

committee's deliberations. Like all committee meetings, the meeting was a public meeting; and all entities, both large and small, were able to express their views on this issue.

Comments on the interim rule were required to be received by May 24, 2010. One comment supporting the rule was received. Therefore, for the reasons given in the interim rule, we are adopting the interim rule as a final rule, without change.

To view the interim rule, go to: <http://www.regulations.gov/search/Regs/home.html#documentDetail?R=0900006480addoad>.

This action also affirms information contained in the interim rule concerning Executive Orders 12866 and 12988, the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), and the E-Gov Act (44 U.S.C. 101).

After consideration of all relevant material presented, it is found that finalizing the interim rule without change, as published in the **Federal Register** (75 FR 20897, April 22, 2010), will tend to effectuate the declared policy of the Act.

#### List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 989

Grapes, Marketing agreements, Raisins, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

#### PART 989—[AMENDED]

■ Accordingly, the interim rule that amended 7 CFR part 989 and that was published at 75 FR 20897 on April 22, 2010, is adopted as a final rule, without change.

Dated: June 18, 2010.

**Robert C. Keeney,**

*Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.*

[FR Doc. 2010-15298 Filed 6-23-10; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-02-P

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Utilities Service

#### 7 CFR Part 1774

RIN 0572-AC14

#### Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities and Households Program

**ACTION:** Final rule.

**SUMMARY:** The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is issuing a regulation to establish the Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities and Households (SEARCH) Program as authorized by Section 306(a)(2) of the Consolidated

Farm and Rural Development Act (CONACT) (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(2)). The amendment added the new SEARCH grant program under which the Secretary is authorized to make predevelopment planning grants for feasibility studies, design assistance, and technical assistance to financially distressed communities in rural areas with populations of 2,500 or fewer inhabitants for water and waste disposal projects.

**DATES:** This rule is effective June 24, 2010.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Anita O'Brien, Loan Specialist, Water and Environmental Programs, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service, Room 2230 South Building, Stop 1570, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250-1570. Telephone: (202) 690-3789, FAX: (202) 690-0649, E-mail: [anita.obrien@usda.gov](mailto:anita.obrien@usda.gov).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Classification

##### *Executive Order 12866*

This final rule has been determined to be not significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866 and, therefore, has not been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

##### *Executive Order 12988*

This final rule has been reviewed in accordance with Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform. RUS has determined that this final rule meets the applicable standards provided in section 3 of the Executive Order. In addition, all State and local laws and regulations that are in conflict with this rule will be pre-empted; no retroactive effect will be given to the rule; and in accordance with sec. 212(e) of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. sec. 6912(e)), appeal procedures must be exhausted before an action against the Department or its agencies may be initiated.

##### *Regulatory Flexibility Act Certification*

RUS has determined that this final rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities, as defined in the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*). The RUS Water and Environmental Programs provide loans to borrowers at interest rates and terms that are more favorable than those generally available from the private sector. RUS borrowers, as a result of obtaining Federal financing, receive economic benefits that exceed any

direct economic costs associated with complying with RUS regulations and requirements.

##### *Information Collection and Recordkeeping Requirements*

The information collection and recordkeeping requirements contained in this final rule are pending approval by OMB pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35) under control number 0572—New. The paperwork contained in this rule will not be effective until approved by OMB.

##### *E-Government Act Compliance*

The Rural Utilities Service is committed to the E-Government Act, which requires Government agencies in general to provide the public the option of submitting information or transacting business electronically to the maximum extent possible.

##### *National Environmental Policy Act Certification*

The Administrator of RUS has determined that this final rule will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment as defined by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*). Therefore, this action does not require an environmental impact statement or assessment.

##### *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance*

The program described by this final rule is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Programs under number 10.759—Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities and Households Program (SEARCH). This catalog is available on a subscription basis from the Superintendent of Documents, the United States Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 20402-9325, telephone number (202) 512-1800 and at <https://www.cfda.gov>.

##### *Executive Order 12372*

This program is not subject to the requirements of Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," as implemented under USDA's regulations at 7 CFR part 3015.

##### *Unfunded Mandates*

This final rule contains no Federal mandates (under the regulatory provision of title II of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995) for State, local, and Tribal governments or the private sector. Therefore, this final rule is not subject to the requirements of section 202 and 205 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

*Executive Order 13132, Federalism*

The policies contained in this final rule do not have any substantial direct effect on States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. Nor does this final rule impose substantial direct compliance costs on State and local governments. Therefore, consultation with States is not required.

*Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination With Indian Tribal Governments*

USDA will undertake, within 6 months after this rule becomes effective, a series of regulation Tribal consultation sessions to gain input by Tribal officials concerning the impact of this rule on Tribal governments, communities, and individuals. These sessions will establish a baseline of consultation for future actions, should any become necessary, regarding this rule. Reports from these sessions for consultation will be made part of the USDA annual reporting on Tribal Consultation and Collaboration. USDA will respond in a timely and meaningful manner to all Tribal government requests for consultation concerning this rule and will provide additional venues, such as webinars and teleconferences, to periodically host collaborative conversations with Tribal leaders and their representatives concerning ways to improve this rule in Indian country.

**Background**

On January 22, 2010, RUS published a proposed rule in the **Federal Register** (75 FR 3642) to establish the Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities and Households (SEARCH) Program as authorized by Section 306(a)(2) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (CONACT) (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(2)). The amendment added a grant program to make Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities and Households (SEARCH) Program grants. SEARCH grants are intended to assist financially distressed, eligible communities to pay for feasibility studies, design assistance and technical assistance associated with water and waste disposal infrastructure needs.

Under the SEARCH program, the Secretary may make predevelopment and planning grants to public or quasi-public agencies, organizations operated on a not-for-profit basis or Indian Tribes on Federal and State reservations and other Federally recognized Indian Tribes. Up to 100 percent of the eligible

cost of the grant may be funded and may not exceed \$30,000. The grant recipients shall use the grant funds for feasibility studies, design assistance, and development of an application for financial assistance to financially distressed communities in rural areas with populations of 2,500 or fewer inhabitants for water and waste disposal projects as authorized in Sections 306(a)(1), 306(a)(2) and 306(a)(24) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (CONACT) (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(1), (a)(2) and (a)(24)).

Eligible entities for the SEARCH grants will be the same entities eligible to obtain a loan, grant, or loan guarantee from the Rural Utilities Service Water and Waste Disposal and Wastewater loan and grant programs. However, as applied to the SEARCH program, rural area is specified as one with a population of 2,500 or less. The Agency will define financially distressed areas as those where the median household income of the areas to be served is either below the poverty line or below 80 percent of the statewide non-metropolitan median household income.

The Secretary may use not more than four percent of the total amount of funds made available for a fiscal year for water and waste disposal to carry out the SEARCH program.

The Administrator of the RUS is required to prescribe regulations to implement the provisions of the SEARCH grant program and does so through this final rule. In developing the SEARCH program regulation, the Agency relied heavily on existing Rural Development regulations relative to water and waste disposal loans and grants.

**Comments**

RUS published a proposed rulemaking in the **Federal Register** on January 22, 2010 at 75 FR 3642. No comments were received from outside Federal agencies, however, one public submission was received with regard to the information collection and recordkeeping requirements contained in the rule. The commentor's responses are summarized below with the Agency's response as follows:

*Issue 1:* Commentor agreed that the collection is necessary for performance and practical utility.

*Response:* Agency concurs.

*Issue 2:* Commentor agreed that the burden estimate is accurate.

*Response:* Agency concurs.

*Issue 3:* Commentor suggested that the information quality, utility and clarity could be enhanced by allowing extra application credit for professional

services; reporting the status of applicable Federal property management specifications on the RUS Web site; adding available water management references to the RUS Web site as a component of the design and technical assistance object; and expounding upon the definition of rural.

*Response:* The Agency will take under advisement the suggestion to provide additional information on RUS Web site. For the purpose of water and waste disposal grants and direct and guaranteed loans, the terms "rural" and "rural area" mean a city, town, or unincorporated area that has a population of no more than 10,000 inhabitants (7 U.S.C. 1991(a)(13)). The SEARCH grant amendment (7 U.S.C. (a)(2)(c)) restricts eligibility, for the purposes of SEARCH, to communities of 2,500 or less within such rural areas.

*Issue 4:* Commentor suggested the collection burden can be minimized by adding two rural support offices directly to the Web pages.

*Response:* The Agency believes that there is minimal burden with the current Web site in obtaining States' local office information.

**List of Subjects**

Community development, Grant programs, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Rural areas, Waste treatment and disposal, Water supply.

■ Therefore for the reasons discussed in the preamble, RUS amends chapter XVII of title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations by adding a new part 1774 to read as follows:

**PART 1774—SPECIAL EVALUATION ASSISTANCE FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES AND HOUSEHOLDS PROGRAM (SEARCH)****Subpart A—General Provisions**

- 1774.1 General.
- 1774.2 Definitions.
- 1774.3 Availability of forms and regulations.
- 1774.4 Allocation of funds.
- 1774.5–1774.6 [Reserved]
- 1774.6 Equal opportunity requirements.
- 1774.7 Environmental requirements.
- 1774.8 Other Federal Statutes.
- 1774.9 [Reserved]

**Subpart B—Grant Application Processing**

- 1774.10 Applications.
- 1774.11 [Reserved]
- 1774.12 Eligibility.
- 1774.13 Limitations.
- 1774.14 Eligible grant purposes.
- 1774.15 Selection criteria.
- 1774.16 Grant application processing and approval.
- 1774.17 Grant closing and disbursement.
- 1774.18 Reporting requirements, accounting methods and audits.

1774.19 Applications determined ineligible.  
 1774.20 Conflict of Interest.  
 1774.21–1774.23 [Reserved]  
 1774.24 Exception Authority.  
 1774.25–1774.99 [Reserved]  
 1774.100 OMB Control Number.

**Authority:** 7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(2)(C).

## Subpart A—General Provisions

### § 1774.1 General.

The purpose of the Special Evaluation Assistance for Rural Communities and Household (SEARCH) Grant program is to provide financial assistance to the neediest, eligible communities, who lack financial resources to pay for feasibility studies, design assistance and technical assistance. This subpart sets forth the general policies and procedures for making and processing predevelopment planning SEARCH grants for water and waste projects.

### § 1774.2 Definitions.

The following definitions apply to subparts A and B of this part.

**Agency.** The Rural Utilities Service of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) within the Rural Development mission area of the Under Secretary for Rural Development. The Processing Official will administer this water and waste program on behalf of the Rural Utilities Service.

**Approval official.** The Agency official at the State level who has been delegated the authority to approve grants.

**ConAct.** Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(2)).

**Design assistance.** Preliminary design and engineering analysis necessary for an application for funding. Design assistance does not include financial assistance for development of plans, specifications, or bidding documents.

**DUNS Number.** Data Universal Numbering System number obtained from Dun and Bradstreet and used when applying for Federal grants or cooperative agreements. A DUNS number may be obtained at no cost, by calling 1-866-705-5711.

**Eligible entity.** Entity that meets eligibility requirements to obtain a loan, loan guarantee or grant under Paragraphs 1, 2 or 24 of Section 306(a) of the ConAct (codified at 7 U.S.C. Section 1926(a)(1)(2) and (24)).

**Feasibility study.** Documentation associated with an objective analysis of project-related technical engineering or environmental impact analyses required to support applications for funding water or waste disposal projects through USDA, Rural Utilities Service or other agencies.

**Financially distressed area.** An area is considered financially distressed if the

median household income of the area to be served is either below the poverty line or below 80 percent of the statewide non-metropolitan median household income based on available historic statistical information from the latest decennial census.

**Grantee.** The applicant receiving financial assistance directly from the RUS to carry out the project or program under this program.

**Poverty line.** The level of income for a family of four, as defined in section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)).

**Processing Official.** The Agency official designated by the approval official as having the authority to accept and process applications for water and waste disposal assistance.

**Rural area.** For the purposes of this SEARCH program, any area not in a city or town with a population of 2,500 or fewer, according to the latest decennial census of the United States.

**State.** Any of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Territory of Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Palau, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

**Technical Assistance.** Supervision, oversight, or training by an organization for the development of an application for financial assistance.

### § 1774.3 Availability of forms and regulations.

Information about the forms, instructions, regulations, bulletins, OMB Circulars, Treasury Circulars, standards, documents and publications cited in this part is available from any USDA/Rural Development Office or the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250-1500 and at <http://www.grants.gov>.

### § 1774.4 Allocation of funds.

The Secretary may use not more than four percent of the total amount of funds made available for a fiscal year for water and waste disposal activities for SEARCH grants.

### §§ 1774.5–1774.6 [Reserved]

### § 1774.7 Environmental requirements.

The policies and regulations contained in 7 CFR part 1794 of this title apply to grants made in accordance with this part.

### § 1774.8 Other Federal Statutes.

Other Federal statutes and regulations are applicable to grants awarded under

this part. These include but are not limited to:

(a) 7 CFR part 1, subpart A—USDA implementation of Freedom of Information Act.

(b) 7 CFR part 3—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-129 regarding debt collection.

(c) 7 CFR part 15, subpart A—USDA implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

(d) 7 CFR part 1794, RUS Implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act.

(e) 7 CFR part 1901, subpart E—Civil Rights Compliance Requirements.

(f) 7 CFR part 3015—Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations.

(g) 7 CFR part 3016—USDA Implementation of OMB Circular Nos. A-102 and A-97, Uniform

Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments.

(h) 7 CFR part 3018—Restrictions on Lobbying, prohibiting the use of appropriated funds to influence Congress or a Federal agency in connection with the making of any Federal grant and other Federal contracting and financial transactions.

(i) 7 CFR part 3019—USDA implementation of OMB Circular A-110, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements With Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations.

(j) 7 CFR part 3021, as amended—Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement); Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Grants), implementing Executive Order 12549 on debarment and suspension and the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 U.S.C. 701).

(k) 7 CFR part 3052—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-133 regarding audits of institutions of higher education and other nonprofit institutions.

(l) 29 U.S.C. 794, section 504—Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and 7 CFR part 15B (USDA implementation of statute), prohibiting discrimination based upon physical or mental handicap in Federally assisted programs.

### § 1774.9 [Reserved]

## Subpart B—Grant Application Processing

### § 1774.10 Applications.

(a) To file an application, an organization must provide their DUNS number. An organization may obtain a DUNS number from Dun and Bradstreet

by calling (1-866-705-5711). To file a complete application, the following information should be submitted:

(1) Standard Form 424, "Application for Federal Assistance (For Non-Construction)."

(2) Standard Form 424A & B, "Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs."

(3) Supporting documentation necessary to make an eligibility determination such as financial statements, audits, organizational documents, or existing debt instruments. The Processing Official will advise applicants regarding the required documents. Applicants that are indebted to RUS will not need to submit documents already on file with the Processing Official as long as such documents are current and valid.

(4) Project narrative detailing the project to be financed with the SEARCH grant funds. The narrative will also provide details on the activities or tasks to be accomplished, objectives, timetables for task completion, and anticipated results.

(5) The applicant's Internal Revenue Service Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN).

(6) Other Forms and certifications. Applicants will be required to submit the following items to the Processing Official, upon notification from the Processing Official to proceed with further development of the full application:

(i) Form RD 442-7, "Operating Budget";

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

(iii) Form RD 400-4, "Assurance Agreement";

(iv) Form AD-1047, "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension and other Responsibility Matters";

(v) Form AD-1049, Certification regarding Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (Grants) Alternative I For Grantees Other Than Individuals;

(vi) Certifications for Contracts, Grants, and Loans (Regarding Lobbying); and

(vii) Certification regarding prohibited tying arrangements. Applicants that provide electric service must provide the Agency a certification that they will not require users of a water or waste facility financed under this part to accept electric service as a condition of receiving assistance.

(b) Applicants are encouraged to contact the State Office or the Processing Official to find out how to file electronically. The application and supporting documentation must be sent or delivered to the Processing Official, unless it is filed electronically.

#### **§ 1774.11 [Reserved]**

#### **§ 1774.12 Eligibility.**

The following eligibility requirements must be met:

(a) The applicant must be:

(1) A public body, such as a municipality, county, district, authority, or other political subdivision or a State, territory or commonwealth, or

(2) An organization operated on a not-for-profit basis, such as an association, cooperative, or private corporation. The organization must be an association controlled by a local public body or bodies, or have a broadly based ownership by or membership of people of the local community, or

(3) Indian Tribes on Federal and State reservations and other Federally recognized Indian Tribes.

(b) The area to be served must be financially distressed and rural as defined in § 1774.2 of this part.

#### **§ 1774.13 Limitations.**

Grant funds may not be used to:

(a) Fund political or lobbying activities.

(b) Pay for work already completed.

(c) Purchase real estate or vehicles, improve or renovate office space, or repair and maintain privately owned property.

(d) Construct or furnish a building.

(e) Intervene in the Federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings.

(f) Sue the Federal Government or any other government entities.

(g) Pay for any other costs that are not allowable under OMB Circular A-87, OMB Circular A-110, OMB Circular A-102 or OMB Circular A-122.

(h) Make contributions or donations to others.

(i) Fund projects that duplicate technical assistance given to implement action plans under the National Forest-Dependent Rural Communities Economic Diversification Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6613). Applicants cannot receive both grants made under this part and grants that the Forest Service makes to implement the action plans for five continuous years from the date of grant approval by the Forest Service.

(j) To pay an outstanding judgment obtained by the United States in a Federal Court (other than in the United States Tax Court), which has been recorded. An applicant will be ineligible to receive a loan or grant until the judgment is paid in full or otherwise satisfied.

#### **§ 1774.14 Eligible grant purposes.**

(a) Eligible predevelopment planning costs are feasibility studies, preliminary design assistance, and technical

assistance as each is defined in § 1774.2. The eligible predevelopment activities funded with these grant funds must be agreed to and accepted by the Agency prior to the disbursement of the SEARCH grant. The predevelopment planning costs must be related to a proposed project that meets the following requirements:

(1) To construct, enlarge, extend, or otherwise improve rural water, sanitary sewage, solid waste disposal, and storm wastewater disposal facilities.

(2) To construct or relocate public buildings, roads, bridges, fences, or utilities, and to make other public improvements necessary for the successful operation or protection of facilities authorized in paragraph (a)(1) of this section.

(3) To relocate private buildings, roads, bridges, fences, or utilities, and other private improvements necessary for the successful operation or protection of facilities authorized in paragraph (a)(1) of this section.

(b) The Secretary, subject to the limitation in § 1774.4 of this part, may fund up to 100 percent of the eligible grant costs, not to exceed \$30,000.

#### **§ 1774.15 Selection Criteria.**

Projects will be selected based primarily on the funding priorities in 7 CFR 1780.17. The Program Official discretionary points stated in 7 CFR 1780.17 (e) can also include consideration of the following criteria:

(a) Systems with limited resources.

(b) Smallest systems with lowest incomes.

(c) Funds availability.

#### **§ 1774.16 Grant application processing and approval.**

(a) Before starting to assemble the full application, the applicant should arrange through the Processing Official an application conference to provide a basis for orderly application assembly. The processing office will explain program requirements, public information requirements and provide guidance on preparation of items necessary for final determination.

(b) The Processing Official will determine if the application is properly assembled. If not, the applicant will be notified within fifteen Federal working days as to what additional submittal items are needed.

(c) The Processing Official and Approval Official will coordinate their reviews to ensure that the applicant is advised about eligibility and anticipated fund availability within 45 days of the receipt of a completed application.

(d) The Processing Official will submit the following to the Approval Official:

(1) "Water and Waste Project Information Summary";

(2) Form RD 442-3, "Balance Sheet" or a financial statement or audit that includes a balance sheet;

(3) Letter of Conditions;

(4) Form RD 1942-46, "Letter of Intent to Meet Conditions";

(5) Form RD 1940-1, "Request for Obligation of Funds";

#### § 1774.17 Grant closing and disbursement.

(a) *Grant closing.* RUS Bulletin 1780-12 "Water or Waste System Grant Agreement" will be completed and executed in accordance with the requirements of grant approval. The grant will be considered closed when RUS Bulletin 1780-12 has been properly executed. Processing officials or Approval officials are authorized to sign the grant agreement on behalf of RUS.

(b) *Grant disbursements.* Agency policy is not to disburse grant funds from the Treasury until they are actually needed by the applicant. If an approved grant includes applicant or other contributions, then these funds will be disbursed before the disbursement of any Agency grant funds.

(c) *Payment for project costs.* Project costs will be monitored by the RUS processing office. Invoices will be approved by the borrower and submitted to the Processing Official for concurrence. The review and acceptance of project costs by the Agency does not attest to the correctness of the amounts, the quantities shown or that the work has been performed under the terms of the agreements or contracts.

(d) *Use of remaining funds.* Funds remaining after all costs incident to the basic project have been paid or provided for will not include applicant contributions if SEARCH grants funds are financing less than 100 percent of the project. Funds remaining may be considered in direct proportion to the amounts obtained from each source. Remaining funds will be handled as follows:

(1) Remaining funds may be used for eligible grant purposes as described in 1774.14 of this subpart, or

(2) Grant funds not expended will be canceled. Prior to the actual cancellation, the borrower, its attorney and its engineer will be notified of RUS' intent to cancel the remaining funds.

#### § 1774.18 Reporting requirements, accounting methods and audits.

All Agency grantees will follow the reporting requirements as outlined in 7 CFR 1780.47.

#### § 1774.19 Applications determined ineligible.

If at any time an application is determined ineligible, the processing office will notify the applicant in writing of the reasons. The notification to the applicant will state that an appeal of this decision may be made by the applicant under 7 CFR part 11.

#### § 1774.20 Conflict of Interest.

Any processing or servicing activity conducted pursuant to this part involving authorized assistance to Rural Development employees with Water and Environmental Programs responsibility, members of their families, known close relatives, or business or close personal associates, is subject to the provisions of subpart D of part 1900 of this title. Applicants of this assistance are required to identify any known relationship or association with an RUS employee.

#### §§ 1774.21-1774.23 [Reserved]

#### § 1774.24 Exception authority.

The Administrator may, in individual cases, make an exception to any requirement or provision of this part which is not inconsistent with the authorizing statute or other applicable law and is determined to be in the Government's interest. Requests for exceptions must be made in writing by the State Director and supported with documentation to explain the adverse effect on the Government's interest, propose alternative course(s) of action, and show how the adverse affect will be eliminated or minimized if the exception is granted. The exception decision will be documented in writing, signed by the Administrator, and retained in the files.

#### § 1774.25-1774.99 [Reserved]

#### § 1774.100 OMB Control Number.

The information collection requirements in this part will not be effective until approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), subject to the submission of a paperwork package to OMB and assigned an OMB Control Number.

Dated: May 10, 2010.

**Jonathan Adelstein,**

*Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.*

[FR Doc. 2010-15265 Filed 6-23-10; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-P

#### FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION

**12 CFR Parts 604, 607, 612, 614, 615, 618, and 627**

RIN 3052-AC63

**Farm Credit Administration Board Meetings; Assessment and Apportionment of Administrative Expenses; Standards of Conduct and Referral of Known or Suspected Criminal Violations; Loan Policies and Operations; Funding and Fiscal Affairs, Loan Policies and Operations, and Funding Operations; General Provisions; and Title IV Conservators, Receivers, and Voluntary Liquidations; Technical Changes**

**AGENCY:** Farm Credit Administration.

**ACTION:** Direct final rule.

**SUMMARY:** The Farm Credit Administration (FCA or Agency) amends the current regulations in parts 604, 607, 612, 614, 615, 618, and 627 to eliminate unnecessary, redundant or outdated regulations, to correct cross-reference errors, and to clarify the intent of a regulatory provision. This direct final rule covers issues that are technical in nature.

**DATES:** If no significant adverse comment is received on or before July 26, 2010, these regulations shall be effective upon the expiration of 30 days after publication in the **Federal Register** during which either or both Houses of Congress are in session. We will publish notice of the effective date in the **Federal Register**. If we receive significant adverse comment on an amendment, paragraph, or section of this rule, and that provision may be addressed separately from the remainder of the rule, we will withdraw that amendment, paragraph, or section and adopt as final those provisions of the rule that are not the subject of a significant comment. In such a case, we would then inform you of how we expect to continue further rulemaking on the provisions that were the subject of significant adverse comment.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jacqueline R. Melvin, Policy Analyst, Office of Regulatory Policy, Farm Credit Administration, McLean, VA 22102-5090, (703) 883-4498, TTY (703) 883-4434, or

Mary Alice Donner, Senior Attorney, Office of General Counsel, Farm Credit Administration, McLean, VA 22102-5090, (703) 883-4020, TTY (703) 883-4020.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**