The Commission encourages electronic submission of protests and interventions in lieu of paper using the eFiling link at http://www.ferc.gov. Persons unable to file electronically should submit an original and 5 copies of the protest or intervention to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20546. This filing is accessible on-line at http://www.ferc.gov, using the eLibrary link and is available for review in the Commission’s Public Reference Room in Washington, DC. There is an eSubscription link on the website that enables subscribers to receive email notification when a document is added to a subscribed docket(s). For assistance with any FERC Online service, please email FERCCentralSupport@ferc.gov, or call (866) 208–3676 (toll free). For TTY, call (202) 502–8659. 

Dated: November 4, 2019.

Nathaniel J. Davis, Sr.,
Deputy Secretary.
public comment period associated with release of the Systematic Review Protocol for the perfluorodecanoic acid (PFDA), perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA), perfluorooxonic acid (PFHxA), perfluoroheptanesulfonate (PFHxS), and perfluorobutanoic acid (PFBA) Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) assessments. This protocol document presents the methods for conducting the systematic reviews and dose response analyses for these assessments as well as summarizes the Agency’s problem formulation activities. Public input will help to inform the subsequent development of draft assessments for these per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) chemicals.

DATES: The 45-day public comment period begins November 8, 2019 and ends December 23, 2019. Comments must be received on or before December 23, 2019.

ADDRESSES: The Systematic Review Protocol for perfluorodecanoic acid (PFDA), perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA), perfluorooxonic acid (PFHxA), perfluoroheptanesulfonate (PFHxS), and perfluorobutanoic acid (PFBA) assessments will be available via the internet on the IRIS website at https://www.epa.gov/iris/iris-recent-additions and in the public docket at http://www.regulations.gov. Docket ID No. EPA–HQ–ORD–2019–0275. Information on these chemicals is provided in the SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION section of this notice.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information on the docket, contact the ORD Docket at the EPA Headquarters Docket Center; telephone: 202–566–1752; facsimile: 202–566–9744; or email: Docket_ORD@epa.gov.

For technical information on the protocol, contact Dr. James Avery, Center for Public Health & Environmental Protection Agency, EPA Docket Center (ORD Docket), Mail Code: 28221T, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20460. The phone number is 202–566–1752.

Hand Delivery: The ORD Docket is located in the EPA Headquarters Docket Center, EPA West Building, Room 3334, 1301 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20004. The EPA Docket Center Public Reading Room is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. The telephone number for the Public Reading Room is 202–566–1744. Deliveries are only accepted during the docket’s normal hours of operation, and special arrangements should be made for deliveries of boxed information. If you provide comments by mail or hand delivery, please submit three copies of the comments. For attachments, provide an index, number pages consecutively with the comments, and submit an unbound original and three copies.

Instructions: Direct your comments on the systematic review protocol to Docket ID No. EPA–HQ–ORD–2019–0275. Please ensure that your comments are submitted within the specified comment period. Comments received after the closing date will be marked “late,” and may only be considered if time permits. It is EPA’s policy to include all comments it receives in the public docket without change and to make the comments available online at https://www.regulations.gov, including any personal information provided, unless a comment includes information claimed to be Confidential Business Information (CBI) or other information for which disclosure is restricted by statute. Do not submit information through https://www.regulations.gov or email that you consider to be CBI or otherwise protected. The https://www.regulations.gov website is an “anonymous access” system, which means EPA will not know your identity or contact information unless you provide it in the body of your comment. If you send an email comment directly to EPA without going through https://www.regulations.gov, your email address will be automatically captured and included as part of the comment that is placed in the public docket and made available on the internet. If you submit an electronic comment, EPA recommends that you include your name and other contact information in the body of your comment and with any disk or CD–ROM you submit. EPA cannot read your comment due to technical difficulties and cannot contact you for clarification, EPA may not be able to consider your comment. Electronic files should avoid the use of special characters, any form of encryption, and be free of any defects or viruses. For additional information about EPA’s public docket visit the EPA Docket Center homepage at https://www.epa.gov/dockets.

Docket: Documents in the docket are listed in the https://www.regulations.gov index. Although listed in the index, some information is not publicly available, e.g., CBI or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute. Certain other materials, such as copyrighted material, are publicly available only in hard copy. Publicly available docket materials are available either electronically in https://www.regulations.gov or hard copy at the ORD Docket in the EPA Headquarters Docket Center.
I. Background

EPA established the FRRCC in 2008 pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act, Public Law 92–463, in order to help EPA build a more positive and proactive relationship with the agricultural industry in furtherance of EPA’s mission to protect human health and the environment. The FRRCC serves as part of EPA’s efforts to expand cooperative working relationships with the agriculture community and others who are interested in agricultural issues and achieving greater progress in environmental protection. The FRRCC provides advice and recommendations to the EPA Administrator on environmental issues and programs that impact, or are of concern to, farms, ranches and rural communities. Topics addressed may include food loss and waste, water or air quality issues, pesticides, toxics, emergency response, enforcement and compliance, technology and innovation, and other topics of environmental importance pertaining to agriculture and rural communities. The previous Charter for the FRRCC was scheduled to expire and therefore was renewed in 2018; however, the committee currently has no members. EPA is currently seeking 20–30 members for the committee, who will be appointed for 2–3 year terms. The membership of this committee will include a balanced representation of interested persons with relevant experience to contribute to the functions of the committee, and will be drawn from relevant sectors, including: but not limited to academia, agricultural industry, nongovernmental organizations, and state, local, and tribal governments. The Committee expects to meet approximately twice a year, or as needed and approved by the Designated Federal Officer (DFO). Meetings will be held in Washington, DC and the EPA regions. Members serve on the Committee in a voluntary capacity. However, EPA may provide reimbursement for travel expenses associated with official government business.

II. Eligibility

Because of the nature of the issues to be discussed, it is the intent of the Agency for the majority of Committee members to be actively engaged in farming or ranching. The membership of this committee will include a balanced representation of interested persons with relevant experience to contribute to the functions of the committee and will be drawn from a variety of relevant sectors. Members may represent farmers, ranchers, and rural communities (can include large, small, crop, livestock, commodity, and specialty producers from various regions)—and their allied industries (farm groups, rural suppliers, marketers, processors, etc.); as well as the academic/research community who research environmental issues impacting agriculture, tribal agriculture groups, state, local, and tribal government, and environmental/conservation and other nongovernmental organizations. Individuals are generally appointed to serve on the FRRCC as “Representative” members and are thus expected to represent the points of view of a particular group (e.g., an industry sector), rather than provide independent judgment and expertise. Other Federal agencies and other sectors as appropriate may be invited to attend or provide presentations at committee meetings as non-members. EPA values and welcomes diversity. In an effort to obtain nominations of diverse candidates, EPA encourages nominations of women and men of all racial and ethnic groups.

Per an October 31, 2017 EPA Directive, “Strengthening and Improving Membership on EPA Federal Advisory Committees,” members of EPA Federal advisory committees cannot concurrently receive EPA grants, either as principal investigator or co-investigator, or be in a position that otherwise would reap substantial direct benefit from an EPA grant. This principal does not apply to state, tribal, or local government agency recipients of EPA grants.

In selecting committee members, EPA will consider each candidate’s qualifications including, but not limited to, on whether the candidate is:

- Is actively engaged in farming.
- Occupies a senior position within their organization.
- Holds leadership positions in agriculture-related organizations, businesses and/or workgroups.
- Has broad agricultural experience regardless of their current position.
- Has experience working on issues where building consensus is necessary.
- Has membership in professional societies, broad-based networks or the equivalent.
- Has extensive experience in the environmental field dealing with agricultural issues.
- Provides services to producers.
- Is involved in processing, retailing, manufacturing and distribution of agricultural products.