

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE****Rural Utilities Service****Dairyland Power Cooperative: CapX 2020 Hampton-Rochester-La Crosse Transmission Line Project****AGENCY:** Rural Utilities Service, USDA.**ACTION:** Notice of Availability of a Final Environmental Impact Statement.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) has prepared a Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to meet its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), RUS' implementing regulations, 7 CFR 1794, and other applicable environmental requirements related to providing financial assistance to Dairyland Power Cooperative (Dairyland) for its share in the construction of a proposed 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission line and associated infrastructure between Hampton, Minnesota and the La Crosse area in Wisconsin (the proposed project). Dairyland is participating in the proposed project with a number of other utilities (Applicants).

The purpose of the proposed project is to: (1) Improve community reliability of the transmission system in Rochester, Winona, La Crosse, and the surrounding areas, which include areas served by Dairyland; (2) improve the regional reliability of the transmission system; and (3) increase generation outlet capacity.

**DATES:** Written comments on this Final EIS will be accepted 30 days following the publication of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's notice of receipt of the Final EIS in the **Federal Register**.

**ADDRESSES:** A copy of the Final EIS may be viewed online at the following Web site: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/UWP-CapX2020-Hampton-Rochester-LaCrosse.html> and at the following repositories:

Alma Public Library, 312 North Main Street, Alma, WI 54610, Phone: 608-685-3823.

Arcadia Public Library, 406 E Main Street, Arcadia, WI 54612, Phone: 608-323-7505.

Campbell Library, 2219 Bainbridge Street, La Crosse, WI 54603, Phone: 608-783-0052.

Cannon Falls Library, 306 West Mill Street, Cannon Falls, MN 55009, Phone: 507-263-2804.

Dairyland Power Cooperative, 500 Old State Highway 35, Alma, WI 54610, Phone: 608-685-4497.

Galesville Public Library, 16787 South Main Street, Galesville, WI 54630, Phone: 608-582-2552.

Holmen Area Library, 103 State Street, Holmen, WI 54636, Phone: 608-526-4198.

Kenyon Public Library, 709 2nd Street, Kenyon, MN 55946, Phone: 507-789-6821.

Riverland Energy Cooperative, N28988 State Road 93, Arcadia, WI 54612, Phone: 608-323-3381.

Rochester Public Library, 101 2nd Street SE., Rochester, MN 55904, Phone: 507-328-2300.

Shirley M. Wright Memorial Library, 11455 Fremont Street, Trempealeau, WI 54661, Phone: 608-534-6197.

Tri-County Electric, 31110 Cooperative Way, Rushford, MN 55971, Phone: 507-864-7783.

La Crosse Public Library, 800 Main Street, La Crosse, WI 54601, Phone: 608-789-7100.

Onalaska Public Library, 741 Oak Avenue, South, Onalaska, WI 54650, Phone: 608-781-9568.

People's Cooperative Services, 3935 Hwy 14 E, Rochester, MN 55903, Phone: 507-288-4004.

Plainview Public Library, 345 1st Avenue Northwest, Plainview, MN 55964, Phone: 507-534-3425.

Van Horn Public Library, 115 SE 3rd Street, Pine Island, MN 55963, Phone: 507-356-8558.

Xcel Energy, 5050 Service Drive, Winona, MN 55987, Phone: 507-457-1236.

Xcel Energy, 1414 West Hamilton Avenue, Eau Claire, WI 54701, Phone: 715-839-2621.

Zumbrota Public Library, 100 West Avenue, Zumbrota, MN 55992, Phone: 507-732-5211.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** To obtain copies of the Final EIS or for further information, contact: Stephanie Strength, Environmental Protection Specialist, USDA, Rural Utilities Service, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Room 2244, Stop 1571, Washington, DC 20250-1571, or email [stephanie.strength@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:stephanie.strength@wdc.usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) are participating in the EIS as cooperating agencies, with RUS as the lead Federal agency. The Final EIS addresses the construction and operation of the proposed project, which, in addition to the 345-kV transmission line and associated infrastructure, includes 161-kV transmission lines in the vicinity of Rochester, Minnesota; construction of two new and expansion of three

substations, with a total transmission line length of approximately 171 miles. Counties through which the proposed project may pass include Dakota, Goodhue, Wabasha, and Olmsted in Minnesota, and La Crosse, Trempealeau, and Buffalo in Wisconsin. Among the alternatives addressed in the Final EIS is the No Action alternative, under which the proposed project would not be undertaken. Additional alternatives addressed in the EIS include route alternatives prepared for the proposed project by the states of Minnesota and Wisconsin.

RUS has carefully studied public health and safety, environmental impacts, and engineering aspects of the proposed project. RUS used input provided by government agencies, private organizations, and the public in the preparation of the Final EIS. RUS has considered all comments received on the Draft EIS, and revised the EIS accordingly. Following the 30-day comment period for the Final EIS, RUS will prepare a Record of Decision (ROD). A notice announcing the availability of the ROD will be published in the **Federal Register**.

In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulation, "Protection of Historic Properties" (36 CFR 800) and as part of its broad environmental review process, RUS must take into account the effect of the proposed project on historic properties. Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3), RUS is using its procedures for public involvement under NEPA to meet its responsibilities to solicit and consider the views of the public during Section 106 review. Any party wishing to participate more directly with RUS as a "consulting party" in Section 106 review may submit a written request to the RUS contact provided in this notice.

The proposed project involves unavoidable impacts to wetlands and floodplains; this Notice of Availability also serves as a statement of no practicable alternatives to impacts on wetlands and floodplains, in accordance with Executive Orders 11990 and 11988, respectively (see Final EIS Sections 3.2 and 3.5).

Any final 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 promulgated in RUS' Environmental Policies and Procedures (7 CFR 1794).

Dated: July 5, 2012.

**James R. Newby,**

*Chief of Staff, Rural Utilities Service.*

[FR Doc. 2012-17127 Filed 7-12-12; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Commerce will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

*Agency:* National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

*Title:* Gear-Marking Requirement for Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan.

*OMB Control Number:* 0648-0364.

*Form Number(s):* NA.

*Type of Request:* Regular submission (extension of a current information collection).

*Number of Respondents:* 4,270.

*Average Hours per Response:* 5 minutes.

*Burden Hours:* 10,235.

*Needs and Uses:* This request is for extension of a current information collection.

The purpose of this collection of information is to enable National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to reduce the serious injury and mortality of large whales, especially right whales, due to incidental entanglement in the United States (U.S.) commercial fishing gear. Any persons setting trap/pot or gillnet gear in some areas of the Atlantic Ocean are required to paint or otherwise mark their gear with one or two color codes, designating the type of gear and area where the gear is set. The surface buoys of this gear need to be marked to identify the vessel or fishery. These marking requirements apply in the various management areas under the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP), developed under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

The goals of this collection of information are to obtain more information on where large whales are being entangled and on what type of gear is responsible for the entanglement. This information will allow NMFS to focus further risk reduction measures in certain areas or fisheries, where needed, to meet the goals of the ALWTRP. Also, fisheries observers can provide information to managers on whether

regulations need to be modified to address compliance or safety issues.

*Affected Public:* Business or other for-profit organizations.

*Frequency:* Annually.

*Respondent's Obligation:* Mandatory.

*OMB Desk Officer:*

*OIRA\_Submission@omb.eop.gov.*

Copies of the above information collection proposal can be obtained by calling or writing Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, (202) 482-0336, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at *Jjessup@doc.gov*).

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to

*OIRA\_Submission@omb.eop.gov.*

Dated: July 10, 2012.

**Gwellnar Banks,**

*Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.*

[FR Doc. 2012-17101 Filed 7-12-12; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### U.S. Census Bureau

#### Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; 2013 Alternative Contact Strategy Test

**AGENCY:** U.S. Census Bureau, Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

**DATES:** To ensure consideration, written comments must be submitted on or before September 11, 2012.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at *jjessup@doc.gov*).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should

be directed to Amy O'Hara, Census Bureau, CARRA Room 6H103, Washington, DC 20233, 301-763-5757 (or via the Internet at *amy.b.ohara@census.gov*).

## SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

### I. Abstract

Decennial censuses have relied on primarily two modes of data collection, mail and in person interview. The Census Bureau seeks to explore alternative modes of contact and collection in an effort to reduce costs and increase self-response. This research will be conducted through a series of projects and tests throughout the decade. Contact involving cellular telephone numbers, text messages, and email are under investigation, extending the Census Bureau's existing knowledge and use of mail, landline telephone, and internet modes. The 2013 Alternative Contact Strategy Test is the first test to support this research.

The Census Bureau will test alternate contact information through a self-response test. Telephone numbers obtained from commercial vendors will be used to contact 40,000 households. Information on the household's communication and contact modes will be collected. The information will be analyzed to inform future contact strategies for 2020 Research and Testing Project tests and design options for the 2020 Census.

### II. Method of Collection

The Census Bureau will conduct the 2013 Alternative Contact Strategy Test with a national sample of 40,000 households, utilizing Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews. The Census Bureau estimates the response rate to be 65 percent. Interviewers will call households to confirm and collect contact information such as address, telephone, cell, and email.

The Census Bureau plans to conduct the 2013 Alternative Contact Strategy Test data collection in early winter of 2013. The specific data collection start and end dates along with the duration of the data collection period are still under consideration. The Census Bureau, however, expects that the duration of the data collection period will be about a month.

### III. Data

*OMB Control Number:* None.

*Form Number:* To be determined.

*Type of Review:* Regular submission.

*Affected Public:* Individuals or Households.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 40,000.