

OMB Control Number: 0535-0234.

Summary of Collection: The Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey (FRIS) has provided detailed data on water management practices and water uses in American agriculture for the past two decades. The 2003 FRIS will gather data describing the irrigation activities of U.S. farm operations. Some of these activities are of national concern, such as the use of chemigation, fertigation and water-conserving practices of irrigators. The FRIS is an integral part of the 2002 Census of Agriculture and is conducted under the authority of the Census of Agriculture Act of 1997 (Pub. L. 105-113).

Need and Use of the Information: NASS will collect information from the FRIS on acres irrigated by land use category, acres and yields of irrigated and non-irrigated crops, quantity of water applied and method of application to selected crops, acres irrigated and quantity of water used by sources, acres irrigated by type of water distribution systems, and number of irrigation wells and pumps. The primary purpose of FRIS is to provide detailed data relating to on-farm irrigation activities for use in preparing a wide variety of water-related local programs, economic models, legislative initiatives, market analyses, and feasibility studies. The absence of FRIS would certainly affect irrigation policy decision.

Description of Respondents: Farms.
Number of Respondents: 25,000.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: Other (one-time).

Total Burden Hours: 15,250.

Ruth Brown,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 03-23528 Filed 9-15-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency

Information Collection; Guaranteed Farm Loan Programs

AGENCY: Farm Service Agency, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) is seeking comments from all interested individuals and entities on the extension and revision of currently approved information used in support of the guaranteed Farm Loan Programs (FLP). The collection of information is intended to reduce paperwork burden

on program participants and agency employees, make assistance available to more farmers, reduce the costs of the program, and enhance the fiscal integrity of the program.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received on or before November 17, 2003 to be assured consideration.

ADDRESSES: Comments concerning this notice should be addressed to Tracy L. Jones, Senior Loan Officer, USDA Farm Service Agency, Loan Making Division, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Stop 0522, Washington, DC 20250-0522, and to: the Desk Office for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503. Comments may be submitted by email to: tracy_jones@wdc.usda.gov. Copies of the information collection may be obtained by contacting Tracy Jones.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tracy Jones, Loan Making Division, (202) 720-3889.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: 7 CFR 762—Guaranteed Farm Loans.

OMB Control Number: 0560-0155.

Expiration Date of Approval: March 31, 2004.

Type of Request: Extension and Revision to a Currently Approved Information Collection.

Abstract: The information collected under OMB Control Number 0560-0155 is needed to effectively administer the FSA guaranteed farm loan programs. The information is collected by the FSA loan official in consultation with participating commercial lenders. The basic objective of the guaranteed loan program is to provide credit to applicants who are unable to obtain credit from lending institutions without a guarantee. The reporting requirements imposed on the public by the regulations at 7 CFR part 762 are necessary to administer the guaranteed loan program in accordance with statutory requirements of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act and are consistent with commonly performed lending practices. Collection of information after loans are made is necessary to protect the Government's financial interest.

Estimate of Respondent Burden: Public reporting burden for the collection of information in this regulation is estimated to average 0.7535 hours per response. Respondents: Commercial Banks, Farm Credit System, farmers and ranchers.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 5,500 lenders, 9,000 loan applicants.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 49.90 per lender, 2.14 per loan applicant.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 221,360.

Comment is invited on: (a) Whether collection of information is necessary for the above stated purposes and the proper performance of FSA, 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 assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information being 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.

All comments received in response to this notice, including names and addresses when provided, will be a matter of public record. Comments will be summarized and included in the Office of Management and Budget Approval.

Signed in Washington, DC on September 9, 2003.

James R. Little,

Administrator, Farm Service Agency.

[FR Doc. 03-23529 Filed 9-15-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-05-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Notice of Proposed Changes in the National Handbook of Conservation Practices

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given of the intention of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to issue a series of new or revised conservation practice standards in its National Handbook of Conservation Practices. These standards include: Brush Management, Forage Harvest Management, Irrigation System—Sprinkler, Irrigation Water Conveyance—Ditch and Canal Lining—Flexible Membrane, Stream Crossing, Structure for Water Control, and Well Decommissioning. These standards are used to convey national guidance in developing Field Office Technical Guide Standards used in the States and