

a.m. and end at 7 p.m. on April 14. On April 15, the meeting will begin at 8 a.m. and end at 4 p.m. Citizens may address the Committee on April 14, beginning at 4 p.m., to present ideas on how to improve National Forest System land and resource management planning.

Citizens who wish to speak at either meeting must register at that meeting before 5 p.m. Each speaker will be limited to a maximum of 5 minutes. Persons may also submit written suggestions to the Committee at either meeting or may mail suggestions to the addresses listed under the **ADDRESSES** heading.

The Committee of Scientists is chartered to provide scientific and technical advice to the Secretary of Agriculture and the Chief of the Forest Service on improvements that can be made to the National Forest System land and resource management planning process (62 FR 43691; August 15, 1997). Notice of the names of the appointed Committee members was published December 16, 1997 (62 FR 65795). Agendas and locations for future meetings will be published as separate notices in the **Federal Register**.

Dated: March 11, 1998.

Gloria Manning,

Acting Deputy Chief for National Forest System.

[FR Doc. 98-6971 Filed 3-17-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

National Agricultural Statistics Service

Intent To Request Approval of an Information Collection

AGENCY: National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. No. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR Part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), this notice announces the National Agricultural Statistics Service's (NASS) intention to request approval for a new information collection, the 1998 Census of Horticultural Specialties.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by May 22, 1998 to be assured of consideration.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COMMENTS: Contact Rich Allen, Associate Administrator, National Agricultural Statistics Service, U.S. Department of

Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Room 4117, South Building, Washington, D.C. 20250-2000, (202) 720-4333.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: 1998 Census of Horticultural Specialties.

Type of Request: The 1998 Census of Horticultural Specialties, authorized by the Census of Agriculture Act of 1997 (Pub. L. No. 105-113), will include all operations in each State that produced and sold \$10,000 or more of horticultural specialty crops during 1998. The horticulture census will provide data on the number of farms, production and sales by type of plant, area in production, selected production expenses, hired workers, and value of land and equipment. Census data are used by the growers, their representatives, the government, and many other groups of people concerned with the horticulture industry. The census will provide detailed data on the production of specialty horticultural crops for each State. Results from the census will be used to evaluate new programs, disburse Federal funds, analyze market trends, and measure performance across States. The horticulture census will provide the only source of dependable, comparable data by State. The National Agricultural Statistics Service will use the information collected only for statistical purposes and will publish the data only as tabulated totals.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 66 minutes per response.

Respondents: Farms.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 36,000.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 39,600 hours.

Copies of this information collection and related instructions can be obtained without charge from Larry Gambrell, the Agency OMB Clearance Officer, at (202) 720-5778.

Comments: 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, such as through the use of appropriate

automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to: Larry Gambrell, Agency OMB Clearance Officer, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Room 4162, South Building, Washington, D.C. 20250-2000. 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.

Signed at Washington, D.C., March 3, 1998.

Donald M. Bay,

Administrator, National Agricultural Statistics Service.

[FR Doc. 98-6941 Filed 3-17-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-20-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

National Agricultural Statistics Service

Intent To Request Approval of an Information Collection

AGENCY: National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. No. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR Part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), this notice announces the National Agricultural Statistics Service's (NASS) intention to request approval for a new information collection, the 1998 Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by May 22, 1998 to be assured of consideration.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COMMENTS: Contact Rich Allen, Associate Administrator, National Agricultural Statistics Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Room 4117 South Building, Washington, D.C. 20250-2000, (202) 720-4333.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: 1998 Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey.

Type of Request: The 1998 Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey, authorized by the Census of Agriculture Act of 1997 (Pub. L. No. 105-113), will include a probability sample of farms reporting irrigation in the 1997 Census of Agriculture. This irrigation survey will provide detailed data relating to on-farm irrigation practices including acres irrigated by category of land use, acres and yields of irrigated and non-irrigated

crops, quantity of water distribution systems, and number of irrigation wells and pumps. Also included will be 1998 irrigation expenditures for maintenance and repair of irrigation equipment and facilities; purchase of energy for on-farm pumping of irrigation water; investment in irrigation equipment, facilities, and land improvement; and cost of water received from off-farm water supplies. Census data are used by the farmers, their representatives, the government, and many other groups of people concerned with the irrigation industry. The survey will provide a comprehensive inventory of farm irrigation practices. Results from the survey will be used to evaluate new programs, disburse Federal funds, analyze market trends, and measure performance across States. The irrigation survey will provide the only source of dependable, comparable data by State. The National Agricultural Statistics Service will use the information collected only for statistical purposes and will publish the data only as tabulated totals.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 45 minutes per response.

Respondents: Farms.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 25,000.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 18,750 hours.

Copies of this information collection and related instructions can be obtained without charge from Larry Gambrell, the Agency OMB Clearance Officer, at (202) 720-5778.

Comments: 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, such as through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to: Larry Gambrell, Agency OMB Clearance Officer, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Room 4162 South Building, Washington, D.C. 20250-2000. 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.

Signed at Washington, D.C., March 3, 1998.

Donald M. Bay,

Administrator, National Agricultural Statistics Service.

[FR Doc. 98-6942 Filed 3-17-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-20-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Notice of Proposed Changes in the NRCS National Handbook of Conservation Practices for Review and Comment

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), U.S. Department of Agriculture.

ACTION: Notice of proposed changes in the NRCS National Handbook of Conservation Practices for review and comment.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given of the intention of NRCS to issue a series of new or revised conservation practice standards in its National Handbook of Conservation Practices. These standards include "Early Successional Habitat Development/Management," "Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats," "Riparian Herbaceous Cover," "Shallow Water Management for Wildlife," "Wildlife Upland Habitat Management," "Wildlife Watering Facility," "Wetland Restoration," "Wetland Enhancement," "Wetland Creation," "Constructed Wetland," "Wildlife Wetland Habitat Management," and "Alley Cropping." NRCS State Conservationists who choose to adopt these practices for use within their State will incorporate them into Section IV of their Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG). These practices may be used in conservation systems that treat highly erodible land or on land determined to be wetland.

EFFECTIVE DATES: Comments must be received by May 18, 1998. This series of new or revised conservation practice standards will be adopted after the close of the 60-day comment period.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Single copies of these standards are available from Ecological Sciences Division, NRCS, Washington, D.C. Submit individual inquiries in writing to Mike W. Anderson, National Wildlife Ecologist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, P.O. Box 2890, Room 6154-S, Washington, D.C. 20013-2890.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 343 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 requires the 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 the NRCS will receive comments relative to the proposed changes. Following that period a determination will be made by the NRCS regarding disposition of those comments and a final determination of change will be made.

Signed in Washington, D.C., on March 12, 1998.

Pearlie S. Reed,

Chief, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Washington, D.C.

[FR Doc. 98-6926 Filed 3-17-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-16-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Municipal Interest Rates for the Second Quarter of 1998

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of municipal interest rates on advances from insured electric loans for the second quarter of 1998.

SUMMARY: The Rural Utilities Service hereby announces the interest rates for advances on municipal rate loans with interest rate terms beginning during the second calendar quarter of 1998.

DATES: These interest rates are effective for interest rate terms that commence during the period beginning April 1, 1998, and ending June 30, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Carolyn Dotson, Loan Funds Control Assistant, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service, Room 0227-S, Stop 1524, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-1500. Telephone: 202-720-1928. FAX: 202-690-2268. E-mail: CDotson@rus.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) hereby announces the interest rates on advances made during the second calendar quarter of 1998 for municipal rate electric loans. RUS regulations at 7 CFR 1714.4 state that each advance of funds on a municipal rate loan shall bear interest at a single rate for each interest rate term. Pursuant to 7 CFR 1714.5, the interest rates on these advances are based on indexes published in the "Bond Buyer" for the four weeks prior to the second Friday of