



On December 16, 2014, President Barack Obama signed into law H.R. 83, the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Act), which provides fiscal year 2015 full-year appropriations through September 30, 2015, for all agencies except the Department of Homeland Security. With the signing of this Act, Rural Development will implement the eligibility maps in accordance with the Agricultural Act of 2014, Pub. L. 113-79 (“Farm Bill”) on February 2, 2015, with the following exceptions:

- Because of the continuing re-examination of the “rural in character” policy, RD will continue its current policy regarding “rural in character” for the purposes of determine eligible rural areas.
- The Act further provides that applicants in communities that have a current rural area waiver under section 541 of the Housing Act of 1949 (42 U.S.C. 1490q) shall be treated as living in a rural area for purposes of section 502 guaranteed loans. This means that the area of Tuscaloosa, Alabama will continue to be considered rural through September 30, 2015 for 502 guaranteed loans, even if their disaster waiver expires during the year.

While the reclassifications will largely involve areas going from rural to non-rural, areas that should have been made eligible during Phase 1 on May 6, 2014, but were missed will now receive the proper classification.

Thus, the ineligible area maps based on the above classifications will be effective on February 2, 2015. The changes will be those already published on the “Future Eligible Areas” maps posted on the [Eligibility Website](http://eligibility.sc.egov.usda.gov/eligibility/welcomeAction.do); <http://eligibility.sc.egov.usda.gov/eligibility/welcomeAction.do>