale, allows the telecommunications program borrower to seek agency permission to sell some of its assets. The form collects detailed information regarding the proposed sale of a portion of the borrower's system. RUS telecommunications borrowers fill out the form to request RUS approval in order to sell capital assets.

*Estimate of Burden:* Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 2.84 hours per response.

*Respondents:* Small businesses or organizations.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 75.

*Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent:* 1.

*Estimate Total Annual Burden on Respondents:* 213.

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: December 14, 1999.

**Christopher McLean,**

*Acting Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.*  
[FR Doc. 99-33057 Filed 12-20-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-P

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Utilities Service

#### Alabama Electric Cooperative; 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 with respect to the potential environmental impacts related to the construction and operation of a 496 megawatt combined cycle electric generation plant and associated facilities. RUS may provide financing assistance to Alabama Electric Cooperative for the project.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Bob Quigel, Rural Utilities Service, Engineering and Environmental Staff, Stop 1571, 1400 Independence Avenue,

SW, Washington, DC 20250-1571, telephone: (202) 720-0468. Information is also available from Phillip Burgess, Alabama Electric Cooperative, Highway 29 North, Andalusia, Alabama 36420-0550, telephone (334) 427-3309.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The project consists of the construction of a 496 megawatt combined cycle electric generation plant in Covington County, Alabama. The preferred site for the plant is adjacent to Alabama Electric Cooperative's McWilliams electric generating plant located in Gantt, Alabama. Associated with the plant will be approximately 18.6 miles of 230 kilovolt transmission line from the proposed plant to Opp, Alabama, and approximately 60 miles of natural gas pipeline from the proposed plant to Flomaton, Alabama. The natural gas pipeline to be constructed and owned by Southeast Alabama Gas District, will traverse Covington, Conecuh, and Escambia Counties, all of which are in Alabama. Alternative sites for the plant location were considered near Alabama Electric Cooperative's Lowman Plant at Leroy in Washington County, Alabama, and at a site in Damascus/Teddy area in Escambia County, Alabama. Three electric transmission line routes and three natural gas pipeline routes were considered.

Alabama Electric Cooperative prepared an environmental report for RUS, which describes the project and assesses its potential environmental impacts. RUS has conducted an independent evaluation of the environmental report, assisted in its completion, and accepted it as the agency's environmental assessment. No significant impacts are expected as a result of the construction and operation of the project.

The environmental assessment can be reviewed at the Andalusia Public Library, South Three Notch Street, Andalusia, Alabama; the White Smith Memorial Library, 213 College Ave., Jackson, Alabama; the Brewton Public Library, 206 Jackson Street, Brewton, Alabama; the headquarters of Alabama Electric Cooperative 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 35 days from the date of publication of this notice.

Any final action by RUS related to the proposed project will be subject to, and contingent upon, compliance with all relevant Federal environmental laws and regulations and completion of

environmental review procedures as prescribed by RUS' Environmental Policies and Procedures, 7 CFR Part 1794.

Dated: December 15, 1999.

**Mark S. Plank,**

*Acting Director, Engineering and Environmental Staff.*

[FR Doc. 99-33055 Filed 12-20-99; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-15-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Submission for OMB Review: Comment Request

DOC has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13.

*Bureau:* International Trade Administration.

*Title:* Participation Agreement and Trade Mission Application.

*Agency Form Number:* ITA-4008P.

*OMB Number:* 0625-0147.

*Type of Request:* Regular Submission.

*Burden:* 2,792 hours.

*Number of Respondents:* 7,500.

*Avg. Hours Per Response:* 20 minutes-70 minutes.

*Needs and Uses:* The ITA-4008P, "Participation Agreement," is the vehicle by which individual firms agree to participate in any of ITA's trade promotion program, and record their required participation fee to the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC). Together with the relevant ITA-4008P-A, "Conditions of Participation," it forms a contract between the individual firm and the DOC. The ITA-4008P-1, "Trade Mission Application," is used to solicit information from firms seeking to participate in DOC overseas trade missions covered by the Statement of Policy Governing Overseas Trade Missions of the Department of Commerce issued by Secretary Daley on March 3, 1997. Trade Mission participants will be required to complete the Forms ITA-4008P, ITA-4008P-1, and ITA-4008P-A. Other DOC trade event participants will complete Forms ITA-4008P and ITA-4008P-A.

*Affected Public:* Businesses or other for profit, not-for-profit institutions.

*Frequency:* On occasion.

*Respondent's Obligation:* Required to obtain or retain a benefit, voluntary.

*OMB Desk Officer:* David Rostker, (202) 395-7340.

Copies of the above information collection can be obtained by calling or writing Linda Engelmeier, Department

Forms Clearance Officer, (202) 482-3272, Department of Commerce, Room 5027, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230. Email LEngelme@doc.gov.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent to David Rostker, OMB Desk Officer, Room 10202, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503 within 30 days of the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**.

Dated: December 16, 1999.

**Linda Engelmeier,**

*Department Forms Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer.*

[FR Doc. 99-33074 Filed 12-20-99; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-FP-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Census Bureau

#### Evaluation of the Census 2000 Partnership Program

**ACTION:** Proposed collection; comment request.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

**DATES:** Written comments must be submitted on or before February 22, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5027, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at LEngelme@doc.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to Sherri Norris, Bureau of the Census, Room BH-120-2, Washington, DC 20233; (301) 457-8081.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

#### I. Abstract

The Census 2000 Partnership Program works to establish partnerships with state, local and tribal governments; private industry; local governments and community groups. The goal is to increase the awareness of the census and to increase response rates,