

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the authority of the plant pest provisions of the Plant Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 7701 *et seq.*), the regulations in 7 CFR part 340, “Introduction of Organisms and Products Altered or Produced Through Genetic Engineering Which Are Plant Pests or Which There Is Reason to Believe Are Plant Pests,” regulate, among other things, the introduction (importation, interstate movement, or release into the environment) of organisms and products altered or produced through genetic engineering that are plant pests or that there is reason to believe are plant pests. Such genetically engineered (GE) organisms and products are considered “regulated articles.”

The regulations in § 340.6(a) provide that any person may submit a petition to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) seeking a determination that an article should not be regulated under 7 CFR part 340. Paragraphs (b) and (c) of § 340.6 describe the form that a petition for a determination of nonregulated status must take and the information that must be included in the petition.

APHIS has received a petition (APHIS Petition Number 17–138–01p) from Bayer CropScience LP of Research Triangle Park, NC (Bayer), seeking a determination of nonregulated status of cotton (*Gossypium* spp.) designated as event GHB811, which has been genetically engineered for dual resistance to the herbicides glyphosate and isoxaflutole. The Bayer petition states that information collected during field trials and laboratory analyses indicates that GHB811 cotton is not likely to be a plant pest and therefore should not be a regulated article under APHIS’ regulations in 7 CFR part 340.

As described in the petition, GHB811 cotton was developed through agrobacterium-mediated transformation using the vector pTSIH09 containing hppdPfw336–1Pa and 2mepsps expression cassettes. The regulatory sequences used in this construct are derived from common plants or plant pathogens that are routinely used in plant biotechnology and have a history of safe use. GHB811 cotton is currently regulated under 7 CFR part 340. Interstate movements and field tests of GHB811 cotton have been conducted under notifications acknowledged by APHIS.

Field tests conducted under APHIS oversight allowed for evaluation in a natural agricultural setting while imposing measures to minimize the risk of persistence in the environment after completion of the tests. Data are gathered on multiple parameters and

used by the applicant to evaluate agronomic characteristics and product performance. These and other data are used by APHIS to determine if the new variety poses a plant pest risk.

Paragraph (d) of § 340.6 provides that APHIS will publish a notice in the **Federal Register** providing 60 days for public comment for petitions for a determination of nonregulated status. On March 6, 2012, we published in the **Federal Register** (77 FR 13258–13260, Docket No. APHIS–2011–0129) a notice¹ describing our process for soliciting public comment when considering petitions for determinations of nonregulated status for GE organisms. In that notice we indicated that APHIS would accept written comments regarding a petition once APHIS deemed it complete.

In accordance with § 340.6(d) of the regulations and our process for soliciting public input when considering petitions for determinations of nonregulated status for GE organisms, we are publishing this notice to inform the public that APHIS will accept written comments regarding the petition for a determination of nonregulated status from interested or affected persons for a period of 60 days from the date of this notice. The petition is available for public review and comment, and copies are available as indicated under **ADDRESSES** and **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** above.

We are interested in receiving comments regarding potential environmental and interrelated economic issues and impacts that APHIS may determine should be considered in our evaluation of the petition. We are particularly interested in receiving comments regarding biological, cultural, or ecological issues, and we encourage the submission of scientific data, studies, or research to support your comments.

After the comment period closes, APHIS will review all written comments received during the comment period and any other relevant information. Any substantive issues identified by APHIS based on our review of the petition and our evaluation and analysis of comments will be considered in the development of our decisionmaking documents. As part of our decisionmaking process regarding a GE organism’s regulatory status, APHIS prepares a plant pest risk assessment to assess its plant pest risk and the appropriate environmental documentation—either an

environmental assessment (EA) or an environmental impact statement (EIS)—in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), to provide the Agency with a review and analysis of any potential environmental impacts associated with the petition request. For petitions for which APHIS prepares an EA, APHIS will follow our published process for soliciting public comment (see footnote 1) and publish a separate notice in the **Federal Register** announcing the availability of APHIS’ EA and plant pest risk assessment.

Should APHIS determine that an EIS is necessary, APHIS will complete the NEPA EIS process in accordance with Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR part 1500–1508) and APHIS’ NEPA implementing regulations (7 CFR part 372).

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 7701–7772 and 7781–7786; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.3.

Done in Washington, DC, this 23rd day of October 2017.

Michael C. Gregoire,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 2017–23401 Filed 10–26–17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

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 the following information collection for which RUS intends to request approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by December 26, 2017.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Thomas P. Dickson, Acting Director, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, 1400 Independence Ave. SW., STOP 1522, Room 5164, South Building, Washington, DC 20250–1522. Telephone: (202) 690–4492. Fax: (202) 720–8435 or email Thomas.Dickson@wdc.usda.gov

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) regulation (5 CFR part 1320) implementing provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub.

¹To view the notice, go to <http://www.regulations.gov/#/docketDetail;D=APHIS-2011-0129>.

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 revision.

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 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 respondents, 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, Rural Utilities Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, STOP 1522, 1400 Independence Ave. SW., Washington, DC 20250–1522. Telephone: (202) 690–1078, Fax: (202) 720–8435 or email: Thomas.Dickson@wdc.usda.gov.

Title: Water and Waste Loan and Grant Program.

OMB Control Number: 0572–0121.

Type of Request: Revision of a currently approved collection.

Abstract: USDA Rural Development, through the Rural Utilities Service, is authorized by Section 306 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926) to make loans to public agencies, nonprofit corporations, and Indian Tribes to fund water and waste disposal projects serving the most financially needy rural communities through the Water and Waste Disposal loan and grant program. Financial assistance should result in reasonable user costs for rural residents, rural businesses, and other rural users. The program is limited to rural areas and small towns with a population of 10,000 or less. The Water and Waste Loan and Grant Program is administered through 7 CFR part 1780. The items covered by this collection include forms and related documentation to support a loan application.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 2.5 hours per response.

Respondents: Not-for-profit institutions; State, Local or Tribal Government.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 789.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 44,323 hours.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from MaryPat Daskal, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, at (202) 720–7853, Fax: (202) 720–8435 or email: MaryPat.Daskal@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: October 18, 2017.

Christopher A. McLean,

Acting Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.

[FR Doc. 2017–23359 Filed 10–26–17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request; Complaint of Employment Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation Against the Department of Commerce

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: Office of the Secretary, Office of Civil Rights, Commerce.

Title: Complaint of Employment Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation against the Department of Commerce.

OMB Control Number: 0690–0024.

Form Number(s): CD–545.

Type of Request: Regular submission (extension of a currently approved information collection).

Burden Hours: 10.

Number of Respondents: 20.

Average Hours per Response: 30 minutes.

Needs and Use: Pursuant to Executive Order 11478 and Department of Commerce Administrative Order (DAO) 215–11, an employee or applicant for employment with the Department of Commerce who alleges that he or she has been subjected to discriminatory treatment based on sexual orientation by the Department of Commerce or one of its sub-agencies, must submit a signed statement that is sufficiently precise to identify the actions or practices that

form the basis of the complaint. Through use of this standardized form, the Office of Civil Rights proposes to collect the information required by the Executive Order and DAO in a uniform manner that will increase the efficiency of complaint processing and trend analyses of complaint activity.

The DOC received no comments in response to the 60-day notice published in the **Federal Register** on April 14, 2017 (82 FR 17968).

Affected Public: Individuals or households.

Frequency: On occasion.

Respondent's Obligation: Voluntary.

This information collection request may be viewed at www.reginfo.gov. Follow the instructions to view Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to OIRA_Submission@omb.emp.gov or faxed to (202) 395–5806.

Sheleen Dumas,

Departmental PRA Lead, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 2017–23442 Filed 10–26–17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-BP-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Office of the Secretary

Office of Civil Rights; Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request; Complaint of Employment Discrimination Against the Department of Commerce

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: Office of the Secretary, Office of Civil Rights, Commerce.

Title: Complaint of Employment Discrimination against the Department of Commerce.

OMB Control Number: 0690–0015.

Form Number(s): CD–498, 498–A.

Type of Request: Regular (extension of a currently approved information collection).

Number of Respondents: 700.

Average Hours per Response: 350.

Burden Hours: 30 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$0.

Needs and Uses: This request is for an extension of a currently approved