

RUS borrowers to establish revolving loan funds.

RBS needs to receive the information contained in this collection of information to select the projects it believes will provide the most long-term economic benefit to rural areas. The selection process is competitive, and RBS has generally received more applications than it could fund. RBS also needs to make sure the funds are used for the intended purpose and, in the case of the loan, that the funds will be repaid. RBS must determine that loans made from revolving loan funds established with grants are used for eligible purposes.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 2.7 hours per response.

Respondents: RUS borrowers.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 120.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 13.3.

Estimated Number of Responses: 1,596.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 4,272.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Cheryl Thompson, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, at (202) 692-0043.

Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of RBS, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the RBS 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, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to Cheryl Thompson, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, STOP 0742, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250. All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: January 13, 2003.

John Rosso,

Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

[FR Doc. 03-1455 Filed 1-22-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XY-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Maximum Dollar Amount on Awards Under the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program for Fiscal Year 2003

AGENCY: Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Rural Business-Cooperative Service hereby announces the maximum dollar amount on loan and grant awards under the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG) program for fiscal year (FY) 2003. The maximum dollar award on zero-interest loans for FY 2003 is \$450,000. The maximum dollar award on grants for FY 2003 is \$200,000. The maximum loan and grant awards stated in this notice are effective for loans and grants made during the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2002, and ending September 30, 2003. REDLG loans and grants are available to Rural Utilities Service electric and telephone utilities to assist in developing rural areas from an economic standpoint.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Patricia Wing, Loan Specialist, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA, STOP 3225, Room 6866, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-3225. Telephone: (202) 720-9558. FAX: (202) 720-2213.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The maximum loan and grant awards are determined in accordance with 7 CFR 1703.28. The maximum loan and grant awards are calculated as 3.0 percent of the projected program levels, rounded to the nearest \$10,000; however, as specified in 7 CFR 1703.28(b), regardless of the projected total amount that will be available, the maximum size may not be lower than \$200,000. The projected program level during FY 2003 for zero-interest loans is \$14.966 million, and the projected program level for grants is \$4 million. Applying the specified 3.0 percent to the program level for loans, rounded to the nearest \$10,000, results in the maximum loan award of \$450,000. Applying the specified 3.0 percent to the program level for grants results in an amount

lower than \$200,000. Therefore, the maximum grant award for FY 2003 will be \$200,000. This notice will be amended should an appropriation in excess of projected levels be received.

Dated: January 13, 2003.

John Rosso,

Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

[FR Doc. 03-1454 Filed 1-22-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 011603B]

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling two public meetings of its (1) Monkfish Oversight Committee and (2) representatives of its Groundfish, Monkfish, Habitat, Sea Scallop, Skate, Whiting and Herring Advisory Panels in February, 2003 to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Recommendations from these groups will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

DATES: The meetings will be held between February 6-13, 2003. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific dates and times.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held in Taunton, MA and South Portland, ME. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific locations.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council (978) 465-0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Meeting Dates and Agendas

Thursday, February 6, 2003, at 9:30 a.m. and Friday, February 7, 2003, at 8:30 a.m. Joint Advisory Panels Representatives Meeting.

Location: Holiday Inn Taunton, 700 Myles Standish Boulevard, Taunton, MA 02780; (508) 823-0430.

There will be a joint meeting of representatives from the Council's Groundfish, Monkfish, Habitat, Sea Scallop, Skate, Whiting and Herring Advisory Panels to comment on and develop alternatives to Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) area management currently proposed for the Scallop Amendment 10 Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement.

Wednesday, February 12, 2003, at 10 a.m. and Thursday, February 13, 2003 at 8:30 a.m. Monkfish Oversight Committee Meeting.

Location: Sheraton South Portland Hotel, 363 Maine Mall Road, South Portland, ME 04106; telephone: (207) 775-6161.

The Committee will discuss issues and options to be included in the Monkfish Amendment 2 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS). Alternatives designed to achieve the approved goals and objectives include, but are not limited to: Permit qualification criteria for vessels fishing south of 38°N; management program for a deepwater directed fishery in the SFMA; separation of monkfish days-at-sea (DAS) from multispecies and sea scallop DAS programs, including counting of monkfish DAS as 24-hour days; measures to minimize impacts of the fishery on endangered sea turtles; measures to minimize bycatch in directed and non-directed fisheries; an exemption program for vessels fishing for monkfish outside of the EEZ (in the NAFO Regulated Area); alternative measures to minimize impacts of the fishery on EFH; measures to improve data collection and research on monkfish, including mechanisms for funding cooperative research programs; and, timing of the annual review and adjustment process. The Committee may develop and recommend other management alternatives not included in the list above.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this group for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids

should be directed to Paul J. Howard (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 days prior to the meeting dates.

Dated: January 16, 2003.

Richard W. Surdi,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 03-1465 Filed 1-22-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 011003A]

NOAA Strategic Plan

AGENCY: Office of Strategic Planning (OSP), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare a new NOAA Strategic Plan; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is the United States' premier agency for environmental assessment and prediction and management providing broad benefit to the Nation in the areas of economy, public safety and the environment. NOAA has recently begun the process of creating a new Strategic Plan for the agency responding to growing needs of the Nation for environmental information and management. One of the objectives of the new NOAA Strategic Plan is to directly address the President's Management Agenda including principles for a citizen-centered, results oriented, and market-based government. To that end, NOAA has conducted a series of stakeholder and employee workshops in Seattle, New Orleans, Boston, Washington, DC, Boulder, Cleveland and Puerto Rico over the past several months and has used this input to lay the foundation for drafting the new NOAA Strategic Plan. Important themes that emerged from these meetings were ecosystem approaches to coastal and ocean resource management, climate variability and change and weather and water information needs as well as agency-wide cross-cutting priorities that will enhance NOAA's mission and provide leadership in the environmental sciences to better serve America in the 21st century. When finalized in early 2003, after public and internal review, the new NOAA Strategic Plan will become the blueprint for the direction of NOAA's core and future missions and will become institutionalized in every aspect of

NOAA's resource planning and priority setting.

DATES: Public comments on this document must be received at the appropriate email address (see **ADDRESSES**) on or before 5 p.m., local time, February 14, 2003.

ADDRESSES: The NOAA Draft Strategic Plan is available at the OSP web site: <http://www.osp.noaa.gov>. Comments may be sent directly to the OSP email address strategic.planning@noaa.gov or visit the OSP website to submit comments. Comments will not be accepted if submitted via phone or fax.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

James Burgess, Office of Strategic Planning (OSP), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Herbert C. Hoover Building (HCHB), Room 6121, 14th and Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20230, phone: 202-482-5181, fax: 202-501-3024.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Status

NOAA encourages all stakeholders and users to review the draft Strategic Plan. All comments must be submitted by individual participants (persons, businesses, organizations, etc.). Group consensus comments will not be accepted. The discussion draft of the NOAA Strategic Plan and directions for submitting comments have been posted on the website. Comments, questions and suggestions are welcomed from both scientific and stakeholder communities. All comments received will be reviewed and considered in the final drafting of NOAA's new Strategic Plan.

Dated: January 16, 2003.

James P. Burgess, III

Acting Director, Office of Strategic Planning, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

[FR Doc. 03-1464 Filed 1-22-03; 8:45 am]

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COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION

Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME): Proposed Amendments to the Weight Specifications, Speculative Position Limits, Delivery Locations, and Delivery Procedures for the Live Cattle Futures Contract

AGENCY: Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

ACTION: Notice of availability of terms and conditions of proposed amendments to the CME's weight specifications, speculative position limits, delivery locations, and delivery