

TITLE 30 - MINERAL LANDS AND MINING
CHAPTER 3A - LEASES AND PROSPECTING PERMITS
SUBCHAPTER II - COAL

§ 208–1. Exploratory program for evaluation of known recoverable coal resources

(a) Authorization; purpose

The Secretary is authorized and directed to conduct a comprehensive exploratory program designed to obtain sufficient data and information to evaluate the extent, location, and potential for developing the known recoverable coal resources within the coal lands subject to this chapter. This program shall be designed to obtain the resource information necessary for determining whether commercial quantities of coal are present and the geographical extent of the coal fields and for estimating the amount of such coal which is recoverable by deep mining operations and the amount of such coal which is recoverable by surface mining operations in order to provide a basis for—

- (1) developing a comprehensive land use plan pursuant to section 2;
- (2) improving the information regarding the value of public resources and revenues which should be expected from leasing;
- (3) increasing competition among producers of coal, or products derived from the conversion of coal, by providing data and information to all potential bidders equally and equitably;
- (4) providing the public with information on the nature of the coal deposits and the associated stratum and the value of the public resources being offered for sale; and
- (5) providing the basis for the assessment of the amount of coal deposits in those lands subject to this chapter under subparagraph (B) of section 201 (a)(3) of this title.

(b) Seismic, geophysical, geochemical or stratigraphic drilling

The Secretary, through the United States Geological Survey, is authorized to conduct seismic, geophysical, geochemical, or stratigraphic drilling, or to contract for or purchase the results of such exploratory activities from commercial or other sources which may be needed to implement the provisions of this section.

(c) Exploratory drilling by party not under contract to United States; confidentiality of information prior to award of lease

Nothing in this section shall limit any person from conducting exploratory geophysical surveys including seismic, geophysical, chemical surveys to the extent permitted by section 201 (b) of this title. The information obtained from the exploratory drilling carried out by a person not under contract with the United States Government for such drilling prior to award of a lease shall be provided the confidentiality pursuant to subsection (d) of this section.

(d) Availability to public of all data, information, maps, surveys; confidentiality of information purchased from commercial sources not under contract to United States prior to award of lease

The Secretary shall make available to the public by appropriate means all data, information, maps, interpretations, and surveys which are obtained directly by the Department of the Interior or under a service contract pursuant to subsection (b) of this section. The Secretary shall maintain a confidentiality of all proprietary data or information purchased from commercial sources while not under contract with the United States Government until after the areas involved have been leased.

(e) Information or data from Federal departments or agencies; confidentiality of proprietary information or data; utilization of Federal departments and agencies by agreement

All Federal departments or agencies are authorized and directed to provide the Secretary with any information or data that may be deemed necessary to assist the Secretary in implementing the exploratory program pursuant to this section. Proprietary information or data provided to the Secretary under the provisions of this subsection shall remain confidential for such period of time as agreed to

NB: This unofficial compilation of the U.S. Code is current as of Jan. 5, 2009 (see <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/uscprint.html>).

by the head of the department or agency from whom the information is requested. In addition, the Secretary is authorized and directed to utilize the existing capabilities and resources of other Federal departments and agencies by appropriate agreement.

(f) Publication of geological and geophysical maps and reports of lands offered for lease

The Secretary is directed to prepare, publish, and keep current a series of detailed geological, and geophysical maps of, and reports concerning, all coal lands to be offered for leasing under this chapter, based on data and information compiled pursuant to this section. Such maps and reports shall be prepared and revised at reasonable intervals beginning eighteen months after the date of enactment of this Act. Such maps and reports shall be made available on a continuing basis to any person on request.

(g) Implementation plan for coal lands exploration program; development and transmittal to Congress; contents

Within six months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop and transmit to Congress an implementation plan for the coal lands exploration program authorized by this section, including procedures for making the data and information available to the public pursuant to subsection (d) of this section, and maps and reports pursuant to subsection (f) of this section. The implementation plan shall include a projected schedule of exploratory activities and identification of the regions and areas which will be explored under the coal lands exploration program during the first five years following the enactment of this section. In addition, the implementation plan shall include estimates of the appropriations and staffing required to implement the coal lands exploration program.

(h) Stratigraphic drilling; scope; statement of results

The stratigraphic drilling authorized in subsection (b) of this section shall be carried out in such a manner as to obtain information pertaining to all recoverable reserves. For the purpose of complying with subsection (a) of this section, the Secretary shall require all those authorized to conduct stratigraphic drilling pursuant to subsection (b) of this section to supply a statement of the results of test boring of core sampling including logs of the drill holes; the thickness of the coal seams found; an analysis of the chemical properties of such coal; and an analysis of the strata layers lying above all the seams of coal. All drilling activities shall be conducted using the best current technology and practices.

(Feb. 25, 1920, ch. 85, § 8A, as added Pub. L. 94-377, § 7, Aug. 4, 1976, 90 Stat. 1087.)

References in Text

Section 2, referred to in subsec. (a)(1), means section 2 of act Feb. 25, 1920, as amended, and is comprised of subsecs. (a) to (d). Subsecs. (a) and (b) of section 2 are classified to section 201 of this title, subsec. (c) of section 2 is classified to section 202 of this title, and subsec. (d) of section 2, as added by section 5(b) of Pub. L. 94-377, is classified to section 202a of this title.

The date of enactment of this Act, referred to in subsecs. (f) and (g), probably means the date of enactment of Pub. L. 94-377, which was approved Aug. 4, 1976.