

§ 1133. Use of wilderness areas

(a) **Purposes of national forests, national park system, and national wildlife refuge system; other provisions applicable to national forests, Superior National Forest, and national park system**

The purposes of this chapter are hereby declared to be within and supplemental to the purposes for which national forests and units of the national park and national wildlife refuge systems are established and administered and—

(1) Nothing in this chapter shall be deemed to be in interference with the purpose for which national forests are established as set forth in the Act of June 4, 1897 (30 Stat. 11), and the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of June 12, 1960 (74 Stat. 215) [16 U.S.C. 528–531].

(2) Nothing in this chapter shall modify the restrictions and provisions of the Shipstead-Nolan Act (Public Law 539, Seventy-first Congress, July 10, 1930; 46 Stat. 1020), the Thy-Blatnik Act (Public Law 733, Eightieth Congress, June 22, 1948; 62 Stat. 568), and the Humphrey-Thye-Blatnik-Andresen Act (Public Law 607, Eighty-Fourth Congress, June 22, 1956; 70 Stat. 326), as applying to the Superior National Forest or the regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture.

(3) Nothing in this chapter shall modify the statutory authority under which units of the national park system are created. Further, the designation of any area of any park, monument, or other unit of the national park system as a wilderness area pursuant to this chapter shall in no manner lower the standards evolved for the use and preservation of such park, monument, or other unit of the national park system in accordance with section 100101(b)(1), chapter 1003, and sections 100751(a), 100752, 100753, and 102101 of title 54, the statutory authority under which the area was created, or any other Act of Congress which might pertain to or affect such area, including, but not limited to, section 796(2) of this title; and chapters 3201 and 3203 of title 54.

(b) **Agency responsibility for preservation and administration to preserve wilderness character; public purposes of wilderness areas**

Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, each agency administering any area designated as wilderness shall be responsible for preserving the wilderness character of the area and shall so administer such area for such other purposes for which it may have been established as also to preserve its wilderness character. Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, wilderness areas shall be devoted to the public purposes of recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation, and historical use.

(c) **Prohibition provisions: commercial enterprise, permanent or temporary roads, mechanical transports, and structures or installations; exceptions: area administration and personal health and safety emergencies**

Except as specifically provided for in this chapter, and subject to existing private rights, there shall be no commercial enterprise and no permanent road within any wilderness area designated by this chapter and, except as necessary

to meet minimum requirements for the administration of the area for the purpose of this chapter (including measures required in emergencies involving the health and safety of persons within the area), there shall be no temporary road, no use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment or motorboats, no landing of aircraft, no other form of mechanical transport, and no structure or installation within any such area.

(d) **Special provisions**

The following special provisions are hereby made:

(1) **Aircraft or motorboats; fire, insects, and diseases**

Within wilderness areas designated by this chapter the use of aircraft or motorboats, where these uses have already become established, may be permitted to continue subject to such restrictions as the Secretary of Agriculture deems desirable. In addition, such measures may be taken as may be necessary in the control of fire, insects, and diseases, subject to such conditions as the Secretary deems desirable.

(2) **Mineral activities, surveys for mineral value**

Nothing in this chapter shall prevent within national forest wilderness areas any activity, including prospecting, for the purpose of gathering information about mineral or other resources, if such activity is carried on in a manner compatible with the preservation of the wilderness environment. Furthermore, in accordance with such program as the Secretary of the Interior shall develop and conduct in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, such areas shall be surveyed on a planned, recurring basis consistent with the concept of wilderness preservation by the United States Geological Survey and the United States Bureau of Mines to determine the mineral values, if any, that may be present; and the results of such surveys shall be made available to the public and submitted to the President and Congress.

(3) **Mining and mineral leasing laws; leases, permits, and licenses; withdrawal of minerals from appropriation and disposition**

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this chapter, until midnight December 31, 1983, the United States mining laws and all laws pertaining to mineral leasing shall, to the same extent as applicable prior to September 3, 1964, extend to those national forest lands designated by this chapter as “wilderness areas”; subject, however, to such reasonable regulations governing ingress and egress as may be prescribed by the Secretary of Agriculture consistent with the use of the land for mineral location and development and exploration, drilling, and production, and use of land for transmission lines, waterlines, telephone lines, or facilities necessary in exploring, drilling, producing, mining, and processing operations, including where essential the use of mechanized ground or air equipment and restoration as near as practicable of the surface of the land disturbed in performing prospecting, location, and, in oil and gas leasing, discovery work, exploration, drilling, and production, as soon as they have served their purpose. Mining locations lying within the

boundaries of said wilderness areas shall be held and used solely for mining or processing operations and uses reasonably incident thereto; and hereafter, subject to valid existing rights, all patents issued under the mining laws of the United States affecting national forest lands designated by this chapter as wilderness areas shall convey title to the mineral deposits within the claim, together with the right to cut and use so much of the mature timber therefrom as may be needed in the extraction, removal, and beneficiation of the mineral deposits, if needed timber is not otherwise reasonably available, and if the timber is cut under sound principles of forest management as defined by the national forest rules and regulations, but each such patent shall reserve to the United States all title in or to the surface of the lands and products thereof, and no use of the surface of the claim or the resources therefrom not reasonably required for carrying on mining or prospecting shall be allowed except as otherwise expressly provided in this chapter: *Provided*, That, unless hereafter specifically authorized, no patent within wilderness areas designated by this chapter shall issue after December 31, 1983, except for the valid claims existing on or before December 31, 1983. Mining claims located after September 3, 1964, within the boundaries of wilderness areas designated by this chapter shall create no rights in excess of those rights which may be patented under the provisions of this subsection. Mineral leases, permits, and licenses covering lands within national forest wilderness areas designated by this chapter shall contain such reasonable stipulations as may be prescribed by the Secretary of Agriculture for the protection of the wilderness character of the land consistent with the use of the land for the purposes for which they are leased, permitted, or licensed. Subject to valid rights then existing, effective January 1, 1984, the minerals in lands designated by this chapter as wilderness areas are withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining laws and from disposition under all laws pertaining to mineral leasing and all amendments thereto.

(4) Water resources, reservoirs, and other facilities; grazing

Within wilderness areas in the national forests designated by this chapter, (1) the President may, within a specific area and in accordance with such regulations as he may deem desirable, authorize prospecting for water resources, the establishment and maintenance of reservoirs, water-conservation works, power projects, transmission lines, and other facilities needed in the public interest, including the road construction and maintenance essential to development and use thereof, upon his determination that such use or uses in the specific area will better serve the interests of the United States and the people thereof than will its denial; and (2) the grazing of livestock, where established prior to September 3, 1964, shall be permitted to continue subject to such reasonable regulations as are deemed necessary by the Secretary of Agriculture.

(5) Commercial services

Commercial services may be performed within the wilderness areas designated by this chapter

to the extent necessary for activities which are proper for realizing the recreational or other wilderness purposes of the areas.

(6) State water laws exemption

Nothing in this chapter shall constitute an express or implied claim or denial on the part of the Federal Government as to exemption from State water laws.

(7) State jurisdiction of wildlife and fish in national forests

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as affecting the jurisdiction or responsibilities of the several States with respect to wildlife and fish in the national forests.

(Pub. L. 88-577, § 4, Sept. 3, 1964, 78 Stat. 893; Pub. L. 95-495, § 4(b), Oct. 21, 1978, 92 Stat. 1650; Pub. L. 102-154, title I, Nov. 13, 1991, 105 Stat. 1000; Pub. L. 102-285, § 10(b), May 18, 1992, 106 Stat. 172; Pub. L. 113-287, § 5(d)(21), Dec. 19, 2014, 128 Stat. 3266.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Act of June 4, 1897, referred to in subsec. (a)(1), is act June 4, 1897, ch. 2, 30 Stat. 11, the Sundry Civil Appropriation Act for Fiscal Year 1898. For classification of that part of this Act classified to the Code, see Tables.

The Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960, referred to in subsec. (a)(1), is Pub. L. 86-517, June 12, 1960, 74 Stat. 215, which is classified generally to sections 528 to 531 of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 528 of this title and Tables.

The Shipstead-Nolan Act, referred to in subsec. (a)(2), is act July 10, 1930, ch. 881, 46 Stat. 1020, which is classified to sections 577 to 577b of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 577 of this title and Tables.

The Thyre-Blatnik Act, referred to in subsec. (a)(2), is act June 22, 1948, ch. 593, 62 Stat. 568, which is classified to sections 577c, 577d, and 577e to 577h of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 577 of this title and Tables.

The Humphrey-Thyre-Blatnik-Andresen Act, referred to in subsec. (a)(2), is act June 22, 1956, ch. 425, 70 Stat. 326, which is classified to sections 577d-1, 577g-1, and 577h of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Tables.

AMENDMENTS

2014—Subsec. (a)(3). Pub. L. 113-287, § 5(d)(21)(B), which directed substitution of “section 796(2) of this title; and chapters 3201 and 3203 of title 54” for “the Act of June 8, 1906 (34 Stat. 225; 16 U.S.C. 432 et seq.; section 3(2) of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 796(2)); and the Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666; 16 U.S.C. 461 et seq.)”, was executed by making the substitution for the same text as directed except with a period at the end of “432 et seq”, to reflect the probable intent of Congress.

Pub. L. 113-287, § 5(d)(21)(A), substituted “section 100101(b)(1), chapter 1003, and sections 100751(a), 100752, 100753, and 102101 of title 54” for “sections 1, 2, 3, and 4 of this title”.

1978—Subsec. (d)(5) to (8). Pub. L. 95-495 redesignated pars. (6) to (8) as (5) to (7), respectively. Former par. (5), which related to the management of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, Superior National Forest, Minnesota, was struck out.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

CHANGE OF NAME

“United States Geological Survey” substituted for “Geological Survey” in subsec. (d)(2) pursuant to provi-

sion of title I of Pub. L. 102-154, set out as a note under section 31 of Title 43, Public Lands.

“United States Bureau of Mines” substituted for “Bureau of Mines” in subsec. (d)(2) pursuant to section 10(b) of Pub. L. 102-285, set out as a note under section 1 of Title 30, Mineral Lands and Mining. For provisions relating to closure and transfer of functions of the United States Bureau of Mines, see Transfer of Functions note set out under section 1 of Title 30.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING IN NATIONAL FOREST WILDERNESS AREAS

Pub. L. 96-560, title I, § 108, Dec. 22, 1980, 94 Stat. 3271, provided that: “The Congress hereby declares that, without amending the Wilderness Act of 1964 [this chapter], with respect to livestock grazing in National Forest wilderness areas, the provisions of the Wilderness Act relating to grazing shall be interpreted and administered in accordance with the guidelines contained under the heading ‘Grazing in National Forest Wilderness’ in the House Committee Report (H. Report 96-617) accompanying this Act [Pub. L. 96-560].”

Executive Documents

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

Enforcement functions of Secretary or other official in Department of the Interior related to compliance with system activities requiring coordination and approval under this chapter and such functions of Secretary or other official in Department of Agriculture, insofar as they involve lands and programs under jurisdiction of that Department, related to compliance with this chapter with respect to pre-construction, construction, and initial operation of transportation system for Canadian and Alaskan natural gas transferred to Federal Inspector, Office of Federal Inspector for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System, until first anniversary of date of initial operation of Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System, see Reorg. Plan No. 1 of 1979, §§ 102(e), (f), 203(a), 44 F.R. 33663, 33666, 93 Stat. 1373, 1376, effective July 1, 1979, set out in the Appendix to Title 5, Government Organization and Employees. Office of Federal Inspector for the Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System abolished and functions and authority vested in Inspector transferred to Secretary of Energy by section 3012(b) of Pub. L. 102-486, set out as an Abolition of Office of Federal Inspector note under section 719e of Title 15, Commerce and Trade. Functions and authority vested in Secretary of Energy subsequently transferred to Federal Coordinator for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation Projects by section 720d(f) of Title 15.

§ 1134. State and private lands within wilderness areas

(a) Access; exchange of lands; mineral interests restriction

In any case where State-owned or privately owned land is completely surrounded by national forest lands within areas designated by this chapter as wilderness, such State or private owner shall be given such rights as may be necessary to assure adequate access to such State-owned or privately owned land by such State or private owner and their successors in interest, or the State-owned land or privately owned land shall be exchanged for federally owned land in the same State of approximately equal value under authorities available to the Secretary of Agriculture: *Provided, however,* That the United States shall not transfer to a State or private owner any mineral interests unless the State or private owner relinquishes or causes to be relinquished to the United States the mineral interest in the surrounded land.

(b) Customary means for ingress and egress to wilderness areas subject to mining claims or other occupancies

In any case where valid mining claims or other valid occupancies are wholly within a designated national forest wilderness area, the Secretary of Agriculture shall, by reasonable regulations consistent with the preservation of the area as wilderness, permit ingress and egress to such surrounded areas by means which have been or are being customarily enjoyed with respect to other such areas similarly situated.

(c) Acquisition of lands

Subject to the appropriation of funds by Congress, the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to acquire privately owned land within the perimeter of any area designated by this chapter as wilderness if (1) the owner concurs in such acquisition or (2) the acquisition is specifically authorized by Congress.

(Pub. L. 88-577, § 5, Sept. 3, 1964, 78 Stat. 896.)

Executive Documents

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

Enforcement functions of Secretary or other official in Department of Agriculture, insofar as they involve lands and programs under jurisdiction of that Department, related to compliance with this chapter with respect to pre-construction, construction, and initial operation of transportation system for Canadian and Alaskan natural gas transferred to Federal Inspector, Office of Federal Inspector for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System, until first anniversary of date of initial operation of Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System, see Reorg. Plan No. 1 of 1979, §§ 102(f), 203(a), 44 F.R. 33663, 33666, 93 Stat. 1373, 1376, effective July 1, 1979, set out in the Appendix to Title 5, Government Organization and Employees. Office of Federal Inspector for the Alaska Natural Gas Transportation System abolished and functions and authority vested in Inspector transferred to Secretary of Energy by section 3012(b) of Pub. L. 102-486, set out as an Abolition of Office of Federal Inspector note under section 719e of Title 15, Commerce and Trade. Functions and authority vested in Secretary of Energy subsequently transferred to Federal Coordinator for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation Projects by section 720d(f) of Title 15.

§ 1135. Gifts, bequests, and contributions

(a) Acceptance by Secretary of Agriculture of land for preservation as wilderness; regulations

The Secretary of Agriculture may accept gifts or bequests of land within wilderness areas designated by this chapter for preservation as wilderness. The Secretary of Agriculture may also accept gifts or bequests of land adjacent to wilderness areas designated by this chapter for preservation as wilderness if he has given sixty days advance notice thereof to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Land accepted by the Secretary of Agriculture under this section shall be come part of the wilderness area involved. Regulations with regard to any such land may be in accordance with such agreements, consistent with the policy of this chapter, as are made at the time of such gift, or such conditions, consistent with such policy, as may be included in, and accepted with, such bequest.