

shall be terminated; except that the Administrator shall for good cause shown, including force majeure, adverse economic conditions, unavoidable delays in construction, major unanticipated vessel repairs that prevent the permittee from conducting commercial recovery activities during an annual period, or other circumstances beyond the control of the permittee, extend the 10-year period, but not beyond the initial 20-year term of the permit.

(Pub. L. 96-283, title I, §107, June 28, 1980, 94 Stat. 567.)

§ 1418. Diligence requirements

(a) In general

The exploration plan or recovery plan and the terms, conditions, and restrictions of each license and permit issued under this subchapter shall be designed to assure diligent development. Each licensee shall pursue diligently the activities described in the exploration plan of the licensee, and each permittee shall pursue diligently the activities described in the recovery plan of the permittee.

(b) Expenditures

Each license shall require such periodic reasonable expenditures for exploration by the licensee as the Administrator shall establish, taking into account the size of the area of the deep seabed to which the exploration plan associated with the license applies and the amount of funds which is estimated by the Administrator to be required for commercial recovery of hard mineral resources to begin within the time limit established by the Administrator. Such required expenditures shall not be established at a level which would discourage exploration by persons with less costly technology than is prevalent in use.

(c) Commercial recovery

Once commercial recovery is achieved, the Administrator shall, within reasonable limits and taking into consideration all relevant factors, require the permittee to maintain commercial recovery throughout the period of the permit; except that the Administrator shall for good cause shown, including force majeure, adverse economic conditions, or other circumstances beyond the control of the permittee, authorize the temporary suspension of commercial recovery activities. The duration of such a suspension shall not exceed one year at any one time, unless the Administrator determines that conditions justify an extension of the suspension.

(Pub. L. 96-283, title I, §108, June 28, 1980, 94 Stat. 567.)

§ 1419. Protection of the environment

(a) Environmental assessment

(1) Deep ocean mining environmental study (DOMES)

The Administrator shall expand and accelerate the program assessing the effects on the environment from exploration and commercial recovery activities, including seabased processing and the disposal at sea of processing wastes, so as to provide an assessment, as ac-

curate as practicable, of environmental impacts of such activities for the implementation of subsections (b), (c), and (d).

(2) Supporting ocean research

The Administrator also shall conduct a continuing program of ocean research to support environmental assessment activity through the period of exploration and commercial recovery authorized by this chapter. The program shall include the development, acceleration, and expansion, as appropriate, of studies of the ecological, geological, and physical aspects of the deep seabed in general areas of the ocean where exploration and commercial development under the authority of this chapter are likely to occur, including, but not limited to—

- (A) natural diversity of the deep seabed biota;
- (B) life histories of major benthic, midwater, and surface organisms most likely to be affected by commercial recovery activities;
- (C) long- and short-term effects of commercial recovery on the deep seabed biota; and
- (D) assessment of the effects of seabased processing activities.

Within 160 days after June 28, 1980, the Administrator shall prepare a plan to carry out the program described in this subsection, including necessary funding levels for the next five fiscal years, and shall submit the plan to the Congress.

(b) Terms, conditions, and restrictions

Each license and permit issued under this subchapter shall contain such terms, conditions, and restrictions, established by the Administrator, which prescribe the actions the licensee or permittee shall take in the conduct of exploration and commercial recovery activities to assure protection of the environment. The Administrator shall require in all activities under new permits, and wherever practicable in activities under existing permits, the use of the best available technologies for the protection of safety, health, and the environment wherever such activities would have a significant effect on safety, health, or the environment, except where the Administrator determines that the incremental benefits are clearly insufficient to justify the incremental costs of using such technologies. Before establishing such terms, conditions, and restrictions, the Administrator shall consult with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, concerning such terms, conditions, and restrictions, and the Administrator shall take into account and give due consideration to the information contained in each final environmental impact statement prepared with respect to such license or permit pursuant to subsection (d).

(c) Programmatic environmental impact statement

(1) If the Administrator, in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and with the assistance of other ap-

appropriate Federal agencies, determines that a programmatic environmental impact statement is required, the Administrator shall, as soon as practicable after June 28, 1980, with respect to the areas of the oceans in which any United States citizen is expected to undertake exploration and commercial recovery under the authority of this chapter—

(A) prepare and publish draft programmatic environmental impact statements which assess the environmental impacts of exploration and commercial recovery in such areas;

(B) afford all interested parties a reasonable time after such dates of publication to submit comments to the Administrator on such draft statements; and

(C) thereafter prepare (giving full consideration to all comments submitted under subparagraph (B)) and publish final programmatic environmental impact statements regarding such areas.

(2) With respect to the area of the oceans in which exploration and commercial recovery by any United States citizen will likely first occur under the authority of this chapter, the Administrator shall prepare a draft and final programmatic environmental impact statement as required under paragraph (1), except that—

(A) the draft programmatic environmental impact statement shall be prepared and published as soon as practicable but not later than 270 days (or such longer period as the Administrator may establish for good cause shown) after June 28, 1980; and

(B) the final programmatic environmental impact statement shall be prepared and published within 180 days (or such longer period as the Administrator may establish for good cause shown) after the date on which the draft statement is published.

(d) Environmental impact statements on issuance of licenses and permits

The issuance of, but not the certification of an application for, any license or permit under this subchapter shall be deemed to be a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment for purposes of section 4332 of title 42. In preparing an environmental impact statement pursuant to this subsection, the Administrator shall consult with the agency heads referred to in subsection (b) and shall take into account, and give due consideration to, the relevant information contained in any applicable studies and any other environmental impact statement prepared pursuant to this section. Each draft environmental impact statement prepared pursuant to this subsection shall be published, with the terms, conditions, and restrictions proposed pursuant to section 1415(b) of this title, within 180 days (or such longer period as the Administrator may establish for good cause shown in writing) following the date on which the application for the license or permit concerned is certified by the Administrator. Each final environmental impact statement shall be published 180 days (or such longer period as the Administrator may establish for good cause shown in writing) following the date on which the draft environmental impact statement is published.

(e) Effect on other law

For the purposes of this chapter, any vessel or other floating craft engaged in commercial recovery or exploration shall not be deemed to be “a vessel or other floating craft” under section 502(12)(B) of the Clean Water Act [33 U.S.C. 1362(12)(B)] and any discharge of a pollutant from such vessel or other floating craft shall be subject to the Clean Water Act [33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.].

(f) Stable reference areas

(1) Within one year after June 28, 1980, the Secretary of State shall, in cooperation with the Administrator and as part of the international consultations pursuant to section 1428(f) of this title, negotiate with all nations that are identified in such subsection for the purpose of establishing international stable reference areas in which no mining shall take place: *Provided, however,* That this subsection shall not be construed as requiring any substantial withdrawal of deep seabed areas from deep seabed mining authorized by this chapter.

(2) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as authorizing the United States to unilaterally establish such reference area or areas nor shall the United States recognize the unilateral claim to such reference area or areas by any State.

(3) Within four years after June 28, 1980, the Secretary of State shall submit a report to Congress on the progress of establishing such stable reference areas, including the designation of appropriate zones to insure a representative and stable biota of the deep seabed.

(4) For purposes of this section “stable reference areas” shall mean an area or areas of the deep seabed to be used as a reference zone or zones for purposes of resource evaluation and environmental assessment of deep seabed mining in which no mining will occur.

(Pub. L. 96-283, title I, §109, June 28, 1980, 94 Stat. 568.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Clean Water Act, referred to in subsec. (e), is act June 30, 1948, ch. 758, as amended generally by Pub. L. 92-500, §2, Oct. 18, 1972, 86 Stat. 816, also known as the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, which is classified generally to chapter 26 (§1251 et seq.) of Title 33, Navigation and Navigable Waters. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1251 of Title 33 and Tables.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

For transfer of authorities, functions, personnel, and assets of the Coast Guard, including the authorities and functions of the Secretary of Transportation relating thereto, to the Department of Homeland Security, and for treatment of related references, see sections 468(b), 551(d), 552(d), and 557 of Title 6, Domestic Security, and the Department of Homeland Security Reorganization Plan of November 25, 2002, as modified, set out as a note under section 542 of Title 6.

§ 1420. Conservation of natural resources

For the purpose of conservation of natural resources, each license and permit issued under