

**§ 399. Leases of unallotted mineral lands withdrawn from entry under mining laws**

*Authority of Secretary of the Interior to lease*—The Secretary of the Interior is authorized and empowered, under general regulations to be fixed by him and under such terms and conditions as he may prescribe, not inconsistent with the terms of this section, to lease to citizens of the United States, or to any association of such persons, or to any corporation organized under the laws of the United States or of any State or Territory thereof, any part of the unallotted lands within any Indian reservation within the States of Arizona, California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Washington, or Wyoming withdrawn prior to June 30, 1919, from entry under the mining laws for the purpose of mining for deposits of gold, silver, copper, and other valuable metalliferous minerals, and non-metalliferous minerals, not including oil and gas, which leases shall be irrevocable, except as herein provided, but which may be declared null and void upon breach of any of their terms.

*Location of mining claims*—Unallotted lands, or such portion thereof as the Secretary of the Interior shall determine, within Indian reservations withheld prior to June 30, 1919, from disposition under the mining laws may be declared by the Secretary of the Interior to be subject to exploration for the discovery of deposits of gold, silver, copper, and other valuable metalliferous minerals and nonmetalliferous minerals, not including oil and gas, by citizens of the United States, and after such declaration mining claims may be located by such citizens in the same manner as mining claims are located under the mining laws of the United States.

*Preference right of locators of claims to lease of lands*—The locators of all such mining claims, or their heirs, successors, or assigns, shall have a preference right to apply to the Secretary of the Interior for a lease, under the terms and conditions of this section, within one year after the date of the location of any mining claim, and any such locator who shall fail to apply for a lease within one year from the date of location shall forfeit all rights to such mining claim.

*Filing copies of location notices*—Duplicate copies of the location notice shall be filed within sixty days with the superintendent in charge of the reservation on which the mining claim is located, and application for a lease under this section may be filed with such superintendent for transmission, through official channels, to the Secretary of the Interior.

*Lands excepted from entry as mining claims*—Lands containing springs, water holes, or other bodies of water needed or used by the Indians for watering livestock, irrigation, or water-power purposes shall not be designated by the Secretary of the Interior as subject to entry under this section.

*Term of lease; renewal*—Leases under this section shall be for a period of twenty years, with the preferential right in the lessee to renew the same for successive periods of ten years, upon such reasonable terms and conditions as may be prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior, unless otherwise provided by law at the time of the expiration of such periods.

*Relinquishment of rights by lessee*—The lessee may, in the discretion of the Secretary of the Interior, be permitted at any time to make written relinquishment of all rights under such a lease and upon acceptance thereof be thereby relieved of all future obligations under said lease.

*Lease of additional land for camp sites and other purposes*—In addition to areas of mineral land to be included in leases under this section the Secretary of the Interior, in his discretion, may grant to the lessee the right to use, during the life of the lease, subject to the payment of an annual rental of not less than \$1 per acre, a tract of unoccupied land, not exceeding forty acres in area, for camp sites, milling, smelting, and refining works, and for other purposes connected with and necessary to the proper development and use of the deposits covered by the lease.

*Reservation of surface of leased land to United States; easements*—The Secretary of the Interior, in his discretion, in making any lease under this section, may reserve to the United States the right to lease for a term not exceeding that of the mineral lease, the surface of the lands embraced within such lease under existing law or laws hereafter enacted, insofar as said surface is not necessary for use of the lessee in extracting and removing the deposits therein: *Provided*, That the said Secretary, during the life of the lease, is hereby authorized to issue such permits for easements herein provided to be reserved.

*Rights and duties of successors to lessees*—Any successor in interest or assignee of any lease granted under this section, whether by voluntary transfer, judicial sale, foreclosure sale, or otherwise, shall be subject to all the conditions of the lease under which such rights are held and also subject to all the provisions and conditions of this section to the same extent as though such successor or assign were the original lessee hereunder.

*Forfeiture of leases; notice*—Any lease granted under this section may be forfeited and canceled by appropriate proceedings in the United States district court for the district in which said property or some part thereof is situated whenever the lessee, after reasonable notice in writing, as prescribed in the lease, shall fail to comply with the terms of this section or with such conditions not inconsistent herewith as may be specifically recited in the lease.

*Royalties payable by lessees*—For the privilege of mining or extracting the mineral deposits in the ground covered by the lease the lessee shall pay to the United States, for the benefit of the Indians, a royalty which shall not be less than 5 per centum of the net value of the output of the minerals at the mine, due and payable at the end of each month succeeding that of the extraction of the minerals from the mine, and an annual rental, payable at the date of such lease and annually thereafter on the area covered by such lease, at the rate of not less than 25 cents per acre for the first calendar year thereafter; not less than 50 cents per acre for the second, third, fourth, and fifth years, respectively; and not less than \$1 per acre for each and every year thereafter during the continuance of the lease, except that such rental for any year shall be credited against the royalties as they accrue for that year.

*Development work by locators or lessees; damage to land*—In addition to the payment of the royalties and rentals as herein provided the lessee shall expend annually not less than \$100 in development work for each mining claim located or leased in the same manner as an annual expenditure for labor or improvements is required to be made under the mining laws of the United States: *Provided*, That the lessee shall also agree to pay all damages occasioned by reason of his mining operations to the land or allotment of any Indian or to the crops or improvements thereon.

*Cutting timber by lessees*—No timber shall be cut upon the reservation by the lessee except for mining purposes and then only after first obtaining a permit from the superintendent of the reservation and upon payment of the fair value thereof.

*Examination of books and accounts of lessees*—The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to examine the books and accounts of lessees, and to require them to submit statements, representations, or reports, including information as to cost of mining, all of which statements, representations, or reports so required shall be upon oath, unless otherwise specified, and in such form and upon such blanks as the Secretary of the Interior may require; and any person making any false statement, representation, or report under oath or in any declaration, certificate, verification, or statement under penalty of perjury as permitted under section 1746 of title 28 shall be subject to punishment as for perjury.

*Disposition of rentals and royalties*—All moneys received from royalties and rentals under the provisions of this section shall be deposited in the Treasury of the United States to the credit of the Indians belonging and having tribal rights on the reservation where the leased land is located, which moneys shall be at all times subject to appropriation by Congress for their benefit, unless otherwise provided by treaty or agreement ratified by Congress: *Provided*, That such moneys shall be subject to the laws authorizing the pro rata distribution of Indian tribal funds.

*Protection of interests of Indians*—The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to perform any and all acts and to make such rules and regulations not inconsistent with this section as may be necessary and proper for the protection of the interests of the Indians and for the purpose of carrying the provisions of this section into full force and effect: *Provided*, That nothing in this section shall be construed or held to affect the right of the States or other local authority to exercise any rights which they may have to levy and collect taxes upon improvements, output of mines, or other rights, property, or assets of any lessee.

*Mining locations by and leases to Indians declared competent*—Mining locations, under the terms of this section, may be made on unallotted lands within Indian reservations by Indians who have heretofore or may hereafter be declared by the Secretary of the Interior to be competent to manage their own affairs; and the said Secretary is authorized and empowered to lease such lands to such Indians in accordance with the provisions of this section.

*Mining locations by and leases to other Indians*—The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to permit other Indians to make locations and obtain leases under the provisions of this section, under such rules and regulations as he may prescribe in regard to the working, developing, disposition, and selling of the products, and the disposition of the proceeds thereof of any such mine by such Indians.

*“Metalliferous” defined*—Wherever the term “metalliferous” is used in this section it shall be defined and construed by the Secretary of the Interior to include magnesite, gypsum, limestone, and asbestos.

(June 30, 1919, ch. 4, §26, 41 Stat. 31; Mar. 3, 1921, ch. 119, 41 Stat. 1231; Dec. 16, 1926, ch. 12, 44 Stat. 922; Pub. L. 94-550, §10, Oct. 18, 1976, 90 Stat. 2536.)

#### REFERENCES IN TEXT

The mining laws of the United States, referred to in text, are classified generally to Title 30, Mineral Lands and Mining.

#### CODIFICATION

Act Mar. 3, 1921, defined the term “metalliferous”.

#### AMENDMENTS

1976—Pub. L. 94-550 inserted “or in any declaration, certificate, verification, or statement under penalty of perjury as permitted under section 1746 of title 28” after “under oath” in paragraph authorizing Secretary of the Interior to examine books and accounts of lessees.

1926—Act Dec. 16, 1926, inserted “and nonmetalliferous minerals, not including oil and gas” after “metalliferous minerals” in first and second paragraphs and reenacted third, fourth, and fifth paragraphs without change.

#### TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

For transfer of functions of other officers, employees, and agencies of Department of the Interior, with certain exceptions, to Secretary of the Interior, with power to delegate, see Reorg. Plan No. 3 of 1950, §§1,2, eff. May 24, 1950, 15 F.R. 3174, 64 Stat. 1262, set out in the Appendix to Title 5, Government Organization and Employees.

### § 400. Leases for mining purposes of reserved and unallotted lands in Fort Peck and Blackfeet Indian Reservations

Lands reserved for school and agency purposes and all other unallotted lands on the Fort Peck and Blackfeet Indian Reservations, in the State of Montana, reserved from allotment or other disposition, may be leased for mining purposes under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior.

(Sept. 20, 1922, ch. 347, 42 Stat. 857.)

#### § 400a. Lease for mining purposes of land reserved for agency or school; disposition of proceeds; royalty

The Secretary of the Interior is authorized under such rules and regulations as he may prescribe, to lease at public auction upon not less than thirty days' public notice for mining purposes land on any Indian reservation reserved for Indian agency or school purposes, in accordance with existing law applicable to other lands in such reservation, and the proceeds arising