

Dated: February 20, 2001.

Jane E. Hardisty,

State Conservationist, Indianapolis, Indiana.

[FR Doc. 01-6290 Filed 3-13-01; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Notice of Proposed Changes to Section IV of the Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) of the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Indiana

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Agriculture.

ACTION: Notice of availability of proposed changes in Section IV of the FOTG of the NRCS in Indiana for review and comment.

SUMMARY: It is the intention of NRCS in Indiana to issue a revised conservation practice standard in section IV of the FOTG. The revised standard is Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats (643). This practice may be used in conservation systems that treat highly erodible land and/or wetlands.

DATES: Comments will be received until on or before April 13, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Address all requests and comments to Jane E. Hardisty, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), 6013 Lakeside Blvd., Indianapolis, Indiana 46278. Copies of this standard will be made available upon written request. You may submit your electronic requests and comments to darrell.brown@in.usda.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jane E. Hardisty, 317-290-3200.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 343 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 states that after enactment of the law, revisions made to NRCS state technical guides used to carry out highly erodible land and wetland 2 provisions of the law, shall be made available for public review and comment. For the next 30 days, the NRCS in Indiana will receive comments relative to the proposed changes. Following that period, a determination will be made by the NRCS in Indiana regarding disposition of those comments and a final determination of changes will be made.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Communities' Access to Local Television; Request for Information

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Request for public comment and notice of public discussion meetings.

SUMMARY: The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) seeks written comments and will host informal meetings with interested parties on implementing the provisions of Public Law 106-553, "Launching Our Communities' Access to Local Television Act of 2000" (the Act). The Act provides for a guaranteed loan program intended to facilitate access, on a technologically neutral basis, to signals of local television stations for households located in nonserved areas and underserved areas.

Among other matters, the Act requires the Administrator, RUS, to prescribe regulations to implement the Act and to issue and otherwise administer loan guarantees approved by a board of Federal officials. In order to afford the public the maximum opportunity to contribute to the development of this new program and to enable the Agency to consider as many options as possible, RUS is requesting comments to assist in the drafting of the proposed rule.

DATES: Interested parties must submit written comments on or before April 13, 2001. RUS encourages interested parties to make arrangements for informal meetings with RUS staff on or before April 13, 2001. By further notice in the **Federal Register**, RUS may terminate, limit, or otherwise modify the process of obtaining information from interested parties.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments to Roberta D. Purcell, Assistant Administrator, Telecommunications Program, Rural Utilities Service, United States Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Av., SW., stop 1590, room 4056-S, Washington, DC 20250-1560. RUS requires, in hard copy, a signed original and 3 copies of all comments (7 CFR 1700.4). Comments will be available for public inspection during normal business hours (7 CFR part 1).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: To arrange an informal meeting, contact Roberta D. Purcell, Assistant Administrator,

Telecommunications Program, Rural Utilities Service, United States Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., stop 1590, room 4056-S, Washington, DC 20250-1560. Phone: 202-720-9554. Fax: 202-720-0810. E-mail:

bpurcell@rus.usda.gov. All meetings will be arranged in a manner and at such times as are convenient to RUS. A meeting may include several interested parties.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On December 21, 2000, the President signed the "Launching Our Communities' Access to Local Television Act of 2000," Pub. L. 106-553 (the "Act"). The Act provides for the establishment of the Local Television Loan Guarantee Board (the "Board"), which consists of the Secretaries of Agriculture, Treasury, Commerce, and the Chair of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, or their designees. The Board may approve loan guarantees up to 80% of not in excess of \$1.25 billion of loans, to facilitate access, on a technologically neutral basis, to signals of local television stations for households located in nonserved areas and underserved areas. The Act provides that, among other matters, the Administrator of RUS shall prescribe regulations to implement the Act and shall issue and otherwise administer loan guarantees approved by the Board. Congress has not yet provided appropriations for these guarantees, but may do so in the near future. The Act contains several specialized technical and business provisions and may be found in its entirety on the RUS website (www.rurdev.usda.gov/rus).

In light of its statutory role in implementing and administering the Act's loan guarantee program, RUS is currently analyzing the provisions of the Act, identifying issues potentially affecting the implementation of the program, and considering how the program can be effectively implemented. RUS is interested in receiving information regarding all aspects, including any financial and technological implications, of the program as well as analyses of any provisions of the Act that may present issues or practical problems in implementing the program. RUS invites interested parties including, but not limited to, financial and lending institutions, equipment providers, facility and other TV broadcast providers, cable and satellite providers, trade associations, consumer groups,