

Notices

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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

January 3, 2000.

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 regarding (a) 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; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; (d) 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 or other forms of information technology should be addressed to: Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Washington, DC 20503 and to Departmental Clearance Office, USDA, OCIO, Mail Stop 7602, Washington, DC 20250-7602. Comments regarding these information collections are best assured of having their full effect if received within 30 days of this notification. Copies of the submission(s) may be obtained by calling (202) 720-6746.

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: Urban Connections.

OMB Control Number: 0596-NEW.

Summary of Collection: Urban

residents are increasingly looking to the National Forests as a source of recreation and relaxation and to gain some relief from dense urban settings. As a result National Forest System lands are under increased pressure from urban residents to meet their need for relief from dense urban environments. The Forest Service (FS) is legally bound to conduct public involvement activities, as referenced in FSM 1626, FSM 1950.1, 36 CFR 219.6, (NEPA, NFMA), and has a long history of doing so. The purpose of the information collection is to help the FS better understand the demands urban residents make on the agency's programs and services, how well the agency communicates its programs and services to these residents, and how well the agency meets the needs and expectations of urban residents, how opportunities might be made available to involve urban residents in participating in volunteer activities on National Forest System lands. Communicating with people who live in close proximity to the National Forests has been of great value to the agency. Because of the increased demands on the natural resources, the FS is collecting information to identify the concerns that urban residents have regarding the agency's ability to meet these additional demands. The FS will collect information using telephone interviews, telephone surveys and focus groups.

Need and Use of the Information: FS will collect information to create opportunities for public involvement with urban residents; provide written information to them; provide them future opportunities to comment on national policy and initiatives; design communications that will meet urban residents needs; make urban residents aware of volunteer opportunities; provide the opportunity to correct any misinformation; let people know about land management planning activities and opportunities to be involved; share information about State and Private Forestry activities; and ensure FS communications reach diverse audiences. The results of this information collection will be used by

FS employees to provide information to urban people in the cities of Boston, MA; Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN; and Detroit, MI. Without the results of the study, the FS would not know which urban residents are interested in public involvement or whom to share information with.

Description of Respondents: Individuals or households.

Number of Respondents: 4,148.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 1,549.

Foreign Agricultural Service

Title: Buyer Alert.

OMB Control Number: 0551-0024.

Summary of Collection: Under 7 U.S.C. part 1761, the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) and the AgExport Connections Office facilitates trade contracts between U.S. exporters and foreign buyers seeking U.S. food and agricultural products. The Buyer Alert service is designed to help U.S. firms introduce their products to new foreign markets, as well as expand their presence in existing markets. This service provides the U.S. firm an opportunity to have its products listed in a biweekly newsletter which is distributed to foreign buyers.

Need and Use of the Information: Buyer Alert is a biweekly overseas newsletter which advertises U.S. food and agricultural products to foreign buyers. Buyer Alert Announcements (advertisements) are processed by the USDA/FAS AgExport connections office and transmitted electronically to 80 FAS overseas offices, who distribute the information to more than 22,000 interested buyers world-wide. Each Announcement features a product description, and optional price indicator, and information about the exporter. U.S. firms may submit up to five Buyer Alert Announcements for distribution in each issue of the newsletter.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for-profit.

Number of Respondents: 600.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 306.

Foreign Agricultural Service

Title: FAS/Cooperator Foreign Market Development Program.

OMB Control Number: 0551-0026.

Summary of Collection: The basic authority for the Foreign Market Development Program is contained in Title VII of the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978, 7 U.S.C. 5721, *et seq.* Program regulations appear at 7 CFR 1550. Title VII directs the Secretary of Agriculture to “establish and, in cooperation with eligible trade organizations, carry out a foreign market development cooperator program to maintain and develop foreign markets for United States agricultural commodities and products.” All data collected is used by the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) marketing specialists and program managers for the allocation of funds, program management, planning and evaluation. The data collection has, in almost every case, been mandated by either the General Accounting Office or the Office of the Inspector General to eliminate perceived deficiencies in program management and to establish additional program controls. FAS will collect information using an application submitted by prospective Cooperators.

Need and Use of the Information: FAS will collect information to manage, plan, evaluate, and account for government resources. Specifically, data is used to assess the extent to which: applicant organizations represent U.S. commodity interests; benefits derived from market development efforts will translate back to the broadest possible range of beneficiaries; the market development efforts will lead to increases in consumption and imports of U.S. agricultural commodities; the applicant is able and willing to commit personnel and financial resources to assure adequate development, supervision and execution of project activities; and private organizations are able and willing to support the promotional program with aggressive marketing of the commodity in question. If information is not available which provides evidence that taxpayer funds are being disbursed in accordance with authorizing legislation, ethical standards, and standard Government rules and regulations, regulatory offices such as the General Accounting Office or the Office of the Inspector General would likely recommend terminating the program.

Description of Respondents: Not-for-profit institutions; State, Local or Tribal Government.

Number of Respondents: 30.

Frequency of Responses:

Recordkeeping; Reporting: Annually.

Total Burden Hours: 43,748.

Agricultural Marketing Service

Title: Regulations Governing the Inspection and Grading of Manufactured

or Processed Dairy Products—Recordkeeping.

OMB Control Number: 0581–0110.

Summary of Collection: The Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 directs the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to develop programs which will provide and enable a more orderly marketing of agricultural products. One of these programs is the USDA voluntary inspection and grading program for dairy products where these dairy products are graded according to U.S. grade standards by a USDA grader. The dairy products so graded may be identified with the USDA grade mark. Dairy processors, buyers, retailers, institutional users, and consumers have requested that such a program be developed to assure the uniform quality of dairy products purchased. In order for any service program to perform satisfactorily, there must be written guides and rules, which in this case are regulations for the provider and user. The Agricultural Marketing Service will require records be maintained on dairy processing activity for visual review during inspections.

Need and Use of the Information: The Agricultural Marketing Service will collect information to administer the dairy inspection program and insure that dairy products are produced under sanitary conditions and buyers are purchasing a quality product. Without laboratory testing results requiring recordkeeping, inspectors would not be able to evaluate the quality of dairy products. The required records are routinely reviewed and evaluated during the inspection of the dairy plant facilities for USDA approval.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for-profit.

Number of Respondents: 508.

Frequency of Responses:

Recordkeeping.

Total Burden Hours: 1,525.

Rural Housing Service

Title: Form RD 410–8, “Application Reference Letter” (A Request for Credit Reference).

OMB Control Number: 0575–0091.

Summary of Collection: The Rural Housing Service (RHS) is required by the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, as amended, and the Housing Act of 1949 as amended to obtain information about an applicant’s credit history that might not appear on a credit report in conjunction with its loanmaking operations. Form RD 410–8, “Applicant Reference Letter” is used by RHS to gather this information. It can be used to document an ability to handle credit effectively for applicants who have not used sources of credit that

appear on a credit report. The form asks only for specific relevant information to determine the applicant’s creditworthiness and to provide clarification on the promptness of applicant’s payments on debts which enables RHS to make better creditworthiness decisions.

Need and Use of the Information: RHS will collect information to supplement or verify other debts when a credit report is limited or unavailable to determine the applicant’s eligibility and creditworthiness for RHS loans and grants.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for-profit.

Number of Respondents: 28,523.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 28,238.

Forest Service

Title: Customer and Use Survey Techniques for Operations, Management, Evaluation and Research.

OMB Control Number: 0596–0110.

Summary of Collection: The National Forest Management Act (NFMA) of 1976 and the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Act (RPA) of 1974 require a comprehensive assessment of present and anticipated uses, demand for, and supply of renewable resources from the nation’s public and private forests and rangelands. The Forest Service (FS) is required to report to Congress and others in conjunction with these legislated requirements as well as the use of appropriated funds. An important element in the reporting is the number of visits to National Forests and Grasslands, as well as to Wilderness Areas that the agency manages. The Customer and Use Survey Techniques for Operations, Management, Evaluation and Research (CUSTOMER) project combines several different survey approaches to gather data describing visitors to and users of public recreation lands, including their trip activities, satisfaction levels, evaluations, demographic profiles, trip characteristics, spending, and annual visitation patterns. FS will use fact-to-face interviewing for collecting information on-site as well as written survey instruments to be mailed back by respondents.

Need and Use of the Information: FS plans to collect information from a variety of National Forests and other recreation areas. Information gathered through the various CUSTOMER modules has been and will continue to be used by planners, researchers, managers, policy analysts, and legislators in resources management areas, regional offices, regional research

stations, agency headquarters, and legislative offices.

Description of Respondents:

Individuals or households.

Number of Respondents: 57,000.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: Quarterly; Annually.

Total Burden Hours: 9,917.

Food and Nutrition Service

Title: Child Nutrition Labeling Program.

OMB Control Number: 0584-0320.

Summary of Collection: The Child Nutrition Labeling Program is a voluntary technical assistance program administered by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). The program is designed to aid schools and institutions participating in the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and the Summer Food Service Program in determining the contribution a commercial product makes towards the meal pattern requirements. By requiring that companies who sell food to the government for use in nutrition program to identify the contribution of a product to the established meal pattern requirements. The Child Nutrition Labeling Program is implemented in conjunction with existing label approval programs administered by the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), and the U.S. Department of Commerce. In addition to an application for approval of a child nutrition label, companies must include a separate statement on how the product satisfies meal pattern requirements. All information is submitted to FSIS on form FSIS 7234-1, Application for Approval of Labels, Marking or Device.

Need and Use of the Information: FNS uses the information collected by FSIS to aid school food authorities and other institutions participating in child nutrition programs in determining the contribution a commercial product makes towards the established meal pattern requirements.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for-profit.

Number of Respondents: 795.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: Other (as needed).

Total Burden Hours: 3,122.

Food and Nutrition Service

Title: SMI Implementation Study—Year 3 Data Collection.

OMB Control Number: 0584-0485.

Summary of Collection: The Healthy Meals for Healthy Americans Act of 1994 (Pub. L. 103-448), as amended, provided the framework for

implementing the School Meals Initiative (SMI) for Healthy Children. The SMI was launched for the purposes of modifying school meals in order to meet the Dietary Guidelines, which were established in 1980 as a joint effort between the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Health and Human Services. In order to assess the progress of the SMI, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) developed plans for a multi-year longitudinal research project that collects information on SMI implementation at the state, district, and school levels. The study project plan calls for a three phase approach. FNS collected evaluation data in the Spring of 1996 and again in 1997. FNS is now seeking approval to proceed with the third phase of the project planned for the 1999-2000 school year.

Need and Use of the Information: FNS plans to collect information from 51 State Child Nutrition Directors, and a representative sample of School Food Authorities to: (1) Describe the status of the implementation of the SMI and (2) provide descriptive information on the operations and characteristics of the school-based Child Nutrition Programs. Two separate surveys have been developed—one for each sample group—that will be mailed to respondents in hardcopy format. Without the information to be collected in this study, FNS would not have continuous and reliable data about the status of the SMI, its effects on school food programs, problems encountered, and progress in achieving its objectives.

Description of Respondents: State, Local, or Tribal Government.

Number of Respondents: 2,039.

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

Total Burden Hours: 2,039.

Food and Nutrition Service

Title: The Impacts of Food Stamp Program Time Limits on Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents.

OMB Control Number: 0584-NEW.

Summary of Collection: Under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, P.L. 104-193 (PRWORA), able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) are subject to a time limit on the receipt of food stamps unless they work or participate in an approved work or training program. The time limit on the receipt of food stamp benefits represents a significant change to the Food Stamp Program (FSP) rules and an operational challenge to administer, yet relatively little is known about how states are implementing this policy or how many people are affected by the new

provisions. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is proposing to conduct a study to (1) describe how the ABAWD provisions have been implemented, and (2) to provide national estimates of how many people are affected by the ABAWD provisions. FNS has contracted with an outside firm to conduct the study which will involve telephone and written surveys with state agency personnel, local office FSP personnel, and representatives from selected advocacy groups. For a smaller sample, some site visits will also be conducted.

Need and Use of the Information: FNS plans to collect information in order to develop a national picture of how the ABAWD provisions are implemented from state to state and to determine how many people are affected by the provisions. It will also provide information on the range of policy decisions that were available to the states and the factors that affected the choice of policies by individual states, counties, and local offices. The information will be shared by FNS with the states and the Congress to inform ongoing discussions on strategies for responding to this segment of the FSP population. The findings generated from the information collection will be presented in the form of a final report and a public-use file containing the state and local responses to the survey questionnaires.

Description of Respondents: Not-for-profit institutions; State, Local, or Tribal Government.

Number of Respondents: 897

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

Total Burden Hours: 2,193.

Food and Nutrition Service

Title: Summer Food Service Program.

OMB Control Number: 0584-0280.

Summary of Collection: The National School Lunch Act, as amended, authorizes the Summer Food Service Program for Children (SFSP). The SFSP is administered by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). The purpose of the SFSP is to provide nutrition meals to children from low-income areas during periods when schools are not in session. Information is gathered from state agencies and other organizations wishing to participate in the program to determine eligibility. If selected, additional reporting requirements apply to determine the amount of meals served and other program volume information. FNS used a variety of forms to collect information.

Need and Use of the Information: FNS uses the information collected to determine an organizations eligibility to participate and to monitor program

performance for compliance and reimbursement purposes.

Description of Respondents: Individuals or households.

Number of Respondents: 76,733.

Frequency of Responses:

Recordkeeping; Reporting: On occasion; Quarterly; Monthly; Weekly.

Total Burden Hours: 316,005.

Rural Housing Service

Title: 7 CFR 1944-I, "Self-Help Technical Assistance Grants".

OMB Control Number: 0575-0043.

Summary of Collection: This regulation prescribes policies and responsibilities, including the collection and use of information, necessary to administer the Section 523 program. Rural Housing Service (RHS) will be collecting information from the non-profit organizations who want to develop a Self-Help program in their area to increase the availability of affordable housing. The information is collected at the local, district, and state levels. The information requested by RHS includes financial and organizational information about the non-profit organization.

Need and Use of the Information: RHS needs this information to determine if the organization is capable of successfully carrying out the requirements of the Self-Help program. The information is collected on an as requested or needed basis. RHS has reviewed the program's need for the collection of information versus the burden placed on the public.

Description of Respondents: State, Local or Tribal Government; Not-for-profit institutions.

Number of Respondents: 100.

Frequency of Responses:

Recordkeeping; Reporting: Monthly, Annually.

Total Burden Hours: 3,095.

Rural Housing Service

Title: 7 CFR 1944-B, Housing Applications Packaging Grants.

OMB Control Number: 0575-0157.

Summary of Collection: Section 509 of the Housing Act of 1949, as amended, authorizes the Rural Housing Service (RHS) to make grants to private and public nonprofit organizations and State and local governments to package housing applications for Section 502, 504, 514/515 and 533 to colonials and designated counties. Eligible organizations aid very low and low-income individuals and families in obtaining benefits from RHS housing programs.

Need and Use of the Information: RHS field personnel use this information, required for approval of

housing application packaging grants, to verify program eligibility requirements and to secure grant assistance. The information is also to insure that the program is administered in a manner consistent with legislative and administrative requirements.

Description of Respondents: Not-for-profit institutions.

Number of Respondents: 200.

Frequency of Responses:

Recordkeeping; Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 900.

Nancy B. Sternberg,

Departmental Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 00-410 Filed 1-6-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Eastern Washington Cascades Provincial Advisory Committee and Yakima Provincial Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Eastern Washington Cascades Provincial Advisory Committee and the Yakima Provincial Advisory Committee will meet on Thursday, January 20, 2000, at the Wenatchee National Forest headquarters main conference room, 215 Melody Lane, Wenatchee, Washington. The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. and continue until 3:30 p.m. Key topics for this meeting will be: Information sharing on new developments on the on-going implementation of the Northwest Forest Plan, a re-cap of the roadless area meetings, and Advisory Committee goal setting for the year 2000. All Eastern Washington Cascades and Yakima Province Advisory Committee meetings are open on the public. Interested citizens are welcome to attend.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Direct questions regarding this meeting to Paul Hart, Designated Federal Official, USDA, Wenatchee National Forest, 215 Melody Lane, Wenatchee, Washington 98801, 509-662-4335.

Dated: January 3, 2000.

Robert J. Sheehan,

Deputy Forest Supervisor, Wenatchee National Forest.

[FR Doc. 00-331 Filed 1-6-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Inviting 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 Rural Development mission area, announces the availability of one single \$500,000 grant from the passenger transportation portion of the Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) Program for Fiscal Year (FY) 2000 to be competitively awarded to a qualified national organization.

DATES: The deadline for receipt of a preapplication in the Rural Development State Office is March 1, 2000. Preapplications received at a Rural Development State Office after that date will not be considered for FY 2000 funding.

ADDRESSES: For further information, entities wishing to apply for assistance should contact a Rural Development State Office to receive further information and copies of the preapplication package. A list of Rural Development State Offices follows:

Alabama

USDA Rural Development State Office, Sterling Center, Suite 601, 4121 Carmichael Road, Montgomery, AL 36106-3683, (334) 279-3400

Alaska

USDA Rural Development State Office, 800 West Evergreen, Suite 201, Palmer, AK 99645-6539, (907) 745-2176

Arizona

USDA Rural Development State Office, 3003 North Central Avenue, Suite 900, Phoenix, AZ 85012-2906, (602) 280-8700

Arkansas

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

California

USDA Rural Development State Office, 430 G Street, Agency 4169, Davis, CA 95616-4169, (530) 792-5800

Colorado

USDA Rural Development State Office, 655 Parfet Street, Room E-100, Lakewood, CO 80215, (303) 236-2801

Delaware-Maryland

USDA Rural Development State Office, 4607 South DuPont Highway, Camden, DE 19934-9998, (302) 697-4300

Florida/Virgin Islands

USDA Rural Development State Office, 4440 NW 25th Place, Gainesville, FL 32614-7010, (352) 338-3400

Georgia

USDA Rural Development State Office, Stephens Federal Building, 355 E.