

# Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Farm Service Agency

#### National Drought Policy Commission

**AGENCY:** Farm Service Agency, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of Commission public hearing and request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The National Drought Policy Act of 1998 established the National Drought Policy Commission (Commission). The Farm Service Agency (FSA) was identified to provide support to the Commission. The Commission shall conduct a thorough study and submit a report to the President and Congress on national drought policy. This notice announces a public hearing to be held on October 13, 1999, in El Paso, Texas, and seeks comments on issues that the Commission should address and recommendations that the Commission should consider as part of its report. The public hearing is open to the public.

**DATES:** The Commission will conduct a public hearing on October 13, 1999, from 1:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. (Mountain Daylight Time) at the Camino Real Hotel, 101 S. El Paso Street, El Paso, Texas.

Anyone wishing to make an oral presentation to the Commission at the public hearing, must contact the Executive Director, Leona Dittus, in writing (by letter, fax or internet) no later than 12 noon Eastern Daylight Time, October 8, 1999, in order to be included on the agenda. Presenters will be approved on a first-come, first-served basis. The request should identify the name and affiliation of the individual who will make the presentation and an outline of the issues to be addressed. Thirty-five copies of any written presentation material shall be given to the Executive Director by all presenters no later than the time of the presentation for distribution to the Commission and the interested public.

Those wishing to testify, but who are unable to notify the Commission office by October 8, 1999, will be able to sign up as a presenter the day of the hearing (October 13) between 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. (Mountain Daylight Time). These presenters will testify on a first-come, first-served basis and comments will be limited based on the time available and the number of presenters. Written statements will be accepted at the meeting, or may be mailed or faxed to the Commission office.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments and statements should be sent to Leona Dittus, Executive Director, National Drought Policy Commission, US Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 6701-S, STOP 0501, Washington, D.C. 20250-0501.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Leona Dittus (202) 720-3168; FAX (202) 720-4293; internet Leona—Dittus@WDC.FSA.USDA.GOV.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The purpose of the Commission is to provide advice and recommendations to the President and Congress on the creation of an integrated, coordinated Federal policy, designed to prepare for and respond to serious drought emergencies. Tasks for the Commission include developing recommendations that will (a) Better integrate Federal laws and programs with ongoing State, local, and tribal programs (b) improve public awareness of the need for drought mitigation, prevention, and response and (c) determine whether all Federal drought preparation and response programs should be consolidated under one existing Federal agency, and, if so, identify the agency. The Commission will be chaired by the Secretary of Agriculture or his designee, and a Vice Chair shall be selected from among the members who are not Federal officers or employees. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair will act in his stead. Administrative staff support essential to the execution of the Commission's responsibilities shall be provided by USDA, FSA.

Commission members specifically cited in Public Law 105-199, include the Secretaries of Agriculture, Interior, Army, and Commerce, the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration; two persons nominated by the National Governors' Association, a person

nominated by the National Association of Counties, and a person nominated by the Conference of Mayors. Those four members are to be appointed by the President. Six additional Commission members have been appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, in coordination with the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of the Army. The six at-large members represent groups acutely affected by drought emergencies, such as the agricultural production community, the credit community, rural and urban water associations, Native Americans, and fishing and environmental interests.

If special accommodations are required, please contact Leona Dittus, at the address specified above, by COB October 6, 1999.

Signed at Washington, DC, on September 17, 1999.

**Keith Kelly,**

*Administrator, Farm Service Agency.*

[FR Doc. 99-24990 Filed 9-24-99; 8:45 am]

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## ARTIC RESEARCH COMMISSION

### Notice of Meeting

September 19, 1999.

Notice is hereby given that the U.S. Arctic Research Commission will hold its 55th Meeting in Arlington, VA on October 18 and 19, 1999.

The Meeting will be held at the National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22230.

Topics for the meeting include Federal and State Agency reports, Congressional liaison reports and a visit to the NOAA National Oceanographic Data Center. Cdr. Robert Perry, Commander, USS HAWKBILL, will brief the Commission on the recent SCICEX mission to the Arctic.

Any person planning to attend the meeting who requires special accessibility features and/or auxiliary aids, such as sign language interpreters must inform the Commission in advance of those needs.

Contact Person for More Information: Dr. Garrett W. Brass, Executive Director, Arctic Research Commission, 703-525-0111 or TDD 703-306-0090.

**Garrett W. Brass,**

*Executive Director.*

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