

News Briefs

Renewable Energy Expo

USDA Rural Development will participate in the West Coast Energy Management Expo & Conference, June 20-21, 2018, at Washington State Convention Center in Seattle, Wash. EMC is the largest energy conference and technology expo held on the U.S. West Coast, bringing together the top experts in all areas of the field to help you set a clear, optimum path to energy efficiency, facility optimization and sustainability. For conference info, visit www.energyevent.com.

Rural Eligibility Change

Changes to Eligible Areas for USDA Rural Development Housing Programs for some counties in Washington State became effective on June 4, 2018. Areas that are no longer considered rural or rural in character and that will not be eligible for the USDA Rural Housing Programs can be viewed at: <https://eligibility.sc.egov.usda.gov/eligibility/welcomeAction.do> by clicking on either "Single Family Housing Guaranteed", "Single Family Housing Direct" or "Multi-Family Housing."



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Washington State Rural Developments

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Washington State



Rural Developments

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USDA is launching a pilot program to increase homeownership opportunities on Tribal lands

USDA is launching a pilot program to increase homeownership opportunities on Tribal lands.

"To thrive, rural America needs a creative and forward-thinking partner in USDA," said Anne Hazlett, Assistant to the Secretary. "Under Secretary Perdue's leadership, USDA is harnessing innovation so we can be a better, more effective partner to Tribal communities in building their futures."

USDA is partnering with two Native Community Development Financial Institutions (NCDIFs) with extensive experience working in Native American communities. USDA will loan \$800,000 each to Mazaska Owecaso Otipit Financial and to Four Bands Community Fund. The organizations will relend the money and service the loans to eligible homebuyers for mortgages on South Dakota and some North Dakota Tribal trust lands. Each NCDIF will contribute \$200,000 for mortgages in the pilot.



USDA has helped nearly 4 million rural residents purchase homes since passage of the Housing Act of 1949. However, homeownership rates on Tribal lands historically have been significantly lower than those for other communities.

The pilot program, which ultimately has the potential of benefiting all tribes, will begin this summer and will be overseen by USDA Rural Development's State Office in South Dakota.

USDA Seeking Applications for REDLG Program

USDA is seeking applications for the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG) Programs for Fiscal Year 2018. The REDLG Program provides funding for rural projects through local utility organizations. USDA provides zero-interest loans to local utilities which they, in turn, pass through to local businesses (ultimate recipients) for projects that will create and retain employment in rural areas. The ultimate recipients repay the lending utility directly. The utility is responsible for repayment to USDA.

USDA provides grants to local utility organizations which use the funding to establish revolving loan funds (RLF). Loans are made from the revolving loan funds to projects that will create or retain rural jobs. When the revolving loan fund is terminated, the grant is repaid to USDA.

To be eligible to apply, applicants must be:

- A former Rural Utilities Service borrower who borrowed, repaid or pre-paid an insured, direct, or guaranteed loan
- Nonprofit utilities that are eligible to receive assistance from the Rural Development Electric or Telecommunication Programs; or
- Current Rural Development Electric or Telecommunication Programs borrowers

This notice is being issued in order to allow applicants sufficient time to leverage financing, prepare and submit their applications, and give the Agency time to process applications within FY 2018.

For more information, please contact Cindy Mason at (202) 690-1433; cindy.mason@wdc.usda.gov.

RCDI Program

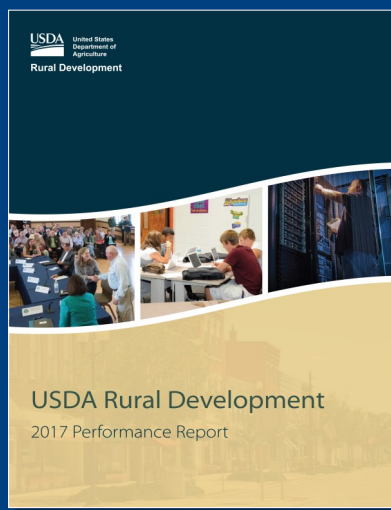
USDA is accepting applications under the Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI) program. Grants are made to qualified intermediary organizations that will provide financial and technical assistance to recipients to develop their capacity and ability to undertake projects related to housing, community facilities, or community and economic development that will support the community. The deadline for receipt of an application is 4 p.m. local time, June 25, 2018. For more information, please refer to page 18264 of the Federal Register / Vol. 83, No. 81 / Thursday, April 26, 2018 or call the Washington State Office at (360) 704-7740.

TAT Grant Deadline Approaching

USDA is making grants available under the Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) Grant Program. These grants are intended to address capacity challenges faced by small, low-income rural communities with limited resources and staff.

The assistance helps communities access USDA funding for essential community facilities. Eligible recipients are private, public, or non profit organizations and Tribal entities that have experience in providing technical assistance and training to rural entities. Eligible projects include **those involving multi-jurisdictions and collaborations among rural communities.** Applications are due **July 2, 2018.** For more information, see page 19512 of the May 3 Federal Register or contact the USDA Rural Development Washington State Office by calling (360) 704-7740.

2017 Performance Report



Applications Wanted for Rural Cooperative Development Grant

USDA is accepting applications for the Rural Cooperative Development Grant (RCDG) program, which helps improve the economic condition of rural areas by helping individuals and businesses start, expand or improve rural cooperatives and other mutually-owned businesses through Cooperative Development Centers. Nonprofit corporations and institutions of higher education are eligible to apply for this program. Public bodies, for-profit business and individuals are not eligible.

- Conducting feasibility studies
- Developing business plans
- Providing leadership and operational improvement training
- Facilitating strategic planning

A Center can be located in any area, but the individuals and business assisted must be located in an eligible rural area. Electronic applications must be received by July 24, 2018, to be eligible for grant funding.

Grant and matching funds (25 percent of total project costs) can be used for developing and operating a Rural Cooperative Development Center. Examples of technical assistance and other services the Centers provide are:

For more information, please contact Carlotta Donisi; carlotta.donisi@wa.usda.gov.

Applications Wanted for Socially Disadvantaged Groups Grant

USDA is accepting applications for the Socially Disadvantaged Groups Grant (SDGG) program, which provides technical assistance to socially-disadvantaged groups through cooperatives and Cooperative Development Centers.

2018. They may also be hand carry to one of our field offices, but it must be received by close of business on the deadline date. Electronic copies must be received by <http://www.grants.gov> no later than midnight Eastern Time July 24, 2018.

Eligible applicants include Cooperatives, Groups of Cooperatives, and Cooperative Development Centers.

Late applications are not eligible for funding under this Notice and will not be evaluated.

Completed applications for grants must be postmarked and mailed, shipped, or sent overnight no later than July 30,

For more information, please contact Carlotta Donisi; carlotta.donisi@wa.usda.gov.

USDA Seeks Applications for Repowering Assistance Program

USDA is accepting applications to encourage the use of renewable biomass as an alternative for fossil fuels to operate eligible biorefineries. Funding is being made available under the Repowering Assistance Program. To be eligible, biorefineries must have been in existence on or before June 18, 2008.

Program. The maximum award is 50 percent of eligible project costs. Examples of projects using the program include ethanol, biodiesel and pellet plants. Applicants should be able to demonstrate significant fossil fuel reductions and a payback of 10 years or less to qualify.

This program provides financial incentives to install new systems that use or produce new energy from renewable biomass. This fiscal year 2018, USDA is making up to \$5 million available for payments through the Repowering Assistance

Applications are due July 19, 2018. For more information, see page 17522 of the April 20 Federal Register or contact Randy Baird, USDA Rural Development Washington State Energy Coordinator by emailing randy.baird@wa.usda.gov.

USDA Seeks Applications for Rural Broadband Loan Program

USDA is accepting applications for loans under its Rural Broadband Access Loan and Loan Guarantee Program to extend broadband infrastructure in eligible rural communities.

additional information and modifications to submitted applications whenever necessary.

Since the passage of the 2014 Farm Bill, the Agency has only accepted applications according to discrete application windows. However, USDA has determined that the use of application windows has not effectively supported its mission to finance improved broadband service in rural areas.

Additionally, USDA plans to make more than \$100 million available through the program. Loan applications ranging from \$100,000 to \$25 million will be processed on a first come, first served basis. USDA will review and rank applications every 90 days through Sept. 30, 2018.

As a result, USDA will now accept applications on a rolling basis throughout FY 2018, giving USDA the ability to request

Applications must be submitted online at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rd-apply>. For details, see page 13225 of the March 28 Federal Register.

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