§426.13 Excess land appraisals.

(a) When does Reclamation appraise the value of a landowner’s land? Reclamation appraises excess land or land burdened by a deed covenant upon a landowner’s request or when required by Reclamation. If a landowner does not request an appraisal within 6 months of the maturity date of a recordable contract, Reclamation, in its discretion, can initiate the appraisal.

(b) Procedures Reclamation uses to determine the sale price of excess land or land burdened by a deed covenant. Reclamation complies with the following procedures to determine the sale price of excess land and land burdened by a deed covenant, except if a landholder owns land subject to a recordable contract that was in force on October 12, 1982, or other pertinent contract that was in force on that date, and these regulations would be inconsistent with provisions in such a contract:

(1) Appraisals of land. Reclamation will base all appraisals of land on the fair market value of the land at the time of appraisal without reference to the construction of the irrigation works. Reclamation must use standard appraisal procedures including: the income, comparable sales, and cost methods, as applicable. Reclamation will consider nonproject water supply factors as provided in paragraph (c)(1) of this section as appropriate; and

(2) Appraisal of improvements to land. Reclamation will assess the contributory fair market value of improvements to land, as of the date of appraisal, using standard appraisal procedures.

(c) Appraisals of nonproject water supplies. (1) The appraiser will consider nonproject water supply factors, where appropriate, including:

(i) Ground water pumping lift;

(ii) Surface water supply;

(iii) Water quality; and

(iv) Trends associated with paragraphs (c)(1)(i) through (iii) of this section, where appropriate.

(2) Reclamation will develop the nonproject water supply and trend information with the assistance of:

(i) The district in which the land is located, if the district desires to participate;

(ii) Landowners of excess land or land burdened by a deed covenant and prospective buyers who submit information either to the district or Reclamation;

(iii) Public meetings and forums, at the discretion of Reclamation;

(3) Data submitted may include:
§ 426.14 Involuntary acquisition of land.

(a) Definitions for purposes of this section. Financial institution means a commercial bank or trust company, a private bank, an agency or branch of a foreign bank in the United States, a thrift institution, an insurance company, a loan or finance company, or the Farm Credit System.

Involuntarily acquired land means land that is acquired through an involuntary foreclosure or similar involuntary process of law, conveyance in satisfaction of a debt (including, but not limited to, a mortgage, real estate contract or deed of trust), inheritance, or devise.

(b) Ineligible excess land that is involuntarily acquired. Reclamation cannot make available irrigation water to land that was ineligible excess land before the new landowner involuntarily acquired it, unless:

(1) The land becomes nonexcess in the new landowner’s ownership; and

(2) The deed to the land contains the 10-year covenant requiring Reclamation sale price approval, and that deed covenant if the landowner disagrees with the first appraisal. The second appraisal will be prepared by a panel of three qualified appraisers, one designated by the United States, one designated by the district, and the third designated jointly by the first two. The appraisal made by the panel will fix the maximum value of the excess land and will be binding on both parties after review and approval as provided in paragraph (h) of this section.

(h) Review of appraisals of excess land or land burdened by a deed covenant. Reclamation will review all appraisals of excess land or land burdened by a deed covenant for:

(1) Technical accuracy and compliance with these rules and regulations;


(3) Reclamation policy; and

(4) Any detailed instructions provided by Reclamation setting conditions applicable to an individual appraisal.

§ 426.14 Involuntary acquisition of land.

(i) Historic geologic data;

(ii) Changing crops and cropping patterns; and

(iii) Other factors associated with the nonproject water supply.

(4) If Reclamation and the district cannot reach agreement on the nonproject water supply information within 60-calendar days, Reclamation will review and update the trend information as it deems necessary and make all final determinations considering the data provided by Reclamation and the district. Reclamation will provide these data to the appraisers who must consider the data in the appraisal process, and clearly explain how they used the data in the valuation of the land.

(d) The date of the appraisal. The date of the appraisal will be the date of last inspection by the appraiser(s) unless there is a prior signed instrument, such as an option, contract for sale, agreement for sale, etc., affecting the property. In those cases, the date of appraisal will be the date of such instrument.

(e) Cost of appraisal. If the appraisal is:

(1) The land’s first appraisal, the United States will initially pay the costs of appraising the value of the land, but such costs will be added to the approved sale price for the land. The United States will reimburse itself for these costs from the sale of the land;

(2) Not the land’s first appraisal, the landowner requesting the appraisal must pay any costs associated with the reappraisal, unless the value set by the reappraisal differs by more than 10 percent, in which case the United States will pay for the reappraisal; or

(3) Associated with a sales price reformation as specified in § 426.12(f)(1), the landowner requesting the appraisal must pay any costs associated with the appraisal.

(f) Appraiser selection. Reclamation will select a qualified appraiser to appraise the excess land or land burdened by a deed covenant if the landowner disagrees with the first appraisal. The second appraisal will be prepared by a panel of three qualified appraisers, one designated by the United States, one designated by the district, and the third designated jointly by the first two. The appraisal made by the panel will fix the maximum value of the excess land and will be binding on both parties after review and approval as provided in paragraph (h) of this section.

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