

and update agency policies and procedures to reflect new authorities and more closely align with current and future forest restoration needs. An analysis of existing agency policy in Forest Service Handbooks and Manuals was conducted to identify revisions needed to support this initiative.

The proposed directives update Forest Service Handbook 2409.12, "Timber Cruising," Chapters 30, 40, 60, and 70, and Forest Service Handbook 2409.15, "Timber Sale Administration," Chapters 20, 40, and 60. These directives set forth policy, responsibilities, and direction for several aspects of management and move the agency closer to its goal of providing more current direction.

The Forest Service has determined that the changes to the manual and handbook formulate standards, criteria, or guidelines applicable to a Forest Service program and it is therefore publishing the proposed directives for public comment in accordance with 36 CFR part 216. The Forest Service is seeking public comment on the proposed directives, including the sufficiency of the proposed directives in meeting the stated objectives, ways to enhance the utility and clarity of information within the direction, or ways to streamline processes outlined.

Forest Service National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) procedures exclude from documentation in an environmental assessment or impact statement "rules, regulations, or policies to establish service-wide administrative procedures, program processes, or instructions" (36 CFR 220.6(d)(2)). The Agency's conclusion is that these proposed directives fall within this category of actions and that no extraordinary circumstances exist as currently defined that require preparation of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement.

After the public comment period closes, the Forest Service will consider timely comments that are within the scope of the proposed directive in the development of the final directive. A notice of the final directive, including a response to timely comments, will be posted on the Forest Service's web page at <https://www.fs.fed.us/about-agency/regulations-policies/comment-on-directives>.

Dated: July 27, 2022.

**Tina Johna Terrell,**

*Associate Deputy Chief, National Forest System.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Natural Resources Conservation Service

[Docket No. NRCS-2022-0009]

#### Notice of Availability of the Draft Programmatic Environmental Assessment for the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities Funding Opportunity

**AGENCY:** Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Department of Agriculture (USDA).

**ACTION:** Notice of availability and finding of no significant impact.

**SUMMARY:** NRCS is announcing the draft Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities funding opportunity is available for public review and comment.

**DATES:** We will consider comments that we receive by August 18, 2022.

**ADDRESSES:** We invite you to submit comments on the PEA and FONSI. You may submit comments:

- By going through the Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and search for Docket ID NRCS-22-0009. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

All comments will be posted without change and will be publicly available on [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov).

A copy of the draft PEA and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) may be obtained from:

- [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) search for Docket ID NRCS-22-0009, supporting documents;
- <https://www.usda.gov/climate-solutions/climate-smart-commodities>; or
- Email [scott.blackburn@usda.gov](mailto:scott.blackburn@usda.gov) with "Request for PEA" in the subject line.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Scott Blackburn; telephone: (202) 360-8195; or email: [scott.blackburn@usda.gov](mailto:scott.blackburn@usda.gov). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication should contact the USDA Target Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities is a voluntary USDA funding opportunity with funding made available through NRCS for partnerships to support the production and marketing of climate-smart commodities. Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities is designed to use the funds and authorities of the

Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) (15 U.S.C. 714-714f) to support the development of markets and production of agricultural commodities using agricultural (farming, ranching, or forestry) production practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions or sequester carbon. NRCS is administering the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities on behalf of CCC.

The environmental impacts of the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities funding opportunity have been considered in a manner consistent with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321-4347), the regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR parts 1500-1508), and the NRCS regulations for compliance with NEPA (7 CFR part 650). A draft PEA has been prepared and based on this analysis, NRCS has preliminarily determined there will not be a significant impact to the human environment. As a result, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has not been initiated (40 CFR 1501.6).

In efforts to diligently involve the public, NRCS is making the draft EA and FONSI available for review and comment for 14 calendar days from the date of publication of this document in the **Federal Register**. NRCS will consider this input and determine whether there is any new information provided relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed action or its impacts that warrant supplementing or revising the draft PEA and FONSI. After the comment period, NRCS will issue either a Final EA and FONSI, or it will issue a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

**Terry Cosby,**

*Chief, Natural Resources Conservation Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Utilities Service

[Docket Number: RUS-22-Telecom-0010]

#### Rural eConnectivity Program

**AGENCY:** Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Funding Opportunity Announcement.

**SUMMARY:** The Rural Utilities Service, a Rural Development agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), hereinafter referred to as "RUS" or "the Agency" is issuing a