

“Notice of Timeframe for Section 514 Farm Labor Housing Loan and Section 516 Farm Labor Housing Grant for Fiscal Year 2004” was published in the **Federal Register** on February 6, 2004 (69 FR 5818). This was done soon after passage of a final appropriations act to allow sufficient time for applicants to complete an application and for the Agency to select and process selected applications within the current fiscal year. In the notice dated February 6, 2004, the Agency announced a deadline of May 6, 2004, 5 p.m., local time for each Rural Development State Office, for submitting applications for sections 514/516 Farm Labor Housing Loans and Grants and section 521 RA funds. Detailed information regarding the application and selection process, as well as a listing of the Rural Development State Offices, can be found in the February 6, 2004, notice.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For general information, applicants may contact Doug MacDowell, Senior Loan Specialist, of the Multi-Family Housing Processing Division, Rural Housing Service, United States Department of Agriculture, Stop 0781, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250, telephone (202) 720-1627 (voice) (this is not a toll free number) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD-Federal Information Relay Service).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Programs Affected

The Farm Labor Housing Program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under Number 10.405, Farm Labor Housing Loans and Grants. Rental Assistance is listed in the Catalog under Number 10.427, Rural Rental Assistance Payments.

Discussion of Notice

I. Authority and Distribution Methodology

A. Authority

The Farm Labor Housing program is authorized by the Housing Act of 1949: section 514 (42 U.S.C. 1484) for loans and section 516 (42 U.S.C. 1486) for grants. Tenant subsidies (rental assistance (RA)) are available through section 521 (42 U.S.C. 1490a). Sections 514 and 516 provide RHS the authority to make loans and grants for financing off-farm housing to broad-based nonprofit organizations, nonprofit organizations of farmworkers, federally recognized Indian tribes, agencies or political subdivisions of State or local government, public agencies (such as local housing authorities) and with section 514 loans to nonprofit limited

partnerships in which the general partner is a nonprofit entity.

B. Distribution Methodology

Because RHS has the ability to adjust loan and grant levels, final loan and grant levels will fluctuate. The estimated funds available for fiscal year (FY) 2004 for off-farm housing are:

Section 514 loans—\$35,774,000
Section 516 grants—\$13,400,759

Applications will be selected based on a national competition, as outlined in the February 6, 2004, notice.

II. Funding Limits

A. Individual requests may not exceed \$3 million (total loan and grant).

B. No State may receive more than 30 percent of the total available funds unless an exception is granted from the Administrator.

C. Rental Assistance will be held in the National Office for use with section 514 loans and section 516 grants and will be awarded based on each project's financial structure and need.

Dated: March 9, 2004.

Arthur A. Garcia,

Administrator, Rural Housing Service.

[FR Doc. 04-5963 Filed 3-16-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Housing Service

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the Section 515 Rural Rental Housing Program for Fiscal Year 2004

AGENCY: Rural Housing Service (RHS), USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This NOFA announces the availability of new construction loan funds for the section 515 Rural Rental Housing (RRH) program for Fiscal Year (FY) 2004. A “Notice of Timeframe to Submit Applications for the Section 515 Rural Rental Housing Program for Fiscal Year 2004” was published in the **Federal Register** on February 6, 2004 (69 FR 5821). This was done soon after passage of a final appropriations act to allow sufficient time for applicants to complete an application and for the Agency to select and process selected applications within the current fiscal year. In the notice dated February 6, 2004, the Agency announced a deadline of April 6, 2004, 5 p.m. local time for each Rural Development State Office, for submitting applications for section 515 new construction loan funds and section 521 Rental Assistance (RA) funds. Detailed information regarding

the application and selection process, as well as a listing of the Rural Development State Offices, can be found in the February 6, 2004, notice.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For general information, applicants may contact Barbara Chism, Senior Loan Officer, Multi-Family Housing Processing Division, Rural Housing Service, United States Department of Agriculture, Stop 0781, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250, telephone (202) 690-1436 (voice) (this is not a toll free number) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD-Federal Information Relay Service).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Programs Affected

The Rural Rental Housing program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under Number 10.415, Rural Rental Housing Loans. Rental Assistance is listed in the Catalog under Number 10.427, Rural Rental Assistance Payments.

Discussion of Notice

Authority and Distribution Methodology

A. Authority

Section 515 of the Housing Act of 1949 (42 U.S.C. 1485) provides RHS with the authority to make loans to any individual, corporation, association, trust, Indian tribe, public or private nonprofit organization, consumer cooperative, or partnership to provide rental or cooperative housing and related facilities in rural areas for very-low, low, or moderate income persons or families, including elderly persons and persons with disabilities. Rental Assistance (RA) is a tenant subsidy for very-low and low-income families residing in rural rental housing facilities with RHS financing and may be requested with applications for such facilities.

B. Distribution Methodology

The total amount available for FY 2004 for section 515 is \$115,857,375, of which \$30,057,375 is available for new construction as follows:

Section 515 new construction funds—
\$7,837,343
Set-aside for nonprofits—\$10,427,163
Set-aside for Underserved Counties and Colonias—\$5,792,869
Set-aside for EZ, EC, and REAP Zones—
\$5,000,000
State Rental Assistance (RA) Designated reserve—\$ 1,000,000

C. Set-asides and State RA Reserve

1. *Nonprofit set-aside.* An amount of \$10,427,163 has been set aside for nonprofit applicants. Details on this set-

aside are provided in the notice published on February 6, 2004 (69 FR 5821).

2. *Underserved counties and colonias set-aside.* An amount of \$5,792,868 has been set aside for loan requests to develop units in the 100 most needy underserved counties or colonias as defined in section 509(f) of the Housing Act of 1949.

3. *EZ, EC, and REAP set-aside.* An amount of \$5,000,000 has been set aside to develop units in EZ, EC, or REAP communities. If requests for this set-aside exceed available funds, selection will be made by point score.

4. *State RA Reserve.* \$1,000,000 is available nationwide in a reserve for States with viable State Rental Assistance (RA) programs. In order to participate, States are to submit specific written information about the State RA program, *i.e.*, a memorandum of understanding, documentation from the provider, etc., to the National Office.

Dated: March 9, 2004.

Arthur A. Garcia,

Administrator, Rural Housing Service.

[FR Doc. 04-5962 Filed 3-16-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Housing Service

Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) for Section 533 Housing Preservation Grants for Fiscal Year 2004

AGENCY: Rural Housing Service (RHS), USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This NOFA announces the availability of funds for section 533 Housing Preservation Grant (HPG) Program. A "Notice of Timeframe for Section 533 Housing Preservation Grants for Fiscal Year 2004" was published in the **Federal Register** on February 6, 2004 (69 FR 5824). This was done shortly after passage of a final appropriations act to allow sufficient time for applicants to complete an application and for the Agency to select and process selected applications within the current fiscal year. Detailed information regarding the application and selection process, as well as a listing of the Rural Development State Offices, can be found in the February 6, 2004, Notice. Also, in the Notice dated February 6, 2004, the Agency announced a deadline of May 6, 2004, 5 p.m., local time for each Rural Development State Office, for submitting applications for the Section

533 Housing Preservation Grant Program.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For general information, applicants may contact Tammy Daniels, Loan Specialist, Multi-Family Housing Processing Division, Rural Housing Service, United States Department of Agriculture, Stop 0781, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC, 20250, telephone (202) 720-0021 (voice) (This is not a toll free number.) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD-Federal Information Relay Service).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Programs Affected

This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under Number 10.433, Rural Housing Preservation Grants. This program is subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials (7 CFR part 3015, subpart V). Applicants are referred to 7 CFR 1944.674 and 1944.676(f), (g), and (h) for specific guidance on these requirements relative to the HPG program.

Discussion of Notice

Authority and Distribution Methodology

A. Authority

The HPG program is a grant program which provides qualified public agencies, private nonprofit organizations, and other eligible entities grant funds to assist very low- and low-income homeowners to repair and rehabilitate their homes in rural areas, and to assist rental property owners and cooperative housing complexes to repair and rehabilitate their units if they agree to make such units available to low- and very low-income persons.

B. Distribution Methodology

The funding instrument for the HPG program will be a grant agreement. The term of the grant can vary from 1 to 2 years, depending on available funds and demand. No maximum or minimum grant levels have been established at the National level. You should contact the State office to determine the allocation and the State maximum grant level, if any. For FY 2004, \$8,882,000 is available for the Housing Preservation Grant Program. A set aside of \$894,690 has been established for grants located in Empowerment Zones, Enterprise Communities, and REAP Zones, \$882,200 has been set aside for the Administrator's reserve and \$7,099,110 has been distributed under a formula allocation to States pursuant to 7 CFR

part 1940, subpart L, "Methodology and Formulas for Allocation of Loan and Grant Program Funds." Decisions on funding will be based on preapplications.

Dated: March 9, 2004.

Arthur A. Garcia,

Administrator, Rural Housing Service.

[FR Doc. 04-5961 Filed 3-16-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Housing Service

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the Section 538 Guaranteed Rural Rental Housing Program (GRRHP) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2004

AGENCY: Rural Housing Service (RHS), USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This NOFA announces the availability of funds for the section 538 Guaranteed Rural Rental Housing Program for FY 2004. Congress appropriated \$99.410 million to the section 538 GRRHP for FY 2004. All applicants that submitted responses to the section 538 GRRHP notice published in the **Federal Register** on February 6, 2004 (69 FR 5826) will be considered for FY 2004 funding. The commitment of program dollars will be made to applicants that submitted responses that have fulfilled the necessary requirements for obligation as described in the February 6, 2004, **Federal Register** Notice. The Agency will continue to review applications submitted hereafter from eligible applicants until all funds are expended.

The Agency will issue a notice to inform the public when funds have been exhausted for FY 2004.

Dated: March 9, 2004.

Arthur A. Garcia,

Administrator, Rural Housing Service.

[FR Doc. 04-5960 Filed 3-16-04; 8:45 am]

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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