

**§ 21a. National mining and minerals policy; “minerals” defined; execution of policy under other authorized programs**

The Congress declares that it is the continuing policy of the Federal Government in the national interest to foster and encourage private enterprise in (1) the development of economically sound and stable domestic mining, minerals, metal and mineral reclamation industries, (2) the orderly and economic development of domestic mineral resources, reserves, and reclamation of metals and minerals to help assure satisfaction of industrial, security and environmental needs, (3) mining, mineral, and metallurgical research, including the use and recycling of scrap to promote the wise and efficient use of our natural and reclaimable mineral resources, and (4) the study and development of methods for the disposal, control, and reclamation of mineral waste products, and the reclamation of mined land, so as to lessen any adverse impact of mineral extraction and processing upon the physical environment that may result from mining or mineral activities.

For the purpose of this section “minerals” shall include all minerals and mineral fuels including oil, gas, coal, oil shale and uranium.

It shall be the responsibility of the Secretary of the Interior to carry out this policy when exercising his authority under such programs as may be authorized by law other than this section.

(Pub. L. 91–631, title I, §101, formerly §2, Dec. 31, 1970, 84 Stat. 1876; Pub. L. 104–66, title I, §1081(b), Dec. 21, 1995, 109 Stat. 721; renumbered title I, §101, Pub. L. 104–325, §2(1), (2), Oct. 19, 1996, 110 Stat. 3994.)

AMENDMENTS

1995—Pub. L. 104–66 in last par. struck out at end “For this purpose the Secretary of the Interior shall include in his annual report to the Congress a report on the state of the domestic mining, minerals, and mineral reclamation industries, including a statement of the trend in utilization and depletion of these resources, together with such recommendations for legislative programs as may be necessary to implement the policy of this section.”

SHORT TITLE

Section 1 of Pub. L. 91–631 provided: “That this Act [enacting this section] may be cited as the ‘Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970.’”

**§ 22. Lands open to purchase by citizens**

Except as otherwise provided, all valuable mineral deposits in lands belonging to the United States, both surveyed and unsurveyed, shall be free and open to exploration and purchase, and the lands in which they are found to occupation and purchase, by citizens of the United States and those who have declared their intention to become such, under regulations prescribed by law, and according to the local customs or rules of miners in the several mining districts, so far as the same are applicable and not inconsistent with the laws of the United States.

(R.S. §2319.)

CODIFICATION

R.S. §2319 derived from act May 10, 1872, ch. 152, §1, 17 Stat. 91.

Words “Except as otherwise provided,” were editorially supplied on authority of act Feb. 25, 1920, ch. 85, 41 Stat. 437, popularly known as the Mineral Lands Leasing Act, which is classified to chapter 3A (§181 et seq.) of this title.

SHORT TITLE

Sections 22 to 24, 26 to 28, 29, 30, 33 to 35, 37, 39 to 43, and 47 of this title are based on sections of the Revised Statutes which are derived from act May 10, 1872, ch. 152, 17 Stat. 91, popularly known as the “General Mining Act of 1872” and as the “Mining Law of 1872”.

**§ 23. Length of claims on veins or lodes**

Mining claims upon veins or lodes of quartz or other rock in place bearing gold, silver, cinnabar, lead, tin, copper, or other valuable deposits, located prior to May 10, 1872, shall be governed as to length along the vein or lode by the customs, regulations, and laws in force at the date of their location. A mining claim located after the 10th day of May 1872, whether located by one or more persons, may equal, but shall not exceed, one thousand five hundred feet in length along the vein or lode; but no location of a mining claim shall be made until the discovery of the vein or lode within the limits of the claim located. No claim shall extend more than three hundred feet on each side of the middle of the vein at the surface, nor shall any claim be limited by any mining regulation to less than twenty-five feet on each side of the middle of the vein at the surface, except where adverse rights existing on the 10th day of May 1872 render such limitation necessary. The end lines of each claim shall be parallel to each other.

(R.S. §2320.)

CODIFICATION

R.S. §2320 derived from act May 10, 1872, ch. 152, §2, 17 Stat. 91.

**§ 24. Proof of citizenship**

Proof of citizenship, under sections 21, 22 to 24, 26 to 28, 29, 30, 33 to 48, 50 to 52, 71 to 76 of this title and section 661 of title 43, may consist, in the case of an individual, of his own affidavit thereof; in the case of an association of persons unincorporated, of the affidavit of their authorized agent, made on his own knowledge, or upon information and belief; and in the case of a corporation organized under the laws of the United States, or of any State or Territory thereof, by the filing of a certified copy of their charter or certificate of incorporation.

(R.S. §2321.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Sections 21, 22 to 24, 26 to 28, 29, 30, 33 to 48, 50 to 52, 71 to 76 of this title and section 661 of title 43, referred to in text, were in the original “this chapter”, meaning chapter 6 of title 32 of the Revised Statutes, consisting of R.S. §§2318 to 2352.

CODIFICATION

R.S. §2321 derived from act May 10, 1872, ch. 152, §7, 17 Stat. 94.

**§ 25. Affidavit of citizenship**

Applicants for mineral patents, if residing beyond the limits of the district wherein the claim