

Notices

Federal Register

Vol. 69, No. 203

Thursday, October 21, 2004

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.

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance, Office of Private Voluntary Cooperation/ American Schools and Hospitals Abroad; Announcement of Draft Changes to Criterion #8 American Schools and Hospitals Abroad Program

The U.S. Agency for International Development is announcing draft changes to Criterion #8 in the American Schools and Hospitals Abroad program, pursuant to section 214 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended. The program criteria serve as administrative guidance for considering the acceptability and relative merits of applicants.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. George Like (703) 712-1766, ASHA Agency for International Development, Washington, DC 20523.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On November 26, 1979, the U.S. Agency for International Development published 11 Program Criteria for the American Schools and Hospitals Abroad program. Criterion #8 states "The institution must be open to all persons regardless of race, religion, sex, color or national origin. (The above shall not be construed to require enrollment of students of both sexes at an educational institution enrolling males or females only.) Assistance may not be used to train persons for religious pursuits or to construct buildings or other facilities intended for worship or religious instruction."

On December 12, 2002, Executive Order 13279 "Equal Protection of the Laws for Faith-Based and Community Organizations" was signed. Accordingly, the U.S. Agency for International Development proposes to change Criterion #8 of the American Schools and Hospitals Abroad program

to "The institution must be open to all persons regardless of race, religion, sex, color or national origin. (The above shall not be construed to require enrollment of students of both sexes at an educational institution enrolling males or females only.) Assistance may not be used to support any inherently religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction or proselytization."

The sixty-day comment period will begin on the date that this announcement is published in the **Federal Register**.

G. Garrett Grigsby,

Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance.

[FR Doc. 04-23552 Filed 10-20-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6116-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Housing Service

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Rural Utilities Service

Farm Service Agency

Notice of Request for Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCIES: Rural Housing Service, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, Rural Utilities Service, and Farm Service Agency, USDA.

ACTION: Proposed collection; comments requested.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Rural Housing Service (RHS), the Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS), Rural Utilities Service (RUS), and the Farm Service Agency's (FSA) intention to request an extension for a currently approved information collection in support of compliance with Civil Rights laws.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by December 20, 2004, to be assured of consideration.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jacqueline Micheli, Equal Opportunity Specialist, Rural Development, Civil Rights Staff, U.S. Department of Agriculture, STOP 0703, 1400

Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250-0703, telephone (202) 692-0099 (voice) or 692-0107 (TDD).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: *Title:* 7 CFR 1901-E, Civil Rights Compliance Requirements.

OMB Number: 0575-0018.

Expiration Date: April 30, 2005.

Type of Request: Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection.

Abstract: The information collection under OMB Number 0575-0018 enables the RHS, RBS, RUS, and FSA to effectively monitor a recipient's compliance with the civil rights laws, and to determine whether or not service and benefits are being provided to beneficiaries on an equal opportunity basis.

The RBS, RHS, RUS, and FSA, formerly the Farmers Home Administration, are required to provide Federal financial assistance through its farmer, housing, and community and business programs on an equal opportunity basis. The laws implemented in 7 CFR part 1901, subpart E ("1901-E"), require the recipients of RBS, RHS, RUS, and FSA's Federal financial assistance to collect various types of information, including information on participants in certain of these agencies' programs, by race, color, and national origin. While these agencies realize that the provisions of 1901-E are outdated as the result of statutory amendment and other processes of law, the information needed to be collected under this implementing regulation is not affected by the obsolete nature of the regulation. The RBS, RHS, RUS, and FSA use the information to monitor a recipient's compliance with the civil rights laws, and to determine whether or not service and benefits are being provided to beneficiaries on an equal opportunity basis. The agencies are in the process of revising 1901-E, and expect to publish for comment a **Federal Register** document proposing these revisions in 2005. The following laws are implemented in 7 CFR 1901-E:

a. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ("Title VI"). The implementing regulations for this Act, issued by the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), requires recipients of RBS', RHS' RUS' and FSA's program assistance to collect information on the race/national origin

of the beneficiaries of their specific programs. This information is used by the RBS, RHS, RUS, and FSA for compliance review and monitoring purposes for Title VI.

b. Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (as amended) ("Title VIII"). Section 808a of Title VIII (42 U.S.C. 3608a (1988)), in pertinent part, requires the Secretary of Agriculture to collect racial and ethnic data on beneficiaries and recipients of USDA's housing programs. Furthermore, the implementing regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and adopted by the RBS, RHS, RUS, and FSA, requires recipients and other participants in RHS's housing programs affirmatively to further fair housing by providing housing, and the opportunity to acquire housing in a non-discriminatory fashion. One way to demonstrate compliance with Title VIII is to prepare Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plans, and to collect and maintain data to reflect compliance with the requirements of that plan. Furthermore, under the Memorandum of Understanding between HUD and USDA, many complaints of fair housing violations by USDA recipients will be processed by HUD. The collection and maintenance of this data will assist in the enforcement effort.

c. Executive Order 11246. The implementing regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), and adopted by the RBS, RHS, RUS, and FSA, require recipients of federally assisted construction contracts of \$10,000 or more to maintain goals for hiring minorities and females, and to submit employment utilization reports to the DOL's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs.

The information collected and maintained by the recipients of certain programs from RBS, RHS, RUS, and FSA is used internally by these agencies for monitoring compliance with the civil rights laws and regulations. This information is made available to USDA officials, officials of other Federal agencies, and to Congress for reporting purposes. Without the required information, RBS, RHS, RUS, FSA and its recipients will lack the necessary documentation to demonstrate that their programs are being administered in a nondiscriminatory manner, and in full compliance with the civil rights laws. In addition, the RBS, RHS, RUS, FSA, and their recipients would be vulnerable in lawsuits alleging discrimination in the affected programs of these agencies, and would be without appropriate data and documentation to defend themselves by demonstrating that services and benefits

are being provided to beneficiaries on an equal opportunity basis.

Estimate of Burden: The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 5.41 hours per response.

Respondents: Recipients of RBS, RHS, RUS, and FSA's Federal financial assistance, loan, and loan guarantee programs.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 54,653.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.99.

Estimated Number of Responses: 108,534.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 587,568.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Tracy Givelekian, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, Support Services Division, at (202) 692-0039.

Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Rural Development, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the Agencies' estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and (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. Comments may be sent to Tracy Givelekian, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, Support Services Division, Rural Development U.S. Department of Agriculture, Ag Box 0742, Washington, DC 20250-0742. All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: October 13, 2004.

Gilbert G. Gonzalez,

Acting Under Secretary, Rural Development.

Dated: October 13, 2004.

J.B. Penn,

Under Secretary, Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services.

[FR Doc. 04-23578 Filed 10-20-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XV-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Bridger-Teton National Forest— Pinedale Ranger District; Wyoming; Moose-Gypsum Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The Forest Service proposes a number of project actions within the Moose-Gypsum Project Area. These actions are designed to move these areas closer to the desired Future Conditions as described in the Bridger-Teton National Forest's Land and Resource Management Plan. The Pinedale Ranger District is proposing a 1,500-acre timber harvest in conifer stands; 1,100 acres of mechanical aspen stand improvement treatments; 600 acres of Wildland/Urban Interface fuels treatments; 29,000 acres of sage/grass/aspen treatments to be accomplished primarily with prescribed burning and possibly with the use of an herbicide sage-reduction treatment on approximately 8,000 acres. Watershed restoration projects, such as the replacement of storm damaged culverts and rehabilitation of damaged stream banks on the Green River are also projects included in this proposal. Recreation project improvements included as a part of this analysis are a rerouting of the district's snowmobile trail around the elk winter feed ground, the development of a dispersed campsite management plan, and new trailhead design and reconstruction. Road management improvements, including the refinement of the existing travel plan to consider All Terrain Vehicle routes and wilderness trespass issues, the obliteration and rehabilitation of a roadbed within the Wilderness, and an upgrade of the Green River Lakes Road to a higher standard are also proposed for analysis in this environmental impact statement.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of the analysis must be received by November 12, 2004. The draft environmental impact statement is expected May 2005, and the final environmental impact statement is expected October 2005.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to Craig Trulock, District Ranger, Pinedale Ranger District, P.O. Box 220, Pinedale, Wyoming 82941. Electronic comments may be sent to; *comments-intermtn-bridger-teton-pinedale@fs.fed.us* with the subject line "Moose-Gypsum EIS."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Craig Trulock, District Ranger, Pinedale