

## Privacy Act

In accordance with 5 U.S.C. 553(c), DOT solicits comments from the public to better inform its rulemaking process. DOT posts these comments, without edit, to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), as described in the system of records notice, DOT/ALL-14 FDMS, accessible through [www.dot.gov/privacy](http://www.dot.gov/privacy). To facilitate comment tracking and response, we encourage commenters to provide their name, or the name of their organization; however, submission of names is completely optional. Whether or not commenters identify themselves, all timely comments will be fully considered. If you wish to provide comments containing proprietary or confidential information, please contact the agency for alternate submission instructions.

(Authority: 49 CFR 1.93(a), 46 U.S.C. 55103, 46 U.S.C. 12121)

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Dated: November 21, 2019.

By Order of the Maritime Administrator.

**T. Mitchell Hudson, Jr.,**

Secretary, Maritime Administration.

[FR Doc. 2019-25712 Filed 11-26-19; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-81-P

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Maritime Administration

[Docket Number MARAD-2019-0193]

#### Waiver Request for Aquaculture Support Operations for the 2020 Calendar Year: COLBY PERCE, RONJA CARRIER, SADIE JANE, MISS MILDRED 1, KC COMMANDER

**AGENCY:** Maritime Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice and request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to a delegation of authority from the Secretary of Transportation, the Maritime Administrator is authorized to issue waivers allowing documented vessels with registry endorsements or foreign flag vessels to be used in operations that treat aquaculture fish or protect aquaculture fish from disease, parasitic infestation, or other threats to their health when suitable vessels of the United States are not available that could perform those services. A request for such a waiver has been received by the Maritime Administration (MARAD). This notice is being published to solicit comments intended to assist MARAD in determining whether suitable vessels of the United States are available that could perform the required services. If no suitable U.S.-flag vessels are

available, the Maritime Administrator may issue a waiver in accordance with USCG regulations on Aquaculture. A brief description of the proposed aquaculture support service is listed in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section below.

**DATES:** Submit comments on or before December 27, 2019.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments identified by DOT Docket Number MARAD-2019-0193 by any of the following methods:

- *On-line via the Federal Electronic Portal:* <http://www.regulations.gov>. Search using "MARAD-2019-0193" and follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- *Mail/Hand-Delivery/Courier:* Docket Management Facility; U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590. Submit comments in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying and electronic filing.

*Reference Materials and Docket Information:* You may view the complete application, including the aquaculture support technical service requirements, and all public comments at the DOT Docket on-line via <http://www.regulations.gov>. Search using "MARAD-2019-0193." All comments received will be posted without change to the docket, including any personal information provided. The Docket Management Facility is open 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on Federal holidays.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Bianca Carr, U.S. Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Room W23-453, Washington, DC 20590. Telephone 202-366-9309, Email [Bianca.carr@dot.gov](mailto:Bianca.carr@dot.gov). If you have questions on viewing the Docket, call Docket Operations, telephone: (800) 647-5527.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** As a result of the enactment of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010, codified at 46 U.S.C. 12102, the Secretary of Transportation has the discretionary authority to issue waivers allowing documented vessels with registry endorsements or foreign flag vessels to be used in operations that treat aquaculture fish for or protect aquaculture fish from disease, parasitic infestation, or other threats to their health when suitable vessels of the United States are not available that could perform those services. The Secretary has delegated this authority to the Maritime Administrator. Pursuant to this authority, MARAD is providing

notice of the service requirements proposed by Cooke Aquaculture (Cooke) in order to make a U.S.-flag vessel availability determination. Specifics can be found in Cooke's application letter posted in the docket.

To comply with USCG Aquaculture Support regulations at 46 CFR part 106, Cooke is seeking a MARAD Aquaculture Waiver to operate the vessels, COLBY PERCE, RONJA CARRIER, SADIE JANE, MISS MILDRED 1 and the KC COMMANDER as follows:

- Intended Commercial Use of Vessel:* "to use highly-specialized foreign-flag vessels referred to as a "wellboat" (or "live fish carrier") to treat Cooke's swimming inventory of farmed Atlantic salmon in the company's salt-water grow-out pens off Maine's North Atlantic Coast. This treatment prevents against parasitic infestation by sea lice that is highly destructive to the salmon's health."
- Geographic Region:* "off Maine's North Atlantic Coast"
- Requested Time Period:* "2020 calendar year, from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020"

Interested parties may submit comments providing detailed information relating to the availability of U.S.-flag vessels to perform the required aquaculture support services. If MARAD determines, in accordance with 46 U.S.C. 12102(d)(1) and MARAD's regulations at 46 CFR part 388, that suitable U.S.-flag vessels are available to perform the required services, a waiver will not be granted. Comments should refer to the docket number of this notice and the vessel name in order for MARAD to properly consider the comments. Comments should also state the commenter's interest in the waiver application, and address the waiver criteria set forth in 46 CFR 388.4.

## Privacy Act

In accordance with 5 U.S.C. 553(c), MARAD solicits comments from the public to inform its process to determine the availability of suitable vessels. DOT posts these comments, without edit, to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), as described in the system of records notice, DOT/ALL-14 FDMS, accessible through [www.dot.gov/privacy](http://www.dot.gov/privacy). In order to facilitate comment tracking and response, we encourage commenters to provide their name, or the name of their organization; however, submission of names is completely optional. Whether or not commenters identify themselves, all timely comments will be fully considered. If you wish to provide comments containing proprietary or confidential information, please contact

the agency for alternate submission instructions.

(Authority: 49 CFR 1.93(w))

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Dated: November 21, 2019.

By Order of the Maritime Administrator.

**T. Mitchell Hudson, Jr.,**

Secretary, Maritime Administration.

[FR Doc. 2019-25710 Filed 11-26-19; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Office of the Secretary

[Docket No. DOT-OST-2019-0167]

#### Rural Opportunities To Use Transportation for Economic Success: Request for Information

**AGENCY:** Office of the Secretary, Department of Transportation (DOT).

**ACTION:** Request for information (RFI).

**SUMMARY:** On October 28, 2019, the Secretary of Transportation issued an order launching the Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES) initiative. ROUTES will help the Department of Transportation (DOT) address disparities in rural transportation infrastructure to tangibly improve safety and economic competitiveness in all parts of the country. This notice requests comments on unmet transportation infrastructure needs in rural transportation, barriers that rural communities face in addressing these needs, stakeholders' experiences with applying to and using DOT discretionary grant and credit programs, and opportunities for DOT to improve its services and technical assistance to rural communities in relation to these grant and credit programs.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before 30 days from posting of this notice. DOT will consider comments filed after this date to the extent practicable.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments should refer to the docket number above and be submitted by one of the following methods:

- *Electronic Submission:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Search by using the docket number (provided above). Follow the instructions for submitting comments on the electronic docket site.

- *Mail:* Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building Ground Floor, Room PL-401, Washington, DC 20590-0001.

- *Hand Delivery or Courier:* 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building

Ground Floor, Room PL-401, Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays.

*Instructions:* All submissions must include the agency name and docket numbers.

**Note:** All comments received, including any personal information, will be posted without change to the docket and will be accessible to the public at <http://www.regulations.gov>. You should not include information in your comment that you do not want to be made public. Input submitted online via [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) is not immediately posted to the site. It may take several business days before your submission is posted.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:** Visit <http://www.transportation.gov/rural>, or contact Robert Hyman at [rural@dot.gov](mailto:rural@dot.gov) or 202-366-5843.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

The mission of the DOT is to ensure our Nation has the safest, most efficient, and modern transportation system in the world; that improves the quality of life for all American people and communities, from rural to urban; and increases the productivity and competitiveness of American workers and businesses. To accomplish this mission, Congress authorizes and appropriates funds to the DOT, which administers a large portfolio of grant and credit programs to maintain and improve aspects of our transportation network. Each year, DOT awards billions of dollars in discretionary transportation grants using prescribed selection and eligibility criteria.

Rural transportation networks are critically important for domestic uses and export of agriculture, mining, and energy commodities, as well as the quality of life for all Americans. However, rural networks face unique challenges in safety, infrastructure condition, and usage.

To address these issues, on October 28, 2019, the Secretary of Transportation issued an order launching the Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES) initiative. ROUTES will improve how the DOT considers rural project applications in DOT's discretionary grant and credit programs, including ensuring that project costs, local resources, and the benefits to the American people and economy are appropriately considered. It will also provide rural communities with technical assistance for meeting the Nation's transportation infrastructure investment needs in a financially sustainable manner.

DOT seeks information directly from the public and other stakeholders to inform the development and implementation of the ROUTES initiative. DOT seeks comments that illustrate rural communities' needs and experiences with transportation infrastructure, including the condition of that infrastructure, its effect on safety, and how its use affects the community. For the purpose of this notice, "transportation" includes road, rail, transit, aviation, maritime, pipelines, and other forms of transportation; "infrastructure" includes all capital investment in transportation such as structures, equipment, and rolling stock. This includes comments and data pertaining to current unmet needs in rural transportation, barriers rural communities face in addressing these transportation needs, stakeholders' experiences with applying to and using DOT discretionary grant and credit programs, and opportunities for the DOT to improve its services and technical assistance to rural communities in relation to these grant and credit programs, within the limits of statutory requirements. In addition, DOT specifically requests comments and data in response to the questions below. To the extent possible, DOT seeks relevant technical information, regulatory citations, data, or other evidence to support the comments received.

##### 1. Identifying Unmet Needs in Rural Transportation

A. What infrastructure issues are contributing to high fatality rates on rural roadways and rail-highway grade crossings (e.g., roadway condition or geometry, driver behavior, wildlife collisions)?

B. What unique challenges do rural areas face related to infrastructure condition (e.g., age of infrastructure or equipment, including vehicles, bridge closures or postings, types of freight carried, weather resiliency)?

C. How does infrastructure usage (e.g., access to public transportation, technology deployment) affect the lives of rural Americans?

D. What types of infrastructure projects are most needed in rural communities to meet national transportation priorities such as safety and economic competitiveness?

E. What types of rural transportation projects or services do rural communities find challenging to fund?

F. What additional or alternative methods can be used to identify and prioritize rural transportation projects for funding through discretionary grants?