

(October 1, 1999, through September 30, 2000).

Done in Washington, DC, this 30th day of August, 1999.

Bobby R. Acord,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 99-23188 Filed 9-3-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency

National Drought Policy Commission

AGENCY: Farm Service Agency, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of Commission meeting and public hearing and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The National Drought Policy Act of 1998 established the National Drought Policy Commission (Commission). The Farm Service Agency (FSA) was identified to provide support to the Commission. The Commission shall conduct a thorough study and submit a report to the President and Congress on national drought policy. The first meeting of the Commission was held on July 22, 1999, and the first public hearing on July 23, 1999. Minutes of the first meeting and a list of Commission members can be found on the Commission's web site at www.fsa.usda.gov/drought. This notice announces the second meeting and public hearing and seeks comments on issues that the Commission should address and recommendations that the Commission should consider as part of its report. The second public hearing and meeting of the Commission will be held September 22. All meetings are open to the public; however, seating is limited and available on a first-come basis.

DATES: The Commission will conduct a public hearing on September 22, 1999, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon in the Williamsburg Room, Jamie L. Whitten Building, 12th and Jefferson Drive, SW, Washington, DC.

The Commission will meet on September 22, 1999, from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the same location. All times noted are Eastern Daylight Time. The Commission will discuss the current drought in the Northeast as it applies to national policy. They will also discuss the status of Commission activities, the operational definition of drought for the Commission, and other committee business.

Anyone wishing to make an oral presentation to the Commission at the public hearing, must contact the

Executive Director, Leona Dittus, in writing (by letter, fax or internet) no later than 12 noon, September 21, 1999, in order to be included on the agenda. Presenters will be approved on a first-come, first-served basis. The request should identify the name and affiliation of the individual who will make the presentation and an outline of the issues to be addressed. Thirty-five copies of any written presentation material shall be given to the Executive Director by all presenters no later than the time of the presentation for distribution to the Commission and the interested public. Those wishing to testify, but who are unable to notify the Commission office by September 21, 1999, will be able to sign up as a presenter the day of the hearing (September 22) between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. These presenters will testify on a first-come, first-served basis and comments will be limited based on the time available and the number of presenters. Written statements will be accepted at the meeting, or may be mailed or faxed to the Commission office.

ADDRESSES: Comments and statements should be sent to Leona Dittus, Executive Director, National Drought Policy Commission, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 6701-S, STOP 0501, Washington, DC 20250-0501.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Leona Dittus (202) 720-3168; FAX (202) 720-4293; internet

Leona_Dittus@WDC.FSA.USDA.GOV.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the Commission is to provide advice and recommendations to the President and Congress on the creation of an integrated, coordinated Federal policy, designed to prepare for and respond to serious drought emergencies. Tasks for the Commission include developing recommendations that will (a) better integrate Federal laws and programs with ongoing State, local, and tribal programs (b) improve public awareness of the need for drought mitigation, prevention, and response and (c) determine whether all Federal drought preparation and response programs should be consolidated under one existing Federal agency, and, if so, identify the agency. The Commission will be chaired by the Secretary of Agriculture or his designee, and a Vice Chair shall be selected from among the members who are not Federal officers or employees. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair will act in his stead. Administrative staff support essential to the execution of the Commission's responsibilities shall be provided by USDA, FSA.

Commission members specifically cited in Public Law 105-199, include the Secretaries of Agriculture, Interior, Army, and Commerce, the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration; two persons nominated by the National Governors' Association, a person nominated by the National Association of Counties, and a person nominated by the Conference of Mayors. Those four members are to be appointed by the President. Six additional Commission members have been appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, in coordination with the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of the Army. The six at-large members represent groups acutely affected by drought emergencies, such as the agricultural production community, the credit community, rural and urban water associations, Native Americans, and fishing and environmental interests.

If special accommodations are required, please contact Leona Dittus, at the address specified above, by COB September 15, 1999.

Signed at Washington, DC, on September 1, 1999.

Parks Shackelford,

Acting Administrator, Farm Service Agency.

[FR Doc. 99-23184 Filed 9-1-99; 2:01 pm]

BILLING CODE 3410-05-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Western Washington Cascades Provincial Interagency Executive Committee (PIEC) Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Western Washington Cascades Provincial Interagency Executive Committee Advisory Committee (Provincial Advisory Committee) will meet on Friday, September 24, 1999, at the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest Headquarters, 21905 64th Avenue West, in Mountlake Terrace, WA. The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. and continue until about 3 p.m. Agenda items to be covered include: (1) formal introduction of members and a review and discussion of Advisory-Committee operating procedures and groundrules; (2) brief orientation including Advisory Committee purpose and history and the role of Committee members; and (3) a futuring session including a briefing on the current status and complexity of forest programs and resources and a

discussion leading to the identification of a strategic focus for the Committee.

In addition to the Advisory Committee meeting, a field trip for Advisory Committee members will take place the previous day, Thursday, September 23, 1999. Members will tour portions of the Baker Lake basin on the Mt. Baker Ranger District, commencing at 9 a.m. at the Mt. Baker District Office, 2105 State Route 20, in Sedro Woolley, Washington, and ending back at the same Office about 4:30 p.m. The purpose of the trip is to: (1) Explore the complexity of National Forest natural resource management; (2) emphasize the integration of forest management activities among federal and non-federal entities; (3) introduce the nature of an "Urban Forest" and its ties to Puget Sound growth; and (4) introduce the idea of a more strategic view of resource management and advice to the Forest. All Western Washington Cascades Provincial Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public. Interested citizens are encouraged to attend. Interested citizens are also welcome to join the September 23 field trip; however, they must provide their own transportation.

The Provincial Advisory Committee provides advice regarding ecosystem management for federal lands within the Western Washington Cascades Province, as well as advice and recommendations to promote better integration of forest management activities among federal and non-federal entities. The Advisory Committee is a key element of implementation of the Northwest Forest Plan.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Direct questions regarding this meeting to Penny Sundblad, Province Liaison, USDA Forest Service, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, Mt. Baker Ranger District, 2105 State Route 20, Sedro Woolley, Washington 98284 (360-856-5700, Extension 321).

Dated: August 30, 1999.

John Phipps,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 99-23150 Filed 9-3-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Information Collection Activity; Comment Request

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, as amended), the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) invites comments on this information collection for which RUS intends to request approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by November 8, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: F. Lamont Heppe, Jr., Program Development & Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, USDA, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., STOP 1522, Room 4034 South Building, Washington, DC 20250-1522. Telephone: (202) 720-0736. FAX: (202) 720-4120.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Seismic Safety of New Building Construction.

OMB Control Number: 0572-0099.

Type of Request: Reinstatement with change of previously approved information collection.

Abstract: The Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977 (42 U.S.C. 7701 *et seq.*) was enacted to reduce risks to life and property through the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP). The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is designated as the agency with the primary responsibility to plan and coordinate the NEHRP. This program includes the development and implementation of feasible design and construction methods to make structures earthquake resistant. Executive Order 12699 of January 5, 1990, Seismic Safety of Federal and Federally Assisted or Regulated New Building Construction, requires that measures to assure seismic safety be imposed on federally assisted new building construction.

Title 7 Part 1792, Subpart C, Seismic Safety of Federally assisted New Building Construction, identifies acceptable seismic standards which must be employed in new building construction funded by loans, grants, or guarantees made by RUS or the Rural Telephone Bank (RTB) or through lien accommodations or subordinations approved by RUS or RTB. This subpart implements and explains the provisions of the loan contract utilized by the RUS for both electric and telecommunications borrowers and by the RTB for its telecommunications borrowers requiring construction certifications affirming compliance with the standards.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information

is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response.

Respondents: Small business or organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,000.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.2.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 800.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Bob Turner, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, at (202) 720-0696.

Comments are invited on (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 assumption 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 on other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to F. Lamont Heppe, Jr., Director, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Stop 1522, Room 4034 South Building, Washington, D.C. 20250-1522.

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: August 31, 1999.

Wally Beyer,

Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.

[FR Doc. 99-23186 Filed 9-3-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. and Plains Electric Generation and Transmission Cooperative, Inc.; Notice of Availability of an Environmental Assessment

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of availability of an environmental assessment.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is issuing an Environmental Assessment (EA) with respect to the potential environmental impacts related to the