

**USDA, Rural Utilities Service (RUS)**

**Public Scoping Meeting for the proposed Energy Answers Arecibo Puerto Rico  
Renewable Energy Project.**

**January 28, 2015 from 3:00-7:00pm**

**Colegio de Ingenieros y Agrimensores de Puerto Rico, Capítulo de Arecibo, Ave.  
Manuel T. Guillán 1, Arecibo.**

**Purpose:** The purpose of the meeting is to receive public comments on what RUS should consider in the environmental impact statement for the proposed project.

**Meeting Schedule:** The scoping meeting is conducted in an open house format. This means that meeting space will be open from 3:00-7:00 PM. USDA representatives, project information and opportunities to comment will be available during the hours of the open house. A court reporter will be available for transcription of verbal comments.

**Presentations:** As the scoping meeting is the beginning of the federal EIS process, no formal presentations will be made. This is an opportunity to see information about the process, the proposed project and provide comment.

**Comments:** Comment in the format most convenient for you, there is no limit on the number of times one may comment (verbal comments will be transcribed by the court reporter, written comments on the comment form, on the aerials of the project site and via email or mail).

**Questions:** Look for USDA employees or representatives of the proposed project (identified by their name tags). Since no decisions have been made and the third party independent assessment of the previous documents on the project has not begun, detailed information regarding impacts or decisions are not available at this time. Your questions

will inform the environmental assessment by RUS and our third-party environmental consultants.

## **FAQs**

### **Why is the meeting held at this time and in this format:**

An open house allows the public to participate in the meeting at a time convenient for them, some attend in their official role and need to arrive during working hours, others need to attend after working hours. The open house format allows flexibility for the public to attend, review information and provide comments whenever they can arrive.

### **Where can I find the project materials in Spanish/English:**

RUS' website provides the project documents in English and Spanish

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/UWP-AreciboPuertoRico.html>

Hard copies of the documents are available for review at:

Tribunal General de Justicia, Centro Judicial de Arecibo and Casa Alcaldía del Municipio de Arecibo (available between 8-4:30 Monday-Friday).

### **What if I can't comment by February 13, 2015?**

While we encourage comments early in the process, additional opportunities for comment will occur (once the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is released and after release of the Final Environmental Impact Statement).

### **Why was the comment period extended?**

The initial scoping notice did not appear in Spanish as intended. Preliminary comments also identified public interest in a scoping meeting. Therefore, the notice was republished (in English and Spanish in newspapers local to the project), a scoping meeting was scheduled and the comment period was extended to February 13, 2015.

**Will the meeting be held in Spanish and will interpreters be available?**

Displays and handouts will be in English and Spanish. Bilingual staff (USDA and project proponent) are available. No presentations will be made. Please let a USDA representative know if you have additional needs.

**Will the meeting be recorded and recordings available to the public?**

Verbal comments made to the court reporter will be transcribed and made available to the public. All comments received will be summarized and made available to the public through the Scoping Report. The Scoping Report will be available on the RUS website after the comment period closes (depending on the quantity of comments received, the report is estimated for release by March, 1, 2015).

**Why is a federal EIS being prepared?**

Before RUS can consider a financing request for the project proponent, a federal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) must be prepared. Puerto Rico Industrial Development Company (PRIDCO) prepared an EIS for Puerto Rico, RUS has determined it must prepare a federal EIS in order to meet its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500–1508), and RUS's Environmental and Policies and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1794) in connection with potential impacts related to the Energy Answers proposal.