

NIFA is holding a public meeting to obtain comments to consider in developing the Fiscal Year 2013 solicitations for the AFRI competitive grants program. The meeting is open to the public. Written comments and suggestions on issues that may be considered in the meeting may be submitted to the NIFA Docket Clerk at the address above.

Implementation Plans

NIFA plans to consider stakeholder input received from this public meeting as well as other written comments in developing the Fiscal Year 2013 solicitations for this program.

Done at Washington, DC, this 25th day of January 2012.

Chavonda Jacobs-Young,

Acting Director National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

[FR Doc. 2012-2100 Filed 1-31-12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Inviting Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program Applications for Grants To Provide Technical Assistance for Rural Transportation Systems

AGENCY: Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS), an Agency within the USDA Rural Development mission area, announces the availability of two individual grants: one single \$500,000 grant from the rural transportation funds appropriated for the Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) program and another single \$250,000 grant for Federally Recognized Native American Tribes (FRNAT) from funds appropriated for the RBEG program. RBS will administer these awards under the Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) program and 7 U.S.C. 1932(c)(2) for fiscal year (FY) 2012. Each grant is to be competitively awarded to an eligible applicant which historically has been a qualified national non-profit organization. One grant is for the provision of technical assistance to rural transportation (RT) projects and that the other grant will be for the provision of technical assistance to RT projects operated by FRNATs only.

Expenses incurred in developing applications will be at the applicant's risk.

DATES: The deadline for receipt of applications in the USDA Rural Development State Office is no later than 4:30 p.m. (local time) on April 2, 2012. Applications received at a USDA Rural Development State Office after that date will not be considered for FY 2012 funding.

ADDRESSES: Entities wishing to apply for assistance should contact the appropriate USDA Rural Development State Office to receive copies of the application package. A list of the USDA Rural Development State Offices addresses and telephone numbers are as follows:

Alabama

USDA Rural Development State Office, Sterling Centre, Suite 601, 4121 Carmichael Road, Montgomery, AL 36106-3683, (334) 279-3400/TDD (334) 279-3495.

Alaska

USDA Rural Development State Office, 800 West Evergreen, Suite 201, Palmer, AK 99645-6539, (907) 761-7707/TDD (907) 761-8905.

Arizona

USDA Rural Development State Office, 230 North First Avenue, Suite 206, Phoenix, AZ 85003-1706, (602) 280-8702/TDD (602) 280-8705.

Arkansas

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, 700 West Capitol Avenue, Room 3416, Little Rock, AR 72201-3225, (501) 301-3200/TDD (501) 301-3279.

California

USDA Rural Development State Office, 430 G Street, Agency 4169, Davis, CA 95616-4169, (530) 792-5800/TDD (530) 792-5848.

Colorado

USDA Rural Development State Office, Denver Federal Center, Building 56, Room 2300, P.O. Box 25426, Denver, CO 80225-0426, (720) 544-2903/TDD (800) 659-3656.

Delaware-Maryland

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1221 College Park Drive, Suite 200, Dover, DE 19904, (302) 857-3580/TDD (302) 857-3585.

Florida/Virgin Islands

USDA Rural Development State Office, 4440 NW 25th Place, P.O. Box 147010, Gainesville, FL 32614-7010, (352) 338-3400/TDD (352) 338-3499.

Georgia

USDA Rural Development State Office, Stephens Federal Building, 355 East Hancock Avenue, Stop 300, Athens, GA 30601-2768, (706) 546-2162/TDD (706) 546-2034.

Hawaii

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Room 311, 154

Waiianuenue Avenue, Hilo, HI 96720, (808) 933-8302/TDD (808) 933-8321.

Idaho

USDA Rural Development State Office, 9173 West Barnes Drive, Suite A1, Boise, ID 83709, (208) 378-5601/TDD (208) 378-5644.

Illinois

USDA Rural Development State Office, 2118 West Park Court, Suite A, Champaign, IL 61821, (217) 403-6201/TDD (217) 403-6240.

Indiana

USDA Rural Development State Office, 5975 Lakeside Boulevard, Indianapolis, IN 46278, (317) 290-3100 ext. 4/TDD (317) 290-3343.

Iowa

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Room 873, 210 Walnut Street, Des Moines, IA 50309, (515) 284-4663/TDD (515) 284-4858.

Kansas

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1303 SW First American Place, Suite 100, Topeka, KS 66604-4040, (785) 271-2777/TDD (785) 271-2767.

Kentucky

USDA Rural Development State Office, 771 Corporate Drive, Suite 200, Lexington, KY 40503, (859) 224-7300/TDD (859) 224-7422.

Louisiana

USDA Rural Development State Office, 3727 Government Street, Alexandria, LA 71302, (318) 473-7920/TDD (318) 473-7655.

Maine

USDA Rural Development State Office, 967 Illinois Avenue, Suite 4, P.O. Box 405, Bangor, ME 04402-0405, (207) 990-9161/TDD (207) 942-7331.

Massachusetts/Rhode Island/Connecticut

USDA Rural Development State Office, 451 West Street, Amherst, MA 01002-2999, (413) 253-4302/TDD (413) 253-4590.

Michigan

USDA Rural Development State Office, 3001 Coolidge Road, Suite 200, East Lansing, MI 48823, (517) 324-5190/TDD (517) 324-5169.

Minnesota

USDA Rural Development State Office, 410 Farm Credit Service Building, 375 Jackson Street, St. Paul, MN 55101-1853, (651) 602-7800/TDD (651) 602-3799.

Mississippi

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Suite 831, 100 West Capitol Street, Jackson, MS 39269, (601) 965-4211/TDD (601) 965-5850.

Missouri

USDA Rural Development State Office, 601 Business Loop 70 West, Parkade Center, Suite 235, Columbia, MO 65203, (573) 876-0987/TDD (573) 876-9480.

Montana

USDA Rural Development State Office, 2229 Boot Hill Court, P.O. Box 850, Bozeman, MT 59715, (406) 585-2580/TDD (406) 585-2562.

Nebraska

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Room 152, 100 Centennial Mall North, Lincoln, NE 68508, (308) 632-2195/TDD (402) 437-5093.

Nevada

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1390 South Curry Street, Carson City, NV 89703-9910, (775) 887-1222/TDD (775) 885-0633.

New Jersey

USDA Rural Development State Office, 8000 Midlantic Drive, 5th Floor North, Suite 500, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054, (856) 787-7700/TDD (856) 787-7784.

New Mexico

USDA Rural Development State Office, 6200 Jefferson Street, Room 255, Albuquerque, NM 87109, (505) 761-4950/TDD (505) 761-4938.

New York

USDA Rural Development State Office, The Galleries of Syracuse, 441 South Salina Street, Suite 357, Syracuse, NY 13202-2541, (315) 477-6435/TDD (315) 477-6447.

North Carolina

USDA Rural Development State Office, 4405 Bland Road, Suite 260, Raleigh, NC 27609, (919) 873-2015/TDD (919) 873-2003.

North Dakota

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Room 208, 220 East Rosser Avenue, P.O. Box 1737, Bismarck, ND 58502-1737, (701) 530-2037/TDD (701) 530-2113.

Ohio

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Room 507, 200 North High Street, Columbus, OH 43215-2418, (614) 255-2390/TDD (614) 255-2554.

Oklahoma

USDA Rural Development State Office, 100 USDA, Suite 108, Stillwater, OK 74074-2654, (405) 742-1000/TDD (405) 742-1007.

Oregon

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1201 Northeast Lloyd Boulevard, Suite 801, Portland, OR 97232, (503) 414-3305/TDD (503) 414-3387.

Pennsylvania

USDA Rural Development State Office, One Credit Union Place, Suite 330, Harrisburg, PA 17110-2996, (717) 237-2262/TDD (717) 237-2261.

Puerto Rico

USDA Rural Development State Office, 654 Plaza Munoz Rivera Avenue, Suite 601, San Juan, PR 00936-6106, (787) 766-5095/TDD (787) 766-5332.

South Carolina

USDA Rural Development State Office, Strom Thurmond Federal Building, 1835 Assembly Street, Room 1007, Columbia, SC 29201, (803) 765-5163/TDD (803) 765-5697.

South Dakota

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Room 210, 200 Fourth Street SW., Huron, SD 57350, (605) 352-1100/TDD (605) 352-1147.

Tennessee

USDA Rural Development State Office, 3322 West End Avenue, Suite 300, Nashville, TN 37203-1071, (615) 783-1300.

Texas

USDA Rural Development State Office, Federal Building, Suite 102, 101 South Main, Temple, TX 76501, (254) 742-9700/TDD (254) 742-9712.

Utah

USDA Rural Development State Office, Wallace F. Bennett Federal Building, 125 South State Street, Room 4311, Salt Lake City, UT 84138, (801) 524-4321/TDD (801) 524-3309.

Vermont/New Hampshire

USDA Rural Development State Office, City Center, 3rd Floor, 89 Main Street, Montpelier, VT 05602, (802) 828-6080/TDD (802) 223-6365.

Virginia

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1606 Santa Rosa Road, Suite 238, Richmond, VA 23229-5014, (804) 287-1552/TDD (804) 287-1753.

Washington

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1835 Black Lake Boulevard SW., Suite B, Olympia, WA 98512-5715, (360) 704-7715/TDD (360) 704-7760.

West Virginia

USDA Rural Development State Office, 1550 Earl Core Road, Suite 101, Morgantown, WV 26505, (304) 284-4860/TDD (304) 284-4836.

Wisconsin

USDA Rural Development State Office, 4949 Kirschling Court, Stevens Point, WI 54481, (715) 345-7671/TDD (715) 345-7614.

Wyoming

USDA Rural Development State Office, P.O. Box 11005, 100 East B Street, Room 1005, Casper, WY 82601, (307) 233-6703/TDD (307) 233-6733.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For additional information, please contact the appropriate USDA Rural Development State Office as provided in the **ADDRESSES** section of this Notice.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Overview**

Federal Agency: Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

Solicitation Opportunity Title: Rural Business Enterprise Grants.

Announcement Type: Initial Solicitation Announcement.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 10.769.

Dates: Application Deadline:

Completed applications must be received in the USDA Rural Development State Office no later than 4:30 p.m. (local time) on April 2, 2012, to be eligible for FY 2012 grant funding. Applications received after this date will not be eligible for FY 2012 grant funding.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

The RBEG program is authorized by section 310B(c) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (CONACT) (7 U.S.C. 1932(c)). Regulations are contained in 7 CFR part 1942, subpart G. The primary objective of the program is to improve the economic conditions of rural areas. The program is administered on behalf of RBS at the State level by the USDA Rural Development State Offices. Assistance provided to rural areas under the Programs may include the provision of on-site technical assistance to local and regional governments, public transit agencies, and related non-profit and for-profit organizations in rural areas; the development of training materials; and the provision of necessary training assistance to local officials and agencies in rural areas.

Awards under the RBEG passenger transportation program will be made on a competitive basis using specific selection criteria contained in 7 CFR part 1942, subpart G, and in accordance with section 310B(c)(2) of the CONACT. Information required to be in the application package includes Forms SF 424, "Application for Federal Assistance;" RD 1940-20, "Request for Environmental Information;" Scope of Work Narrative; Income Statement; Balance Sheet or Audit for previous 3 years; AD-1047, "Debarment/Suspension Certification;" AD-1048, "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion;" AD-1049, "Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace Requirements;" SF LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities;" RD 400-1, "Equal Opportunity Agreement;" RD 400-4, "Assurance Agreement;" a letter stating Board authorization to obtain assistance; and a letter certifying citizenship, as referenced in 7 CFR 1942.307(b). For the FRNAT grant, which must benefit Federally Recognized Native American Tribes, at least 75 percent of the benefits of the project must be received by members of Federally Recognized

Native American Tribes. The project that scores the greatest number of points based on the RBEG selection criteria and the discretionary points will be selected for each grant.

Applicants must be qualified national non-profit organizations with experience in providing technical assistance and training to rural communities for the purpose of improving passenger transportation service or facilities. To be considered "national," RBS requires a qualified organization to provide evidence that it operates rural transportation assistance programming in multiple States. There is not a requirement to use the grant funds in a multi-State area. Grants will be made to qualified national non-profit organizations for the provision of technical assistance and training to rural communities for the purpose of improving passenger transportation services or facilities.

Definitions

The definitions are published at 7 CFR 1942.304.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Grant.

Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2012.

Total Funding: \$750,000.

Approximate Number of Awards: Two.

Average Award: One single \$500,000 grant and another single \$250,000 grant for FRNAT's.

Anticipated Award Date: May 16, 2012.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

To be considered eligible, an entity must be a qualified national non-profit organization serving rural areas. Grants will be competitively awarded to qualified national non-profit organizations.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

Matching funds are not required.

C. Other Eligibility Requirements

Applications will only be accepted from qualified national non-profit organizations to provide technical assistance for rural transportation.

D. Completeness Eligibility

Applications will not be considered for funding if they do not provide sufficient information to determine eligibility or are missing required elements. If due to a change made in the appropriation, additional information is needed, then applicants that submitted complete applications prior to the application deadline will be provided

additional time in which to provide that information.

IV. Fiscal Year 2012 Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

For further information, entities wishing to apply for assistance should contact the USDA Rural Development State Office provided in the **ADDRESSES** section of this Notice to obtain copies of the application package.

Applicants are encouraged to submit applications through the Grants.gov Web site at: <http://www.grants.gov>. Applications may be submitted in either electronic or paper format. Users of Grants.gov will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it off line, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov Web site. Applications may not be submitted by electronic mail.

- When you enter the Grants.gov Web site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site as well as the hours of operation. USDA Rural Development strongly recommends that you begin the application process through Grants.gov in sufficient time to complete the application before the deadline date.

- You may submit all documents electronically through the Web site, including all information typically included on the application and all necessary assurances and certifications.

- After electronically submitting an application through the Web site, the applicant will receive an automatic acknowledgement from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number.

- USDA Rural Development may request that the applicant provide original signatures on forms at a later date.

- If applicants experience technical difficulties on the closing date and are unable to meet the deadline, you may submit a paper copy of your application to your respective Rural Development State Office. Paper applications submitted to a Rural Development State Office must meet the closing date and local time deadline.

- Please note that applicants can locate the downloadable application package for this program by the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number or FedGrants Funding Opportunity Number, which can be found at <http://www.Grants.gov>.

All applicants, whether filing applications through www.Grants.gov or by paper, must have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number which can be

obtained at no cost via a toll-free request line at 1-(866) 705-5711 or at <http://www.dnb.com>.

B. Content and Form of Submission

An application must contain all of the required elements. Each application received in a USDA Rural Development State Office will be reviewed to determine if it is consistent with the eligible purposes contained in section 310B(c)(2) of the CONACT. Each selection priority criterion outlined in 7 CFR 1942.305(b)(3), must be addressed in the application. Failure to address any of the criteria will result in a zero-point score for that criterion and will impact the overall evaluation of the application. Copies of 7 CFR part 1942, subpart G, will be provided by any interested applicant making a request to a USDA Rural Development State Office provided in the **ADDRESSES** section of this Notice.

All projects to receive technical assistance through these passenger transportation grant funds are to be identified when the applications are submitted to the USDA Rural Development State Office. Multiple project applications must identify each individual project, indicate the amount of funding requested for each individual project, and address the criteria as stated above for each individual project.

For multiple-project applications, the average of the individual project scores will be the score for that application.

C. Submission Dates and Times

Application Deadline Date: No later than 4:30 p.m. (local time) April 2, 2012.

Explanation of Deadlines:

Applications must be in the USDA Rural Development State Office by the deadline date.

V. Application Review Information

RBS will score applications based on the grant selection criteria and weights contained in 7 CFR part 1942, subpart G and will select a grantee subject to the grantee's satisfactory submission of the additional items required by 7 CFR part 1942, subpart G and the USDA Rural Development Letter of Conditions.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive notification for funding from the USDA Rural Development State Office. Applicants must comply with all applicable statutes and regulations before the grant award will be approved. Unsuccessful applications will receive notification by mail. Grantees must further comply with applicable

provisions of 7 CFR parts 3015, 3016, 3019, and 3052.

VII. Agency Contacts

For general questions about this announcement, please contact your USDA Rural Development State Office provided in the **ADDRESSES** section of this Notice.

VIII. Paperwork Reduction Act

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, the paperwork burden has been cleared by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under OMB Control Number 0570-0022.

Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act

All applicants, in accordance with 2 CFR part 25, must have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number, which can be obtained at no cost via a toll-free request line at 1-(866) 705-5711 or online at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>.

Similarly, in accordance with 2 CFR part 25, all applicants must be registered in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) prior to submitting an application. Applicants may register for the CCR at <http://www.ccr.gov> or by calling 1-(866) 606-8220 and press "1" for CCR. All recipients of Federal financial assistance are required to report information about first-tier sub-awards and executive total compensation in accordance with 2 CFR part 170.

Nondiscrimination Statement

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TTD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay). USDA is

an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Dated: January 20, 2012.

Judith A. Canales,

Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

[FR Doc. 2012-2099 Filed 1-31-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XY-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Turning Point Solar LLC: Notice of Availability of an Environmental Assessment

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of Availability of an Environmental Assessment for Public Review.

SUMMARY: The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to meet its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and RUS's Environmental and Policies and Procedures (7 CFR part 1794) in relation to possible financial assistance for a proposal by Turning Point Solar LCC (TPS). The proposal consists of constructing a 49.9 megawatt (MW) ground-mounted solar photovoltaic generating facility in Noble County, Ohio. Turning Point Solar LLC is requesting that RUS provide a loan or loan guarantee for the proposal. RUS is considering funding this proposal, thereby making it an undertaking subject to review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), 16 USC 470(f), and its implementing regulation, "Protection of Historic Properties" (36 CFR part 800).

DATES: Written comments on this Notice must be received on or before March 2, 2012.

ADDRESSES: A copy of the EA may be viewed at the following RUS Web site: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/UWP-ea.htm>, and at the following repository: Caldwell Public Library, 517 Spruce Street, Caldwell, Ohio 43724-0230; Telephone: (740) 732-4506 for operating hours.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To obtain copies of the EA, to comment on the EA, or for further information, contact: Ms. Lauren McGee, Environmental Scientist, USDA/RUS, 1400 Independence Ave. SW., Room 2244-S, Stop 1571, Washington, DC 20250-1571, Telephone: (202) 720-1482, fax: (202) 690-0649, or email: lauren.mcgee@wdc.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Turning Point Solar LLC proposes to construct a 49.9 MW solar generating facility in Brookfield Township, Noble County, Ohio. The proposal involves the installation of high-efficiency monocrystalline photovoltaic panels mounted on fixed solar racking equipment and the construction of access roads, a powerhouse, transmission improvements, and other supporting facilities. The preferred site is located eight miles northwest of Caldwell, Ohio, on approximately 771 acres of reclaimed strip-mined land owned by Columbus Southern Power Company and Ohio Power Company, collectively American Electric Power Ohio (AEP Ohio). The land was mined by the Central Ohio Coal Company between 1969 and 1991, after which time it was reclaimed. The proposed generating facility would interconnect to AEP Ohio's South Cumberland 69kV substation, subject to completion of the Pennsylvania-New Jersey-Maryland (PJM) Generation Interconnection application process.

As part of its environmental review process, RUS must take into account the effect of the proposal on historic properties in accordance with section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulation, "Protection of Historic Properties" (36 CFR part 800). Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3), RUS is using its procedures for public involvement under NEPA to meet its responsibilities to solicit and consider the views of the public during Section 106 review. RUS has determined that no historic properties listed in or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) will be affected by the proposal.

Alternatives considered by RUS and TPS include (a) no action, (b) project alternatives, and (c) project alternative sites. An environmental report that describes the proposal in detail and discusses its anticipated environmental impacts has been prepared by URS Corporation. RUS has reviewed and accepted the document as its EA of the proposal. The EA is available for public review at the addresses provided in this Notice. Questions and comments should be sent to RUS at the mailing or email addresses provided in this Notice. RUS should receive comments on the EA in writing by March 2, 2012 to ensure that they are considered in its environmental impact determination.

Should RUS, based on the EA of the proposal, determine that the impacts of the construction and operation of the proposal would not have a significant environmental impact, it will prepare a