§ 15942. NEPA review

(a) NEPA review

Action by the Secretary of the Interior in managing the public lands, or the Secretary of Agriculture in managing National Forest System Lands, with respect to any of the activities described in subsection (b) shall be subject to a rebuttable presumption that the use of a categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 [42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.] (NEPA) would apply if the activity is conducted pursuant to the Mineral Leasing Act [30 U.S.C. 181 et seq.] for the purpose of exploration or development of oil or gas.

(b) Activities described

The activities referred to in subsection (a) are the following:

(1) Individual surface disturbances of less than 5 acres so long as the total surface disturbance on the lease is not greater than 150 acres and site-specific analysis in a document prepared pursuant to NEPA has been previously completed.

(2) Drilling an oil or gas well at a location or well pad site at which drilling has occurred previously within 5 years prior to the date of spudding the well.

(3) Drilling an oil or gas well within a developed field for which an approved land use plan or any environmental document prepared pursuant to NEPA analyzed such drilling as a reasonably foreseeable activity, so long as such plan or document was approved within 5 years prior to the date of spudding the well.

(4) Placement of a pipeline in an approved right-of-way corridor, so long as the corridor was approved within 5 years prior to the date of placement of the pipeline.

(5) Maintenance of a minor activity, other than any construction or major renovation or a building or facility.


References in Text


The Mineral Leasing Act, referred to in subsec. (a), is act Feb. 25, 1920, ch. 85, 41 Stat. 437, as amended, which is classified generally to chapter 3A (§ 181 et seq.) of Title 30, Mineral Lands and Mining. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 181 of Title 30 and Tables.