

2010 - SUPPORTING STATEMENT
0572-0124
Weather Radio Transmitter Grant Program

A. Justification

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is requesting a revision of a currently approved paperwork collection in support of the Weather Radio Transmitter Grant Program.

Under the authorization of P.L. 106-387 (FY 2001 Appropriations Act), the President of the United States and the United States Congress made \$5 million (later reduced to \$4,989,000) in grant funds available to facilitate the expansion of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Weather Radio and Alert System into rural areas that are not covered or are poorly covered at this time. Limited grant funds from the original \$5 million appropriation remain available for fiscal year 2010, using residual money, since many of the program's grantees completed their projects under budget. Applications will be processed on a noncompetitive basis until the appropriation is used in its entirety.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the Agency has made of the information received from the current collection.

The Weather Radio and Alert System is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting 24 hours a day from National Weather Service offices to alert people of approaching dangerous weather and other emergencies, including natural, environmental and public safety alerts. Thousands of people die or lose property annually because they did not know soon enough about hazards, disasters or emergencies. The NOAA Weather Radio and Alert System covers all major metropolitan areas and many smaller cities and towns. This program provides grant funds for use in rural areas and communities of 50,000 or less inhabitants. Applications are processed on a first-come, first-served basis until the appropriation is used in its entirety.

The Rural Utilities Service, in consultation with the National Weather Service developed a list of proposed rural transmitter sites that are eligible for funding under this program. The list of eligible proposed rural transmitter sites was published in the *Federal Register* on April 4, 2001, and updated on October 16, 2001, December 24, 2002, and April 8, 2005. Applicants must propose an eligible site to receive funding. Weather Radio Transmitter Grant Program applicants are primarily municipalities and large cooperatives. Applicants are required to submit their applications to RUS via hard copy. Grant applications must contain those items set forth in the FY 2001 NOFA (which is the

only NOFA published for this program) and, if their project is selected, will enter into a Grant Agreement with the Agency. RUS uses the submitted information as follows:

Application

Information submitted in an application is used by Rural Development to determine that adequate coverage in the area does not already exist and that the proposed coverage will meet the needs of the community; design requirements are met and, that the funds needed to complete the project are adequate based on the grant and the matching portion from the applicant.

Grant Agreement

This form is used by the Agency and grantee as a contract for receipt of grant funds.

FORM APPROVED UNDER OTHER OMB NUMBER

SF 270, "Request for Advancement or Reimbursement", (0348-0004). This form is used to request advances of funds under the grant.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g. permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection.

RUS is committed to meeting the requirements of the E-Government Act, which requires Government agencies in general to provide the public the option of submitting information or transacting business electronically to the maximum extent possible." If additional funding for this program is received, this program will be made available for electronic submission through Grants.gov.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.

Each application will be for a new project and new purpose, therefore information to determine feasibility will be unique and will not be duplicated. RUS has reviewed other Department grant programs in determining what information to require for the grant application.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities (item 5 of OMB Form 83-1), describe any methods used to minimize burden.

RUS believes it has minimized the burden for eligible applicants and that the required information is the least amount needed to monitor the grant funds and does not adversely

impact small businesses or other small entities. Most of the applicants for this program are municipalities or larger cooperatives that do not meet the SBA definition of a small business.

6. Describe the consequences to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

The submission of the required information is required at the time the application for the grant is made and is project specific and therefore, could not be submitted less frequently. Also, once funding for a transmitter for a specific unserved area has been made, no future funding for that particular area would be available again.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:

- a. Requiring respondents to report information more than quarterly.

There are no such requirements.

- b. Requiring written responses in less than 30 days.

There are no such requirements.

- c. Requiring more than an original and two copies.

There are no such requirements.

- d. Requiring respondents to retain records for more than 3 years.

There are no such requirements.

- e. That is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study.

This collection does not involve statistical information.

f. Requiring use of statistical sampling which has not been reviewed and approved by OMB.

This collection does not involve statistical information.

g. Requiring a pledge of confidentiality.

There is no such requirement.

h. Requiring submission of proprietary trade secrets.

There is no such requirement.

8. If applicable, identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice soliciting comments on the information collection. Summarize public comments received and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the Agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, reporting format (if any), and on data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

As required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), a notice to request comments was published on February 9, 2010 at 75 FR 6343. No public comments were received.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than reenumeration of contractors or grantees.

No such decision has been made.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or Agency policy.

No assurances have been made. Information submitted to RUS by borrowers is covered by provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552).

11. Provide additional justification for any question of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

There are no questions of this nature.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

The Agency estimates the burden to be 37.5 hours, determined as follows:

5 grants X 7.50 hours = 37.5 hours

The Agency estimates the cost on respondents to be \$1288.50 determined as follows:

5 grants X 7.5 hours X \$42.95 (Source: may, 2009, Bureau of Labor Statistics) managers, all others time = \$1,610

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information.

(a) Total capital and start-up cost component (annualized over its expected useful life); and

There are no capital or start-up costs involved with this collection.

(b) Total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component.

There are no operational and maintenance or purchase of services costs involved with this collection.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal Government.

The cost to the Federal Government to collect and evaluate this information is estimated to be \$4,351 based on the following calculations:

Review of Grant Application and Follow-up:
\$48.35 hr. (GS-13/5) X 6 hrs. X 15 responses = \$4,351

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-1.

This is a revision of the previously approved package with an adjustment increase of 7.5 hours. This increase accounts for the burden associated with the SF-270 that was previously shown under 0348-0004.

16. For collection of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication.

There are no plans for publication.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

There is no such approval requested.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in item 19 on OMB 83-1.

There are no exceptions.

B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods.

This collection does not involve statistical methods.