

Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Basin Electric Power Cooperative: Deer Creek Station

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of availability of Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

SUMMARY: The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) and the Western Area Power Administration (Western) have issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed Deer Creek Station in White, Brookings County, South Dakota. The DEIS was prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), RUS's NEPA implementing regulations (7 CFR part 1794), and Western's NEPA implementing regulations (10 CFR part 1021). Western is the lead federal agency as defined at 40 CFR 1501.5; RUS is a cooperating agency. The purpose of the DEIS is to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of and alternatives to Basin Electric Power Cooperative's (Basin Electric) application for a RUS loan and a Western interconnection agreement to construct the proposed 300 megawatt (MW) Deer Creek Station in Brookings and Deuel Counties, South Dakota (Project). The proposed facility would include a new natural gas-fired combustion turbine set, a heat recovery steam generator (HRSG), and a steam turbine generator set.

DATES: With this notice, RUS invites any affected Federal, State, and local agencies and other interested persons to comment on the DEIS. Written comments on this DEIS will be accepted for 45 days following the publication of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's notice of availability for this

DEIS in the **Federal Register**, which occurred on February 5, 2010.

Western, as lead agency, will hold a public meeting on February 25, 2010, from 6 to 8 p.m. at McKnight Community Hall, located at: 228 W. Main St., White, South Dakota. RUS will be in attendance. In accordance with 40 CFR 1503.1, Inviting Comments, the purpose of the meeting will be to solicit comments from interested parties on the DEIS for the Deer Creek Station. A copy of the DEIS can be obtained or viewed online at: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/ees/eis.htm>. Copies of the DEIS will also be available for public review at the following locations (hours vary; contact individual repositories for available times):

Brookings Public Library, 515 3rd Street, Brookings, SD; telephone: (605) 692-9407;
SDSU Hilton M. Briggs Library, South Dakota State University, Brookings, SD; telephone: (605) 688-5570;
Deubrook Community Library, 100 School Avenue, White, SD;
Elkton City Hall, Elkton, SD;
Siverson Public Library, 100 W. Garfield, Hendricks, MN;
Brookings County Commission Office, 314 6th Avenue, Brookings, SD.

ADDRESSES: To send comments or request additional information, contact: Ms. Lauren McGee, Environmental Scientist, USDA, Rural Utilities Service, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Stop 1571, Washington, DC 20250-1571, telephone: (202) 720-1482, fax: (202) 690-0649, or e-mail: lauren.mcgee@wdc.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Basin Electric's proposed Project is to construct, own, operate, and maintain the Deer Creek Station Energy Facility Project, a 300 MW combined-cycle natural gas generation facility, water pipeline, transmission lines, transmission interconnection(s), and other associated facilities, all in Brookings and Deuel counties in eastern South Dakota. The purpose of the proposed Project is to help serve increased load demand for electric power in the eastern portion of Basin Electric's service area. Basin Electric's eastern service area includes western Nebraska, northwestern and central Iowa, portions of southern Minnesota, all of South Dakota, portions of eastern Montana, and western and central North Dakota. The need for additional

generating capacity is driven by the increasing electrical power usage of the Basin Electric membership consumers. Between 1999 and 2006, Basin Electric's total system peak demand increased 752 MW from 1,195 MW to 1,947 MW, or approximately 107 MW per year. In 2007, Basin Electric prepared a forecast showing load and capability surpluses/deficits through the year 2021. The forecast predicted that by 2014, there will be a deficit of 800–900 MW for the eastern portion of its service area. The proposed Project's addition of 300 MW of generation will help meet Basin Electric's future energy requirements.

Basin Electric's proposed Project is subject to the jurisdiction of the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (SDPUC) which has regulatory authority for siting power plants and transmission lines within the State. Basin Electric will submit an application for an Energy Conversion Facility Permit and a Route Permit to the SDPUC. The SDPUC permits would authorize Basin Electric to construct the proposed Project under South Dakota rules and regulations.

After considering various ways to meet these future needs, Basin Electric identified construction of the proposed Project as its best course of action. This DEIS considered 17 alternatives to meet the future energy requirements of the eastern portion of its service area. These alternatives were evaluated in terms of cost-effectiveness, technical feasibility, and environmental factors.

The DEIS analyzes in detail the no action alternative and the proposed action (Deer Creek station and related facilities) at two separate locations: White Site I (Brookings County, T111N R48W, Section 25 NE Quarter) and White Site II (Brookings County, T111N R48W, Section 2 NW Quarter).

Because the proposed Project may involve action in floodplains or wetlands, this Notice of Availability also serves as a notice of proposed floodplain or wetland action. The DEIS includes a floodplain/wetland assessment and floodplain/wetland statement of findings following DOE regulations for compliance with floodplain and wetlands environmental review (10 CFR part 1022).

Any action by RUS related to the proposed Project will be subject to, and contingent upon, compliance with all relevant Federal, state and local environmental laws and regulations,

and completion of the environmental review requirements as prescribed in RUS's Environmental Policies and Procedures, 7 CFR part 1794, as amended.

Dated: February 19, 2010.

Nivin A. Elgohary,

Acting Assistant Administrator, Electric Programs, Rural Utilities Service.

[FR Doc. 2010-3986 Filed 2-25-10; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Housing Service

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for Loan Guarantees Under Section 538 Guaranteed Rural Rental Housing Program (GRRHP) for Fiscal Year 2010

AGENCY: Rural Housing Service, USDA.

ACTION: NOFA.

SUMMARY: This is a request for proposals for loan guarantees under the section 538 Guaranteed Rural Rental Housing Program (GRRHP) pursuant to 7 CFR 3565.4 for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010. FY 2010 funding for the section 538 program is \$129,130,434.78. Applicants will submit proposals in the form of "responses." Responses to this NOFA will be accepted until December 31, 2010, 12 p.m. Eastern Time. The commitment of program dollars will be made to applicants of selected responses that have fulfilled the necessary requirements for obligation. Expenses incurred in developing applications will be at the applicant's risk. The following paragraphs outline the timeframes, eligibility requirements, lender responsibilities, and the overall response and application processes.

The GRRHP operates under 7 CFR part 3565. The GRRHP Origination and Servicing Handbook (HB-1-3565) is available to provide lenders and the general public with guidance on program administration. HB-1-3565, which contains a copy of 7 CFR part 3565 in Appendix 1, can be found at: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/regs/hblist.html#hbw6>.

Eligible lenders are invited to submit responses for the new construction and the acquisition with rehabilitation of affordable rural rental housing.

Also eligible for guarantees is the revitalization, repair, and transfer (as stipulated in 7 CFR 3560.406) of existing direct section 515 housing (transfer costs are subject to Agency approval and must be an eligible use of loan proceeds as listed in 7 CFR 3565.205), and properties involved in the Agency's multi-family preservation

and revitalization (MPR) program. Equity payments, as stipulated in 7 CFR 3560.406, in connection with the transfer of existing direct section 515 housing, are an eligible use of guaranteed loan proceeds. In order to be considered, for a transfer, the direct section 515 housing and MPR projects must need repairs and undergo revitalization of a minimum of \$6,500 per unit.

The Agency will review responses submitted by eligible lenders, on the lender's letterhead, and signed by both the prospective borrower and lender. Although a complete application is not required in response to this NOFA, eligible lenders may submit a complete application concurrently with the response. Submitting a complete application will not have any effect on the respondent's NOFA response score. **DATES:** Eligible responses to this NOFA will be accepted per this guidance until December 31, 2010, 12 p.m. Eastern Time.

Selected responses that develop into complete applications and meet all Federal environmental requirements will receive commitments until all funds are expended. A notice will be placed in the **Federal Register** if all FY 2010 funds are committed prior to September 30, 2010. Responses to this NOFA that are received after September 30, 2010, and deemed eligible for further processing will be funded to the extent an appropriation act provides funding for GRRHP for FY 2011.

The Agency will select the responses that meet eligibility criteria and invite lenders to submit complete applications to the Agency. Those responses that are selected that subsequently submit complete applications that meet all program requirements and are received prior to or on April 1, 2010, but score less than 25 points, or score 25 points or more, but have a development cost ratio equal to or greater than 70 percent, may be selected for obligation after April 1, 2010, with the highest scoring responses receiving priority subject to availability of funds. After April 1, 2010, responses that develop into complete applications that meet all program requirements will be selected for further processing regardless of score, subject to the availability of funding.

The USDA Rural Development will prioritize the obligation requests received after April 1, 2010, using the highest score and the procedures outlined as follows. Once a complete application is received and approved, the Agency will obligate funds. Obligation requests submitted will be

accumulated, but not obligated throughout the week until midnight Eastern Time every Thursday. To the extent that funds remain available, the Agency will obligate the requests accumulated through the weekly request deadline of the previous week by the following Tuesday (*i.e.*, requests received from Friday, May 14, 2010, to Thursday, May 20, 2010, will be obligated by Tuesday, May 25, 2010). However, requests received prior to April 1, 2010, that are not eligible for obligation until after April 1, 2010, will be obligated no earlier than Tuesday, April 6, 2010. Funds will be obligated in scoring order, with the highest scoring requests being obligated first, until all funds are exhausted. In the event of a tie, priority will be given to the request for the project that: 1st—the highest percentage of leveraging (lowest Loan to Cost) and in the event there is still a tie;—is in the smaller rural community.

Eligible lenders mailing a response or application must provide sufficient time to permit delivery to the *submission address* on or before the closing deadline date and time. Acceptance by a U.S. Post Office or private mailer does not constitute delivery. Postage due responses and applications will not be accepted.

Submission Address: Eligible lenders will send responses to the contact person in the State Office where the project will be located.

USDA Rural Development State Offices, their addresses, telephone numbers, and person to contact follows: [this information may also be found at http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/recd_map.html]

Note: Telephone numbers listed are not toll-free.

Alabama State Office, 4121 Carmichael Road, Suite 601, Sterling Centre, Montgomery, AL 36106-3683, (334) 279-3440, TDD (334) 279-3495, Anne Chavers.

Alaska State Office, 800 West Evergreen, Suite 201, Palmer, AK 99645, (907) 761-7740, TDD (907) 761-8905, Deborah Davis.

Arizona State Office, 230 North First Ave., Suite 206, Phoenix, AZ 85003-1706, (602) 280-8768, TDD (602) 280-8706, Carol O. Torres.

Arkansas State Office, 700 W. Capitol Ave., Room 3416, Little Rock, AR 72201-3225, (501) 301-3250, TDD (501) 301-3279, Gregory Kemper.

California State Office, 430 G Street, #4169, Davis, CA 95616-4169, (530) 792-5813, TDD (530) 792-5848, Edgar Morales.

Colorado State Office, 655 Parfet Street, Room E100, Lakewood, CO 80215, (720) 544-2923, TDD (800) 659-2656, Mary Summerfield.

Connecticut, Served by Massachusetts State Office.