

Notices

Federal Register

Vol. 83, No. 180

Monday, September 17, 2018

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

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

September 11, 2018.

The Department of Agriculture has submitted the following information collection requirement(s) to 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; and (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 and other forms of information technology.

Comments regarding this information collection received by October 17, 2018 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 20503. Commentors 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) 720-8681.

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.

Forest Service

Title: Environmental Justice and the Urban Forest in Atlanta, GA.

OMB Control Number: 0596-0237.

Summary of Collection:

Environmental justice is defined by the Environmental Protection Agency as the "fair treatment and meaningful involvement of *all* people . . . with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies." This information collection addresses environmental justice in urban settings. Cities are often (though not always) places of particular concern for environmental justice inquires due to the greater concentration of environmental pollutants and human populations. The following statutes and regulations are relevant to this request for information collection: Executive Order 12898, Memorandum of Understanding on Environmental Justice and Executive Order 12898, National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Pub. L. 91-190), the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Pub. L. 88-352).

Need and Use of the Information: The study provides an integrated approach to assessing residents' relationship to the urban forest. The collection addresses environmental justice from the perspective of urban trees; and how this resource may contribute to environmental justice in a given community or neighborhood. The agency will use this information to determine whether their programs, policies, and activities have disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority populations and low-income populations. If the information is not collected, efforts at the federal level to evaluate environmental justice will remain limited to methodologies that reproduce incomplete assessments of environmental justice.

Description of Respondents: Individuals or households.

Number of Respondents: 1,900.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: Other (one time).

Total Burden Hours: 215.

Ruth Brown,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2018-20070 Filed 9-14-18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3411-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Notice of Solicitation of Applications for the Rural Energy for America Program for Federal Fiscal Year 2019; Correction

AGENCY: Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; correction.

SUMMARY: The Rural Business-Cooperative Service (the Agency) published a notice in the **Federal Register** of August 14, 2018, announcing the acceptance of applications for funds available under the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2019. The 2014 Farm Bill provides funding for the program for FY 2017. This notice provides corrections to: Section V. Application Review Information, subsection B. Review and Selection Process, subparagraphs (1)(c), (1)(d), and (3) to indicate applications received by April 1, 2019.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information about this Notice, please contact Anthony Crooks, Rural Energy Policy Specialist, USDA Rural Development, Energy Division, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Stop 3225, Room 6870, Washington, DC 20250. Telephone: (202) 205-9322. Email: anthony.crooks@wdc.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In the **Federal Register** on August 14, 2018 (83 FR 40216), make the following corrections:

Summary of Changes

1. In the second column on page 40221, under Section V. Application Review Information, subsection B. Review and Selection Process, subparagraphs (1)(c) the first sentence is being revised to read as follows:

a. Eligible applications for renewable energy system and energy efficiency improvements, regardless of the amount of the funding request, received by April 1, 2019, can compete for unrestricted grant funds.

2. In the second column on page 40221, under Section V. Application Review Information, subsection B. Review and Selection Process, subparagraphs (1)(d) is being revised to read as follows:

a. National unrestricted grant funds for all eligible renewable energy system and energy efficiency improvements grant applications received by April 1, 2019, which include grants of \$20,000 or less, that are not funded by State allocations can be submitted to the National Office to compete against grant applications from other States at a final national competition.

3. In the third column on page 40221, under Section V. Application Review Information, subsection B. Review and Selection Process, subparagraphs (3), the third sentence of the second paragraph, that continues on page 40222 is being revised to read as follows:

a. All unfunded eligible applications for combined grant and guaranteed loan applications that are received by April 1, 2019, and that are not funded by State allocations can be submitted to the National Office to compete against other grant and combined grant and guaranteed loan applications from other States at a final national competition.

Dated: September 11, 2018.

David Foster,

Acting Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

[FR Doc. 2018–20119 Filed 9–14–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XY-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Telecommunications Program: Notice of availability of a Finding of No Significant Impact

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of Availability of a Finding of No Significant Impact for a Programmatic Environmental Assessment of USDA Rural Utilities Service's Financial Support for Deployment of the Telecommunications Programs to Rural America.

SUMMARY: The Rural Utilities Service (RUS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture, has issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) in association with the "Broadband Deployment to Rural America" Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) published on March 1, 2016. The PEA provides a broad environmental analysis of the Agency's preliminary decisions and includes a tiered, site-specific analysis at the

project level that would be completed before Agency dispersal of funds and/or applicant construction.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To obtain copies of the FONSI or PEA, or for further information, please contact: Ms. Lauren Rayburn, Environmental Scientist, Rural Utilities Service, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Mail Stop 1571, Room 2240, Washington, DC 20250, phone: (202) 695–2540, or email: lauren.rayburn@wdc.usda.gov. Additional information about the Agency and its programs is available on the internet at <http://www.rd.usda.gov/>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: RUS issued a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for the development of a more efficient and effective environmental review process for its Telecommunications Program on March 1, 2016. The PEA provides a broad environmental analysis of the Agency's preliminary decisions and includes a tiered, site-specific analysis at the project level that would be completed before Agency dispersal of funds and/or applicant construction. Since publication of the Agency's Environmental Policies and Procedures (7 CFR part 1970) on March 2, 2016, RUS has updated the PEA with citations to the Agency's new environmental rule. These changes were administrative and not substantive, therefore supplementation of the PEA is not required.

The RUS Telecommunications Program provides a variety of loans and grants to build and expand broadband networks in rural America. Loans to build broadband networks and deliver service to households and businesses in rural communities provide a necessary source of capital for rural telecommunications companies. Grant funding is awarded based on a number of factors relating to the benefits to be derived from the proposed broadband network project, as specified in applicable program regulations.

Eligible applicants for RUS loans and grants include for-profit and non-profit entities, tribes, municipalities, and cooperatives. The Agency particularly encourages investment in tribal and economically disadvantaged areas. Through low-cost funding for telecommunications infrastructure, rural residents can have access to services that will close the digital divide between rural and urban communities. Once funds are awarded, RUS monitors the projects to make sure they are completed in accordance with program conditions and requirements.

The application process for requesting financial assistance for the various

Telecommunications programs varies slightly from a competitive grant program, individual project proposals, or multi-year "loan design" applications. The Agency seeks to synchronize and create environmental review efficiencies for future project-level environmental review compliance for the various programs, commensurate with the potential environmental impacts. The Agency also seeks to establish proper sequencing of certain agency preliminary decisions (*i.e.*, obligation of funds and/or approval of interim financing requests) with subsequent tiered, site-specific project environmental reviews.

The PEA is intended to expedite the funding, deployment, and expansion of broadband infrastructure in rural America. The PEA includes detailed descriptions and analyses of the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts associated with broadband infrastructure technologies and construction methods, such as impacts to water resources, terrestrial resources, historic and cultural resources, air and climate resources, noise, threatened and endangered species, electromagnetic radiation, and Environmental Justice issues. Use of the PEA analyses thereby saves project-level processing time, ensuring consistent and accurate environmental evaluations while avoiding unnecessary duplication and repetition in project-level planning and evaluation. Use of the PEA and its FONSI enables project-level compliance with NEPA, ESA, NHPA, and other requirements to focus on the remaining relevant site-specific issues, expediting planning, analysis, compliance, documentation, and ultimately project-level decisions.

Any final action by RUS related to the broadband portion of the RUS Telecommunications Program will be subject to, and contingent upon, compliance with all relevant presidential executive orders and federal, state, and local environmental laws and regulations in addition to the completion of the environmental review requirements as prescribed in the Agency's Environmental Policies and Procedures.

Based on its EA, RUS has determined that the issued FONSI fulfills its obligations under NEPA for Agency actions associated with financing through the following programs: Telecommunications Infrastructure Loan Program; Rural Broadband Access Loan and Loan Guarantee Program; Community Connect Grant Program; and Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Program. RUS is satisfied that the environmental