

life that depends on those waters, and in human uses of that water. This phenomenon is called eutrophication. Eutrophication of United States surface waters is a long standing problem. Eutrophication due to excessive nutrients is one of the top five causes of waterbody impairment in the U.S., according to information provided by states on their CWA section 303(d) lists. Chronic symptoms of over-enrichment include low dissolved oxygen, fish kills, cloudy murky water, and depletion of desirable flora and fauna.

Within wetlands chronic symptoms of over-enrichment include low dissolved oxygen, fish kills, increased sediment accumulation, and species and abundance shifts of flora and fauna. The problem is national in scope, but varies in nature from one region of the country to another due to geographical variations in geology and soil types.

#### *B. What Has EPA Done To Develop Criteria for Nutrients?*

In 1998, EPA published a report entitled "National Strategy for the Development of Regional Nutrient Criteria." This report outlined a framework for development of waterbody-specific technical guidance that can be used to assess nutrient status and develop region-specific numeric nutrient criteria. We have already released the companion Nutrient Criteria Technical Guidance Manuals for Rivers and Streams (2000), Lakes and Reservoirs (2000), and Estuarine and Coastal Marine Waters (2001). The document presented here is the wetland-specific technical guidance for developing numeric nutrient criteria.

#### *C. What Is Included in the Draft Guidance?*

The guidance explains how to consider water, vegetation and soil conditions to develop regionally-based numeric nutrient criteria for wetland systems. While the manual does not provide specific recommendations for nutrient criteria, it does give EPA's recommendations on defensible technical approaches for developing regional nutrient criteria. This document provides elements considered important to criteria development including Classification, Sampling Design and Criteria Development (setting a benchmark).

#### 1. Classification of Wetlands

Classification strategies for nutrient criteria development can include physiographic regions, hydrogeomorphic class, water depth and duration, and/or vegetation type or zone. Choosing a specific classification

scheme will depend on practical considerations, such as: Whether a classification scheme is available in mapped digital form or can be readily derived from existing map layers; whether a hydrogeomorphic or other classification scheme has been refined for a particular region and wetland type; and whether classification schemes are already in use for monitoring and assessment of other water body types in a state or region.

#### 2. Sampling Design

Three sampling designs for new wetland monitoring programs are described including: stratified random sampling, targeted/tiered approach, and BACI (Before/After, Control/Impact). These approaches are designed to allow one to obtain a significant amount of information for statistical analyses with relatively minimal effort. Sampling efforts should be designed to collect information that will answer management questions in a way that will allow robust statistical analysis. In addition, site selection, characterization of reference sites or systems, and identification of appropriate index periods are all of particular concern when selecting an appropriate sampling design. Careful selection of sampling design will allow the best use of financial resources and will result in the collection of high quality data for evaluation of the wetland resources of a State or Tribe.

#### 3. Criteria Development

Several methods can be used to develop numeric nutrient criteria for wetlands; they include but are not limited to three criteria development methods that are detailed in this document: (1) Identification of reference systems for each established wetland type and class based on either best professional judgment (BPJ) or percentile selections of data plotted as frequency distributions; (2) refinement of classification systems, use of models, and/or examination of system biological attributes to assess the relationships among nutrients, vegetation or algae, soil, and other variables; and (3) use of published nutrient and vegetation, algal, and soil relationships and values that may be used (or modified for use) as criteria. A weight of evidence approach with multiple attributes that combine one or more of the development approaches will produce criteria of greater scientific validity.

Recognizing relationships between nutrient input and wetland response is the first step in mitigating the effects of cultural eutrophication. Once relationships are established, nutrient

criteria can be developed to manage nutrient pollution and protect wetlands from eutrophication.

Dated: December 7, 2006.

**Ephraim King,**

*Director, Office of Science and Technology.*

[FR Doc. E6-21287 Filed 12-13-06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6560-50-P**

## EXPORT-IMPORT BANK

#### [Public Notice 95]

#### **Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request**

**AGENCY:** Export-Import Bank of the United States (Ex-Im Bank).

**ACTION:** Notice and request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The Export-Import Bank, as a part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on the proposed information collection as required by the Paperwork Reduction act of 1995. The purpose of the survey is to fulfill a statutory mandate (The Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended, 12 U.S.C. 635) which directs Ex-Im Bank to report annually to the U.S. Congress any action taken toward providing export credit programs that are competitive with those offered by official foreign export credit agencies. The Act further stipulates that the annual report on competitiveness should include the results of a survey of U.S. exporters and U.S. commercial lending institutions which provide export credit to determine their experience in meeting financial competition from other countries whose exporters compete with U.S. exporters.

Accordingly, Ex-Im Bank is requesting that the proposed survey (EIB No. 00-02) be sent to approximately 60 applicants of Ex-Im Bank's medium- and long-term programs. The revised survey is similar to the previous survey, as it asks bankers and exporters to evaluate the competitiveness of Ex-Im Bank's programs vis-à-vis foreign export credit agencies. However, it has been modified in order to account for newer policies and to capture enough information to provide a better analysis of our competitiveness. In addition, the survey will be available on Ex-Im Bank's website, [www.exim.gov](http://www.exim.gov), with recipients encouraged to respond on-line as well.

**DATES:** Written comments should be received on or before January 16, 2007 to be assured of consideration.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all comments to David Rostker, Office of Management and Budget, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, NEOB, Room 10202, Washington, DC 20503 (202) 395-3897.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** With respect to the proposed collection of information, Ex-Im Bank invites comments as to:

- Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of Ex-Im Bank, including whether the information will have a practical use;
- The accuracy of Ex-Im Bank's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- Ways to enhance the quality, usefulness, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- Ways to minimize the burden of 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; e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses

**Title & Form Number:** 2006 Exporter & Banker Survey of Ex-Im Bank Competitiveness, EIB Form 00-02.

**OMB Number:** 3048-0004.

**Type of Review:** Revision of a currently approved collection.

**Annual Number of Respondents:** 60.

**Annual Burden Hours:** 60.

**Frequency of Reporting or Use:** Annual Survey.

Dated: December 8, 2006.

**Solomon Bush,**

*Agency Clearance Officer.*

[FR Doc. 06-9680 Filed 12-13-06; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6690-01-M**

## FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

### Sunshine Act Notices Meeting

**DATE AND TIME:** Thursday, December 14, 2006 at 10 a.m.

**PLACE:** 999 E Street, NW., Washington, DC (ninth floor).

**STATUS:** This meeting will be open to the public.

**THE FOLLOWING ITEM HAS BEEN ADDED TO THE AGENDA:** Purpose of Disbursement Policy Statement.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Robert Biersack, Press Officer, Telephone: (202) 694-1220.

**Mary W. Dove,**  
*Secretary of the Commission.*

[FR Doc. 06-9721 Filed 12-12-06; 10:53 am]

**BILLING CODE 6715-01-M**

1. Proposed joint rules implementing the "Broker" exceptions for banks under the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act.

**NOTE:** This meeting will be recorded for the benefit of those unable to attend. Cassettes will be available for listening in the Board's Freedom of Information Office, and copies may be ordered for \$6 per cassette by calling 202-452-3684 or by writing to: Freedom of Information Office, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Washington, D.C. 20551.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Michelle Smith, Director, or Dave Skidmore, Assistant to the Board, Office of Board Members at 202-452-2955.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** You may call (202) 452-3206 for a **recorded announcement** of this meeting; or you may contact the Board's Web site at <http://www.federalreserve.gov> for an **electronic announcement**. (The Web site also includes procedural and other information about the open meeting.)

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, December 11, 2006.

**Robert deV. Frierson,**

*Deputy Secretary of the Board.*

[FR Doc. 06-9715 Filed 12-11-06; 4:19 pm]

**BILLING CODE 6210-01-S**

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

### Medicare Program; Medicare Appeals; Adjustment to the Amount in Controversy Threshold Amounts for Calendar Year 2007

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This notice announces the annual adjustment in the amount in controversy (AIC) threshold amounts for administrative law judge (ALJ) hearings and judicial review under the Medicare appeals process. The adjustments to the AIC threshold amounts will be effective for requests for ALJ hearings and judicial review filed on or after January 1, 2007. The 2007 AIC threshold amounts are \$110 for ALJ hearings and \$1,130 for judicial review.

**DATES:** *Effective Date:* January 1, 2007.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Michael L. Lipinski, Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals, Office of the Secretary; (216) 615-4084.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

#### I. Background

Section 1869(b)(1)(E) of the Social Security Act, as amended by Section 521 of the Medicare, Medicaid and SCHIP Benefits Improvement and

**MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED:**  
**Discussion Agenda:**