

review of the proposal so that it is meaningful and alerts an agency to the reviewer's position and contentions. *Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978). Also, environmental objections that could be raised at the DEIS stage but are not raised until after completion of the FEIS may be waived or dismissed by the courts. *City of Angoon v. Hodel*, 803 F.2d 1016, 1002 (9th Cir., 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). Because of these court rulings, it is very important that those interested in this proposed action participate by the close of the DEIS 45-day comment period so that substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider them and respond to them in the FEIS.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the DEIS should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft statement. Reviewers may wish to refer to the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.

Responsible Official: Cecilia R. Seesholtz, Forest Supervisor, Boise National Forest, 1249 South Vinnell Way, Suite 200, Boise, ID 83709.

Dated: October 6, 2009.

Cecilia R. Seesholtz,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. E9-24523 Filed 10-9-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Research Service

Notice of Intent To Grant Exclusive License

AGENCY: Agricultural Research Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, intends to grant to NutriGrown, LLC of Baltimore, Maryland, an exclusive license to U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 11/504,401, "Fertilizer Formulation for Reduction of Nutrient and Pesticide Leaching", filed on August 14, 2006.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before November 12, 2009.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to: USDA, ARS, Office of Technology Transfer, 5601 Sunnyside Avenue, Rm. 4-1174, Beltsville, Maryland 20705-5131.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: June Blalock of the Office of Technology Transfer at the Beltsville address given above; telephone: 301-504-5989.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Federal Government's patent rights in this invention are assigned to the United States of America, as represented by the Secretary of Agriculture. It is in the public interest to so license this invention as NutriGrown, LLC of Baltimore, Maryland, has submitted a complete and sufficient application for a license. The prospective exclusive license will be royalty-bearing and will comply with the terms and conditions of 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR 404.7. The prospective exclusive license may be granted unless, within thirty (30) days from the date of this published Notice, the Agricultural Research Service receives written evidence and argument which establishes that the grant of the license would not be consistent with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR 404.7.

Richard J. Brenner,

Assistant Administrator.

[FR Doc. E9-24484 Filed 10-9-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-03-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council will meet in Washington, DC, October 28-29, 2009. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss emerging issues in urban and community forestry, work on Council administrative items and hear public input related to urban and community forestry.

DATES: The meeting will be held on October 28-29, 2009, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. or until Council business is completed.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Franklin Court Building, Washington, DC, 1099 14th Street, NW., Suite 5500 W, Washington, DC, Phone: 202-273-4695. Written comments concerning this meeting should be addressed to Nancy Stremple, Executive Staff to National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council, 201 14th St., SW., Yates Building (1 Central) MS-

1151, Washington, DC 20250-1151. Comments may also be sent via e-mail to nstremple@fs.fed.us, or via facsimile to 202-690-5792.

All comments, including names and addresses when provided, are placed in the record and are available for public inspection and copying. The public may inspect comments received at 201 14th St., SW., Yates Building (1 Central) MS-1151, Washington, DC. Visitors are encouraged to call ahead to 202-205-1054 to facilitate entry into the building.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Nancy Stremple, Executive Staff to National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council, 201 14th St., SW., Yates Building (1 Central) MS-1151, Washington, DC 20250-1151, phone 202-205-1054.

Individuals who use telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The meeting is open to the public. Those interested in attending should contact Nancy Stremple to be placed on the list at the lobby security desk. Council discussion is limited to Forest Service staff and Council members; however, persons who wish to bring urban and community forestry matters to the attention of the Council may file written statements with the Council staff (201 14th St., SW., Yates Building (1 Central) MS-1151, Washington, DC 20250-1151, e-mail: nstremple@fs.fed.us) before or after the meeting. Public input sessions will be provided at the meeting.

Public comments will be compiled and provided to the Secretary of Agriculture along with the Council's recommendations.

Dated: September 28, 2009.

James E. Hubbard,

Deputy Chief, State and Private Forestry.

[FR Doc. E9-24607 Filed 10-9-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Notice of Solicitation of Applications (NOSA) for Inviting Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program Preapplications for Technical Assistance for Rural Transportation Systems

AGENCY: Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS), an Agency within the USDA Rural Development mission area, solicits applications of two individual grants: one single grant from the passenger transportation funds appropriated for the Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) program and another grant for Federally Recognized Native American Tribes' (FRNAT) from funds appropriated for the RBEG program. USDA Rural Development will administer these awards under the RBEG program and 7 U.S.C. 1932(c)(2) for fiscal year (FY) 2010. Historically, Congress has appropriated funding for these specific programs. This Notice is being issued prior to passage of a FY 2010 Appropriations Act, which may or may not provide an appropriation for these programs, to allow applicants sufficient time to leverage financing, submit applications, and give the Agency time to process applications within the 2010 fiscal year. A subsequent notice identifying the amount received in the appropriations will be published, if any. Each grant is to be competitively awarded to a qualified national non-profit organization. One grant is for the provision of technical assistance to rural transportation projects. The other grant is for the provision of technical assistance to rural transportation projects operated by FRNAT's only.

Expenses incurred in developing applications will be at the applicant's risk.

DATES: The deadline for receipt of preapplications in the USDA Rural Development State Office is December 14, 2009. Applications received at a USDA Rural Development State Office after that date will not be considered for FY 2010 funding.

ADDRESSES: Entities wishing to apply for assistance should contact the appropriate Rural Development State Office to receive copies of the application package. A list of the USDA Rural Development State Offices addresses and telephone numbers are as follows:

Alabama

USDA Rural Development State Office, Sterling Centre, Suite 601, 4121 Carmichael Road, Montgomery, AL 36106-3683, (334) 279-3400/TDD (334) 279-3495.

Alaska

USDA Rural Development State Office, 800 West Evergreen, Suite 201, Palmer, AK 99645-6539, (907) 761-7705/TDD (907) 761-8905.

Arizona

USDA Rural Development State Office, 230 N. 1st Ave., Suite 206, Phoenix, AZ 85003, (602) 280-8701/TDD (602) 280-8705.

Arkansas

USDA Rural Development State Office, 700 West Capitol Avenue, Room 3416, Little Rock, AR 72201-3225, (501) 301-3200/TDD (501) 301-3279.

California

USDA Rural Development State Office, 430 G Street, #4169, Davis, CA 95616-4169, (530) 792-5800/TDD (530) 792-5848.

Colorado

USDA Rural Development State Office, 655 Parfet Street, Room E-100, Lakewood, CO 80215, (720) 544-2903/TDD (720) 544-2976.

Delaware-Maryland

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1221 College Park Drive, Suite 200, Dover, DE 19904, (302) 857-3580/TDD (302) 857-3585.

Florida/Virgin Islands

USDA Rural Development State Office, 4440 NW 25th Place, P.O. Box 147010, Gainesville, FL 32614-7010, (352) 338-3400/TDD (352) 338-3499.

Georgia

USDA Rural Development State Office, Stephens Federal Building, 355 E. Hancock Avenue, Athens, GA 30601-2768, (706) 546-2162/TDD (706) 546-2034.

Hawaii

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Room 311, 154 Waiuanue Avenue, Hilo, HI 96720, (808) 933-8380/TDD (808) 933-8321.

Idaho

USDA Rural Development State Office, 9173 West Barnes Dr., Suite A1, Boise, ID 83709, (208) 378-5600/TDD (208) 378-5644.

Illinois

USDA Rural Development State Office, 2118 West Park Court, Suite A, Champaign, IL 61821 (217) 403-6200/TDD (217) 403-6240

Indiana

USDA Rural Development State Office, 5975 Lakeside Boulevard, Indianapolis, IN 46278, (317) 290-3100/TDD (317) 290-3343.

Iowa

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Room 873, 210

Walnut Street, Des Moines, IA 50309, (515) 284-4663/TDD (515) 284-4858.

Kansas

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1303 S.W. First American Place, Suite 100, Topeka, KS 66604-4040, (785) 271-2700/TDD (785) 271-2767.

Kentucky

USDA Rural Development State Office, 771 Corporate Drive, Suite 200, Lexington, KY 40503, (859) 224-7300/TDD (859) 224-7422.

Louisiana

USDA Rural Development State Office, 3727 Government Street, Alexandria, LA 71302, (318) 473-7921/TDD (318) 473-7655.

Maine

USDA Rural Development State Office, 967 Illinois Avenue, Suite 4, P.O. Box 405, Bangor, ME 04402-0405, (207) 990-9160/TDD (207) 942-7331.

Massachusetts/Rhode Island/Connecticut

USDA Rural Development State Office, 451 West Street, Suite 2, Amherst, MA 01002-2999, (413) 253-4300/TDD (413) 253-4590.

Michigan

USDA Rural Development State Office, 3001 Coolidge Road, Suite 200, East Lansing, MI 48823, (517) 324-5190/TDD (517) 324-5169.

Minnesota

USDA Rural Development State Office, 375 Jackson Street, Suite 410, St. Paul, MN 55101-1853, (651) 602-7800/TDD (651) 602-3799.

Mississippi

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Suite 831, 100 W. Capitol Street, Jackson, MS 39269, (601) 965-4316/TDD (601) 965-5850.

Missouri

USDA Rural Development State Office, 601 Business Loop 70 West, Parkade Center, Suite 235, Columbia, MO 65203, (573) 876-0976/TDD (573) 876-9480.

Montana

USDA Rural Development State Office, 900 Technology Boulevard, Suite B, P.O. Box 850, Bozeman, MT 59771, (406) 585-2580/TDD (406) 585-2562.

Nebraska

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Room 152, 100 Centennial Mall North, Lincoln, NE

68508, (402) 437-5551/TDD (402) 437-5093.

Nevada

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1390 South Curry Street, Carson City, NV 89703-5146, (775) 887-1222/TDD (775) 885-0633.

New Jersey

USDA Rural Development State Office, 8000 Midlantic Drive, 5th Floor North, Suite 500, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054, (856) 787-7700/TDD (856) 787-7784.

New Mexico

USDA Rural Development State Office, 6200 Jefferson Street, NE., Room 255, Albuquerque, NM 87109, (505) 761-4950/TDD (505) 761-4938.

New York

USDA Rural Development State Office, The Galleries of Syracuse, 441 South Salina Street, Suite 357, Syracuse, NY 13202-2541, (315) 477-6400/TDD (315) 477-6447.

North Carolina

USDA Rural Development State Office, 4405 Bland Road, Suite 260, Raleigh, NC 27609, (919) 873-2000/TDD (919) 873-2003.

North Dakota

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Room 208, 220 East Rosser, P.O. Box 1737, Bismarck, ND 58502-1737, (701) 530-2037/TDD (701) 530-2113.

Ohio

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Room 507, 200 North High Street, Columbus, OH 43215-2418, (614) 255-2400/TDD (614) 255-2554.

Oklahoma

USDA Rural Development State Office, 100 USDA, Suite 108, Stillwater, OK 74074-2654, (405) 742-1000/TDD (405) 742-1007.

Oregon

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1201 NE Lloyd Blvd., Suite 801, Portland, OR 97232, (503) 414-3300/TDD (503) 414-3387.

Pennsylvania

USDA Rural Development State Office, One Credit Union Place, Suite 330, Harrisburg, PA 17110-2996, (717) 237-2299/TDD (717) 237-2261.

Puerto Rico

USDA Rural Development State Office, IBM Building, Suite 601, 654 Munos

Rivera Avenue, San Juan, PR 00918-6106, (787) 766-5095/TDD (787) 766-5332.

South Carolina

USDA Rural Development State Office, Strom Thurmond Federal Building, 1835 Assembly Street, Room 1007, Columbia, SC 29201, (803) 765-5163/TDD (803) 765-5697.

South Dakota

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Room 210, 200 Fourth Street, SW., Huron, SD 57350, (605) 352-1100/TDD (605) 352-1147.

Tennessee

USDA Rural Development State Office, 3322 West End Avenue, Suite 300, Nashville, TN 37203-1084, (615) 783-1300.

Texas

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Suite 102, 101 South Main, Temple, TX 76501, (254) 742-9700/TDD (254) 742-9712.

Utah

USDA Rural Development State Office, Wallace F. Bennett Federal Building, 125 South State Street, Room 4311, Salt Lake City, UT 84138, (801) 524-4320/TDD (801) 524-3309.

Vermont/New Hampshire

USDA Rural Development State Office, City Center, 3rd Floor, 89 Main Street, Montpelier, VT 05602, (802) 828-6000/TDD (802) 223-6365.

Virginia

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1606 Santa Rosa Road, Suite 238, Richmond, VA 23229-5014, (804) 287-1550/TDD (804) 287-1753.

Washington

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1835 Black Lake Boulevard SW., Suite B, Olympia, WA 98512-5715, (360) 704-7740/TDD (360) 704-7760.

West Virginia

USDA Rural Development State Office, 75 High Street, Room 320, Morgantown, WV 26505-7500, (304) 284-4860/TDD (304) 284-4836.

Wisconsin

USDA Rural Development State Office, 4949 Kirschling Court, Stevens Point, WI 54481, (715) 345-7600/TDD (715) 345-7614.

Wyoming

USDA Rural Development State Office, 100 East B, Federal Building, Room 1005, P.O. Box 11005, Casper, WY

82602-5006, (307) 233-6700/TDD (307) 233-6733.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The Rural Development State Office identified in this notice.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Overview

Federal Agency: Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

Solicitation Opportunity Title: Rural Business Enterprise Grants.

Announcement Type: Initial Solicitation Announcement.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 10.769.

Dates: Application Deadline:

Completed applications must be received in the USDA Rural Development State Office no later than December 14, 2009, to be eligible for FY 2010 grant funding. Applications received after this date will not be eligible for FY 2010 grant funding.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

The RBEG program is authorized by section 310B(c) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (CONACT) (7 U.S.C. 1932(c)). Regulations are contained in 7 CFR part 1942, subpart G. The primary objective of the program is to improve the economic conditions of rural areas. The program is administered on behalf of RBS at the State level by the USDA Rural Development State Offices. Assistance provided to rural areas under this program may include on-site technical assistance to local and regional governments, public transit agencies, and related non-profit and for-profit organizations in rural areas; the development of training materials; and the provision of necessary training assistance to local officials and agencies in rural areas.

Awards under the RBEG passenger transportation program will be made on a competitive basis using specific selection criteria contained in 7 CFR part 1942, subpart G, and in accordance with section 310B(c)(2) of the CONACT. Information required to be in the application package includes Forms SF 424, "Application for Federal Assistance;" RD 1940-20, "Request for Environmental Information;" Scope of Work Narrative; Income Statement; Balance Sheet or Audit for previous 3 years; AD-1047, "Debarment/Suspension Certification;" AD-1048, "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion;" AD-1049, "Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace Requirements;" Restrictions on Lobbying; RD 400-1, "Equal

Opportunity Agreement;" RD 400-4, "Assurance Agreement;" Letter stating Board authorization to obtain assistance; and Letter certifying citizenship, as referenced in 7 CFR 1942.307(b). For the FRNAT grant, which must benefit Federally Recognized Native American Tribes, at least 75 percent of the benefits of the project must be received by members of Federally Recognized Native American Tribes. The project that scores the greatest number of points based on the RBEG selection criteria and the discretionary points will be selected for each grant. Applications will be tentatively scored by the State Offices and submitted to the National Office for review, final scoring, and selection.

Applicants must be qualified national non-profit organizations with experience in providing technical assistance and training to rural communities for the purpose of improving passenger transportation service or facilities. To be considered "national" RBS requires a qualified organization to provide evidence that it operates rural transportation assistance programming in multiple States. There is not a requirement to use the grant funds in a multi-State area. Under this notice, grants will be made to qualified, private, non-profit organizations for the provision of technical assistance and training to rural communities for the purpose of improving passenger transportation services or facilities.

Definitions

The definitions are published at 7 CFR 1942.304.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Grant.

Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2010.

Total Funding: To be determined by appropriations bill, if any.

Approximate Number of Awards: Two

Average Award: Will be determined by amount received in appropriations, if any. This Notice will be amended to provide this information once an appropriation has been exacted.

Anticipated Award Date: January 26, 2010.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

To be considered eligible, an entity must be a private non-profit corporation serving rural areas. Grants will be competitively awarded to one or more qualified national organizations.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

Matching funds are not required.

C. Other Eligibility Requirements

Applications will only be accepted from qualified national organizations to provide technical assistance for rural transportation.

D. Completeness Eligibility

Applications will not be considered for funding if they do not provide sufficient information to determine eligibility or are missing required elements.

IV. Fiscal Year 2010 Application and Submission Information

A. Address To Request Application Package

For further information, entities wishing to apply for assistance should contact the USDA Rural Development State Office identified in this Notice to obtain copies of the application package.

Applicants are encouraged to submit applications through the Grants.gov web site at: <http://www.grants.gov>. Applications may be submitted in either electronic or paper format. Users of Grants.gov will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it off line, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov web site. Applications may not be submitted by electronic mail.

- When you enter the Grants.gov web site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site as well as the hours of operation. USDA Rural Development strongly recommends that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through Grants.gov.

- You may submit all documents electronically through the Web site, including all information typically included on the application and all necessary assurances and certifications.

- After electronically submitting an application through the Web site, the applicant will receive an automatic acknowledgement from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number.

- USDA Rural Development may request that the applicant provide original signatures on forms at a later date.

- If applicants experience technical difficulties on the closing date and are unable to meet the deadline, you may submit a paper copy of your application to your respective Rural Development State Office. Paper applications submitted to a Rural Development State Office must meet the closing date and local time deadline.

All applicants, whether filing applications through <http://www.grants.gov>

or by paper, must have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number which can be obtained at no cost via a toll-free request line at 1-866-705-5711 or at <http://www.dnb.com>.

Please note that applicants can locate the downloadable application package for this program by the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number or FedGrants Funding Opportunity Number, which can be found at <http://www.Grants.gov>.

B. Content and Form of Submission

An application must contain all of the required elements. Each application received in a USDA Rural Development State Office will be reviewed to determine if it is consistent with the eligible purposes contained in section 310B(c) of the CONACT. Each selection priority criterion outlined in 7 CFR 1942.305(b)(3), must be addressed in the application. Failure to address any of the criteria will result in a zero-point score for that criterion and will impact the overall evaluation of the application. Copies of 7 CFR part 1942, subpart G, will be provided by any interested applicant making a request to a USDA Rural Development State Office listed in this notice.

All projects to receive technical assistance through these passenger transportation grant funds are to be identified when the applications are submitted to the USDA Rural Development State Office. Multiple project applications must identify each individual project, indicate the amount of funding requested for each individual project, and address the criteria as stated above for each individual project.

For multiple-project applications, the average of the individual project scores will be the score for that application.

C. Submission Dates and Times

Application Deadline Date: December 14, 2009.

Explanation of Deadlines: Applications must be in the USDA Rural Development State Office by the deadline date.

V. Application Review Information

The National Office will score applications based on the grant selection criteria and weights contained in 7 CFR part 1942, subpart G and will select a grantee subject to the grantee's satisfactory submission of the additional items required by 7 CFR part 1942, subpart G and the USDA Rural Development Letter of Conditions.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive notification for funding from the USDA Rural Development State Office. Applicants must comply with all applicable statutes and regulations before the grant award will be approved. Unsuccessful applications will receive notification by mail. Grantees must further comply with applicable provisions of 7 CFR parts 3015, 3016, 3019, and 3052.

VII. Agency Contacts

For general questions about this announcement, please contact your USDA Rural Development State Office identified in this Notice.

VIII. Paperwork Reduction Act

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, the paperwork burden has been cleared by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under OMB Control Number 0570-0022.

Nondiscrimination Statement:

“The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination write to USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication and Compliance, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.”

Dated: September 23, 2009.

Judith A. Canales,

Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

[FR Doc. E9-24611 Filed 10-9-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XY-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Commerce will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the

Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. chapter 35).

Agency: U.S. Census Bureau.

Title: American Community Survey Methods Panel Tests.

Form Number(s): ACS-1, ACS-1(SP), ACS-1PR, ACS-1PR(SP), ACS CATI(HU), ACS CAPI(HU).

OMB Control Number: 0607-0936.

Type of Request: Revision of a currently approved collection.

Burden Hours: 92,422.

Number of Respondents: 169,667.

Average Hours per Response: 28 minutes.

Needs and Uses: The U.S. Census Bureau requests authorization from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to conduct the American Community Survey (ACS) Methods Panel tests.

Given the rapid demographic changes experienced in recent years and the strong expectation that such changes will continue and accelerate, the once-a-decade data collection approach to a census is no longer acceptable as a source for the housing and socio-economic data collected on the census long-form. To meet the needs and expectations of the country, the Census Bureau developed the ACS. This survey collects detailed socioeconomic data every month and provides tabulations of these data on a yearly basis. The ACS allows the Census Bureau to provide more timely and relevant housing and socio-economic data while also reducing operational risks in the census by eliminating the long-form historically given to one in every six addresses.

Full implementation of the ACS includes an annual sample of approximately three million residential addresses a year in the 50 states and the District of Columbia, and another 36,000 addresses in Puerto Rico. A sample this large allows for annual production and release of single-year estimates for areas with a population of 65,000 or more. Lower levels of geography require aggregates of three and five years' worth of data in order to produce estimates of comparable reliability to the census long-form. However, an ongoing data collection effort with an annual sample of this magnitude requires that the ACS continue research, testing and evaluations aimed at improving ACS questionnaires content and related data collection materials. In addition, the ACS Methods Panel during the 2010-2012 period may include testing methods for increasing survey and operational efficiencies; alternative methods or procedures may be developed and evaluated that could potentially reduce the overall survey cost, lessen respondent burden, and

improve response rates. At this time, specific plans are in place to propose three methods panel tests: A content reinterview study, the 2010 ACS Content Test, and an Internet Mode Test. Since the ACS Methods Panel is designed to address emerging issues, we may conduct additional testing as needed. Testing would focus on methods for reducing data collection costs or testing new questions that have an urgent need to be included on the ACS.

During Census 2000, a content reinterview study (CRS) was conducted in conjunction with the long form, which the ACS now replaces. The decennial CRS was an evaluation of the quality of the data collected in the census, focusing on response bias and simple response variance (reliability). The Census Bureau proposes to design and implement a CRS to look at the current ACS production questions on an ongoing basis. This will allow for the identification of problems with reliability. Results from the CRS will provide data users with concrete data quality measures (such as reliability or bias measures) for each ACS item.

The ACS CRS will allow the Census Bureau to continuously monitor the data quality of the ACS and identify questions that are currently unreliable or that may become unreliable due to changes in the survey climate (e.g., changes in policy that change the definition of what the ACS is trying to measure). The results from the CRS, generated on a yearly basis, would identify which questions require modifications and future testing via a content test, thus providing a more scientific approach to determining the need for content testing of current ACS items. The CRS will be conducted by telephone only with a small sample of cases that responded during production.

Second, in response to Federal agencies' requests for new and revised ACS questions, the Census Bureau plans to conduct the 2010 ACS Content Test. Changes to the current ACS content and the addition of new content were identified through the Interagency Committee for the ACS and through recent legislative action. The primary objective of the 2010 ACS Content Test is to test whether changes to question wording, response categories, and redefinition of underlying constructs improve the quality of data collected. The Census Bureau proposes to evaluate changes to the questions, or for new questions, to compare the performance of question versions to each other as well as to other well-known sources of such information. The proposed topics for content testing are new questions to