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Huron, SD 57350
(605) 352-1100

Tennessee

USDA Rural Development State Office
3322 West End Avenue, Suite 300
Nashville, TN 37203-1084
(615) 783-1300

Texas

USDA Rural Development State Office
Federal Building, Suite 102
101 South Main Street
Temple, TX 76501
(254) 742-9700

Utah

USDA Rural Development State Office
Wallace F. Bennett Federal Building 125
South State Street, Room 4311
P. O. Box 11350
Salt Lake City, UT 84147-0350
(801) 524-4321

Vermont/New Hampshire

USDA Rural Development State Office
City Center, 3rd Floor
89 Main Street
Montpelier, VT 05602
(802) 828-6010

Virginia

USDA Rural Development State Office
Culpeper Building, Suite 238
1606 Santa Rosa Road
Richmond, VA 23229-5014
(804) 287-1550

Washington

USDA Rural Development State Office
1835 Black Lake Boulevard, SW.
Suite B
Olympia, WA 98512-5715
(360) 704-7740

West Virginia

USDA Rural Development State Office
Federal Building
75 High Street, Room 320
Morgantown, WV 26505-7500
(304) 284-4860

Wisconsin

USDA Rural Development State Office
4949 Kirschling Court
Stevens Point, WI 54481
(715) 345-7610

Wyoming

USDA Rural Development State Office
Federal Building, Room 1005
100 East B Street
P. O. Box 820
Casper, WY 82602
(307) 261-6300

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The passenger transportation portion of the RBEG program is authorized by section 310B(c)(2) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (CONACT) (7 U.S.C. 1932(c)(2)). The RBEG program is administered on behalf of RBS at the State level by the Rural Development State Offices. The primary objective of the program is to improve the economic

conditions of rural areas. Assistance provided to rural areas under this program may include on-site technical assistance to local and regional governments, public transit agencies, and related nonprofit and for-profit organizations in rural areas; the development of training materials; and the provision of necessary training assistance to local officials and agencies in rural areas.

Awards under the RBEG passenger transportation program are made on a competitive basis using specific selection criteria contained in 7 CFR part 1942, subpart G, and in accordance with section 310B(c)(2) of the CONACT. That subpart also contains the information required to be in the preapplication package. For the \$248,375 grant, at least 75 percent of the benefits of the project must be received by members of Federally Recognized Tribes. The project that scores the greatest number of points based on the selection criteria and Administrator's points will be selected for each grant. Preapplications will be tentatively scored by the State Offices and submitted to the National Office for review, final scoring, and selection.

To be considered "national", a qualified organization is required to provide evidence that it operates in multi-State areas. There is not a requirement to use the grant funds in a multi-State area. Under this notice, grants will be made to qualified, private, non-profit organizations for the provision of technical assistance and training to rural communities for the purpose of improving passenger transportation services or facilities. Public bodies are not eligible for passenger transportation RBEG grants.

The information collection requirements contained within this Notice have received approval by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under OMB Control Number 0570-0022 (7 CFR part 1942, subpart G).

Fiscal Year 2003 Preapplications Submission

Each preapplication received in a Rural Development State Office will be reviewed to determine if this preapplication is consistent with the eligible purposes contained in section 310B(c)(2) of the CONACT. Each selection priority criterion outlined in 7 CFR part 1942, subpart G, section 1942.305(b)(3), must be addressed in the preapplication. Failure to address any of the criteria will result in a zero-point score for that criterion and impact the overall evaluation of the preapplication. Copies of 7 CFR part 1942, subpart G, will be provided to any interested

applicant making a request to a Rural Development State Office listed in this notice. All projects to receive technical assistance through these passenger transportation grant funds are to be identified when the preapplications are submitted to the Rural Development State Office. Multiple project preapplications must identify each individual project, indicate the amount of funding requested for each individual project, and address the criteria as stated above for each individual project. For multiple-project preapplications, the average of the individual project scores will be the score for that preapplication.

All eligible preapplications, along with tentative scoring sheets and the Rural Development State Director's recommendation, will be referred to the National Office no later than June 13, 2003, for final scoring and selection for award.

The National Office will score preapplications based on the grant selection criteria and weights contained in 7 CFR part 1942, subpart G and will select a grantee subject to the grantee's satisfactory submission of a formal application and related materials in the manner and time frame established by RBS in accordance with 7 CFR part 1942, subpart G. It is anticipated that the grantees will be selected by July 31, 2003. All applicants will be notified by RBS of the Agency's decision on the awards.

Dated: April 3, 2003.

John Rosso,

Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

[FR Doc. 03-8818 Filed 4-9-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XY-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Rural Business-Cooperative Service****Inviting Applications for Rural Business Opportunity Grants**

AGENCY: Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS), an Agency within the Rural Development mission area, announces the availability of grants of up to \$50,000 per application from the Rural Business Opportunity Grant (RBOG) Program for fiscal year (FY) 2003, to be competitively awarded. For multi-State projects, grant funds of up to \$150,000 will be available on a competitive basis.