

mechanical or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to Michele L. Brooks, Director, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, STOP 1522, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250-1522. Fax: (202) 720-8435.

*Title:* Advance of Loan Funds and Budgetary Control and Other Related Burdens.

*OMB Control Number:* 0572-0015.

*Type of Request:* Extension of a currently approved collection.

*Abstract:* This collection is necessary to comply with the applicable provisions of the RUS loan contract. Borrowers submit requisitions to RUS for funds for project costs incurred. Insured loan funds will be advanced only for projects which are included in the RUS approved borrower's construction workplan or approved amendment and in an approved loan, as amended. The process of loan advances establishes the beginning of the audit trail of the use of loan funds which is required for subsequent RUS compliance audits.

The RUS Form 595 is used as a requisition for advances of funds. The form helps to assure that loan funds are advanced only for the budget purposes and amount approved by RUS. According to the applicable provisions of the RUS loan contract, borrowers must certify with each request for funds to be approved for advance, which such funds are for projects previously approved.

When a prospective borrower requests and is granted an RUS loan, a loan contract is established between the Federal government, acting through the RUS Administrator, and the borrower. At the time this contract is entered into, the borrower must provide RUS with a list of projects for which loan funds will be spent, along with an itemized list of the estimated costs of these projects. Thus, the borrower receives a loan based upon estimated cost figures.

RUS Form 219, Inventory of Work Orders, is one of the documents the borrower submits to RUS to support actual expenditures and an advance of loan funds. The form also serves as a connecting link and provides an audit trail that originates with the advance of funds and terminates with evidence supporting the propriety of expenditures for construction or retirement projects.

*Estimate of Burden:* The Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.57 hours per response.

*Respondents:* Not-for-profit institutions; Business or other for profit.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 670.

*Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent:* 15.37.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:* 16,215.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from MaryPat Daskal, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, at (202) 720-7853. Fax: (202) 720-8435.

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 29, 2008.

**Curtis M. Anderson,**

*Deputy Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.*

[FR Doc. E8-26315 Filed 11-4-08; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-15-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Utilities Service

#### Announcement of Grant and Loan Application Deadlines and Funding Levels

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

**ACTION:** Notice of solicitation of applications.

**SUMMARY:** The Rural Utilities Service, an agency delivering the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Development Utilities Programs, hereinafter referred to as Rural Development, announces its Revolving Fund Program (RFP) application window for Fiscal Year (FY) 2009. In addition to announcing the application window, Rural Development announces the available funding and maximum amounts for RFP competitive grants for the fiscal year. This notice is being issued prior to passage of a final appropriations bill, which may or may not provide for funding this program, to allow applicants sufficient time to leverage financing and submit applications. Rural Development will publish a subsequent notice identifying the amount received in the appropriations, if any.

The RFP is authorized under section 306(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (Con Act), 7 U.S.C. 1926(a), as amended by section 6001 of the Food, Conservation & Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill), Public Law 110-246. Qualified private non-profit organizations will receive RFP grant funds to establish a lending program for eligible entities. Eligible entities for the revolving loan fund will

be the same entities eligible to obtain a loan, loan guarantee, or grant from the Rural Development Utilities Programs Water and Waste Disposal loan and grant programs.

**DATES:** You may submit completed applications for grants on paper or electronically according to the following deadlines:

- Paper copies must be postmarked and mailed, shipped, or sent overnight *no later* than May 31, 2009 to be eligible for FY 2009 grant funding. Late or incomplete applications will not be eligible for FY 2009 grant funding.

- Electronic copies must be received by May 31, 2009 to be eligible for FY 2009 grant funding. Late or incomplete applications will not be eligible for FY 2009 grant funding.

**ADDRESSES:** You may obtain application guides and materials for the RFP program at the Water and Environmental Programs (WEP) Web site: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/index.htm>. You may also request application guides and materials by contacting Anita O'Brien at (202) 690-3789.

Submit completed paper applications for RFP grants to the Rural Development Utilities Programs, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Room 2233, STOP 1570, Washington, DC 20250-1570. Applications should be marked "*Attention: Assistant Administrator, Water and Environmental Programs.*"

Submit electronic grant applications at <http://www.grants.gov> (Grants.gov) and follow the instructions you find on that Web site.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Anita O'Brien, Loan Specialist, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Utilities Programs, Water and Environmental Programs; *telephone:* (202) 690-3789, *fax:* (202) 690-0649.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Overview

*Federal Agency:* Rural Utilities Service (RUS).

*Funding Opportunity Title:* Grant Program to Establish a Fund for Financing Water and Wastewater Projects (Revolving Fund Program (RFP)).

*Announcement Type:* Funding Level Announcement, and Solicitation of Applications.

*Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:* 10.864.

*Due Date for Applications:* May 31, 2009.

*Reminder of Competitive Grant Application Deadline:* Applications

must be mailed, shipped or submitted electronically through Grants.gov no later than May 31, 2009 to be eligible for FY 2009 grant funding.

#### Items in Supplementary Information

- I. Funding Opportunity: Brief introduction to the RFP.
- II. Award Information: Available funds, maximum amounts.
- III. Eligibility Information: Who is eligible, what kinds of projects are eligible, what criteria determine basic eligibility.
- IV. Application and Submission Information: Where to get application materials, what constitutes a completed application, how and where to submit applications, deadlines, items that are eligible.
- V. Application Review Information: Considerations and preferences, scoring criteria, review standards, selection information.
- VI. Award Administration Information: Award notice information, award recipient reporting requirements.
- VII. Agency Contacts: Web, phone, fax, email, contact name.

#### I. Funding Opportunity

Drinking water systems are basic and vital to both health and economic development. With dependable water facilities, rural communities can attract families and businesses that will invest in the community and improve the quality of life for all residents. Without dependable water facilities, the communities cannot sustain economic development.

Rural Development provides financial and technical assistance to help communities bring safe drinking water and sanitary, environmentally sound waste disposal facilities to rural Americans in greatest need. It supports the sound development of rural communities and the growth of our economy without endangering the environment.

The Revolving Fund (RFP) Grant Program has been established to assist communities with water or wastewater systems. Qualified private non-profit organizations will receive RFP grant funds to establish a lending program for eligible entities. Eligible entities for the revolving loan fund will be the same entities eligible to obtain a loan, loan guarantee, or grant from the Water and Waste Disposal loan and grant programs administered by Rural Development. As grant recipients, the non-profit organizations will set up a revolving loan fund to provide loans to finance predevelopment costs of water or wastewater projects, or short-term small capital projects not part of the regular operation and maintenance of current water and wastewater systems. The amount of financing to an eligible entity shall not exceed \$100,000.00 and shall

be repaid in a term not to exceed 10 years. The interest rate on loans made under RFP shall be determined in the approved grant work plan.

#### II. Award Information

*Available funds:* Rural Development will publish a subsequent notice announcing the amount of funds available once a final Appropriations bill is enacted for FY 2009.

#### III. Eligibility Information

##### A. Who is eligible to apply?

An applicant is eligible to apply for the RFP grant if it:

1. Is a private, non-profit organization that has tax-exempt status from the United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS);
2. Is legally established and located within one of the following:
  - (a) A state within the United States;
  - (b) The District of Columbia;
  - (c) The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; or
  - (d) A United States territory;
3. Has the legal capacity and authority to carry out the grant purpose;
4. Has a proven record of successfully operating a revolving loan fund to rural areas;
5. Has capitalization acceptable to the Agency, and is composed of at least 51 percent of the outstanding interest or membership being citizens of the United States or individuals who reside in the United States after being legally admitted for permanent residence;
6. Has no delinquent debt to the Federal Government or no outstanding judgments to repay a Federal debt; and
7. Demonstrates that it possesses the financial, technical, and managerial capability to comply with Federal and State laws and requirements.

##### B. What are the basic eligibility requirements for a project?

1. The following activities are authorized under the RFP statute:
  - (a) Grant funds must be used to capitalize a revolving fund program for the purpose of providing direct loan financing to Ultimate Recipients for pre-development costs associated with proposed or with existing water and wastewater systems, *or*,
  - (b) Short-term costs incurred for equipment replacement, small-scale extension of services, or other small capital projects that are not part of the regular operations and maintenance activities of existing water and wastewater systems.
2. Grant funds may not be used to pay either of the following:
  - (a) Payment of the Intermediary's administrative costs or expenses, or,

(b) Delinquent debt owed to the Federal Government.

#### IV. Application and Submission Information

A. The grant application guide, copies of necessary forms and samples, and the RFP regulation are available from these sources:

1. The Internet: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/index.htm> or <http://www.grants.gov>.

2. For paper copies of these materials telephone (202) 690-3789.

B. You may file an application in either paper or electronic format.

1. Applications submitted by paper:
 

- (a) Send or deliver paper applications by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) or courier delivery services to: Assistant Administrator—Water and Environmental Programs, Rural Development Utilities Programs, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 1548, Room S-5145, Washington, DC, 20250-1548.

(b) For paper applications mail or ensure delivery of an original paper application (no stamped, photocopied, or initialed signatures) and two copies by the deadline date. The application and any materials sent with it become Federal records by law and cannot be returned to you.

2. Electronically submitted applications:

(a) For electronic applications you must file through Grants.gov, the official Federal Government Web site at <http://www.grants.gov>. You must be registered with Grants.gov before you can submit a grant application. If you have not used Grants.gov before, you will need to register with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR) and the Credential Provider. You will need a DUNS number to access or register at any of the services. The registration processes may take several business days to complete. Follow the instructions at Grants.gov for registering and submitting an electronic application. Rural Development may request original signatures on electronically submitted documents later.

(b) The CCR registers your organization, housing your organizational information and allowing Grants.gov to use it to verify your identity. You may register for the CCR by calling the CCR Assistance Center at 1-888-227-2423 or, you may register online at <http://www.ccr.gov>.

(c) The Credential Provider gives you or your representative a username and password, as part of the Federal Government's e-Authentication to ensure a secure transaction. You will need the username and password when

you register with Grants.gov or use Grants.gov to submit your application. You must register with the Central Provider through Grants.gov at the following Web address: <https://apply.grants.gov/OrcRegister>.

(d) *DUNS Number*: Whether you file a paper or an electronic application, you will need a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. You must provide your DUNS number on the SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance." To verify that your organization has a DUNS number or to receive one at no cost, call the dedicated toll-free request line at 1-866-705-5711 or access the Web site at <http://www.dunandbradstreet.com>. The following information is needed when requesting a DUNS number:

- (1) Legal Name.
- (2) Headquarters name and address of the organization.
- (3) Doing business as (dba) or other name by which the organization is commonly recognized.
- (4) Physical address.
- (5) Mailing address (if separate from headquarters and/or physical address).
- (6) Telephone number.
- (7) Contact name and title.
- (8) Number of employees at the physical location.

(e) Rural Development will not accept applications by fax or e-mail.

C. A complete application must meet the following requirements:

1. To be considered for support, you must be an eligible entity and must submit a complete application by the deadline date. You should consult the cost principles and general administrative requirements for grants pertaining to their organizational type in order to prepare the budget and complete other parts of the application. You also must demonstrate compliance (or intent to comply), through certification or other means, with a number of public policy requirements. Applications should be prepared in conformance with the provisions in 7 CFR 1783, and applicable USDA regulations including 7 CFR parts 3015, 7 CFR parts 3019, and OMB Circular A-122.

2. Applicants must complete and submit the following forms to apply for a RFP grant:

(a) Standard Form 424, "Application for Federal Assistance."

(b) Standard Form 424A, "Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs."

(c) Standard Form 424B, "Assurances—Non-Construction Programs."

(d) Standard Form LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activity."

(e) Form RD 400-1, "Equal Opportunity Agreement."

(f) Form RD 400-4, "Assurance Agreement (Under Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964)."

3. The project proposal should outline the project in sufficient detail to provide a reader with a complete understanding of how the loan program will work. Explain what you will accomplish by lending funds to eligible entities. Demonstrate the feasibility of the proposed loan program in meeting the objectives of this grant program. The proposal should cover the following elements:

(a) Present a brief project overview. Explain the purpose of the project, how it relates to Rural Development's purposes, how you will carry out the project, what the project will produce, and who will direct it.

(b) Describe why the project is necessary. Demonstrate that eligible entities need loan funds. Quantify the number of prospective borrowers or provide statistical or narrative evidence that a sufficient number of borrowers will exist to justify the grant award. Describe the service area. Address community needs.

(c) Clearly state your project goals. Your objectives should clearly describe the goals and be concrete and specific enough to be quantitative or observable. They should also be feasible and relate to the purpose of the loan program.

(d) The narrative should cover in more detail the items briefly described in the Project Summary. It should establish the basis for any claims that you have substantial expertise in promoting the safe and productive use of revolving funds. In describing what the project will achieve, you should tell the reader if it also will have broader influence. The narrative should address the following points:

(1) Document your ability to administer and service a revolving fund in accordance with the provisions of 7 CFR Part 1783.

(2) Document that, to establish the revolving fund, you can commit financial resources your organization controls. This documentation should describe the sources of funds other than the RFP grant that will be used to pay your operational costs and provide financial assistance for projects.

(3) Demonstrate that you have secured commitments of significant financial support from other funding sources, if appropriate.

(4) List the fees and charges that borrowers will be assessed.

(e) The work plan must describe the tasks and activities that will be accomplished with available resources

during the grant period. It must show the work you plan to do to achieve the anticipated outcomes, goals, and objectives set out for the RFP. The plan must:

(1) Describe the work to be performed by each person.

(2) Give a schedule or timetable of work to be done.

(3) Show evidence of previous experience with the techniques to be used or their successful use by others.

(4) Outline the loan program to include the following: Specific loan purposes, a loan application process; priorities, borrower eligibility criteria, limitations, fees, interest rates, terms, and collateral requirements.

(5) Provide a marketing plan.

(6) Explain the mechanics of how you will transfer loan funds to the borrowers.

(7) Describe follow-up or continuing activities that should occur after project completion such as monitoring and reporting borrowers' accomplishments.

(8) Describe how the results will be evaluated. The evaluation criteria should be in line with the project objectives.

(9) List all personnel responsible for administering this program along with a statement of their qualifications and experience.

(f) The written justification for projected costs should explain how budget figures were determined for each category. It should indicate which costs are to be covered by grant funds and which costs will be met by your organization or other organizations. The justification should account for all expenditures discussed in the narrative. It should reflect appropriate cost-sharing contributions. The budget justification should explain the budget and accounting system proposed or in place. The administrative costs for operating the budget should be expressed as a percentage of the overall budget. The budget justification should provide specific budget figures, rounding off figures to the nearest dollar. Applicants should consult OMB Circular A-122: "Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations" for information about appropriate costs for each budget category.

(g) In addition to completing the standard application forms, you must submit:

1. Supplementary material that demonstrate that your organization is legally recognized under state and Federal law. Satisfactory documentation includes, but is not limited to, certificates from the Secretary of State, or copies of state statutes or laws establishing your organization. Letters

from the IRS awarding tax-exempt status are not considered adequate evidence.

2. A certified list of directors and officers with their respective terms.

3. Evidence of tax exempt status from the IRS.

4. Debarment and suspension information required in accordance with 7 CFR, Part 3017, subpart 3017.335, if it applies. The section heading is "What information must I provide before entering into a covered transaction with the Department of Agriculture?" It is part of the Department of Agriculture's rules on Government-wide Debarment and Suspension.

5. All of your organization's known workplaces by including the actual address of buildings (or parts of buildings) or other sites where work under the award takes place. Workplace identification is required under the drug-free workplace requirements in accordance with 7 CFR, Part 3021, subpart 3021.230. The section heading is "How and when must I identify workplaces?" It is part of the Department of Agriculture's rules on Government-wide Requirements for

Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance).

6. The most recent audit of your organization.

7. The following financial statements:

i. A pro forma balance sheet at start-up and for at least three additional years; Balance sheets, income statements, and cash flow statements for the last three years.

ii. If your organization has been formed less than three years, the financial statements should be submitted for the periods from inception to the present. Projected income and cash flow statements for at least three years supported by a list of assumptions showing the basis for the projections. The projected income statement and balance sheet must include one set of projections that shows the revolving loan fund only and a separate set of projections that shows your organization's total operations.

8. Additional information to support and describe your plan for achieving the grant objectives. The information may be regarded as essential for understanding and evaluating the

project such as letters of support, resolutions, policies, etc. The supplements may be presented in appendices to the proposal.

**V. Application Review Information**

A. Within 30 days of receiving your application, Rural Development will send you a letter of acknowledgment. Your application will be reviewed for completeness to determine if you included all of the items required. If your application is incomplete or ineligible, Rural Development will return it to you with an explanation.

B. A review team, composed of at least two members, will evaluate all applications and proposals. They will make overall recommendations based on factors such as eligibility, application completeness, and conformity to application requirements. They will score the applications based on criteria in the next section.

C. All applications that are complete and eligible will be ranked competitively based on the following scoring criteria:

Scoring criteria	Points
1—Degree of expertise and successful experience in making and servicing commercial loans, with a successful record .....	Up to 30 points.
2—Extent to which the work plan demonstrates a well thought out comprehensive approach to accomplishing objectives; clearly defines who will be served by the project or program; clearly articulates the problem/issues to be addressed, identifies the service area to be covered by the RFP loans, and appears likely to be sustainable.	Up to 40 points.
3—Percentage of applicant contributions. Points allowed under this paragraph will be based on written evidence of the availability of funds from sources other than the proceeds of a RFP grant to pay part of the cost of a loan recipient's project. In-kind contributions will not be considered. Funds from other sources as a percentage of the RFP grant and points corresponding to such percentages are as follows:	Ineligible.
Less than 20 percent .....	10 points.
At least 20 percent but not more than 49 percent of the total project costs .....	20 points.
At least 50 percent of the total project costs .....	Up to 15 points.
4—Extent to which the goals and objectives are clearly defined, tied to the work plan, and are measurable .....	Up to 10 points.
5—Lowest ratio of projected administrative expenses to loans advanced .....	Up to 20 points.
6—Evaluation methods for considering loan applications and making RFP loans are specific to the program, clearly defined, measurable, and are consistent with program outcomes.	
7—Administrator's discretion, taking into consideration such factors as:	Up to 10 points.
Creative outreach ideas for marketing RFP loans;	
Amount of funds requested in relation to the amount of needs demonstrated in the proposal;	
Excellent utilization of a previous revolving loan fund; and,	
Optimizing the use of agency resources..	

**VI. Award Administration Information**

A. Rural Development will rank all qualifying applications by their final score. Applications will be selected for funding, based on the highest scores and the availability of funding for RFP grants. Each applicant will be notified in writing of the score its application receives.

B. In making its decision about your application, Rural Development may determine that your application is:

1. Eligible and selected for funding,
2. Eligible but offered fewer funds than requested,

3. Eligible but not selected for funding, or

4. Ineligible for the grant.

C. In accordance with 7 CFR Part 1900, subpart B, you generally have the right to appeal adverse decisions. Some adverse decisions cannot be appealed. For example, if you are denied Rural Development funding due to a lack of funds available for the grant program, this decision cannot be appealed. However, you may make a request to the National Appeals Division (NAD) to review the accuracy of our finding that the decision cannot be appealed. The appeal must be in writing and filed at

the appropriate Regional Office, which can be found at <http://www.nad.usda.gov/offices.htm> or by calling (703) 305-1166.

D. Applicants selected for funding will complete a grant agreement, which outlines the terms and conditions of the grant award.

E. Grantees will be reimbursed as follows:

1. SF-270, "Request for Advance or Reimbursement," will be completed by the grantee and submitted to either the State or National Office not more frequently than monthly.

2. Upon receipt of a properly completed SF-270, the funds will be requested through the field office terminal system. Ordinarily, payment will be made within 30 days after receipt of a proper request for reimbursement.

3. Grantees are encouraged to use women- and minority-owned banks (a bank which is owned at least 50 percent by women or minority group members) for the deposit and disbursement of funds.

F. Any change in the scope of the project, budget adjustments of more than 10 percent of the total budget, or any other significant change in the project must be reported to and approved by the approval official by written amendment to the grant agreement. Any change not approved may be cause for termination of the grant.

G. Grantees shall constantly monitor performance to ensure that time schedules are being met, projected work by time periods is being accomplished, and other performance objectives are being achieved. The Grantee will provide project reports as follows:

1. SF-269, "Financial Status Report (short form)," and a project performance activity report will be required of all grantees on a quarterly basis, due 30 days after the end of each quarter.

2. A final project performance report will be required with the last SF-269 due 90 days after the end of the last quarter in which the project is completed. The final report may serve as the last quarterly report.

3. All multi-State grantees are to submit an original of each report to the National Office. Grantees serving only one State are to submit an original of each report to the State Office. The project performance reports should detail, preferably in a narrative format, activities that have transpired for the specific time period.

H. The grantee will provide an audit report or financial statements as follows:

1. Grantees expending \$500,000 or more Federal funds per fiscal year will submit an audit conducted in accordance with OMB Circular A-133. The audit will be submitted within 9 months after the grantee's fiscal year. Additional audits may be required if the project period covers more than one fiscal year.

2. Grantees expending less than \$500,000 will provide annual financial statements covering the grant period, consisting of the organization's statement of income and expense and balance sheet signed by an appropriate official of the organization. Financial

statements will be submitted within 90 days after the grantee's fiscal year.

## VII. Agency Contacts

A. *Web site:* <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water>. The Rural Development Utilities Programs Web site maintains up-to-date resources and contact information for the RFP.

B. *Phone:* 202-690-3789.

C. *Fax:* 202-690-0649.

D. *E-mail:* [anita.obrien@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:anita.obrien@wdc.usda.gov).

E. *Main point of contact:* Anita O'Brien, Loan Specialist, Water and Environmental Programs, Water Programs Division, Rural Development Utilities Programs, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Dated: October 16, 2008.

**Curtis M. Anderson,**

*Deputy Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.*

[FR Doc. E8-26322 Filed 11-4-08; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-15-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Utilities Service

#### **PowerSouth Energy Cooperative, Incorporated: Notice of Intent To Hold Public Scoping Meeting and Prepare an Environmental Assessment**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of Intent to Hold Public Scoping Meeting and Prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA).

**SUMMARY:** The Rural Utilities Service, an agency delivering the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Utilities Programs, hereinafter referred to as Rural Development and/or the Agency, intends to hold a public scoping meeting and prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) to meet its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and 7 CFR 1794 in connection with potential impacts related to projects proposed by PowerSouth Energy Cooperative, Inc. (PowerSouth) of Andalusia, Alabama. The proposal consists of the construction of a new 360-megawatt peaking-load gas-fired generation facility at the existing McIntosh Power Plant. PowerSouth is requesting USDA Rural Development to provide financial assistance for the proposed action.

**DATES:** Rural Development will conduct a scoping meeting in an open house format in order to provide information and solicit comments for the preparation of an EA. The meeting will be held on November 20, 2008, from 6:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. at the McIntosh Elementary School in

McIntosh, Alabama. Written questions and comments must be received no later than December 22, 2008.

**ADDRESSES:** To send comments or for further information, contact: Stephanie Strength, Environmental Protection Specialist, Rural Development Utilities Programs, Engineering and Environmental Staff, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Stop 1571, Washington, DC 20250-1571, or e-mail [stephanie.strength@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:stephanie.strength@wdc.usda.gov). The McIntosh Elementary School is located at 8945 Highway 43 N. Highway 43 North, Highway 43 North on the west side of Highway 43 near the Ciba Plant entrance, McIntosh, Alabama, telephone (251) 944-2481. An Alternatives Report prepared by PowerSouth will be available at the public scoping meeting, at the Agency's address provided in this notice, at the Agency's Web site: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/ea.htm>, at PowerSouth Energy Cooperative, Inc., 2027 East Three Notch Street, Andalusia, Alabama 36420, and at the: McIntosh Branch Library, 83 Olin Road, McIntosh, AL 36553, Phone: 251-944-2047. Washington Public Library, 14102 St. Stephens Avenue, Chatom, AL 36515. Phone: 251-847-2097.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

PowerSouth Energy Cooperative, Inc. proposes to construct a new 360-megawatt peaking-load gas-fired generation facility at the existing McIntosh Power Plant in Washington County, Alabama with an in-service date of late 2010.

Government agencies, private organizations, and the public are invited to participate in the planning and analysis of the proposed project. Representatives from the Agency and PowerSouth Energy Cooperative, Inc. will be available at the scoping meeting to discuss the environmental review process, describe the proposal, discuss the scope of environmental issues to be considered, answer questions, and accept comments. As part of its broad environmental review process, the Agency must take into account the effect of the proposal on historic properties in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulation, "Protection of Historic Properties" (36 CFR Part 800). Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3), the Agency is using its procedures for public involvement under NEPA to meet its responsibilities to solicit and consider the views of the public during Section 106 review. Accordingly, comments submitted in response to scoping will inform Agency decision making in Section 106 review. Any