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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Information Collection Activity; Comment Request

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35, as amended), the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) invites comments on this information collection for which approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) will be requested.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by **[INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas P. Dickson, Acting Director, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, USDA Rural Utilities Service, Rural Development, United States Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, STOP 1522, Room 5164, South Building, Washington, DC 20250-1522.

Telephone: (202) 690-4492. FAX: (202) 720-8435. E-mail:

Thomas.Dickson@wdc.usda.gov

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) regulation (5 CFR 1320) implementing provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) requires that interested members of the public and affected agencies have an opportunity to comment on information collection and recordkeeping activities (see 5 CFR 1320.8(d)). This notice identifies an information collection that RUS is submitting to OMB for extension.

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, 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: Thomas P. Dickson, Acting Director, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, USDA Rural Utilities Service, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, STOP 1522, Washington, DC 20250-1522.

FAX: (202) 720-8435. E-mail: Thomas.Dickson@wdc.usda.gov

Title: Wholesale Contracts for the Purchase and Sale of Electric Power

OMB Control Number: 0572-0089.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: Most RUS financed electric systems are cooperatives and are organized in a two-tiered structure. Retail customers are members of the distribution system that provides electricity to their homes and business. Distribution cooperatives, in turn, are members of power supply cooperatives, also known as generation and transmission cooperatives (G&T's) that generate or purchase power and transmit the power to the distribution systems.

For a distribution system, a lien on the borrower's assets generally represents adequate security. However, since most G&T revenues flow from its distribution members, RUS requires, as a condition of a loan or loan guarantee to a G&T the long-term requirements wholesale power contract to purchase their power from the G&T at rates that cover all the G&T's expenses, including debt service and margins.

RUS Form 444 is the standard form of the wholesale power contract. The Form is used by RUS G&T borrowers to enter into agreement with their distribution members for purchase of power from the G&T. Most borrowers adapt this form to meet their specific needs. The contract is prepared and executed by the G&T and each member and by RUS and the information allows RUS to determine credit quality and credit worthiness to determine repayment ability for loans and loan guarantees.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 6 hours per response.

Respondents: Small business or other for-profit; not-for-profit organizations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 20.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 120 hours.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Rebecca Hunt, RUS Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, at (202) 205-3660; Facsimile: (202) 720-8435 or Email: Rebecca.Hunt@wdc.usda.gov.

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.

Dated: March 28, 2016.

Brandon McBride,
Administrator,
Rural Utilities Service.

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