

snowmaking water source; (4) February median flow should be the minimum for water withdrawals from the East Branch, and a minimum flow for water withdrawals should be set for Boyle Brook; (5) a full range of water storage options should be considered for snowmaking needs; (6) visual impacts; (7) impacts to private residences at the base of Loon Mountain from parking facilities and associated traffic; (8) not enough opportunity for glade and tree skiing; (9) include cross-over trails between South Mountain and the existing ski area; (10) maintain natural snow only ski trails; (11) the purpose and need for the Proposed Action is questionable; (12) wetland impacts from water storage pond construction; (13) impacts to various resources (*i.e.*, soils, water quality, wildlife and aquatic habitat, threatened, endangered, and sensitive plants and animals, and cultural sites); and (14) socioeconomic impacts to the local community (*i.e.*, dependent businesses, traffic congestion, and infrastructure demands).

Decision To Be Made

The site-specific environmental analysis provided by the EIS will assist the Responsible Official in determining whether the Proposed Action, or an alternative to the Proposed Action, best meets the purpose and need of the Proposed Action while addressing public concerns and issues. In preparing the EIS, the Forest Service will consider the Proposed Action against a range of feasible and practicable alternatives including the No Action Alternative. The Responsible Official will consider the comments, responses, and environmental consequences discussed in the Final EIS, and applicable laws, regulations, and policies when making a decision regarding this proposal. The Responsible Official will document the decision and reasons for the decision in the Record of Decision. The decision will be subject to appeal under 36 CFR 217 and 36 CFR 251.

Public Participation

Public participation will be incorporated into the preparation of the EIS under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act. The Forest Service solicited comments for 42 days after the August 4, 1998 Notice of Intent, 37 days after the March 31, 1999 Newsletter, and accepted comments at three public meetings. Information and written comments received from the public and agencies during the August 1998 and March 31, 1999 Newsletter scoping periods for the Supplement to the FEIS will be considered as part of

the analysis for the EIS, and will be used in preparation of the Draft EIS and Final EIS. Written comments responding to this NOI should be submitted to the Forest Service within 30 days from the date of publication of this NOI in the **Federal Register**. Please note that comments in response to this NOI and in response to the Draft EIS will be regarded as public information including names and addresses.

The Forest Service believes at this early stage it is important to give reviewers notice of court rulings related to public participation in the environmental review process. First, reviewers of draft environmental impact statements must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal so that it is meaningful and alerts an agency to the reviewer's position and contentions. [*Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978)]. Also, environmental objections that could be raised at the Draft EIS stage but that are not raised until after completion of the FEIS may be waived or dismissed by the Courts [*City of Angoon v. Hodel*, 803 F.2d 1015, 1022 (9th Cir. 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc. v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980)]. Because of these court rulings, it is very important that those interested in this Proposed Action participate by the close of the 45-day comment period so that substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service at a time when they can meaningfully consider them and respond to them in the Final EIS.

Cooperating and Participating Agencies

The State of New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency were cooperating agencies in preparing the Supplement to the FEIS and will continue to be cooperating agencies in preparing the new EIS. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will continue as a participating agency. The New Hampshire Department of Transportation, New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development, and the Towns of Lincoln and Woodstock, New Hampshire will continue to assist in the analysis process.

Potential Permits

Potential permits required to implement the Proposed Action may include the following: (1) Special Use Permit from the Forest Service; (2) Section 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; (3) National

Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit and Stormwater Permit from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; and (4) Significant Alteration of Terrain Permit, Section 401 Permit, Dam Permit, and Stormwater Permit from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. Any additional permits needed from Local, State, and Federal agencies will be identified during the analysis process. In addition, consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and any assistance and cooperation from other agencies will be conducted as needed.

Dated: December 7, 1999.

Anne Archie,

Acting Forest Supervisor.

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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 February 11, 2000.

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: Distance Learning and Telemedicine Loan and Grant Program. *OMB Control Number:* 0572-0096.

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

Abstract: The Rural Utilities Service's (RUS) Distance Learning and Telemedicine (DLT) Loan and Grant program provides loans and grants for advanced telecommunications services to improve rural areas' access to educational and medical services. The

various forms and narrative statements required are collected from the applicants (rural community facilities, such as schools, libraries, hospitals, and medical facilities for example). The purpose of collecting the information is to determine such factors as: eligibility of the applicant; the specific nature of the proposed project; the purposes for which loan and grant funds will be used; project financial and technical feasibility; and, compliance with applicable laws and regulations. In addition, for grants funded pursuant to the competitive evaluation process, information collected facilitates the Rural Utilities Service's selection of those applications most consistent with DLT goals and objectives in accordance with the authorizing legislation and implementing regulation.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 50 hours per response. In addition, it is estimated each of the anticipated 150 award recipients will average 12 hours to provide legal, audit, and related documentation.

Respondents: Business or other for-profit and non-profit institutions.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 300.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 16,800.

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, DC 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: December 2, 1999.

Christopher A. McLean,

Acting Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.

[FR Doc. 99-32141 Filed 12-10-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Census Bureau

Evaluation of the Census 2000 Telephone Questionnaire Assistance (TQA) Program

ACTION: Proposed collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before February 11, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5027, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at LEngelme@doc.gov).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to Wendy Davis, Bureau of the Census, DSCMO 2424/2, Washington, DC 20233-0001, (301) 457-4051.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

Customer satisfaction surveys will be administered to a sample of people who access the Telephone Questionnaire Assistance (TQA) program through either the English or Spanish toll free telephone numbers. The caller will be asked to complete an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) survey that asks callers to rate different characteristics of their TQA interaction. The survey will be tailored to whether the caller completed his/her call using the available IVR instrument or by speaking with a TQA agent. In general, the surveys evaluate specific aspects of the callers' TQA experience, but callers will also be

asked to rate their overall satisfaction with TQA.

This evaluation is unique, given its technical environment. This evaluation will serve as an indication of the success of the TQA 2000 project (as measured by customer satisfaction), thereby providing substantial feedback for future Census telephone products.

A systematic sample will be selected at the point when the call enters the TQA network, but prior to the caller hearing the greeting to the TQA system in the IVR. Once callers enter the IVR, they will be notified that they have been selected to participate in a short customer satisfaction survey. Approximately 50,000 TQA respondents will be asked to participate in the survey, with an expected response rate of 15 percent resulting in 7,500 completed customer satisfaction surveys. The sample selection begins at the open of TQA 2000 (March 3, 2000) and will be completed by the end of the TQA program (June 8, 2000).

II. Method of Collection

The customer satisfaction surveys will be administered at the conclusion of the respondents call to TQA. When the callers indicate that they have completed their TQA transaction, they will be informed that they will be automatically transferred to an automated customer satisfaction survey and that the survey is estimated to take less than 3 minutes to complete. Once the transfer takes place, the caller will be prompted to indicate whether they have a touch tone phone or not. The customer satisfaction survey will be tailored to their touch tone or rotary capabilities. The completed surveys will be compiled for evaluation purposes.

III. Data

OMB Number: Forthcoming.

Form Number: This telephone survey will have no form.

Type of Review: Regular Submission.

Affected Public: Those who receive Census short or long forms or update/leave (US and Puerto Rico) and have direct access to a telephone.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 50,000.

Estimated Time Per Response: 2 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 1,667.

Estimated Total Annual Cost: There is no cost to the respondent other than the time taken to complete the survey.

Respondents Obligation: Voluntary.

Legal Authority: Title 13, United States Code, Sections 141 and 193.