

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

Food and Nutrition Service

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection, Comment Request—Food Stamp Program: State Issuance and Participation Estimates—Form FNS-388

AGENCY: Food and Nutrition Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is publishing for public comment a summary of a proposed information collection. The proposed collection is to reinstate a previously approved collection under OMB No. 0584-0081 for the Food Stamp Program for the form FNS-388, State Issuance and Participation Estimates.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by June 12, 2000 to be assured of consideration.

ADDRESSES: Send comments and requests for copies of this information collection to Barbara Hallman, Chief, State Administration Branch, Food Stamp Program, Food and Nutrition Service, USDA, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, VA 22302. Copies of the estimate of the information collection can be obtained by contacting Ms. Hallman.

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed 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 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.

All comments will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval of the information collection. All comments will become a matter of public record.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Barbara Hallman, telephone number (703) 305-2383.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Form FNS-388, State Issuance and Participation Estimates.

OMB Number: 0584-0081.

Expiration Date: Expired.

Type of Request: Reinstatement of a previously approved collection.

Abstract: Section 18(b) of the Food Stamp Act limits the value of allotments paid to food stamp households to an amount not in excess of the appropriation for the fiscal year. If allotments in any fiscal year would exceed the appropriation, the Secretary of Agriculture is required to direct State agencies to reduce the value of food stamp allotments to the extent necessary to stay within appropriated funding limits.

Section 18(a) of the Food Stamp Act requires the Secretary of Agriculture to submit a monthly report to Congress setting forth the Secretary's best estimate of the second preceding month's expenditures for the Food Stamp Program as well as the cumulative total for the fiscal year. In each monthly report the Secretary is required to also state whether supplemental appropriations will be needed to support the operation of the program through the end of the fiscal year. The timeliness and accuracy of the data available to the Secretary prior to submitting this report will have a direct effect upon any request for supplemental appropriations that may be submitted and the manner in which allotments will be reduced if the supplemental appropriation is not provided. While benefit reductions have never been ordered in the past under Section 18(b) nor are they anticipated based on current data, the Department must continue to monitor actual program costs against the appropriation.

Section 11(e)(12) of the Food Stamp Act requires that the State Plan of Operations shall provide for the submission of reports required by the Secretary of Agriculture. State agencies are required to report on a monthly basis on the FNS-388, State Issuance and Participation Estimates, estimated or actual issuance and participation data for the current month and previous month, and actual participation data for the second preceding month. The FNS-388 report provides the necessary data for an early warning system to enable the Department to fulfill its reporting requirements to Congress.

State agencies in general only submit one Statewide FNS-388 per month. The exception is that State agencies which choose to operate both a coupon system and an electronic benefit transfer (EBT) system or which choose to operate an approved alternative issuance demonstration project such as a cash-out system submit a separate report for each type of issuance system. State agencies are converting from coupons to EBT. In July 1999, 39 States and the District of Columbia operated an EBT system and 31 operated EBT statewide. With additional States moving from paper coupons to EBT in the next few months, few States will be expected to temporarily submit more than one FNS-388 report per month at any one time. With State agency automated information systems, the separate report for a secondary issuance system or an alternative issuance demonstration project should have a negligible impact on the burden.

In addition, State agencies are required to submit a project area breakdown on the FNS-388 of issuance and participation data twice a year. This data is useful in identifying project areas that are required to do photo identification of heads of households or to operate fraud detection units in accordance with the Act.

Beginning July 1993, State agencies were allowed to submit the FNS-388 data electronically to the national database files stored in FNS' Food Stamp Program Integrated Information System in lieu of a paper report. The voluntary changeover from paper to electronic reporting of FNS-388 data by States was done as part of FNS' State Cooperative Data Exchange Project. This project is being expanded over time as more FNS forms are transferred to

electronic formats for State data entry. As of July 1999, 45 State agencies submit the FNS-388 data electronically and 8 State agencies submit paper reports.

Respondents: State agencies that administer the Food Stamp Program.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 53.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent:

Form FNS-388: 53 State agencies 12 times a year.

Form FNS-388A: 53 State agencies twice a year.

Estimate of Burden:

Form FNS-388: The State agencies submit Form FNS-388 10 times per year at an estimate of 5.60 hours per respondent, or 2,970 hours annually for all respondents. The remaining two FNS-388 submissions with a public assistance (PA) and non-public assistance (NA) caseload breakout are covered under the FNS-388A twice a year submissions (see below).

Form FNS-388A: The State agencies submit a more detailed FNS-388 (with PA and NA breakout) twice a year and FNS-388A project area breakdown twice a year at an estimate of 14.8 hours per respondent, or 1,572 hours annually for all respondents.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: The annual reporting and recordkeeping burden for OMB No. 0584-0081 is estimated to be 4,542 hours.

Dated: March 22, 2000.

Samuel Chambers, Jr.,
Administrator.

[FR Doc. 00-8937 Filed 4-10-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-30-U

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Willamette Provincial Advisory Committee (PAC); Meeting

AGENCY: Forest Service.

SUMMARY: The Willamette Province Advisory Committee (PAC) will meet on Thursday, April 20, 2000. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 9 a.m., and will conclude at approximately 2 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Salem Office of the Bureau of Land Management; 1717 Fabry Road, SE., Salem, Oregon; (503) 375-5646. The tentative agenda includes:

(1) REO update, (2) Information sharing, (3) Public forum; (4) Update on FS Roadless Area Initiative and Roads Strategy, (5) Panel discussion, Fish management in the Willamette Basin.

The Public Forum is tentatively scheduled to begin at 10:30 a.m. Time

allotted for individual presentations will be limited to 3-4 minutes. Written comments are encouraged, particularly if the material cannot be presented within the time limits for the Public Forum. Written comments may be submitted prior to the April 20 meeting by sending them to Designated Federal Official Neal Forrester at the address given below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For more information regarding this meeting, contact Designated Federal Official Neal Forrester; Willamette National Forest; 211 East Seventh Avenue; Eugene, Oregon 97401; (541) 465-6924.

Dated: April 4, 2000.

Y. Robert Iwamoto,

Deputy Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 00-8886 Filed 4-10-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Notice of Proposed Changes in the National Handbook of Conservation Practices

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given of the intention of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to issue a series of new or revised conservation practice standards in its National Handbook of Conservation Practices. These standards include Heavy Use Area Protection; Irrigation System, Tailwater Recovery; Pest Management; Pipeline; and Watering Facility. These standards are used to convey national guidance when developing Field Office Technical Guide Standards used in the States. NRCS State conservationists who choose to adopt these practices for use within their States will incorporate them into Section IV of their Field Office Technical Guide. These practices may be used in conservation systems that treat highly erodible land or on land determined to be wetland.

DATES: Comments will be received for a 60-day period commencing with the date of publication. This series of new or revised conservation practice standards will be adopted after the close of the 60-day period.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Single copies of these standards are available from NRCS-CED in

Washington, DC. Submit individual inquiries and return any comments in writing to William Hughey, National Agricultural Engineer, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Post Office Box 2890, Room 6139-S, Washington, DC 20013-2890. Telephone Number 202-720-5023. The standards are also available and can be downloaded from the Internet at: http://www.ftw.nrcs.usda.gov/practice_stdts.html.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 343 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 requires NRCS to make available for public review and comment proposed revisions to conservation practice standards used to carry out the highly erodible land and wetland provisions of the law. For the next 60 days, NRCS will receive comments relative to the proposed changes. Following that period, a determination will be made by NRCS regarding disposition of those comments, and a final determination of change will be made.

Signed at Washington, D.C., on March 31, 2000.

Pearlie S. Reed,

Chief, Natural Resources Conservation Service.

[FR Doc. 00-8974 Filed 4-10-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-16-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Commerce (DoC) has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. chapter 35).

Agency: Patent and Trademark Office (PTO).

Title: Requirements for Patent Applications Containing Nucleotide Sequence and/or Amino Acid Sequence Disclosures.

Form Numbers: N/A.

Agency Approval Number: 0651-0024.

Type of Request: Reinstatement, with change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired.

Burden: 5,283 hours annually.

Number of Respondents: 5,601 responses annually.

Avg. Hours Per Response: Based on PTO time and motion studies, the agency estimates that it will take the