

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**National Agricultural Statistics Service****Notice of Intent To Request an Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection**

AGENCY: National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104–13) and Office of Management and Budget regulations at 5 CFR part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), this notice announces the intention the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) to request an extension of a currently approved information collection, Field Crop Production.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by August 9, 2004 to be assured of consideration.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be sent to Ginny McBride, NASS Clearance Officer, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 5336 South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250 or to gmcbride@nass.usda.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Carol House, Associate Administrator, National Agricultural Statistics Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, (202) 720–4333.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Field Crop Production.

OMB Control Number: 0535–0002.

Expiration Date of Approval: 12/31/04.

Type of Request: To extend a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: The primary objective of the National Agricultural Statistics Service is to prepare and issue state and national estimates of crop and livestock production, prices, and disposition. The Field Crop Production program consists of probability field crop surveys and supplemental panel surveys. The panel surveys capture unique crop characteristics such as the concentration of crops in localized geographical areas. These surveys are extremely valuable for commodities where acreage and yield are published at the county level.

The Field Crop Production Program was last approved by OMB in 2001 for a 3-year period. NASS intends to request that the survey be approved for another 3 years. Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response.

Respondents: Farms.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 550,000.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 150,000 hours.

These data will be collected under the authority of 7 U.S.C. 2204(a). Individually identifiable data collected under this authority are governed by section 1770 of the Food Security Act of 1985, 7 U.S.C. 2276, which requires USDA to afford strict confidentiality to non-aggregated data provided by respondents.

Copies of this information collection and related instructions can be obtained without charge from Ginny McBride, the Agency OMB Clearance Officer, at (202) 720–5778.

Comments: 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 the 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: Ginny McBride, Agency OMB Clearance Officer, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 5330B South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250–2024 or gmcbride@nass.usda.gov.

All responses to this notice will become a matter of public record and be summarized in the request for OMB approval.

Signed at Washington, DC, May 18, 2004.

Carol House,

Associate Administrator.

[FR Doc. 04–12468 Filed 6–2–04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–20–P

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AGENCY: National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. No. 104–13) and Office of Management and Budget regulations at 5 CFR part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), this notice announces the intention the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) to request an extension of a currently approved information collection, the Fruits, Nuts, and Specialty Crops Surveys.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by August 9, 2004 to be assured of consideration.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be sent to Ginny McBride, NASS Clearance Officer, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 5336 South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250 or to gmcbride@nass.usda.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Carol House, Associate Administrator, National Agricultural Statistics Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, (202) 720–4333.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Fruits, Nuts, and Specialty Crops Surveys.

OMB Control Number: 0535–0039.

Expiration Date of Approval: 11/30/04.

Type of Request: To extend a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: The primary objective of the National Agricultural Statistics Service is to prepare and issue state and national estimates of crop and livestock production, prices, and disposition. The Fruits, Nuts, and Specialty Crops survey program collects information on acreage, yield, production, price, and value of citrus and noncitrus fruits and nuts and other specialty crops in States with significant commercial production. The program provides data needed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and other government agencies to administer programs and to set trade quotas and tariffs. Producers, processors, other industry representatives, State Departments of Agriculture and universities also use forecasts and estimates provided by these surveys.

The Fruits, Nuts, and Specialty Crops Program was last approved by OMB in 2001 for a 3-year period. NASS intends to request that the survey be approved for another 3 years.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 17 minutes per response.

Respondents: Producers, processors, and handlers.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 53,000.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 17,000 hours.

These data will be collected under the authority of 7 U.S.C. 2204(a). Individually identifiable data collected under this authority are governed by section 1770 of the Food Security Act of 1985, 7 U.S.C. 2276, which requires USDA to afford strict confidentiality to non-aggregated data provided by respondents.

Copies of this information collection and related instructions can be obtained without charge from Ginny McBride, the Agency OMB Clearance Officer, at (202) 720-5778.

Comments: 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 the 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: Ginny McBride, Agency OMB Clearance Officer, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 5330B South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250-2024 or gmcbride@nass.usda.gov.

All responses to this notice will become a matter of public record and be summarized in the request for OMB approval.

Signed at Washington, DC, May 18, 2004.

Carol House,

Associate Administrator.

[FR Doc. 04-12469 Filed 6-2-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-20-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Walnut Bayou Irrigation Project in the Red River Watershed, Little Rock, AR

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969; the Council on

Environmental Quality Guidelines (40 CFR part 1500); and the Natural Resources Conservation Service Regulations (7 CFR part 650); the Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, announces its intention to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the impacts of an irrigation project in the Red River Watershed in Little River County, Arkansas.

The measures proposed by NRCS include the diversion of water from the Red River to irrigate 23,500 acres of agricultural land in the Walnut Bayou Irrigation District. The Draft EIS will assess the potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts of the NRCS proposed action and a range of alternatives. The Draft EIS analysis will incorporate mitigation measures which will minimize to the greatest extent practicable any potential adverse environmental or socioeconomic impacts.

Public Participation: The NRCS invites full participation to promote open communication and better decision making. All persons and organizations that have an interest in the Walnut Bayou Irrigation Project as it affects Little River County and the environment are urged to participate in the NEPA environmental analysis process.

Public comments are welcomed throughout the NEPA process. Opportunities for public participation include: (1) The EIS scoping period when comments on the NRCS proposal will be solicited through various media; (2) during the 45-day review and comment period for the published Draft EIS; and (3) for 30 days after the publication of the Final EIS.

Scoping Process: NRCS is soliciting public comments indicating what issues and impacts the public believes should be encompassed within the scope of the EIS analysis, any concerns they might have about the NRCS proposal and alternatives, and any ideas they might have about addressing irrigation for the Walnut Bayou Irrigation District.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Alan Rees, Biologist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Room 3416, Federal Building, 700 West Capitol Avenue, Little Rock, Arkansas 72201-3225. Comments may also be submitted by sending a facsimile to (501) 301-3189, or by e-mail to alan.rees@ar.usda.gov. Respondents should provide mailing address information and indicate if they wish to be included on the EIS mailing list. All individuals on the mailing list will receive a copy of the Draft EIS.

Responsible Official: The State Conservationist, NRCS, Little Rock, Arkansas is the responsible official for this proposed action.

Decisions To Be Made: The responsible NRCS official will decide whether to approve the proposal, an alternative to the proposal, or no action.

Need for the Proposal: The proposal is needed to provide a dependable supply of irrigation water to cropland during the growing season.

Purpose of the Proposal: The purpose of the proposal is prevention of crop damage due to a lack of water for the existing crop composition.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Walnut Bayou project area encompasses approximately 23,500 acres in Little River County in Southwest Arkansas. The project area begins at the Arkansas/Oklahoma state line and continues east along Walnut Bayou to its confluence with the Red River. The Red River is the largest source of surface water in the project area, and has about 48,000 square miles of drainage upstream from Arkansas. Corn, soybeans, pecans, grain sorghum, rice, and wheat are the primary crops produced within the project area.

Preliminary Issues: Among the issues that NRCS plans to consider in the scope of the EIS analysis are:

- The potential impacts on endangered species;
- The potential for soil salinization;
- The economic and social impacts of the proposed action and alternatives;
- The potential for floodplain impacts;
- The costs and benefits of the proposed action and alternatives; and
- Analysis of known and foreseeable cumulative effects on the Red River.

Preliminary Alternatives: The Draft EIS will assess the potential environmental impacts of a range of alternatives. The preliminary alternatives for the Draft EIS include: (1) On-farm irrigation water storage with no withdrawal from the Red River; (2) on-farm irrigation water storage with additional water withdrawn from the Red River; (3) on-farm conservation measures, no irrigation water storage, with water withdrawn from the Red River; and (4) no action. The alternatives will be refined and supplemented, as appropriate, based on input by the public and agencies during the public scoping process.

Alternative 1—On-farm irrigation water storage with no withdrawal from the Red River. Under this alternative runoff from rainfall that falls upon the project area would be captured, stored in reservoirs, and used for irrigation.