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grant agreement and, as applicable, the provisions of 7 CFR parts 3015, 3016 and 3017, or their successors.

§ 1709.14 Inspections.

The grantee will permit periodic inspection of the grant project operations by a representative of the Agency.

§ 1709.15 Grant closeout.

Grant closeout is when all required work is completed, administrative actions relating to the completion of work and expenditure of funds have been accomplished, the final project report has been submitted and found acceptable by RUS and RUS accepts final expenditure information. No monitoring action by RUS of the grantee is required after grant closeout. However, grantees remain responsible in accordance with the terms of the grant agreement for compliance with conditions on property acquired or derived through grant funds.

§ 1709.16 Performance reviews.

Each grant agreement shall include performance criteria and RUS will regularly evaluate the progress and performance of grantee according to such criteria. If the grantee does not comply with or does not meet the performance criteria set out in the grant agreement, the Administrator may require amendment of the grant agreement, or may suspend or terminate the grant pursuant to 7 CFR 2015, subpart N.

§ 1709.17 Environmental review.

(a) All grants made under this subpart are subject to the requirements of 7 CFR part 1794 or its successor.

(b) Applicants must address environmental aspects of their projects in the grant application in sufficient detail to allow the Agency to categorize the project for purposes of compliance with environmental review requirements. The grant announcement will establish the form and content of the environmental information required for the application.

(c) Projects that are selected for grant awards by the Administrator will be reviewed by the Agency under 7 CFR part 1794 prior to final award approval. The Agency may require the selected

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applicant to submit additional information, including an environmental report, environmental assessment, or environmental impact statement, as may be required, concerning the proposed project in order to complete the required reviews and to develop any project-specific conditions for the final grant agreement.

§ 1709.18 Civil rights.

This program will be administered in accordance with applicable Federal Civil Rights Law. All grants made under this subpart are subject to the requirements of title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin. In addition, all grants made under this subpart are subject to the requirements of section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability; the requirements of the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; and title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by private entities in places of public accommodations. Grantees are required to comply with certain regulations on nondiscrimination in program services and benefits and on equal employment opportunity including 7 CFR parts 15 and 15b; and 45 CFR part 90, as applicable.

§ 1709.19 Other USDA regulations.

The grant programs under this part are subject to the provisions of other departmental regulations, including but not limited to the following departmental regulations, or their successors, as applicable:

(a) 7 CFR part 3015, Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations;

(b) 7 CFR part 3016, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments;

(c) 7 CFR part 3017, Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) and Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Grants);

(d) 7 CFR part 3018, New Restrictions on Lobbying;

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(e) 7 CFR part 3019, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals and Other Non-profit Organizations; and

(f) 7 CFR part 3052, Audits of States, Local Governments and Non-profit Organizations.

§ 1709.20 Member delegate clause.

Each grant agreement under this part shall provide that no member of Congress shall be admitted to any share or part of a grant program or any benefit that may arise there from, but this provision shall not be construed to bar as a contractor under a grant a publicly held corporation whose ownership might include a member of Congress.

§ 1709.21 Audit requirements.

The grantee shall provide the Agency with an audit for each year, beginning with the year in which a portion of the financial assistance is expended, in accordance with the following:

(a) If the grantee is a for-profit entity, an RUS Electric or Telecommunication borrower or any other entity not covered by paragraph (b) of this section, the recipient shall provide an independent audit report in accordance with 7 CFR part 1773, "Policy on Audits of RUS Borrowers" and the grant agreement.

(b) If the grantee is a State or local government, or a non-profit corporation (other than an RUS Electric or Telecommunication Borrower), the recipient shall provide an audit in accordance with 7 CFR part 3052.

§ 1709.22 Project changes.

The Grantee shall obtain prior written approval from the Agency for any change to the scope or objectives of the approved grant project.

§§ 1709.23–1709.99 [Reserved]

§ 1709.100 OMB control number.

The information collection requirements in this part are approved by the Office of Management and Budget and assigned OMB control number 0572–0136.

Subpart B—RUS High Energy Cost Grant Program

§ 1709.101 Purpose.

This subpart establishes policies and procedures for the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) High Energy Cost Grant Program under section 19(a)(1) of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, as amended (7 U.S.C. 918a(a)(1)). The purpose of this grant program is to assure access to adequate and reliable energy services for persons in extremely high energy cost communities by providing financial assistance to acquire, construct, extend, upgrade, and otherwise improve energy generation, transmission, or distribution facilities serving the community.

§ 1709.102 Policy.

(a) All high energy cost grants will be awarded competitively subject to the limited exceptions in 7 CFR 3015.158(d).

(b) RUS may give priority consideration to projects that benefit smaller rural communities, communities experiencing economic hardship, projects that extend service to households that lack reliable centralized or commercial energy services, and projects that correct imminent hazards to public safety, welfare, the environment or critical community energy facilities. RUS may also give priority to projects that are coordinated with State rural development initiatives or that serve a Federally-identified Empowerment Zone or Enterprise Community (EZ/EC) or a USDA-identified "Champion Community." Priority consideration will be provided through the award of additional points under the project selection criteria as specified in the grant announcement.

§§ 1709.103–1709.105 [Reserved]

§ 1709.106 Eligible applicants.

(a) Eligible applicants for grants to fund projects serving eligible extremely high energy cost communities include Persons, States, political subdivisions of States, and other entities organized under the laws of States.

(b) Eligible applicants may be for-profit or non-profit business entities