

Since an environmental assessment will be prepared instead of an environmental impact statement, the NOI is hereby rescinded.

Dated: January 24, 2003

**Ranotta K. McNair,**

*Forest Supervisor.*

[FR Doc. 03-2150 Filed 1-29-03; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Notice of Resource Advisory Committee Meeting

**AGENCY:** Southwest Idaho Resource Advisory Committee, Boise, ID, Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to the authorities in the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Public Law 92-463) and under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (Public Law 103-393), the Boise and Payette National Forests' Southwest Idaho Resource Advisory Committee will conduct a business meeting. The meeting is open to the public.

**DATES:** Wednesday, February 19, 2003 beginning at 10:30 a.m.

**ADDRESSES:** Idaho Counties Risk Management Program Building, 3100 South Vista Avenue, Boise, Idaho.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Agenda topics will include review and approval of project proposals and an open public forum.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Randy Swick, Designated Federal Officer, at (208) 634-0400.

Dated: January 23, 2003.

**Mark J. Madrid,**

*Forest Supervisor.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Utilities Service

#### Rural Broadband Access Loans and Loan Guarantees Program

**AGENCY:** Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of application deadline.

**SUMMARY:** The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) announces funding available for the Rural Broadband Access Loan and Loan Guarantee program. For FY 2003,

no less than \$1.455 billion in loans is available, \$1.295 billion for direct cost-of-money loans, \$80 million for direct 4-percent loans, and \$80 million for loan guarantees.

**DATES:** All returned applications from the Broadband Pilot Program must be delivered to RUS or bear postmark no later than March 3, 2003 in order to have a priority consideration in FY 2003. All applications must be delivered to RUS or bear postmark no later than January 31, 2003, to be considered for funding from their applicable state's allocation. All other applications must be delivered to RUS or bear postmark no later than July 31, 2003, to be considered for funding in Fiscal Year 2003.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Roberta D. Purcell, Assistant Administrator, Telecommunications Program, Rural Utilities Service, STOP 1590, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-1590, Telephone (202) 720-9554, Facsimile (202) 720-0810.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**General Information**

During FY 2003, no less than \$1.455 billion will be made available for loans and loan guarantees for the construction, improvement, and acquisition of facilities and equipment for broadband service in eligible rural communities. Of the total loan funds available, \$1.295 billion will be available for direct cost-of-money loans, \$80 million for 4-percent direct loans, and \$80 million for loan guarantees. The Rural Broadband Access Loan and Loan Guarantee Program is authorized by the Rural Electrification Act (7 U.S.C. 601) (the Act), as added by the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, Pub. L. 101-171.

Priority will be given to applications previously received by RUS under its Broadband Pilot Program, described at 67 FR 45079.

Applications must be submitted in accordance with 7 CFR part 1738. This part and an application guide to assist in the preparation of applications are available in the Internet at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom>. Application guides may also be requested from RUS by contacting the appropriate agency contact:

**Agency Contacts**

For application information, contact the following individual: Deborah Jackson, Telecommunications Program, RUS/USDA, Room 2919, Stop 1541,

1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC, (202) 720-8427.

**Minimum and Maximum Loan Amounts**

Loans and loan guarantees under this authority will not be made for less than \$100,000. Maximum loan amounts apply only to the direct 4-percent loan program. The maximum amount available for any one applicant for a direct 4-percent loan is \$5,000,000.

**Minimum Rate of Data Transmission Criteria**

The Secretary of Agriculture determines what qualifies as broadband service for the purpose of determining eligibility for financial assistance under the Rural Broadband Access Loan and Loan Guarantee Program. During fiscal year 2003 (and thereafter until further notice), to qualify as broadband service, the minimum rate-of-data transmission shall be 200 kilobits/second in the customer's connection to the network, both from the provider to the customer (downstream) and from the customer to the provider (upstream).

**State Allocations**

Due to the date of publication of the regulation and the regulatory deadline of January 31 for applications to be considered under the state allocation, applications submitted pursuant to this notice for fiscal year 2003 will be funded from the national reserve.

The Act requires RUS, from amounts made available each fiscal year, to establish a national reserve for loans and loan guarantees to eligible entities in states and to allocate amounts in the reserve to each state for each fiscal year. The Act further sets forth the method of allocation as follows:

"The amount of an allocation made to a State for a fiscal year \* \* \* shall bear the same ratio to the amount of allocations made for all States for the fiscal year as the number of communities with a population of 2,500 inhabitants or less in the State bears to the number of communities with a population of 2,500 inhabitants or less in all States, as determined on the basis of the latest available census".

The following table shows the number of communities with 2,500 inhabitants or less (from the 2000 U.S. Census data), the percent in each state of such communities in relation to the total of all states, and the dollar amount of loan and loan guarantee funds available to each state: