

(3) to the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, \$5,000,000 to carry out subsections (a)(2) and (c).

(Pub. L. 109-58, title III, §362, Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 721.)

#### Editorial Notes

##### REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Mineral Leasing Act, referred to in subsec. (b)(1)(A), is act Feb. 25, 1920, ch. 85, 41 Stat. 437, which is classified generally to chapter 3A (§181 et seq.) of Title 30, Mineral Lands and Mining. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 181 of Title 30 and Tables.

Section 361, referred to in subsec. (b)(2), is section 361 of Pub. L. 109-58, title III, Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 720, which is not classified to the Code.

#### § 15922. Consultation regarding oil and gas leasing on public land

##### (a) In general

Not later than 180 days after August 8, 2005, the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture shall enter into a memorandum of understanding regarding oil and gas leasing on—

- (1) public land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior; and
- (2) National Forest System land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Agriculture.

##### (b) Contents

The memorandum of understanding shall include provisions that—

- (1) establish administrative procedures and lines of authority that ensure timely processing of—

- (A) oil and gas lease applications;
- (B) surface use plans of operation, including steps for processing surface use plans; and
- (C) applications for permits to drill consistent with applicable timelines;

- (2) eliminate duplication of effort by providing for coordination of planning and environmental compliance efforts;

- (3) ensure that lease stipulations are—

- (A) applied consistently;
- (B) coordinated between agencies; and
- (C) only as restrictive as necessary to protect the resource for which the stipulations are applied;

- (4) establish a joint data retrieval system that is capable of—

- (A) tracking applications and formal requests made in accordance with procedures of the Federal onshore oil and gas leasing program; and
- (B) providing information regarding the status of the applications and requests within the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture; and

- (5) establish a joint geographic information system mapping system for use in—

- (A) tracking surface resource values to aid in resource management; and
- (B) processing surface use plans of operation and applications for permits to drill.

(Pub. L. 109-58, title III, §363, Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 722.)

#### § 15923. Methodology

The Secretary of the Interior shall use the same assessment methodology across all geological provinces, areas, and regions in preparing and issuing national geological assessments to ensure accurate comparisons of geological resources.

(Pub. L. 109-58, title III, §364(b), Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 723.)

#### § 15924. Project to improve Federal permit coordination

##### (a) Establishment

The Secretary of the Interior (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”) shall establish a Federal Permit Streamlining Project (referred to in this section as the “Project”).

##### (b) Memorandum of understanding

###### (1) In general

Not later than 90 days after August 8, 2005, the Secretary shall enter into a memorandum of understanding for purposes of this section with—

- (A) the Secretary of Agriculture;
- (B) the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency; and
- (C) the Chief of Engineers.

###### (2) State participation

The Secretary may request that the Governors of the States in which Project offices are located be signatories to the memorandum of understanding.

##### (c) Designation of qualified staff

###### (1) In general

Not later than 30 days after the date of the signing of the memorandum of understanding under subsection (b), all Federal signatory parties shall, if appropriate, assign to each of the field offices identified in subsection (d) an employee who has expertise in the regulatory issues relating to the office in which the employee is employed, including, as applicable, particular expertise in—

- (A) the consultations and the preparation of biological opinions under section 1536 of title 16;
- (B) permits under section 1344 of title 33;
- (C) regulatory matters under the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.);
- (D) planning under the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a et seq.); and
- (E) the preparation of analyses under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

###### (2) Duties

Each employee assigned under paragraph (1) shall—

- (A) not later than 90 days after the date of assignment, report to the Bureau of Land Management Field Managers in the office to which the employee is assigned;
- (B) be responsible for all issues relating to the jurisdiction of the home office or agency of the employee; and