

into administration of the Forest Service's Recreation Fee Program under the Guidelines.

This final directive, which replaces the Guidelines, formalizes direction on REA by incorporating it into the Forest Service's Directive System. The final directive incorporates without interpretation the requirements in REA and therefore was not subjected to public comment. Formalizing direction on these requirements will assist Forest Service employees who administer the Recreation Fee Program. The final directive will be available to the public online at <http://www.fs.fed.us/im/directives>.

Regulatory Certifications

Environmental Impact

This final directive will incorporate without interpretation the requirements in REA into the Forest Service's Directive System. Forest Service regulations at 36 CFR 220.6(d)(2) exclude from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement "rules, regulations, or policies to establish Service-wide administrative procedures, program processes, or instructions." The Agency has concluded that this final directive falls within this category of actions and that no extraordinary circumstances exist which would require preparation of an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

Regulatory Impact

This final directive has been reviewed under USDA procedures and Executive Order (E.O.) 12866 on regulatory planning and review. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has determined that this final directive is not significant. The final directive will not have an annual effect of \$100 million or more on the economy, nor will it adversely affect productivity, competition, jobs, the environment, public health and safety, or State or local governments. The final directive will not interfere with an action taken or planned by another agency, nor will it raise new legal or policy issues. Finally, the final directive will not alter the budgetary impact of entitlement, grant, or loan programs or the rights and obligations of beneficiaries of those programs. Accordingly, this final directive is not subject to OMB review under E.O. 12866.

The Agency has considered this final directive in light of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 602 *et seq.*). The Agency has determined that this final directive will not have a significant

economic impact on a substantial number of small entities as defined by the act because the final directive will not impose record-keeping requirements on them; it will not affect their competitive position in relation to large entities; and it will not affect their cash flow, liquidity, or ability to remain in the market. The final directive will formalize direction on the Forest Service's authority to charge recreation fees to the public and will have no direct effect on small businesses.

No Takings Implications

The Agency has analyzed this final directive in accordance with the principles and criteria contained in E.O. 12630. The Agency has determined that this final directive does not pose the risk of a taking of private property.

Civil Justice Reform

The Agency has reviewed this final directive under E.O. 12988 on civil justice reform. After adoption of this final directive, (1) all State and local laws and regulations that conflict with this final directive or that impede its full implementation will be preempted; (2) no retroactive effect will be given to this final directive; and (3) it will not require administrative proceedings before parties may file suit in court challenging its provisions.

Unfunded Mandates

Pursuant to Title II of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531–1538), the Agency has assessed the effects of this final directive on State, local, and Tribal governments and the private sector. This final directive will not compel the expenditure of \$100 million or more by any State, local, or Tribal government or anyone in the private sector. Therefore, a statement under section 202 of the act is not required.

Federalism and Consultation and Coordination With Indian Tribal Governments

The Agency has considered this final directive under the requirements of E.O. 13132 on federalism and has determined that the final directive conforms with the federalism principles set out in this E.O.; will not impose any compliance costs on the States; and will not have substantial direct effects on the States, the relationship between the Federal government and the States, or the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. Therefore, the Agency has determined that no further assessment of federalism implications is necessary.

Moreover, this final directive does not have Tribal implications as defined by E.O. 13175, "Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments," and therefore advance consultation with Tribes is not required.

Energy Effects

This final directive has been reviewed under E.O. 13211 of May 18, 2001, "Actions Concerning Regulations That Significantly Affect Energy Supply, Distribution, or Use." The Agency has determined that this final directive does not constitute a significant energy action as defined in the E.O.

Controlling Paperwork Burdens on the Public

This final directive does not contain any record-keeping or reporting requirements or other information collection requirements as defined in 5 CFR part 1320 that are not already required by law or not already approved for use. Accordingly, the review provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*) and its implementing regulations at 5 CFR part 1320 do not apply.

Dated: November 26, 2013.

Thomas L. Tidwell,

Chief, U.S. Forest Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Publication of Depreciation Rates

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service.

ACTION: Notice of Depreciation Rates for Telecommunications Plant.

SUMMARY: The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Utilities Service (RUS) administers rural utilities programs, including the Telecommunications Program. RUS announces the depreciation rates for telecommunications plant for the period ending December 31, 2012.

DATES: These rates are effective immediately and will remain in effect until rates are available for the period ending December 31, 2013.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Keith B. Adams, 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 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. § 1737.70(e)(2) refers to median depreciation rates published by RUS for all borrowers. The following chart provides those rates, compiled by RUS, for the reporting period ending December 31, 2012:

MEDIAN DEPRECIATION RATES OF RURAL UTILITIES SERVICE BORROWERS BY EQUIPMENT CATEGORY FOR PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2012

| Telecommunications plant category | Depreciation rate |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. Land and Support Assets: | |
| a. Motor vehicles | 16.00 |
| b. Aircraft | 14.29 |
| c. Special purpose vehicles | 13.24 |
| d. Garage and other work equipment | 10.00 |
| e. Buildings | 3.20 |
| f. Furniture and office equipment | 10.00 |
| g. General purpose computers | 20.00 |
| 2. Central Office Switching: | |
| a. Digital | 9.09 |
| b. Analog & Electro-mechanical | 10.00 |
| c. Operator Systems | 9.30 |
| 3. Central Office Transmission: | |
| a. Radio Systems | 10.00 |
| b. Circuit equipment | 10.00 |
| 4. Information origination/termination: | |
| a. Station apparatus | 12.00 |
| b. Customer premises wiring | 10.00 |
| c. Large private branch exchanges | 11.20 |
| d. Public telephone terminal | 11.53 |
| e. Other terminal equipment | 10.50 |
| 5. Cable and wire facilities: | |
| a. Aerial cable—poles | 6.00 |
| b. Aerial cable—metal | 5.80 |

MEDIAN DEPRECIATION RATES OF RURAL UTILITIES SERVICE BORROWERS BY EQUIPMENT CATEGORY FOR PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2012—Continued

| Telecommunications plant category | Depreciation rate |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| c. Aerial cable—fiber | 5.00 |
| d. Underground cable—metal | 5.00 |
| e. Underground cable—fiber | 5.00 |
| f. Buried cable—metal | 5.05 |
| g. Buried cable—fiber | 5.00 |
| h. Conduit systems | 3.74 |
| i. Other | 5.40 |

John Charles Padalino,
Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.
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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc.: Notice of Availability of an Environmental Assessment

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.
ACTION: Notice of Availability of an Environmental Assessment.

SUMMARY: The Rural Utilities Service (RUS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture, has issued an Environmental Assessment (EA) to meet its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality’s (CEQ) regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500–1508), and RUS’s Environmental and Policies and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1794) in connection with potential impacts related to a proposal by Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. (Tri-State) with

headquarters in Westminster, Colorado. The proposal consists of the construction of approximately 72 miles of 230 kilovolt (kV) transmission line in eastern Colorado between the Burlington Substation (located in Kit Carson County) and the Wray Substation (located in Yuma County) (proposed Project). Tri-State is requesting financial assistance from RUS for the construction of the proposed Project.

RUS is considering funding the proposed Project, thereby making it an undertaking subject to review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), 16 U.S.C. 470(f), and its implementing regulation, “Protection of Historic Properties” (36 CFR part 800). To meet its responsibilities under Section 106, RUS must take into account the effect of the proposed Project on historic properties; i.e., buildings, structures, sites, objects and districts which are listed or eligible for listing on the *National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)*. RUS has coordinated its compliance with Section 106 with the steps taken to comply with NEPA and its environmental policies and procedures. Accordingly, this EA also documents the manner in which RUS has met its responsibilities to take into account effects to historic properties. RUS has determined that the proposed project will have no adverse effects to historic properties listed on or eligible for listing on the *NRHP*.

DATES: Written comments on this Notice must be received on or before January 8, 2014.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the EA will be available for public review at the Agency’s Web site: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/UWP-EA-Burlington-Wray.html>, at Tri-State’s Web site: <http://www.tristategt.org/Transmission/Burlington-Wray.cfm>, and at the following repositories:

TABLE 5—FY 2013 COMMON POOL INCIDENTAL CATCH TACS

| Building location | Address | Phone |
|---------------------------------|--|--------------|
| Wray Public Library | 621 Blake Street Wray, CO 80758 | 970–332–4744 |
| Burlington Public Library | 321 14th Street Burlington, CO 90907 | 719–346–8109 |

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To obtain copies of the EA or for further information, contact Mr. Dennis Rankin, Environmental Protection Specialist, USDA/RUS, 1400 Independence Ave. SW., Room 2244–S, Stop 1571, Washington, DC 20250–1571, or email: dennis.rankin@wdc.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Tri-State proposes to construct a single-circuit 230-kV line approximately 72 miles in length between the Burlington Substation (located in Kit Carson County) and the Wray Substation (located in Yuma County). The Burlington Substation would be expanded from the existing two breaker

arrangement to a three breaker ring bus arrangement to allow for the new 230-kV line bay. The Wray Substation would require a new 230-kV ring bus configuration with three new 230-kV circuit breakers.

The overall purpose of the proposed Project is to alleviate transmission systems limitations in eastern Colorado,