

For: State and County Offices

County Committee (COC) Review of Local Administrative Area (LAA) Boundaries

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Field Operations



1 Overview

A Background

On August 17, 2004, the Secretary of Agriculture published in the Federal Register (FR) proposed uniform guidelines for conducting FSA, COC elections pursuant to §10708 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Pub. L. 107-171) (2002 Farm Bill). After analysis of the comments received, the Secretary issued final uniform guidelines on January 18, 2005, in FR.

One of the guideline requirements is that COC's complete their annual review of LAA boundaries within each County Office jurisdiction no later than April 1, of each year.

County Offices are to determine whether redrawing LAA boundaries or increasing the number of LAA's in a given area will assist in ensuring the fair representation of socially disadvantaged (SDA) and other producers in the area over which a COC has jurisdiction.

Any proposed change in LAA's must be opened to public comment before any change is approved by STC.

B Purpose

This notice provides State Offices, COC's, and County Offices with:

- guidance to establish LAA's
- revised dates to complete reviews of LAA boundaries.

C Contact

For questions about this notice, contact:

- Ken Nagel, DAFO, at 202-720-7890
- Zina Riley, DAFO, at 202-720-0258.

Disposal Date	Distribution
July 1, 2005	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

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2 Action

A COC Action

COC's shall:

- follow instructions in 15-AO, Section 3 for reviewing LAA boundaries
- determine whether redrawing LAA boundaries or increasing the number of LAA's in a given area will assist in ensuring the fair representation of SDA producers
- propose new LAA boundaries if it is determined that changes would provide better representation of SDA producers
- complete COC review of LAA boundaries and request STC's approval of LAA boundaries before April 1, 2005, by submitting:
 - boundary changes on FSA-582
 - county map showing proposed boundary changes
 - justification for proposed boundary changes with COC's recommendations and DD's concurrence
 - comments received from the public about the proposed changes
 - a request for STC's approval of the existing LAA boundaries by submitting FSA-582, if no changes are made
- ensure that the correct LAA's and LAA voter lists are prepared for the 2005 election.

Note: COC shall document the review and determination concerning LAA boundaries in COC minutes.

- ensure that a maximum of 5 LAA's exist after any office combination.

Note: Shared management is not an office combination.

2 Action (Continued)

B COC Action

- submit STC determination to COC for action
- document all decisions in the minutes
- conduct reviews of selected COC's to determine if redrawing LAA's will assist in ensuring the fair representation of SDA producers in the county or area
- select COC's when FSA or STC finds evidence of under representation of SDA producers on COC
- complete the STC review of COC, LAA boundary changes and approve by May 31, 2005.

3 Publicizing Proposed LAA Changes

A Proposed LAA Changes

County Offices shall:

- publicize proposed LAA changes by:
 - posting proposed changes in LAA boundaries in County Offices
 - locally publicize proposed LAA boundaries in a County Office publication and local media
- ensure that adequate time is available for comments by eligible voters to be received before proposed LAA boundaries are submitted for approval to STC.

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4 Computer Operations

A LAA Updates

County Offices shall ensure that:

- COC and LAA data is updated according to 15-AO, paragraphs 67 and 68
- LAA changes are in effect no later than June 15, 2005.

B Voter Data Verification

County Offices shall ensure that:

- voters are listed in the correct LAA
- all voter names and addresses are correct for each LAA
- all voter flags are correct

C Eligible Voter Lists

County Offices shall:

- ensure that eligible voter list for the LAA or LAA's conducting an election in 2005 are available for public view no later than June 15, 2005
- continually update eligible voter lists throughout the year as changes are known.