

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

## AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

### Sunshine Act Meeting

**TIME:** 10:00 am–4:00 pm.

**PLACE:** ADF Headquarters.

**DATE:** Friday, 26 January 2001.

**STATUS:** Open.

#### Agenda

10:00 am Chairman's Report

10:30 am–12:00 pm President's Report

12:00 pm Lunch

1:00–2:30 pm President's Report  
(Continued)

2:30–4:00 pm Executive Session  
(Closed)

4:00 pm Adjournment

If you have any questions or comments, please direct them to Doris Martin, General Counsel, who can be reached at (202) 673–3916.

**Nathaniel Fields,**  
*President.*

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**BILLING CODE 6116–01–M**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Commodity Credit Corporation

### Natural Resources Conservation Service

### Farmland Protection Program

**AGENCY:** Commodity Credit Corporation, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture (USDA).

**ACTION:** Notice of request for proposals.

**SUMMARY:** Section 388 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 established the Farmland Protection Program (FPP). The Secretary of Agriculture delegated the authority for FPP to the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), who is a vice president of the

Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC). The Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000 provides \$10 million in financial and technical assistance for the purposes described in FPP in fiscal year 2001. The CCC requests proposals from federally recognized Indian tribes, States, units of local government, and non-governmental organizations to cooperate in the acquisition of conservation easements or other interests in prime, unique, or other productive soil that is subject to a pending offer, for the purpose of limiting conversion to nonagricultural uses of that land. An additional \$20 million has also been provided for FPP in accordance with the Conference Report on H.R. 4577, Department of Labor, Health, and Human Services, and Education and Related Agencies Appropriations (House of Representatives—December 15, 2000). This amount excludes proposals from non-governmental organizations and is dedicated only to proposals from federally recognized Indian tribes, States, and units of local government. USDA has designated up to \$5 million to be provided to State agencies that have a long and effective history of purchasing development rights on farmland.

**DATES:** Proposals must be received in the NRCS State Office within 45 days of the date of this notice.

**ADDRESSES:** Written proposals should be sent to the appropriate NRCS State conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA. The telephone numbers and addresses of the NRCS State conservationists are attached in the appendix of this notice.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Douglas J. Lawrence, NRCS; phone: (202) 720–1510; fax: (202) 690–6473; or e-mail: doug.lawrence@usda.gov; Subject: 2001 FPP.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

#### Background

Urban sprawl continues to threaten the Nation's farmland. Social and economic changes over the past three decades have influenced the rate at which land is converted to non-agricultural uses. Population growth, demographic changes, preferences for larger lots, inexpensive fuel costs, expansion of transportation systems, and economic prosperity have

contributed to increases in agricultural land conversion rates.

The amount of farmland lost to development is not the only significant concern. Another cause for concern is the quality and pattern of farmland being converted. In most States, prime farmland is being converted at two to four times the rate of other, less-productive agricultural land.

There continues to be an important national interest in the protection of farmland. Once developed, productive farmland with rich topsoil is effectively lost forever, placing future food security for the Nation at risk. Land use devoted to agriculture provides an important contribution to environmental quality, history, and scenic beauty.

#### Availability of Funding

Effective on the publication date of this notice, the CCC announces the availability, until September 30, 2001, of \$30 million for FPP. The CCC, acting through the appropriate NRCS State conservationist, must receive proposals for participation within 45 days of the date of this notice. State, tribal, and local governmental entities may apply for money under funding sources; however, non-governmental organizations are only eligible for the original \$10 million provided by the Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000.

Selection will be based on the criteria established in this notice. Selected eligible entities may receive no more than 50 percent of the purchase price for each conservation easement, not to exceed the fair market value of the interest to be purchased. Pending offers by an eligible entity must be for the acquisition of an easement for a minimum duration of 30 years.

#### Definitions

Chief means the Chief of NRCS, USDA.

Eligible entities means federally recognized Indian tribes, States, units of local government, and non-governmental organizations that have pending offers for the acquisition of conservation easements for the purposes of protecting the agricultural use. Non-governmental organizations are only eligible for the \$10 million originally authorized by the Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000.

Field Office Technical Guide means the official NRCS guidelines, criteria,