

Notices

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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

Rural Utility Service

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

April 28, 2016.

The Department of Agriculture has submitted the following information collection requirement(s) to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13. Comments are requested regarding (1) whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; (4) 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 regarding this information collection received by June 3, 2016 will be considered. Written comments should be addressed to: Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), New Executive Office Building, 725 17th Street NW., Washington, DC 20502. Commenters are encouraged to submit their comments to OMB via email to: OIRA_Submission@OMB.EOP.GOV or fax (202) 395-5806 and to Departmental Clearance Office, USDA, OCIO, Mail Stop 7602, Washington, DC 20250-7602. Copies of the submission(s) may be obtained by calling (202) 720-8958.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information

unless the collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number and the agency informs potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information that such persons are not required to respond to the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Rural Utilities Service

Title: Operating Reports for Telecommunications and Broadband Borrowers.

OMB Control Number: 0572-0031.

Summary of Collection: The Rural Utilities Service's (RUS) is a credit agency of the Department of Agriculture. The Rural Electrification Act of 1936, as amended (RE Act) (7 U.S.C. 901 *et seq.*) authorizes the Secretary to make mortgage loans and loan guarantees to finance electric, telecommunications, broadband, and water and waste facilities in rural areas. In addition to providing loans and loan guarantees, one of RUS' main objectives is to safeguard loan security until the loan is repaid. The RE Act also authorizes the Secretary to make studies, investigations, and reports concerning the progress of borrowers' furnishing of adequate telephone service and publish and disseminate this information.

Need and Use of the Information: Information from the Operating Report for both telecommunication and broadband borrowers provides RUS with vital financial information needed to ensure the maintenance of the security for the Government's loans and service data which enables RUS to ensure the provision of quality telecommunications and broadband service as mandated by the RE Act of 1936. Form 674, "Certificate of Authority to Submit or Grant Access to Data" will allow telecommunication and broadband borrowers to file electronic Operating Reports with the agency using the new USDA Data Collection System. Accompanied by a Board Resolution, it will identify the name and USDA e-Authentication ID for a certifier and security administrator that will have access to the system for purposes of filing electronic Operating Reports.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for-profit; Not-for-profit institutions.

Number of Respondents: 647.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On occasion; Quarterly; Annually.

Total Burden Hours: 8,525.

Rural Utilities Service

Title: Request for Release of Lien and/or Approval of Sale.

OMB Control Number: 0572-0041.

Summary of Collection: The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is a credit agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that makes mortgage loans and loan guarantees to finance electric, telecommunications, and water and waste facilities in rural areas. RUS manages loan programs in accordance with the Rural Electrification Act (RE Act) of 1936, 7 U.S.C. 901 *et seq.*, as amended (RE Act). A 1949 amendment to the RE Act established the telephone program in RUS with the purpose of making loans to furnish and improve rural telephone service. Section 201 of the RE Act provides that loans shall not be made unless RUS finds and certifies that the security for the loan is reasonably adequate and that the loan will be repaid within the time agreed. In addition to providing loans and loan guarantees, one of RUS main objectives is to safeguard loan security until the loan is repaid.

Need and Use of the Information: A borrower's assets provide the security for a Government loan. The selling of assets reduces the security and increases the risk of loss to the Government. A borrower seeking permission to sell some of its assets uses RUS Form 793. The form contains detailed information regarding the proposed sale. If the information in Form 793 is not collected when capital assets are sold, the capital assets securing the Government's loans could be liquidated and the Government's security either eliminated entirely or diluted to an undesirable level. This increases the risk of loss to the Government in the case of a default.

Description of Respondents: Not-for-profit institutions; State, Local or Tribal Government.

Number of Respondents: 40.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 100.

Charlene Parker,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

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