• In general, the CRP purposes now explicitly include addressing issues raised by state, regional and national conservation initiatives (see 16 U.S.C. 3831(a)).

• The cropping history requirements are updated to 4 of 6 years from 2002 to 2007 (see 16 U.S.C. 3831(b)).

• The enrollment authority is set at 39.2 million acres through 2009 and reduced to 32.0 million acres for fiscal years 2010, 2011, and 2012 (see 16 U.S.C. 3831(d)).

• Alfalfa and multiyear grasses and legumes in a rotation practice with an agricultural commodity may contribute towards meeting crop history requirements (see 16 U.S.C. 3831(g)).

• The authority is granted to except acreage enrolled under continuous signup and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program provided county government concurs (see 16 U.S.C. 3831(b)).

• CCC requires management by the participant throughout the contract term to implement the conservation plan (see 16 U.S.C 3843).

• CCC provides exceptions to general prohibitions (see 16 U.S.C. 3844) on use including:

○ Managed harvesting with appropriate vegetation management during named periods and with a payment reduction,

○ Managed harvesting for biomass with appropriate vegetation management during named periods and with a payment reduction,

○ Grazing for invasive species with appropriate vegetation management during named periods and with a payment reduction, and

○ Installation of wind turbines with appropriate vegetation management during named periods and with a payment reduction.

• Annual survey of dryland and cash rental rates by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (see 16 U.S.C. 3843(c)).

• Incentives for beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers to facilitate a transition of land enrolled in CRP from a retired or retiring owner or operator to return some or all of the land to agricultural production using sustainable grazing or crop production methods (see 16 U.S.C. 3835).

• Adds incentives for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers as well as limited resource farmers and ranchers and Indian tribes to participate in conservation programs (see 16 U.S.C. 3844).

• Development of habitat for native and managed pollinators and use of conservation practices that benefit them are encouraged for any conservation program (see 16 U.S.C. 3844).

The SEIS will help FSA review potential environmental impacts resulting from the 2008 Farm Bill changes to the CRP program. The results of the SEIS will be used in implementing and modifying CRP administration. The record of decision resulting from the SEIS will also serve as guidance to FSA program decision makers when considering future CRP changes.

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the SEIS process provides a means for the public to provide input on program implementation alternatives and on environmental concerns. The public is urged to participate in helping to define the scope of the proposed SEIS. In addition to allowing the opportunity to comment via mail, the internet, and e-mail as provided in the above **ADDRESSES** section, FSA plans to hold nine public scoping meetings to provide information and opportunities for discussing the issues and alternatives to be covered in the draft SEIS, and to receive oral and written comments. The meetings will be held at the following locations and times:

| Date | Time | Location information |
|---|---|---|
| September 15, 2009 | 5:30–7:30 p.m. local time. | Hilton Garden Inn Spokane Airport, 9015 West SR Highway 2, Spokane, WA 99224, (509) 244–5866. |
| September 17, 2009 | 5–7 p.m. local time | Hampton Inn Great Falls, 2301 14th St., SW., Great Falls, MT 59404, (406) 453–2675. |
| September 21, 2009 | 5–7 p.m. local time | AmericInn Lodge & Suites and Event Center of Moorhead, 600 30th Ave., S., Moorhead, MN 56560, (218) 287–7100. |
| September 23, 2009 | 5–7 p.m. local time | Clarion Hotel, 530 Richards Drive, Manhattan, KS 66502, (785) 539–5311. |
| September 25, 2009 | 5–7 p.m. local time | Hilton Garden Inn, Springfield, 3100 S. Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, IL 62703, (217) 529–7171 ext. 507. |
| September 29, 2009 | 5–7 p.m | Oklahoma City Marriott Hotel, 3233 N.W. Expressway, Oklahoma City, OK 73112, (405) 879–7042. |
| October 1, 2009 | 5–7 p.m. local time | La Quinta Inn & Suites Clovis, 4521 N. Prince St., Clovis, NM 88101, (575) 763–8777. |
| October 6, 2009 | 5–7 p.m. local time | Hilton Garden Inn Albany, 101 S. Front Street, Albany, GA 31701, (229) 888–1590. |
| October 8, 2009 | 5–7 p.m. local time | Courtyard by Marriott Harrisburg/Hershey, 725 Eisenhower Blvd, Harrisburg, PA 17111, (717) 558–8544 ext. 6504. |

Please check *http://public.geo-marine.com* for specific meeting locations, times, directions, and comment forms.

**Description of Preliminary Alternatives**

FSA has developed a set of preliminary alternatives to be studied in the draft SEIS to initiate the process. The alternatives will be amended, as appropriate, based on input by the public and agencies during the public scoping process. The SEIS will address the following alternatives, which include recommended changes to the program:

• No Action Alternative—continuation of CRP as currently implemented.

• Action Alternative 1—full implementation of the applicable 2008 Farm Bill provisions in accordance with current procedures.

• Action Alternative 2—implementation of CRP in accordance with applicable 2008 Farm Bill provisions exercising discretion that differs from current procedures.

Signed in Washington, DC on August 28, 2009.

**Jonathan W. Coppess,**

*Executive Vice President, Commodity Credit Corporation, and Administrator, Farm Service Agency.*

[FR Doc. E9–21236 Filed 9–2–09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–05–P

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Farm Service Agency

### Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers

**AGENCY:** Farm Service Agency, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice requesting nominations.

**SUMMARY:** The Secretary of Agriculture is renewing the charter of the Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers (Committee). The Committee provides advice to the Secretary on ways to encourage Federal and State beginning farmer programs to provide joint financing to beginning farmers and ranchers, and other methods of creating new farming and ranching opportunities. This notice invites nominations for persons to service on the Committee.

**DATES:** We will consider nominations that we receive by October 5, 2009.

**ADDRESSES:** The instructions for submission of nominations are provided in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section. You may submit nominations to: Mark Falcone, Designated Federal Official (DFO) for the Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers, or Ken Hill, Farm Service Agency, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 0522, Washington, DC 20250–0522; telephone (202) 720–1632; Fax (202) 690–1117.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mark Falcone at (202) 720–1632; or e-mail: *mark.falcone@usda.gov*, or Ken Hill at (202) 720–5199, or e-mail: *Kenneth.Hill@wdc.usda.gov*.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** As required by section 5 of the Agricultural Credit Improvement Act of 1992 (Pub. L. 102–554), the Secretary of Agriculture established the Committee to advise the Secretary on:

(1) Development of a program of coordinated financial assistance to qualified beginning farmers and ranchers under section 309(i) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (Federal and State beginning farmer programs provide joint financing to beginning farmers and ranchers);

(2) Methods of maximizing the number of new farming and ranching opportunities created through the program;

(3) Methods of encouraging States to participate in the program;

(4) Administration of the program; and

(5) Other methods of creating new farming or ranching opportunities.

The law requires that members of the Committee be representatives from the following groups:

(1) The Farm Service Agency (FSA);

(2) State beginning farmer programs (as defined in section 309(i)(5) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act);

(3) Commercial lenders;

(4) Private nonprofit organizations with active beginning farmer or rancher programs;

(5) The USDA Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES);

(6) Community colleges or other educational institutions with demonstrated experience in training beginning farmers or ranchers; and

(7) Other entities or persons providing lending or technical assistance to qualified beginning farmers or ranchers.

The Secretary will also appoint farmers and ranchers to the Committee. USDA Departmental Regulation 1042–119, dated November 25, 1998, first established the Committee and designated FSA to provide support. Seven of the Committee members were replaced when the Committee charter was last renewed on March 28, 2008. Approximately one-third of the 20 existing members will be replaced when the charter is renewed.

We are now accepting nominations of individuals to serve for a 2-year term on the Committee. Reappointments are made to assure effectiveness and continuity of operations. The duration of the Committee is indefinite. No member, other than a USDA employee, can serve for more than 6 consecutive years. There will be a vacancy in at least four groups: State beginning farmer programs, commercial lenders, CSREES, and farmers and ranchers. Appointments and reappointments to the Committee will be made by the end of the calendar year and all nominees will be notified in writing.

The Committee generally meets at least once a year and all meetings are open to the public. Committee meetings provide an opportunity for members to exchange ideas and provide advice on ways to increase opportunities for beginning farmers and ranchers. Members discuss various issues and draft recommendations, which are submitted to the Secretary in writing.

Nominations are being sought through the media, this **Federal Register** notice, and other appropriate methods. Persons nominated for the Committee will be required to complete and submit an Advisory Committee Membership Background Information Questionnaire (Form AD–755). Submission of this form will constitute a nomination. The form is available on the Internet at *http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/ad755.pdf*. AD–755 can be completed on-line. However, nominees must print their completed forms from the Adobe PDF file, sign, and mail or fax them to the above address or fax number. The form also may be requested by telephone, fax, or e-mail. Letters of recommendation may be submitted, but should not be solicited or obtained from USDA officials employed in Washington DC. All inquiries about the nomination process and submissions of the AD–755 should go to Mark Falcone or Ken Hill, as provided in the **ADDRESSES** section for addresses and numbers.

Appointments to the Committee will be made by the Secretary of Agriculture. Equal opportunity practices, consistent with USDA policies, will be followed in making all appointments to the Committee. To ensure that the recommendations of the Committee have taken into account the needs of the diverse groups served by the Department, membership should include, to the extent practicable, individuals with demonstrated ability to represent minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and senior citizens.

Signed in Washington, DC on August 28, 2009.

**Jonathan W. Coppess,**

*Administrator, Farm Service Agency.*

[FR Doc. E9–21293 Filed 9–2–09; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410–05–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Utilities Service

### Publication of Depreciation Rates

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

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Rural Utilities Service (RUS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), announces the depreciation rates for telecommunications plant for the period ending December 31, 2008.

**DATES:** These rates are effective immediately and will remain in effect until rates are available for the period ending December 31, 2009.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jonathan P. Claffey, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Telecommunications Program, Rural Utilities Service, STOP 1590—Room 5151, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250–1590. Telephone: (202) 720–9556.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In the Rural Utilities Service regulation, 7 CFR part 1737, Pre-Loan Policies and Procedures Common to Insured and Guaranteed Telecommunications Loans, § 1737.70(e) explains the depreciation rates that are used by RUS in its feasibility studies. Section 1737.70(e)(2) refers to median depreciation rates published by RUS for all borrowers. The following chart provides those rates,