

Notices

Federal Register

Vol. 75, No. 58

Friday, March 26, 2010

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.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Office of the Secretary

Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; extension of application acceptance period.

SUMMARY: On March 5, 2010, the Department of Agriculture published in the **Federal Register** (75 FR 10204) a notice of intent to establish the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Advisory Committee and call for nominations for committee members. The Department of Agriculture is extending the date that applications for nominations will be accepted from March 22, 2010, to March 29, 2010.

DATES: All nominations must be received in writing by March 29, 2010. Nominations must contain a completed application packet that includes the nominee's name, resume, and completed form AD-755 (Advisory Committee Membership Background Information). The package must be sent to the address below.

ADDRESSES: Send nominations and applications to William Timko, USDA Forest Service; Forest Management, Room 3NW; 201 14th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20024 by express mail or overnight courier service. If sent via the U.S. Postal Service, send to the following address: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Forest Management, National Forest System, Mail Stop 1103, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-1123.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas Peterson, U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Forest System, Forest Management; telephone 202-205-0893, fax 202-205-1045, e-mail: tpeterson01@fs.fed.us, or contact William Timko, U.S. Department of

Agriculture; National Forest System, Forest Management, telephone 202-205-0893, fax 202-205-1045, e-mail: btimko@fs.fed.us. Individuals who use telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday.

Dated: March 21, 2010.

Pearlie S. Reed,

Assistant Secretary of Administration.

[FR Doc. 2010-6777 Filed 3-25-10; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Announcement of Grant and Loan Application Deadlines and Funding Levels

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of funding availability and solicitation of applications.

SUMMARY: The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) announces its Revolving Fund Program (RFP) application window for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010. In addition to announcing the application window, RUS announces the available funding of \$497,000 for RFP competitive grants for the fiscal year.

DATES: You may submit completed applications for grants on paper or electronically according to the following deadlines:

- Paper copies must be postmarked and mailed, shipped, or sent overnight *no later than* May 25, 2010 to be eligible for FY 2010 grant funding. Late or incomplete applications will not be eligible for FY 2010 grant funding.
- Electronic copies must be received by May 25, 2010 to be eligible for FY 2010 grant funding. Late or incomplete applications will not be eligible for FY 2010 grant funding.

ADDRESSES: You may obtain application guides and materials for the RFP program at the Water and Environmental Programs (WEP) Web site: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/index.htm>. You may also request application guides and materials by contacting Anita O'Brien at (202) 690-3789.

Submit completed paper applications for RFP grants to the USDA Rural

Utilities Service, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Room 2233, STOP 1570, Washington, DC 20250-1570.

Applications should be marked "Attention: Assistant Administrator, Water and Environmental Programs."

Submit electronic grant applications at <http://www.grants.gov> (Grants.gov) and follow the instructions you find on that Web site.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Joyce Taylor, Community Program Specialist, USDA, Rural Utilities Service, Water and Environmental Programs; telephone: (202) 720-0499, fax: (202) 690-0649.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Overview

Federal Agency: Rural Utilities Service (RUS).

Funding Opportunity Title: Grant Program to Establish a Fund for Financing Water and Wastewater Projects (Revolving Fund Program (RFP)).

Announcement Type: Funding Level Announcement, and Solicitation of Applications.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 10.864.

Dates: You may submit completed application for a RFP grant from March 26, 2010 to May 25, 2010.

Reminder of competitive grant application deadline: Applications must be mailed, shipped or submitted electronically through Grants.gov no later than May 25, 2010 to be eligible for FY 2010 grant funding.

Items in Supplementary Information

- I. Funding Opportunity: Brief introduction to the RFP.
- II. Award Information: Available funds, maximum amounts.
- III. Eligibility Information: Who is eligible, what kinds of projects are eligible, what criteria determine basic eligibility.
- IV. Application and Submission Information: Where to get application materials, what constitutes a completed application, how and where to submit applications, deadlines, items that are eligible.
- V. Application Review Information: Considerations and preferences, scoring criteria, review standards, selection information.
- VI. Award Administration Information: Award notice information, award recipient reporting requirements.
- VII. Agency Contacts: Web, phone, fax, e-mail, contact name.

I. Funding Opportunity

Drinking water systems are basic and vital to both health and economic development. With dependable water facilities, rural communities can attract families and businesses that will invest in the community and improve the quality of life for all residents. Without dependable water facilities, the communities cannot sustain economic development.

RUS provides financial and technical assistance to help communities bring safe drinking water and sanitary, environmentally sound waste disposal facilities to rural Americans. It supports the sound development of rural communities and the growth of our economy without endangering the environment.

The RFP has been established to assist communities with water or wastewater systems. Qualified private non-profit organizations, who are selected for funding, will receive RFP grant funds to establish a lending program for eligible entities. Eligible entities for the revolving loan fund will be the same entities eligible to obtain a loan, loan guarantee, or grant from the Water and Waste Disposal loan and grant programs administered by RUS, under 7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(1) and (2). As grant recipients, the non-profit organizations will set up a revolving loan fund to provide loans to finance predevelopment costs of water or wastewater projects, or short-term small capital projects not part of the regular operation and maintenance of current water and wastewater systems. The amount of financing to an eligible entity shall not exceed \$100,000.00 and shall be repaid in a term not to exceed 10 years. The rate shall be determined in the approved grant work plan.

II. Award Information

Available funds: RUS is making available \$497,000 for competitive grants in FY 2010.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Who is eligible to apply?

An applicant is eligible to apply for the RFP grant if it:

1. Is a private, non-profit organization;
2. Is legally established and located within one of the following:
 - (a) A state within the United States;
 - (b) The District of Columbia;
 - (c) The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; or
 - (d) A United States territory;
3. Has the legal capacity and authority to carry out the grant purpose;
4. Has a proven record of successfully operating a revolving loan fund to rural areas;

5. Has capitalization acceptable to the Agency, and is composed of at least 51 percent of the outstanding interest or membership being citizens of the United States or individuals who reside in the United States after being legally admitted for permanent residence;

6. Has no delinquent debt to the Federal Government or no outstanding judgments to repay a Federal debt;

7. Demonstrates that it possesses the financial, technical, and managerial capability to comply with Federal and State laws and requirements.

B. What are the basic eligibility requirements for a project?

1. The following activities are authorized under the RFP statute:

(a) Grant funds must be used to capitalize a revolving fund program for the purpose of providing direct loan financing to eligible entities for pre-development costs associated with proposed or with existing water and wastewater systems, or

(b) Short-term costs incurred for equipment replacement, small-scale extension of services, or other small capital projects that are not part of the regular operations and maintenance activities of existing water and wastewater systems.

2. Grant funds may not be used to pay any of the following:

(a) Payment of the Grant Recipient's administrative costs or expenses, and

(b) Delinquent debt owed to the Federal Government.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. The Grant Application Guide, Copies of Necessary Forms and Samples, and the RFP Regulation Are Available From These Sources

1. The Internet: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/index.htm> or <http://www.grants.gov>.

2. For paper copies of these materials telephone (202) 720-0499.

B. You May File an Application in Either Paper or Electronic Format

1. Applications submitted by paper:

- (a) Send or deliver paper applications by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) or courier delivery services to: Assistant Administrator—Water and Environmental Programs, Rural Utilities Service, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 1548, Room S-5145, Washington, DC, 20250-1548.
- (b) For paper applications mail or ensure delivery of an original paper application (no stamped, photocopied, or initialed signatures) and two copies by the deadline date. The application

and any materials sent with it become Federal records by law and cannot be returned to you.

2. Electronically submitted applications:

(a) Applicant may file an electronic application at <http://www.grants.gov>. Applications will not be accepted via facsimile machine transmission or electronic mail. Grants.gov contains full instructions on all required passwords, credentialing, and software. Follow the instructions at Grants.gov for registering and submitting an electronic application. If a system problem or technical difficulty occurs with an electronic application, please use the customer support resources available at the Grants.gov Web site.

(b) First time Grants.gov users should go to the "Get Started" tab on the Grants.gov site and carefully read and follow the steps listed. These steps need to be initiated early in the application process to avoid delays in submitting your application online.

(c) Registering with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR) will take some time to complete, so keep that in mind when beginning the application process. In order to register with the CCR, your organization will need a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number.

(d) A DUNS number is a unique nine-character identification number provided by the commercial company, Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). Whether you file a paper or an electronic application, you will need a DUNS number. To investigate if your organization already has a DUNS number or to obtain a DUNS number, contact Dun & Bradstreet at 1-866-705-5711 or access the Web site at <http://www.dunandbradstreet.com>. You must provide your DUNS number on the SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance." The following information is needed when requesting a DUNS number:

- (1) Legal Name
- (2) Headquarters name and address of the organization
- (3) Doing business as (dba) or other name by which the organization is commonly recognized
- (4) Physical address
- (5) Mailing address (if separate from headquarters and/or physical address)
- (6) Telephone number
- (7) Contact name and title
- (8) Number of employees at the physical location

(e) Be sure to complete the Marketing Partner ID (MPIN) and Electronic Business Primary Point of Contact fields during the CCR registration process. These are mandatory fields that are

required when submitting grant applications through Grants.gov. Information about registering with CCR was published in the **Federal Register** on January 17, 2006. (See 71 FR 2549.) Additional application instructions for submitting an electronic application can be found by selecting this funding opportunity on Grants.gov.

C. A Complete Application Must Meet the Following Requirements

1. To be considered for support, you must be an eligible entity and must submit a complete application by the deadline date. You should consult the cost principles and general administrative requirements for grants pertaining to their organizational type in order to prepare the budget and complete other parts of the application. You also must demonstrate compliance (or intent to comply), through certification or other means, with a number of public policy requirements.

2. Applicants must complete and submit the following forms to apply for a RFP grant:

(a) Standard Form 424, "Application for Federal Assistance"

(b) Standard Form 424A, "Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs"

(c) Standard Form 424B, "Assurances—Non-Construction Programs"

(d) Standard Form LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activity"

(e) Form RD 400-1, "Equal Opportunity Agreement"

(f) Form RD 400-4, "Assurance Agreement" (Under Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964)

3. The project proposal should outline the project in sufficient detail to provide a reader with a complete understanding of how the loan program will work. Explain what you will accomplish by lending funds to eligible entities. Demonstrate the feasibility of the proposed loan program in meeting the objectives of this grant program. The proposal should cover the following elements:

(a) Present a brief project overview. Explain the purpose of the project, how it relates to RUS' purposes, how you will carry out the project, what the project will produce, and who will direct it.

(b) Describe why the project is necessary. Demonstrate that eligible entities need loan funds. Quantify the number of prospective borrowers or provide statistical or narrative evidence that a sufficient number of borrowers will exist to justify the grant award. Describe the service area. Address community needs.

(c) Clearly state your project goals. Your objectives should clearly describe the goals and be concrete and specific enough to be quantitative or observable. They should also be feasible and relate to the purpose of the loan program.

(d) The narrative should cover in more detail the items briefly described in the Project Summary. It should establish the basis for any claims that you have substantial expertise in promoting the safe and productive use of revolving funds. In describing what the project will achieve, you should tell the reader if it also will have broader influence. The narrative should address the following points:

(1) Document your ability to administer and service a revolving fund in accordance with the provisions of 7 CFR part 1783.

(2) Document your ability to commit financial resources to establish the RFP with funds your organization controls. This documentation should describe the sources of funds other than the RFP grant that will be used to pay your operational costs and provide financial assistance for projects.

(3) Demonstrate that you have secured commitments of significant financial support from other funding sources, if appropriate.

(4) List the fees and charges that borrowers will be assessed.

(e) The work plan must describe the tasks and activities that will be accomplished with available resources during the grant period. It must show the work you plan to do to achieve the anticipated outcomes, goals, and objectives set out for the RFP. The plan must:

(1) Describe the work to be performed by each person.

(2) Give a schedule or timetable of work to be done.

(3) Show evidence of previous experience with the techniques to be used or their successful use by others.

(4) Outline the loan program to include the following: specific loan purposes, a loan application process, priorities, borrower eligibility criteria, limitations, fees, interest rates, terms, and collateral requirements.

(5) Provide a marketing plan.

(6) Explain the mechanics of how you will transfer loan funds to the borrowers.

(7) Describe follow-up or continuing activities that should occur after project completion such as monitoring and reporting borrowers' accomplishments.

(8) Describe how the results will be evaluated. The evaluation criteria should be in line with the project objectives.

(9) List all personnel responsible for administering this program along with a statement of their qualifications and experience.

(f) The written justification for projected costs should explain how budget figures were determined for each category. It should indicate which costs are to be covered by grant funds and which costs will be met by your organization or other organizations. The justification should account for all expenditures discussed in the narrative. It should reflect appropriate cost-sharing contributions. The budget justification should explain the budget and accounting system proposed or in place. The administrative costs for operating the budget should be expressed as a percentage of the overall budget. The budget justification should provide specific budget figures, rounding off figures to the nearest dollar. Applicants should consult OMB Circular A-122: "Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations" for information about appropriate costs for each budget category.

(g) In addition to completing the standard application forms, you must submit:

(1) Supplementary material that demonstrate that your organization is legally recognized under state and Federal law. Satisfactory documentation includes, but is not limited to, certificates from the Secretary of State, or copies of state statutes or laws establishing your organization. Letters from the IRS awarding tax-exempt status are not considered adequate evidence.

(2) A certified list of directors and officers with their respective terms.

(3) Evidence of tax exempt status from the IRS.

(4) Debarment and suspension information required in accordance with 7 CFR, part 3017, subpart 3017.335, if it applies. The section heading is "What information must I provide before entering into a covered transaction with the Department of Agriculture?" It is part of the Department of Agriculture's rules on Government-wide Debarment and Suspension.

(5) All of your organization's known workplaces by including the actual address of buildings (or parts of buildings) or other sites where work under the award takes place. Workplace identification is required under the drug-free workplace requirements in accordance with 7 CFR, part 3021, subpart 3021.230. The section heading is "How and when must I identify workplaces?" It is part of the Department of Agriculture's rules on Government-wide Requirements for

Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance).

(6) The most recent audit of your organization.

(7) The following financial statements:

i. A pro forma balance sheet at start-up and for at least three additional years; Balance sheets, income statements, and cash flow statements for the last three years.

ii. If your organization has been formed less than three years, the financial statements should be submitted for the periods from inception to the present. Projected income and cash flow statements for at least three years supported by a list of assumptions showing the basis for the

projections. The projected income statement and balance sheet must include one set of projections that shows the revolving loan fund only and a separate set of projections that shows your organization's total operations.

(8) Additional information to support and describe your plan for achieving the grant objectives. The information may be regarded as essential for understanding and evaluating the project such as letters of support, resolutions, policies, etc. The supplements may be presented in appendices to the proposal.

V. Application Review Information

A. Within 30 days of receiving your application, RUS will send you a letter

of acknowledgment. Your application will be reviewed for completeness to determine if you included all of the items required. If your application is incomplete or ineligible, RUS will return it to you with an explanation.

B. A review team, composed of at least two members, will evaluate all applications and proposals. They will make overall recommendations based on factors such as eligibility, application completeness, and conformity to application requirements. They will score the applications based on criteria in the next section.

C. All applications that are complete and eligible will be ranked competitively based on the following scoring criteria:

Scoring criteria	Points
1. Degree of expertise and successful experience in making and servicing commercial loans, with a successful record, for the following number of full years:	
(i) At least 1 but less than 3 years	5 points.
(ii) At least 3 but less than 5 years	10 points.
(iii) At least 5 but less than 10 years	20 points.
(iv) 10 or more years	30 points.
2. Percentage of applicant contributions. Points allowed under this paragraph will be based on written evidence of the availability of funds from sources other than the proceeds of a RFP grant to pay part of the cost of a loan recipient's project. In-kind contributions will not be considered. Funds from other sources as a percentage of the RFP grant and points corresponding to such percentages are as follows:	
Less than 20 percent -;	Ineligible.
At least 20 percent but not more than 49 percent of the total project costs	10 points.
3. Extent to which the work plan clearly articulates a well thought out comprehensive approach to accomplishing objectives; clearly defines who will be served by the project or program; clearly articulates the problem/issues to be addressed, identifies the service area to be covered by the RFP loans, and appears likely to be sustainable.	Up to 40 points.
4. Extent to which the goals and objectives are clearly defined, tied to the work plan, and are measurable	Up to 15 points.
5. Lowest ratio of projected administrative expenses to loans advanced	Up to 10 points.
6. Evaluation methods for considering loan applications and making RFP loans are specific to the program, clearly defined, measurable, and are consistent with program outcomes.	Up to 20 points.
7. Administrator's discretion, taking into consideration such factors as:	Up to 10 points.
Creative outreach ideas for marketing RFP loans;	
Amount of funds requested in relation to the amount of needs demonstrated in the proposal;	
Excellent utilization of a previous revolving loan fund; and,	
Optimizing the use of agency resources.	

VI. Award Administration Information

A. RUS will rank all qualifying applications by their final score. Applications will be selected for funding, based on the highest scores and the availability of funding for RFP grants. Each applicant will be notified in writing of the score its application receives.

B. In making its decision about your application, RUS may determine that your application is:

1. Eligible and selected for funding,
2. Eligible but offered fewer funds than requested,
3. Eligible but not selected for funding, or
4. Ineligible for the grant.

C. In accordance with 7 CFR part 1900, subpart B, you generally have the right to appeal adverse decisions. Some adverse decisions cannot be appealed.

For example, if you are denied RUS funding due to a lack of funds available for the grant program, this decision cannot be appealed. However, you may make a request to the National Appeals Division (NAD) to review the accuracy of our finding that the decision cannot be appealed. The appeal must be in writing and filed at the appropriate Regional Office, which can be found at <http://www.nad.usda.gov/offices.htm> or by calling (703) 305-1166.

D. Applicants selected for funding will complete a grant agreement, which outlines the terms and conditions of the grant award.

E. Grantees will be reimbursed as follows:

1. SF-270, "Request for Advance or Reimbursement," will be completed by the grantee and submitted to either the State or National Office.

2. Upon receipt of a properly completed SF-270, the funds will be requested through the field office terminal system. Ordinarily, payment will be made within 30 days after receipt of a proper request for reimbursement.

F. Any change in the scope of the project, budget adjustments of more than 10 percent of the total budget, or any other significant change in the project must be reported to and approved by the approval official by written amendment to the grant agreement. Any change not approved may be cause for termination of the grant.

G. Grantees shall constantly monitor performance to ensure that time schedules are being met, projected work by time periods is being accomplished, and other performance objectives are

being achieved. The Grantee will provide project reports as follows:

1. SF-269, "Financial Status Report (short form)," and a project performance activity report will be required of all grantees on a quarterly basis, due 30 days after the end of each quarter.

2. A final project performance report will be required with the last SF-269 due 90 days after the end of the last quarter in which the project is completed. The final report may serve as the last quarterly report.

3. All multi-State grantees are to submit an original of each report to the National Office. Grantees serving only one State are to submit an original of each report to the State Office. The project performance reports should detail, preferably in a narrative format, activities that have transpired for the specific time period.

H. The grantee will provide an audit report or financial statements as follows:

1. Grantees expending \$500,000 or more Federal funds per fiscal year will submit an audit conducted in accordance with OMB Circular A-133. The audit will be submitted within 9 months after the grantee's fiscal year. Additional audits may be required if the project period covers more than one fiscal year.

2. Grantees expending less than \$500,000 will provide annual financial statements covering the grant period, consisting of the organization's statement of income and expense and balance sheet signed by an appropriate official of the organization. Financial statements will be submitted within 90 days after the grantee's fiscal year.

VII. Agency Contacts

A. Web site: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water>. The Rural Utilities Service Web site maintains up-to-date resources and contact information for the RFP.

B. Phone: 202-720-0499.

C. Fax: 202-690-0649.

D. E-mail: joycem.taylor@wdc.usda.gov.

E. Main point of contact: Joyce Taylor, Community Programs Specialist, Water and Environmental Programs, Water Programs Division, Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

Dated: March 5, 2010.

Jonathan Adelstein,

Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.

[FR Doc. 2010-6686 Filed 3-25-10; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Household Water Well System Grant Program Announcement of Application Deadlines and Funding

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of funding availability and solicitation of applications.

SUMMARY: The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) announces the availability of \$993,000 in grant funds to be competitively awarded for the Household Water Well System (HWWS) Grant Program for fiscal year 2010. RUS will make grants to qualified private non-profit organizations to establish lending programs for homeowners to borrow up to \$11,000 to construct or repair household water wells for an existing home. The HWWS Grant Program regulations are contained in 7 CFR 1776.

DATES: The deadline for completed applications for a HWWS grant is May 31, 2010. Applications in either paper or electronic format must be postmarked or time-stamped electronically on or before the deadline. Late applications will be ineligible for grant consideration.

ADDRESSES: Submit electronic grant applications through <http://www.grants.gov> (Grants.gov), following the instructions on that Web site. Submit completed paper applications to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service, Mail Stop #1570, Room 2233-S, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250-1570. Applications should be marked "Attention: Water and Environmental Programs."

Application guides and materials for the HWWS Grant Program may be obtained electronically through <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/well.htm>. Call (202) 720-9589 to request paper copies of application guides and materials from the Water and Environmental Programs staff.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Lorrie Davis, Community Programs Specialist, U.S. Department of Agriculture, RUS Programs, Water and Environmental Programs, *telephone:* (202) 720-9631, *fax:* (202) 690-0649, *e-mail:* Lorrie.davis@wdc.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Overview

Federal Agency: Rural Utilities Service.

Funding Opportunity Title: HWWS Grant Program.

Announcement Type: Grant—Initial.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 10.862.
Due Date for Applications: May 31, 2010.

Items in Supplementary Information

- I. Funding Opportunity: Description of the HWWS Grant Program.
- II. Award Information: Available funds.
- III. Eligibility Information: Who is eligible, what kinds of projects are eligible, what criteria determine basic eligibility.
- IV. Application and Submission Information: Where to get application materials, what constitutes a completed application, how and where to submit applications, deadlines, items that are eligible.
- V. Application Review Information: Considerations and preferences, scoring criteria, review standards, selection information.
- VI. Award Administration Information: Award notice information, award recipient reporting requirements.
- VII. Agency Contacts: Web, phone, fax, e-mail, contact name.

I. Funding Opportunity

A. Program Description

The HWWS Grant Program has been established to help individuals with low to moderate incomes finance the costs of household water wells that they own or will own. The HWWS Grant Program is authorized under Section 306E of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (CONACT), 7 U.S.C. 1926e. The CONACT authorizes the RUS to make grants to qualified private non-profit organizations to establish lending programs for household water wells.

As the grant recipients, private non-profit organizations will receive HWWS grants to establish lending programs that will provide water well loans to individuals. The individuals, as loan recipients, may use the loans to construct, refurbish, and service their household well systems. A loan may not exceed \$11,000 and will have a term up to 20 years at a one percent annual interest rate.

B. Background

The RUS supports the sound development of rural communities and the growth of our economy without endangering the environment. The RUS provides financial and technical assistance to help communities bring safe drinking water and sanitary, environmentally sound waste disposal facilities to rural Americans in greatest need.

Central water systems may not be the only or best solution to drinking water problems. Distance or physical barriers make public central water systems expensive in remote areas. A significant