

and Budget. Since this proposed general permit affects only a single Federal agency's record-keeping and reporting requirements, it is not subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act.

B. Endangered Species Act

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) imposes duties on Federal agencies regarding endangered species of fish, wildlife, or plants and habitat of such species that have been designated as critical. Section 7(a)(2) of the ESA and its implementing regulations (50 CFR part 402) require EPA to ensure, in consultation with the Secretary of Interior or Commerce, that any action authorized, funded, or carried out by EPA in the United States or upon the high seas, is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered or threatened species, or adversely affect their critical habitat.

In compliance with section 7 of the ESA, an endangered species list for the affected area of ocean dumping of ice piers from the NSF facility at McMurdo Station was requested by EPA and received from both the Fish and Wildlife Service (F&WS) of the Department of the Interior and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) of the Department of Commerce. No endangered, threatened, or candidate species are reported to potentially occur in the affected area.

EPA has discussed this matter with both the F&WS and the NMFS pursuant to section 7 of the ESA, and the agencies have agreed that the ocean dumping of ice piers by the NSF or its agents from McMurdo Station in Antarctica will have no effect on endangered or threatened species. EPA will consider any comments offered by either the F&WS or the NMFS on this issue before promulgating a final general permit on the ocean dumping of ice piers.

Dated: January 2, 2003.

Suzanne E. Schwartz,

Director, Oceans and Coastal Protection Division.

The proposed permit is as follows:

Disposal of Ice Piers From McMurdo Station, Antarctica

The United States National Science Foundation and its agents are hereby granted a general permit under sections 102(a) and 104(c) of the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act, 33 U.S.C. 1412(a) and 1414(c), to transport ice piers from the McMurdo Sound, Antarctica, research station for the purpose of ocean dumping, subject to the following conditions:

(a) The NSF shall have a spill prevention, control, and

countermeasures (SPCC) plan in place, consistent with the requirements of 40 CFR 112.3, for the McMurdo Station ice pier. The SPCC plan shall address procedures for loading and unloading the following materials, and shall include methods to minimize the accidental release or discharge of any of the following materials to the ice pier:

(1) Petroleum products unloaded from supply tankers to the storage tanks at McMurdo Station;

(2) Drummed chemicals, petroleum products, and materiel unloaded from cargo freighters to supply depots at McMurdo Station; and

(3) Materials loaded to freighters destined to be returned to bases outside Antarctica.

(b) If a spill or discharge occurs on an ice pier, clean-up procedures must be completed by NSF or its contractors to a level below any visible evidence of the spill or discharge. All spills or discharges on an ice pier must be cleaned up within two hours of the spill or discharge, or as soon as possible thereafter.

(c) As part of normal monitoring requirements, a record of the following information shall be kept by NSF:

(1) The date and time of all spills or discharges, the location of the spill or discharge, a description of the material that was spilled or discharged, the approximate volume of the spill or discharge, clean-up procedures employed, and the results;

(2) The number of wooden poles remaining in the pier at the time of its release from McMurdo Station, and their approximate length;

(3) The approximate length of the steel cables remaining in the pier at the time of its release from McMurdo Station;

(4) Any other substances remaining on the pier at the time of its release from McMurdo Station; and

(5) The date of detachment of the pier from McMurdo Station, and the geographic coordinates (latitude and longitude) of the point of final release of the pier in McMurdo Sound or the Antarctic Sea.

(d) The non-embedded ends of all wooden utility poles and bollards will be cut off from the ice pier prior to disposal, and shall not be disposed of in the ocean.

(e) Prior to the ocean dumping of any ice piers, the following actions shall be taken by NSF:

(1) Other than the matter physically embedded in the ice pier (*i.e.*, the ends of light poles or bollards frozen in the pier, and the strengthening cables), all other objects (including the non-embedded portions of bollards used for

maintaining a connection between the pier and the mainland, the non-embedded portions of poles used for lighting, power, or telephone connections, and any removable equipment, debris, or objects of anthropogenic origin), shall be removed from the pier prior to dumping.

(2) The gravel non-slip surface of the pier shall be removed to the maximum extent possible, and stored on the mainland for subsequent use.

(3) A methodology to track any ice piers released from McMurdo Station shall be established and utilized for a period of one year from the date of release of the ice pier. The results of these tracking efforts are to be included in the annual reports that the NSF is required to submit to EPA.

(f) The NSF shall submit a report by June 30 of every year to the Director of the Oceans and Coastal Protection Division, in EPA's Office of Water, on (1) Any spills, discharges, or clean-up procedures on the ice pier at McMurdo Station, (2) any ocean dumping of ice piers from McMurdo Station, and (3) any tracking efforts of ice piers released from McMurdo Station under this general permit for the year preceding the date of the annual report.

(g) For the purpose of this permit, the term "ice pier(s)" means those man-made ice structures containing embedded steel cable, and any remaining gravel frozen into the surface of the pier, that are constructed at McMurdo Station, Antarctica, for the purpose of off-loading the annual provision of materiel and supplies for the base at McMurdo Station and other U.S. Antarctic bases, and for loading the previous year's accumulation of wastes, which are returned to the United States.

(h) This permit shall be valid until [add date—seven years from the date of issuance].

[FR Doc. 03-335 Filed 1-6-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560-50-P

FEDERAL HOUSING FINANCE BOARD

[No. 2002-N-15]

Notice of Annual Adjustment of the Cap on Average Total Assets That Defines Community Financial Institutions, and Notice of Annual Adjustment of the Limits on Annual Compensation for Federal Home Loan Bank Directors, and Notice of Annual Adjustment of the Maximum Dollar Limits on Certain Allocations by a Bank of its Annual Required Affordable Housing Program Contributions

AGENCY: Federal Housing Finance Board.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Federal Housing Finance Board (Finance Board) has adjusted the cap on average total assets that defines a "Community Financial Institution" (CFI) based on the annual percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers (CPI-U), as published by the Department of Labor (DOL), pursuant to the requirements of section 2(13)(B) of the Federal Home Loan Bank Act (Bank Act) requirements of the Finance Board's regulations. Notice is hereby given that the Finance Board has made similar adjustments to the limits on annual compensation for the Federal Home Loan Bank (Bank) directors, based on the CPI-U, as published by the DOL, pursuant to the requirements of section 7(i)(2)(B) of the Bank Act and requirements of the Finance Board's regulations. In addition, notice is hereby given that the Finance Board has made similar adjustments to the maximum dollar limits on certain allocations by a Bank of its annual required Affordable Housing Program (AHP) contributions, pursuant to the requirements of the Finance Board's regulations.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Scott L. Smith, Associate Director, Economic and Financial Analysis, Office of Supervision, (202) 408-2991, or Kirsten L. Landeryou, Economic and Financial Analysis, Office of Supervision, (202) 408-2552. Staff also can be reached by regular mail at the Federal Housing Finance Board, 1777 F Street, NW., Washington, DC 20006.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 2(13)(B) of the Bank Act (12 U.S.C. 1422(13)(B)), and § 900.1 of the Finance Board's regulations (12 CFR 900.1) require the Finance Board, beginning in 2001, to adjust annually the cap on average total assets (CFI Asset Cap) set forth in section 2(13)(A)(ii) of the Bank Act (12 U.S.C. 1422(13)(A)(ii)) and § 900.1 of the Finance Board's regulations that defines a CFI, based on the annual percentage increase, if any, in the CP-U, as published by the DOL.

Section 7(i)(2)(B) of the Bank Act (12 U.S.C. 1427(i)(2)(B)) and § 918.3(a)(1) of the Finance Board's regulations (12 CFR 918.3(a)(1)), require the Finance Board, beginning January 1, 2001, to make similar annual adjustments to the annual compensation limits set forth in section 7(i)(2)(A) of the Bank Act (12 U.S.C. 1427(i)(2)(A)) and § 918.3(a)(1), for members of the boards of directors of the Banks. Section 951.3(a)(1)(iii) of the Finance Board's regulations (12 CFR 951.3(a)(1)(iii)) requires the Finance Board, beginning in 2003, to make

similar annual adjustments to the maximum dollar limits set forth in § 951.3(a)(1)(i), on the amounts that a Bank may set aside annually from its annual required AHP contributions for the current year and the subsequent year, towards homeownership set-aside programs. In addition, § 951.3(a)(1)(iii) of the Finance Board's regulations (12 CFR 951.3(a)(1)(iii)) requires the Finance Board, beginning in 2003, to make similar annual adjustments to the maximum dollar limits set forth in § 951.3(a)(1)(ii), on the amounts that a Bank may set aside annually from its annual required AHP contributions for the current year and the subsequent year, towards an additional first-time homebuyer set-aside program. Section 951.3(a)(2) of the Finance Board's regulations (12 CFR 951.3(a)(2)), requires the Finance Board, beginning in 2002, to make a similar annual adjustment to the maximum dollar limit set forth in § 951.3(a)(2), on the amount that a Bank may allocate from its annual required AHP contribution for the subsequent year to the current year's competitive application program.

For purposes of the CFI Asset Cap, the Finance Board is required to publish notice by **Federal Register** of the CP-U-adjusted Cap. See 12 CFR 900.1. For purposes of the Banks' board of directors annual compensation limits, the Finance Board is required to publish notice, by **Federal Register**, distribution of a memorandum or otherwise, of the CP-U-adjusted limits on such compensation. See 12 CFR 918.3(a)(1). For purposes of the maximum dollar limits on Banks' allocations from annual required AHP contributions, the Finance Board is required to publish notice, by **Federal Register**, distribution of a memorandum or otherwise, of the CP-U-adjusted maximum dollar limits.

The annual adjustments of the existing CFI Asset Cap, annual Bank director compensation limits and maximum dollar limits on Bank allocations from annual required AHP contributions, effective January 1 of a particular calendar year, reflect the percentage by which the CP-U published for November of the preceding calendar year exceeds the CP-U published for November of the year before the preceding calendar year (if at all). For example, the adjustments of the limits effective January 1, 2003 are based on the percentage increase in the CP-U from November 2001 to November 2002. The CFI Asset Cap is rounded to the nearest million dollars, the annual compensation limits are rounded to the nearest dollar and the limits on allocations from AHP

contributions are rounded to the nearest \$100,000.¹

The Finance Board has determined that it is appropriate to use data from November rather than waiting for the December data to become available so that the Banks can be notified of the adjusted CFI Asset Cap, annual Bank director compensation limits and AHP maximum dollar allocation limits as close to the January 1 effective date as possible. Other Federal agencies do not rely on December data, which is published in mid-January, when calculating annual inflation adjustments and, as a result, are able to announce their adjustments prior to the effective date of January 1.

The DOL encourages the use of CPI-U data that has not been seasonally adjusted in "escalation agreements," because seasonal factors are updated annually and seasonally adjusted data are subject to revision for up to five years following the original release. Unadjusted data are not routinely subject to revision, and previously published unadjusted data are only corrected when significant calculation errors are discovered. Accordingly, the Finance Board is using data that has not been seasonally adjusted to calculate the new CFI Asset Cap, annual Bank director compensation limits and AHP maximum dollar allocation limits.

The unadjusted CPI-U increased 2.2 percent between November of 2001 and November of 2002. Based on this data, pursuant to the requirements of § 900.1, the Finance Board has adjusted the CFI Asset Cap from the 2002 limit of \$527 million to \$538 million, effective January 1, 2003. The Finance Board arrived at the adjusted limit of \$538 million by rounding to the nearest million.

Pursuant to § 918.3(a)(1), based on the 2.2 percent increase in the unadjusted CPI-U, the Finance Board has adjusted the annual compensation limits for the members of the boards of directors of the Banks as follows, effective January 1, 2003: for a Chairperson—\$26,921; for a Vice-Chairperson—\$21,537; for any other member of a Bank's board of directors—\$16,152. The Finance Board arrived at the adjusted annual compensation limits by rounding to the nearest dollar.

Pursuant to § 951.3(a)(1)(iii), based on the 2.2 percent increase in the unadjusted CPI-U, the Finance Board has adjusted the maximum dollar limits

¹ All adjusted limits referred to in this notice have been rounded to some dollar level. However, the calculations of new limits are based on cumulative CP-U changes applied to the limits as they first appeared in Finance Board regulations, and hence are not distorted over time by rounding.

on the amounts that a Bank may set aside from its annual required AHP contributions for the current year and the subsequent year, toward homeownership set-aside programs, from the 2002 limit of \$3.0 million to \$3.1 million, effective January 1, 2003. The Finance Board arrived at the adjusted limit of \$3.1 million by rounding to the nearest \$100,000.

Pursuant to § 951.3(a)(1)(iii), the Finance Board also applied the 2.2 percent increase in the unadjusted CPI-U to the 2002 maximum dollar limit on the amount that a Bank may set aside from its annual required AHP contributions, for the current year and the subsequent year, towards an additional first-time homebuyer set-aside program. Rounding the resulting number to the nearest \$100,000, the maximum dollar limit remains at the 2002 level of \$1.5 million, effective January 1, 2003. In addition, pursuant to § 951.3(a)(2), based on the 2.2 percent increase in the unadjusted CPI-U, the Finance Board has adjusted the maximum dollar limit on the amount that a Bank may allocate from its annual required AHP contribution for the subsequent year to the current year's competitive application program, from the 2002 limit of \$3.0 million to \$3.1 million, effective January 1, 2003. The Finance Board arrived at the adjusted limit of \$3.1 million by rounding to the nearest \$100,000.

Dated: December 31, 2002.

Federal Housing Finance Board.

John T. Korsmo,

Chairman.

[FR Doc. 03-196 Filed 1-6-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6725-01-P

FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

Sunshine Act Meeting

AGENCY HOLDING THE MEETING: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

TIME AND DATE: 11 a.m., Monday, January 13, 2003.

PLACE: Marriner S. Eccles Federal Reserve Board Building, 20th and C Streets, NW., Washington, DC 20551.

STATUS: Closed.

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED:

1. Personnel actions (appointments, promotions, assignments, reassignments, and salary actions) involving individual Federal Reserve System employees.

2. Any items carried forward from a previously announced meeting.

CONTACT PERSON FOR MORE INFORMATION: Michelle A. Smith, Assistant to the Board; (202) 452-2955.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: You may call (202) 452-3206 beginning at approximately 5 p.m. two business days before the meeting for a recorded announcement of bank and bank holding company applications scheduled for the meeting; or you may contact the Board's Web site at <http://www.federalreserve.gov> for an electronic announcement that not only lists applications, but also indicates procedural and other information about the meeting.

Dated: January 3, 2003.

Robert deV. Frierson,

Deputy Secretary of the Board.

[FR Doc. 03-354 Filed 1-3-03; 2:17pm]

BILLING CODE 6210-01-P

OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT ETHICS

Proposed Collection; Comment Request for Unmodified SF 278 Executive Branch Personnel Public Financial Disclosure Report

AGENCY: Office of Government Ethics (OGE).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: After this first round notice and public comment period, OGE plans to submit the Standard Form (SF) 278 for extension of approval (up to three years) by Office of Management and Budget

(OMB) under the Paperwork Reduction Act. The SF 278 is henceforth to be accompanied by agency notification to filers of the adjustment of the gifts/travel reimbursements reporting thresholds and, when final, the revisions to the Privacy Act Statement. Both revisions will not be incorporated into the form itself at this time, since OGE plans a more thorough revision of the form in the next year or two.

DATES: Comments on this proposed extension should be received by March 24, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be sent to Mary T. Donovan, Office of Administration and Information Management, Office of Government Ethics, Suite 500, 1201 New York Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20005-3917. Comments may also be sent electronically to OGE's Internet E-mail address at usoge@oge.gov. For E-mail messages, the subject line should include the following reference—"Paperwork comment on the SF 278."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Donovan at the Office of Government Ethics; telephone: 202-208-8000, ext. 1185; FAX: 202-208-8038. A copy of a blank SF 278 may be obtained, without charge, by contacting Ms. Donovan. Also, a copy of a blank SF 278 is available through the Forms, Publications & Other Ethics Documents section of OGE's Web site at <http://www.usoge.gov>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Office of Government Ethics is planning to submit, after this notice and comment period, the unmodified Standard Form 278 Executive Branch Personnel Public Financial Disclosure Report (OMB control number 3209-0001) for extension of approval for (up to) three years by OMB under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35). The current paperwork approval for the SF 278 is scheduled to expire at the end of March 2003. Since, for now, no modification to this standard form is being proposed, OGE will not seek any General Services Administration (GSA) standard forms clearance for this extension.

The Office of Government Ethics, as the supervising ethics office for the executive branch of the Federal Government under the Ethics in Government Act (the Ethics Act), is the sponsoring agency for the Standard Form 278. In accordance with section 102 of the Ethics Act, 5 U.S.C. app. section 102, and OGE's implementing financial disclosure regulations at 5 CFR part 2634, the SF 278 collects pertinent financial information from certain officers and high-level employees in the executive branch for conflicts of interest review and public disclosure. The financial information collected under the statute and regulations relate to: assets and income; transactions; gifts, reimbursements and travel expenses; liabilities; agreements or arrangements; outside positions; and compensation over \$5,000 paid by a source—all subject to various reporting thresholds and exclusions.

The Office of Government Ethics notes two changes (discussed below) affecting the content of SF 278s. The first change concerns the recent adjustments in the gifts/reimbursements reporting thresholds. The second change involves the routine use language contained in the Privacy Act Statement of the form that will be revised in 2003. For now, OGE is proposing no revisions to the SF 278, but rather asks that executive branch departments and agencies inform SF 278 filers, through cover memorandum or otherwise, of these two changes when the existing