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CHAP. 107.—An act to provide for the sale of desert lands in certain States and Territories— March 3, 1877.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That it shall be lawful for any citizen of the United States, or any person of requisite age "who may be entitled to become a citizen, and who has filed his declaration to become such" and upon payment of twenty five cents per acre—to file a declaration under oath with the register and the receiver of the land district in which any desert land is situated, that he intends to reclaim a tract of desert land not exceeding one section, by conducting water upon the same, within the period of three years thereafter, *Provided however* that the right to the use of water by the person so conducting the same, on or to any tract of desert land of six hundred and forty acres shall depend upon bona fide prior appropriation: and such right shall not exceed the amount of water actually appropriated, and necessarily used for the purpose of irrigation and reclamation: and all surplus water over and above such actual appropriation and use, together with the water of all, lakes, rivers and other sources of water supply upon the public lands and not navigable, shall remain and be held free for the appropriation and use of the public for irrigation, mining and manufacturing purposes subject to existing rights. Said declaration shall describe particularly said section of land if surveyed, and, if unsurveyed, shall describe the same as nearly as possible without a survey. At any time within the period of three years after filing said declaration, upon making satisfactory proof to the register and receiver of the reclamation of said tract of land in the manner aforesaid, and upon the payment to the receiver of the additional sum of one dollar per acre for a tract of land not exceeding six hundred and forty acres to any one person, a patent for the same shall be issued to him. *Provided*, that no person shall be permitted to enter more than one tract of land and not to exceed six hundred and forty acres which shall be in compact form.

Desert lands may be purchased.

Declaration.

Right to use water.

Water on public lands to be free.

Contents of declaration.

Perfection of title.

Limit to quantity of land purchasable.

SECTION 2. That all lands exclusive of timber lands and mineral lands which will not, without irrigation, produce some agricultural crop, shall be deemed desert lands, within the meaning of this act, which fact shall be ascertained by proof of two or more credible witnesses under oath, whose affidavits shall be filed in the land office in which said tract of land may be situated—

Desert lands defined.

SECTION 3. That this act shall only apply to and take effect in the States of California, Oregon and Nevada, and the Territories of Washington, Idaho, Montana, Utah, Wyoming Arizona, New Mexico and Dakota, and the determination of what may be considered desert land shall be subject to the decision and regulation of the Commissioner of the General Land Office.

Localities in which act to apply.

Approved, March 3, 1877.

CHAP. 108.—An act in relation to the Hot Springs reservation in the State of Arkansas. March 3, 1877.

Ante, p. 356.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That so much of section five of an act of June eleventh, eighteen hundred and seventy, in relation to the Hot Springs reservation of Arkansas, as provides for the appointment of a receiver by the court, be, and the same is hereby, repealed: *Provided*, That nothing in this section shall be constued to affect the right of the United States to collect and receive rents already due.

1870, ch. 126, 16 Stat., 149.

Law for receiver of Hot Springs, Ark., repealed.

Rights reserved.

SEC. 2. That it shall be the duty of the President of the United States upon the passage of this act, to appoint three discreet, competent, and disinterested persons, who shall constitute a board of commissioners, any two of whom shall constitute a quorum, who are hereby authorized

Commissioners to lay out Hot Springs reservation.