

the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

### Agricultural Marketing Service

*Title:* Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program (LFS).  
*OMB Control Number:* 0581-0334.

*Summary of Collection:* The Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621 et. seq.), as amended, directs and authorizes USDA to administer Federal cooperative agreements programs. AMS cooperative agreement programs are administered according to the OMB Guidance for Grants and Cooperative Agreements under the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR part 200) (85 FR 49506; December 13, 2020). The information collection requirements in this emergency request are needed for AMS to administer a new noncompetitive cooperative agreement program, in accordance with section 5(c) of the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (15 U.S.C. 714c(c)), for the purchase of local foods for distribution to schools.

*Need and Use of The Information:* The information collected is used only by authorized representatives of USDA, AMS, Commodity Procurement Program to certify that cooperative agreement participants are complying with applicable program regulations, and the data collected is the minimum information necessary to effectively carry out the program requirements.

*Description of Respondents:* State, Local, and Tribal Governments.

*Number of Respondents:* 50.

*Frequency of Responses:* Reporting: Annually.

*Total Burden Hours:* 3,154.

**Levi S. Harrell,**

*Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.*

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**BILLING CODE 3410-02-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### National Institute of Food and Agriculture

#### Notice of Intent To Extend and Revise Currently Approved Information Collection

**AGENCY:** National Institute of Food and Agriculture, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice and request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 and

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations this notice announces the National Institute of Food and Agriculture's (NIFA) intention to extend and revise a previously approved information collection, entitled *NIFA Proposal Review Process*. This information collection replaces an existing information collection, also entitled *NIFA Proposal Review Process*.

**DATES:** Written comments on this notice must be received by July 25, 2022 to be assured of consideration. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments through the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

*Instructions:* All comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Robert Martin, 202-445-5388,  
[Robert.martin3@usda.gov](mailto:Robert.martin3@usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*Title of Collection:* NIFA Proposal Review Process.

*OMB Control Number:* 0524-0041.

*Expiration Date of Current Approval:* 8/31/2022.

*Type of Request:* Notice of intent to extend and revise a currently approved information collection. The burden for this collection remains unchanged.

NIFA is requesting a three-year extension for the current collection entitled "NIFA Proposal Review Process." NIFA is also proposing to update the collection so that the previously approved Reviewer Questionnaire, as well as the Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Certification Form are both available on NIFA's Peer Review System (PRS) web-based portal. Additionally, NIFA is proposing some minor updates to the wording of questions in the Reviewer Questionnaire in order to ensure that peer review panels have the required scientific and technical expertise, comprised of research, education, extension, and other subject matter experts as appropriate, while remaining inclusive, representative, and diverse. Furthermore, the data collected through this questionnaire will ensure that NIFA is compliant in its Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) practices.

*Abstract:* The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is responsible for performing a review of proposals submitted to NIFA competitive award programs in accordance with section 103(a) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998, 7 U.S.C.

7613(a). Reviews are undertaken to ensure that projects supported by NIFA are of high quality, and are consistent with the goals and requirements of the funding program.

Proposals submitted to NIFA undergo a programmatic evaluation to determine worthiness of Federal support. The evaluations consist of a peer panel review and may also entail an assessment by Federal employees and electronically submitted (ad-hoc) reviews in the Peer Review System.

The information collected from the evaluations is used to support NIFA grant programs. NIFA uses the results of the proposal evaluation to determine whether a proposal should be declined or recommended for award. When NIFA has rendered a decision, copies of reviews, excluding the names of the reviewers, and summaries of review panel deliberations, if any, are provided to the submitting Project Director.

Given the highly technical nature of many of these proposals, the quality of the peer review greatly depends on the appropriate matching of the subject matter of the proposal with the scientific and technical expertise of the potential reviewer. In order to obtain this information, an electronic questionnaire is used to collect information about potential panel and ad-hoc reviewers. If the reviewer is already in the NIFA database, the questionnaire asks potential reviewers to update their basic biographical information including address, contact information, professional expertise, and their availability to review for NIFA in the future. If the reviewer is new, they are prompted to complete the questionnaire. This information has been invaluable in the NIFA review process, which has been recognized by the grantee and grantor community for its quality.

The applications and associated materials made available to reviewers, as well as the discussions that take place during panel review meetings are strictly confidential and are not to be disclosed to or discussed with anyone who has not been officially designated to participate in the review process. While each panelist certifies at the time of preparing a review they do not have a conflict-of-interest with a particular application and will maintain its confidentiality in the Peer Review System, a certification of their intent at the time of the panel review proceedings is collected to emphasize and reinforce confidentiality not only of applications and reviews but also panel discussions. On the Conflict-of-Interest and Confidentiality Certification Form, the panelist affirms they understand the

conflict-of-interest guidelines and will not be involved in the review of the application(s) where a conflict exists. The panelist also affirms their intent to maintain the confidentiality of the panel process and not disclose to another individual any information related to the peer review or use any information for personal benefit.

*Estimate of Burden:* NIFA estimates that anywhere from one hour to twenty hours may be required to review a proposal. It is estimated that approximately five hours are required to review an average proposal. Each proposal receives an average of four reviews, accounting for an annual burden of 20 hours. NIFA estimates it receives 4,600 competitive applications each year. The total annual burden on reviewers is 92,000 hours. NIFA estimates that the potential reviewer questionnaire takes an estimated 10 minutes to complete. The database consists of approximately 50,000 reviewers. The total annual burden of questionnaire is 8,330 hours. NIFA estimates that the potential Conflict-of-Interest and Confidentiality Certification Form takes an estimated 10 minutes to complete. The agency has approximately 1,000 panelists each year. The total annual burden of the certification form is 167 hours. The total annual burden of the component of the entire review process is 100,497 hours.

*Comments:* 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 proposed collection of information; (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 those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request to OMB for approval. All comments will become a matter of public record.

*Obtaining a Copy of the Information Collection:* A copy of the information collection and related instructions may be obtained free of charge by contacting Robert Martin as directed above.

Done at Washington, DC, this day of May 13, 2022.

**Dionne Toombs,**

*Acting Director, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture.*

[FR Doc. 2022-11281 Filed 5-25-22; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Natural Resources Conservation Service

[Docket No. NRCS-2020-0009]

#### Final Guidance for Identification of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land (NIPF)

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

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** On December 17, 2020, NRCS published a notice of proposed guidance for NIPF identification and provided a 30-day public comment period for input. NRCS received 139 comments from different members of the public, including Indian Tribes, State agencies, non-governmental organizations, and individuals. Several of these comments provided coordinated input from many organizations, including one letter that provided input from over 60 organizations. This document responds to comments received during the public comment period, which closed on January 19, 2021, and, for the reasons stated in this document, identifies that NRCS will not adopt the guidance it proposed in its December 2020 notice.

**APPLICABLE DATE:** May 26, 2022.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Martha Joseph, telephone: (814) 203-5562; email: [martha.joseph@usda.gov](mailto:martha.joseph@usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

#### Background

NRCS is one of the USDA agencies that identifies NIPF for program enrollment. In particular, NRCS identifies NIPF for enrollment in the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), and the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP).

Identification for NIPF enrollment under these NRCS programs is based on section 1201(a)(18) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (the 1985 Farm Bill) (16 U.S.C. 3801), which defines NIPF as rural land, as determined by the Secretary, that:

- Has existing tree cover or is suitable for growing trees; and
- Is owned by any nonindustrial private individual, group, association, corporation, Indian Tribe, or other private legal entity that has definitive decision-making authority over the land.

Since the NIPF definition was first established several decades ago, changes have occurred in the forestry industry. In particular, foresters would identify the "industrial" status of a parcel of land by whether or not a company was vertically integrated (for example, the landowner owned both forestland and primary wood processing facilities). However, the ability to distinguish whether a particular parcel of land is industrial or nonindustrial became complicated when companies started to divest either their land or mills at the turn of the 21st century and timber investment management organizations (TIMOs) and real estate investment trusts (REITs) reflected an increasing amount of industrial forest land ownership.

To address these changes in the forestry industry, NRCS described in its December 2020 notice, proposed guidance that would be used to identify NIPF as defined by the 1985 Farm Bill and NRCS program regulations. NRCS was not re-defining NIPF but was providing guidelines for helping its staff identify the various components of the statutory definition. Referencing criteria used by other conservation agencies (the USDA Forest Service and Farm Service Agency), NRCS proposed to clarify how to identify a nonindustrial private landowner if they:

(1)(i) Own fewer than 45,000 acres of forest land in the United States; and

(ii) Do not own or operate an industrial mill for the primary processing of raw wood products as determined by NRCS in consultation with the State Technical Committee; or

(2) Meet criteria established for a nonindustrial private landowner by NRCS in a State in consultation with the State Technical Committee.

NRCS received a total of 91 letters or emails containing 139 comments. The comments were from forestry or agricultural stakeholders, conservation organizations, individuals, Tribal entities, other organizations, and governmental agencies. One of the letters was signed by over 60 organizations. NRCS review of the comments revealed a clear stakeholder preference that NRCS continue to use the existing programmatic framework until Congress can address how the changes in the forestry industry should