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(1) If the Agency prevails on the program discrimination complaint, the interest that would have accrued during the moratorium will be reinstated on the account when the moratorium terminates, and all offsets and servicing actions will resume.

(2) If the borrower prevails on the program discrimination complaint, the interest that would have accrued during the moratorium will not be reinstated on the account unless specifically required by the settlement agreement or court order.

(b) The moratorium will begin on:

(1) May 22, 2008, if the borrower had a pending program discrimination claim that was accepted by USDA as valid and the account was at the point of acceleration or foreclosure on or before that date; or

(2) The date after May 22, 2008, when the borrower has a program discrimination claim accepted by USDA as valid and the borrower's account is at the point of acceleration or foreclosure.

(c) The point of acceleration under this section is the earliest of the following:

(1) The day after all rights offered on the Agency notice of intent to accelerate expire if the borrower does not appeal;

(2) The day after all appeals resulting from an Agency notice of intent to accelerate are concluded if the borrower appeals and the Agency prevails on the appeal;

(3) The day after all appeal rights have been concluded relating to a failure to graduate and the Agency prevails on any appeal;

(4) Any other time when, because of litigation, third party action, or other unforeseen circumstance, acceleration is the next step for the Agency in servicing and liquidating the account.

(d) A borrower is considered to be in foreclosure status under this section anytime after acceleration of the account.

(e) The moratorium will end on the earlier of:

(1) The date the program discrimination claim is resolved by USDA or

(2) The date that a court of competent jurisdiction renders a final decision on the program discrimination

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claim if the borrower appeals the decision of USDA.

[76 FR 5058, Jan. 28, 2011]

§§ 766.359–766.400 [Reserved]

Subpart I—Exception Authority

§ 766.401 Agency exception authority.

On an individual case basis, the Agency may consider granting an exception to any regulatory requirement or policy of this part if:

(a) The exception is not inconsistent with the authorizing statute or other applicable law; and

(b) The Agency's financial interest would be adversely affected by acting in accordance with published regulations or policies and granting the exception would resolve or eliminate the adverse effect upon its financial interest.

PART 767—INVENTORY PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

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AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 301 and 7 U.S.C. 1989.

SOURCE: 72 FR 63358, Nov. 8, 2007, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—Overview

§ 767.1 Introduction.

(a) *Purpose.* This part describes the Agency's policies for:

- (1) Managing inventory property;
- (2) Selling inventory property;
- (3) Leasing inventory property;
- (4) Managing real and chattel property the Agency takes into custody after abandonment by the borrower;
- (5) Selling or leasing inventory property with important resources, or located in special hazard areas; and
- (6) Conveying interest in real property for conservation purposes.

(b) *Basic policy.* The Agency maintains, manages and sells inventory property as necessary to protect the Agency's financial interest.

§ 767.2 Abbreviations and definitions.

Abbreviations and definitions for terms used in this part are provided in § 761.2 of this chapter.

§§ 767.3–767.50 [Reserved]

Subpart B—Property Abandonment and Personal Property Removal

§ 767.51 Property abandonment.

The Agency will take actions necessary to secure, maintain, preserve, manage, and operate the abandoned security property, including marketing perishable security property on behalf of the borrower when such action is in the Agency's financial interest. If the security is in jeopardy, the Agency will

take the above actions prior to completing servicing actions contained in 7 CFR part 766.

§ 767.52 Disposition of personal property from real estate inventory property.

(a) *Preparing to dispose of personal property.* If, at the time of acquisition, personal property has been left on the real estate inventory property, the Agency will notify the former real estate owner and any known lienholders that the Agency will dispose of the personal property. Property of value may be sold at a public sale.

(b) *Reclaiming personal property.* The owner or lienholder may reclaim personal property at any time prior to the property's sale or disposal by paying all expenses incurred by the Agency in connection with the personal property.

(c) *Use of proceeds from sale of personal property.* Proceeds from the public sale of personal property will be distributed as follows:

- (1) To lienholders in order of lien priority less a pro rata share of the sale expenses;
- (2) To the inventory account up to the amount of expenses incurred by the Agency in connection with the sale of personal property;
- (3) To the outstanding balance on the FLP loan; and
- (4) To the borrower, if the borrower's whereabouts are known.

§§ 767.53–767.100 [Reserved]

Subpart C—Lease of Real Estate Inventory Property

§ 767.101 Leasing real estate inventory property.

(a) The Agency may lease real estate inventory property:

- (1) To the former owner under the Homestead Protection Program;
- (2) To a beginning farmer or socially disadvantaged farmer selected to purchase the property but who was unable to purchase it because of a lack of Agency direct or guaranteed loan funds;

(3) When the Agency is unable to sell the property because of lengthy litigation or appeal processes.

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(b) The Agency will lease real estate inventory property in an “as is” condition.

(c) The Agency will lease property for:

(1) Homestead protection in accordance with part 766, subpart D, of this chapter.

(2) A maximum of 18 months to a beginning farmer or socially disadvantaged farmer the Agency selected as purchaser when no Agency loan funds are available; or

(3) The shortest possible duration for all other cases subject to the following:

(i) The maximum lease term for such a lease is 12 months.

(ii) The lease is not subject to renewal or extension.

(d) The lessee may pay:

(1) A lump sum;

(2) On an annual installment basis; or

(3) On a crop-share basis, if the lessee is a beginning farmer or socially disadvantaged farmer under paragraph (a) of this section.

(e) The Agency leases real estate inventory property for a market rent amount charged for similar properties in the area.

(f) The Agency may require the lessee to provide a security deposit.

(g) Only leases to a beginning farmer or socially disadvantaged farmer or Homestead Protection Program participant will contain an option to purchase the property.

[72 FR 63358, Nov. 8, 2007, as amended at 73 FR 74345, Dec. 8, 2008]

§ 767.102 Leasing non-real estate inventory property.

The Agency does not lease non-real estate property unless it is attached as a fixture to real estate inventory property that is being leased and it is essential to the farming operation.

§ 767.103 Managing leased real estate inventory property.

(a) The Agency will pay for repairs to leased real estate inventory property only when necessary to protect the Agency’s interest.

(b) If the lessee purchases the real estate inventory property, the Agency will not credit lease payments to the purchase price of the property.

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§§ 767.104–767.150 [Reserved]

Subpart D—Disposal of Inventory Property

§ 767.151 General requirements.

Subject to § 767.152, the Agency will attempt to sell its inventory property as follows:

(a) The Agency will combine or divide inventory property, as appropriate, to maximize the opportunity for beginning farmers or socially disadvantaged farmersto purchase real property.

(b) The Agency will advertise all real estate inventory property that can be used for any authorized FO loan purpose for sale to beginning farmers or socially disadvantaged farmers no later than 15 days after the Agency obtains title to the property.

(c) If more than one eligible beginning farmer or socially disadvantaged farmer applies, the Agency will select a purchaser by a random selection process open to the public.

(1) All applicants will be advised of the time and place of the selection.

(2) All drawn offers will be numbered.

(3) Offers drawn after the first will be held in suspense pending sale to the successful applicant.

(4) Random selection is final and not subject to administrative appeal.

(d) If there are no offers from beginning farmers or socially disadvantaged farmers, the Agency will sell inventory property by auction or sealed bid to the general public no later than 165 days after the Agency obtains title to the property. All bidders will be required to submit a 10 percent deposit with their bid.

(e) If the Agency receives no acceptable bid through an auction or sealed bid, the Agency will attempt to sell the property through a negotiated sale at the best obtainable price.

(f) If the Agency is not able to sell the property through negotiated sale, the Agency may list the property with a real estate broker. The broker must be properly licensed in the State in which the property is located.

[72 FR 63358, Nov. 8, 2007, as amended at 73 FR 74345, Dec. 8, 2008]

§ 767.152 Exceptions.

The Agency's disposition procedure under § 767.151 is subject to the following:

(a) If the Agency leases real estate inventory property to a beginning farmer or socially disadvantaged farmer in accordance with § 767.101(a)(2), and the lease expires, the Agency will not advertise the property if the Agency has direct or guaranteed loan funds available to finance the transaction.

(b) The Agency will not advertise a property for sale until the homestead protection rights have terminated in accordance with part 766, subpart D of this chapter.

(c) The Agency may allow an additional 60 days if needed for conservation easements or environmental reviews.

(d) If the property was owned by an American Indian borrower and is located on an Indian reservation, the Agency will:

(1) No later than 90 days after acquiring the property, offer the opportunity to purchase or lease the property in accordance with:

(i) The priorities established by the Indian Tribe having jurisdiction over the Indian reservation;

(ii) In cases where priorities have not been established, the following order:

(A) A member of the Indian Tribe that has jurisdiction over the Indian reservation;

(B) An Indian entity;

(C) The Indian Tribe.

(2) Transfer the property to the Secretary of the Interior if the property is not purchased or leased under paragraph (1) of this section.

(e) If Agency analysis of farm real estate market conditions indicates the sale of the Agency's inventory property will have a negative effect on the value of farms in the area, the Agency may withhold inventory farm properties in the affected area from the market until further analysis indicates otherwise.

[72 FR 63358, Nov. 8, 2007, as amended at 73 FR 74345, Dec. 8, 2008]

§ 767.153 Sale of real estate inventory property.

(a) *Pricing.* (1) The Agency will advertise property for sale at its market

value, as established by an appraisal obtained in accordance with § 761.7.

(2) Property sold by auction or sealed bid will be sold for the best obtainable price. The Agency reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

(b) *Agency-financed sales.* The Agency may finance sales to purchasers if:

(1) The Agency has direct or guaranteed FO loan funds available;

(2) All applicable loan making requirements are met; and

(3) All purchasers who are not beginning farmers or socially disadvantaged farmers make a 10 percent down payment.

(c) *Taxes and assessments.* (1) Property taxes and assessments will be prorated between the Agency and the purchaser based on the date the Agency conveys title to the purchaser.

(2) The purchaser is responsible for paying all taxes and assessments after the Agency conveys title to the purchaser.

(d) *Loss or damage to property.* If, through no fault of either party, the property is lost or damaged as a result of fire, vandalism, or act of God before the Agency conveys the property, the Agency may reappraise the property and set the sale price accordingly.

(e) *Termination of contract.* Either party may terminate the sales contract. If the contract is terminated by the Agency, the Agency returns any deposit to the bidder. If the contract is terminated by the purchaser, any deposit will be retained by the Agency as full liquidated damages, except where failure to close is due to Agency non-approval of credit.

(f) *Warranty on title.* The Agency will not provide any warranty on the title or on the condition of the property.

[72 FR 63358, Nov. 8, 2007, as amended at 73 FR 74345, Dec. 8, 2008]

§ 767.154 Conveying easements, rights-of-way, and other interests in inventory property.

(a) *Appraisal of real property and real property interests.* The Agency will determine the value of real property and real property interests being transferred in accordance with § 761.7 of this chapter.

(b) *Easements and rights-of-way on inventory property.* (1) The Agency may

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grant or sell an easement or right-of-way for roads, utilities, and other appurtenances if the conveyance is in the public interest and does not adversely affect the value of the real property.

(2) The Agency may sell an easement or right-of-way by negotiation for market value to any purchaser for cash without giving public notice if:

(i) The sale would not prevent the Agency from selling the property; and

(ii) The sale would not decrease the value of the property by an amount greater than the price received.

(3) In the case of condemnation proceedings by a State or political subdivision, the transfer of title will not be completed until adequate compensation and damages have been determined and paid.

(c) *Disposal of other interests in inventory property.* (1) If applicable, the Agency will sell mineral and water rights, mineral lease interests, mineral royalty interests, air rights, and agricultural and other lease interests with the surface land except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section.

(2) If the Agency sells the land in separate parcels, any rights or interests that apply to each parcel are included with the sale.

(3) The Agency will assign lease or royalty interests not passing by deed to the purchaser at the time of sale.

(4) Appraisals of property will reflect the value of such rights, interests, or leases.

§ 767.155 Selling chattel property.

(a) *Method of sale.* (1) The Agency will use sealed bid or established public auctions for selling chattel. The Agency does not require public notice of sale in addition to the notice commonly used by the auction facility.

(2) The Agency may sell chattel inventory property, including fixtures, concurrently with real estate inventory property if, by doing so, the Agency can obtain a higher aggregate price. The Agency may accept an offer for chattel based upon the combined final sales price of both the chattel and real estate.

(b) *Agency-financed sales.* The Agency may finance the purchase of chattel inventory property if the Agency has direct or guaranteed OL loan funds avail-

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able and all applicable loan making requirements are met.

§§ 767.156-767.200 [Reserved]

Subpart E—Real Estate Property With Important Resources or Located in Special Hazard Areas

§ 767.201 Real estate inventory property with important resources.

In addition to the requirements established in part 799 of this chapter, the following apply to inventory property with important resources:

(a) *Wetland conservation easements.* The Agency will establish permanent wetland conservation easements to protect and restore certain wetlands that exist on inventory property prior to the sale of such property, regardless of whether the sale is cash or credit.

(1) The Agency establishes conservation easements on all wetlands or converted wetlands located on real estate inventory property that:

(i) Were not considered cropland on the date the property was acquired by the Agency; and

(ii) Were not used for farming at any time during the 5 years prior to the date of acquisition by the Agency.

(A) The Agency will consider property to have been used for farming if it was used for agricultural purposes including, but not limited to, cropland, pastures, hayland, orchards, vineyards, and tree farming.

(B) In the case of cropland, hayland, orchards, vineyards, or tree farms, the Agency must be able to demonstrate that the property was harvested for crops.

(C) In the case of pastures, the Agency must be able to demonstrate that the property was actively managed for grazing by documenting practices such as fencing, fertilization, and weed control.

(2) The wetland conservation easement will provide for access to other portions of the property as necessary for farming or other uses.

(b) *Mandatory conservation easements.* The Agency will establish conservation easements to protect 100-year

floodplains and other Federally-designated important resources. Federally-designated important resources include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Listed or proposed endangered or threatened species;
- (2) Listed or proposed critical habitats for endangered or threatened species;
- (3) Designated or proposed wilderness areas;
- (4) Designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers;
- (5) Historic or archeological sites listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places;
- (6) Coastal barriers included in Coastal Barrier Resource Systems;
- (7) Natural landmarks listed on National Registry of Natural Landmarks; and
- (8) Sole source aquifer recharge areas as designated by EPA.

(c) *Discretionary easements.* The Agency may grant or sell an easement, restriction, development right, or similar legal right to real property for conservation purposes to a State government, a political subdivision of a State government, or a private non-profit organization.

(1) The Agency may grant or sell discretionary easements separate from the underlying fee or property rights.

(2) The Agency may convey property interests under this paragraph by negotiation to any eligible recipient without giving public notice if the conveyance does not change the intended use of the property.

(d) *Conservation transfers.* The Agency may transfer real estate inventory property to a Federal or State agency provided the following conditions are met:

- (1) The transfer of title must serve a conservation purpose;
- (2) A predominance of the property must:
 - (i) Have marginal value for agricultural production;
 - (ii) Be environmentally sensitive; or
 - (iii) Have special management importance;
- (3) The homestead protection rights of the previous owner have been exhausted;
- (4) The Agency will notify the public of the proposed transfer; and

(5) The transfer is in the Agency's financial interest.

(e) *Use restrictions on real estate inventory property with important resources.*

(1) Lessees and purchasers receiving Agency credit must follow a conservation plan developed with assistance from NRCS.

(2) Lessees and purchasers of property with important resources or real property interests must allow the Agency or its representative to periodically inspect the property to determine if it is being used for conservation purposes.

[72 FR 63358, Nov. 8, 2007, as amended at 81 FR 51285, Aug. 3, 2016]

§ 767.202 Real estate inventory property located in special hazard areas.

(a) The Agency considers the following to be special hazard areas:

- (1) Mudslide hazard areas;
- (2) Special flood areas; and
- (3) Earthquake areas.

(b) The Agency will use deed restrictions to prohibit residential use of properties determined to be unsafe in special hazard areas.

(c) The Agency will incorporate use restrictions in its leases of property in special hazard areas.

§§ 767.203–767.250 [Reserved]

Subpart F—Exception Authority

§ 767.251 Agency exception authority.

On an individual case basis, the Agency may consider granting an exception to any regulatory requirement or policy of this part if:

(a) The exception is not inconsistent with the authorizing statute or other applicable law; and

(b) The Agency's financial interest would be adversely affected by acting in accordance with published regulations or policies and granting the exception would reduce or eliminate the adverse effect upon the its financial interest.

PART 768—EQUITABLE RELIEF

768.1 Providing equitable relief.

768.2 [Reserved]

AUTHORITY: 5 U.S.C. 301 and 7 U.S.C. 1989.