

SUBCHAPTER IV—ABANDONED MINE
RECLAMATIONS

§ 1231. Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund

(a) Establishment; administration; State funds

There is created on the books of the Treasury of the United States a trust fund to be known as the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund (hereinafter referred to as the “fund”) which shall be administered by the Secretary of the Interior. State abandoned mine reclamation funds (State funds) generated by grants from this subchapter shall be established by each State pursuant to an approved State program.

(b) Sources of deposits to fund

The fund shall consist of amounts deposited in the fund, from time to time derived from—

- (1) the reclamation fees levied under section 1232 of this title;
- (2) any user charge imposed on or for land reclaimed pursuant to this subchapter after expenditures for maintenance have been deducted;
- (3) donations by persons, corporations, associations, and foundations for the purposes of this subchapter;
- (4) recovered moneys as provided for in this subchapter; and
- (5) interest credited to the fund under subsection (e).

(c) Use of moneys

Moneys in the fund may be used for the following purposes:

- (1) reclamation and restoration of land and water resources adversely affected by past coal mining, including but not limited to reclamation and restoration of abandoned surface mine areas, abandoned coal processing areas, and abandoned coal refuse disposal areas; sealing and filling abandoned deep mine entries and voids; planting of land adversely affected by past coal mining to prevent erosion and sedimentation; prevention, abatement, treatment, and control of water pollution created by coal mine drainage including restoration of stream beds, and construction and operation of water treatment plants; prevention, abatement, and control of burning coal refuse disposal areas and burning coal in situ; prevention, abatement, and control of coal mine subsidence; and establishment of self-sustaining, individual State administered programs to insure private property against damages caused by land subsidence resulting from underground coal mining in those States which have reclamation plans approved in accordance with section 1253 of this title: *Provided*, That funds used for this purpose shall not exceed \$3,000,000 of the funds made available to any State under section 1232(g)(1) of this title;
- (2) acquisition and filling of voids and sealing of tunnels, shafts, and entryways under section 1239 of this title;
- (3) acquisition of land as provided for in this subchapter;
- (4) enforcement and collection of the reclamation fee provided for in section 1232 of this title;
- (5) restoration, reclamation, abatement, control, or prevention of adverse effects of

coal mining which constitutes an emergency as provided for in this subchapter;

- (6) grants to the States to accomplish the purposes of this subchapter;
- (7) administrative expenses of the United States and each State to accomplish the purposes of this subchapter;
- (8) for use under section 1240a of this title;
- (9) for the purpose of section 1257(c) of this title, except that not more than \$10,000,000 shall annually be available for such purpose;
- (10) for the purpose described in section 1232(h) of this title; and
- (11) all other necessary expenses to accomplish the purposes of this subchapter.

(d) Availability of moneys; no fiscal year limitation

(1) In general

Moneys from the fund for expenditures under subparagraphs (A) through (D) of section 1232(g)(3) of this title shall be available only when appropriated for those subparagraphs.

(2) No fiscal year limitation

Appropriations described in paragraph (1) shall be made without fiscal year limitation.

(3) Other purposes

Moneys from the fund shall be available for all other purposes of this subchapter without prior appropriation as provided in subsection (f).

(e) Interest

The Secretary of the Interior shall notify the Secretary of the Treasury as to what portion of the fund is not, in his judgment, required to meet current withdrawals. The Secretary of the Treasury shall invest such portion of the fund in public debt securities with maturities suitable for achieving the purposes of the transfers under section 1232(h) of this title and bearing interest at rates determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, taking into consideration current market yields on outstanding marketable obligations of the United States of comparable maturities. The income on such investments shall be credited to, and form a part of, the fund for the purpose of the transfers under section 1232(h) of this title.

(f) General limitation on obligation authority

(1) In general

From amounts deposited into the fund under subsection (b), the Secretary shall distribute during each fiscal year beginning after September 30, 2007, an amount determined under paragraph (2).

(2) Amounts

(A) For fiscal years 2008 through 2022

For each of fiscal years 2008 through 2022, the amount distributed by the Secretary under this subsection shall be equal to—

- (i) the amounts deposited into the fund under paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of subsection (b) for the preceding fiscal year that were allocated under paragraphs (1) and (5) of section 1232(g) of this title; plus
- (ii) the amount needed for the adjustment under section 1232(g)(8) of this title for the current fiscal year.

(B) Fiscal years 2023 and thereafter

For fiscal year 2023 and each fiscal year thereafter, to the extent that funds are available, the Secretary shall distribute an amount equal to the amount distributed under subparagraph (A) during fiscal year 2022.

(3) Distribution**(A) In general**

Except as provided in subparagraph (B), for each fiscal year, of the amount to be distributed to States and Indian tribes pursuant to paragraph (2), the Secretary shall distribute—

(i) the amounts allocated under paragraph (1) of section 1232(g) of this title, the amounts allocated under paragraph (5) of section 1232(g) of this title, and any amount reallocated under section 1240a(h)(3) of this title in accordance with section 1240a(h)(2) of this title, for grants to States and Indian tribes under section 1232(g)(5) of this title; and

(ii) the amounts allocated under section 1232(g)(8) of this title.

(B) Exclusion

Beginning on October 1, 2007, certified States shall be ineligible to receive amounts under section 1232(g)(1) of this title.

(4) Availability

Amounts in the fund available to the Secretary for obligation under this subsection shall be available until expended.

(5) Addition**(A) In general**

Subject to subparagraph (B), the amount distributed under this subsection for each fiscal year shall be in addition to the amount appropriated from the fund during the fiscal year.

(B) Exceptions

Notwithstanding paragraph (3), the amount distributed under this subsection for the first 4 fiscal years beginning on and after October 1, 2007, shall be equal to the following percentage of the amount otherwise required to be distributed:

- (i) 50 percent in fiscal year 2008.
- (ii) 50 percent in fiscal year 2009.
- (iii) 75 percent in fiscal year 2010.
- (iv) 75 percent in fiscal year 2011.

(Pub. L. 95–87, title IV, § 401, Aug. 3, 1977, 91 Stat. 456; Pub. L. 98–473, title I, § 101(c) [title III, § 324], Oct. 12, 1984, 98 Stat. 1837, 1875; Pub. L. 101–508, title VI, § 6002, Nov. 5, 1990, 104 Stat. 1388–289; Pub. L. 102–486, title XIX, § 19143(b)(3)(A), title XXV, § 2504(c)(1), Oct. 24, 1992, 106 Stat. 3056, 3105; Pub. L. 109–432, div. C, title II, § 201(a), Dec. 20, 2006, 120 Stat. 3006.)

AMENDMENTS

2006—Subsec. (c)(2) to (13). Pub. L. 109–432, § 201(a)(1), redesignated pars. (3) to (5) and (7) to (13) as (2) to (4) and (5) to (11), respectively, and struck out former pars. (2) and (6) which read as follows:

“(2) for transfer on an annual basis to the Secretary of Agriculture for use under section 1236 of this title;” and

“(6) studies, research, and demonstration projects by the Department of the Interior to such extent or in such amounts as are provided in appropriation Acts with public and private organizations conducted in accordance with section 3501 of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986, conducted for the purposes of this subchapter;”.

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 109–432, § 201(a)(2), added subsec. (d) and struck out former subsec. (d) which read as follows: “Moneys from the fund shall be available for the purposes of this subchapter, only when appropriated therefor, and such appropriations shall be made without fiscal year limitations.”

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 109–432, § 201(a)(3), in second sentence, substituted “achieving the purposes of the transfers under section 1232(h) of this title” for “the needs of such fund” and, in third sentence, inserted “for the purpose of the transfers under section 1232(h) of this title” before period at end.

Subsec. (f). Pub. L. 109–432, § 201(a)(4), added subsec. (f).

1992—Subsec. (c)(6). Pub. L. 102–486, § 2504(c)(1), substituted “studies, research, and demonstration projects” for “studies” and struck out “to provide information, advice, and technical assistance, including research and demonstration projects” after “private organizations”.

Subsec. (c)(12), (13). Pub. L. 102–486, § 19143(b)(3)(A), added par. (12) and redesignated former par. (12) as (13).

1990—Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 101–508, § 6002(a)(1), amended par. (1) generally. Prior to amendment, par. (1) read as follows: “the reclamation fees levied under section 1232 of this title: *Provided*, That an amount not to exceed 10 per centum of such reclamation fees collected for any calendar quarter shall be reserved beginning in the first calendar year in which the fee is imposed and continuing for the remainder of that fiscal year and for the period in which such fee is imposed by law, for the purpose of section 1257(c) of this title, subject to appropriation pursuant to authorization under section 1302 of this title: *Provided further*, That not more than \$10,000,000 shall be available for such purposes;”.

Subsec. (b)(5). Pub. L. 101–508, § 6002(a)(2), added par. (5).

Subsec. (c)(1). Pub. L. 101–508, § 6002(b)(1), substituted “section 1232(g)(1)” for “section 1232(g)(2)”.

Subsec. (c)(2). Pub. L. 101–508, § 6002(b)(2), amended par. (2) generally. Prior to amendment, par. (2) read as follows: “for use under section 1236 of this title, by the Secretary of Agriculture, of up to one-fifth of the money deposited in the funds annually and transferred by the Secretary of the Interior to the Secretary of Agriculture for such purposes;”.

Subsec. (c)(6). Pub. L. 101–508, § 6002(b)(3), struck out “by contract” after “Department of the Interior” and inserted “conducted in accordance with section 3501 of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986” after “projects”.

Subsec. (c)(10) to (12). Pub. L. 101–508, § 6002(b)(5), added pars. (10) and (11) and redesignated former par. (10) as (12).

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 101–508, § 6002(c), added subsec. (e).

1984—Subsec. (c)(1). Pub. L. 98–473 inserted at end “and establishment of self-sustaining, individual State administered programs to insure private property against damages caused by land subsidence resulting from underground coal mining in those States which have reclamation plans approved in accordance with section 1253 of this title: *Provided*, That funds used for this purpose shall not exceed \$3,000,000 of the funds made available to any State under section 1232(g)(2) of this title;”.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1990 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 101–508, title VI, § 6014, Nov. 5, 1990, 104 Stat. 1388–298, provided that: “The amendments made by this subtitle [subtitle A (§§ 6001–6014) of title VI of Pub. L. 101–508, enacting section 1240a of this title and amending this section and sections 1232 to 1237, 1239, 1257, and

1302 of this title] shall take effect at the beginning of the first fiscal year [Oct. 1, 1991] immediately following the fiscal year in which this subtitle is enacted.”

SAVINGS PROVISION

Pub. L. 101-508, title VI, §6013, Nov. 5, 1990, 104 Stat. 1388-298, provided that: “Nothing in this subtitle [subtitle A (§§6001-6014) of title VI of Pub. L. 101-508, see Short Title of 1990 Amendment note set out under section 1201 of this title] shall be construed to affect the certifications made by the State of Wyoming, the State of Montana, and the State of Louisiana to the Secretary of the Interior prior to the date of enactment of this subtitle [Nov. 5, 1990] that such State has completed the reclamation of eligible abandoned coal mine lands.”

ABANDONED MINE RECLAMATION FUND; DEPOSIT AND EXPENDITURE OF CERTAIN DONATIONS

Pub. L. 105-277, div. A, §101(e) [title I], Oct. 21, 1998, 112 Stat. 2681-231, 2681-245, provided in part: “That hereafter, donations received to support projects under the Appalachian Clean Streams Initiative and under the Western Mine Lands Restoration Partnerships Initiative, pursuant to 30 U.S.C. 1231, shall be credited to this account and remain available until expended without further appropriation for projects sponsored under these initiatives, directly through agreements with other Federal agencies, or through grants to States, and funding to local governments, or tax exempt private entities.”

ABANDONED MINE RECLAMATION RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Pub. L. 99-509, title III, §3501, Oct. 21, 1986, 100 Stat. 1891, as amended by Pub. L. 102-285, §10(b), May 18, 1992, 106 Stat. 172, provided that after enactment of Pub. L. 99-509, the research and demonstration authorities of the Department of the Interior under former subsec. (c)(6) of this section were to be transferred to, and carried out by, the Director of the United States Bureau of Mines.

§ 1232. Reclamation fee

(a) Payment; rate

All operators of coal mining operations subject to the provisions of this chapter shall pay to the Secretary of the Interior, for deposit in the fund, a reclamation fee of 28 cents per ton of coal produced by surface coal mining and 12 cents per ton of coal produced by underground mining or 10 per centum of the value of the coal at the mine, as determined by the Secretary, whichever is less, except that the reclamation fee for lignite coal shall be at a rate of 2 per centum of the value of the coal at the mine, or 8 cents per ton, whichever is less.

(b) Due date

Such fee shall be paid no later than thirty days after the end of each calendar quarter beginning with the first calendar quarter occurring after August 3, 1977, and ending September 30, 2021.

(c) Submission of statement

Together with such reclamation fee, all operators of coal mine operations shall submit a statement of the amount of coal produced during the calendar quarter, the method of coal removal and the type of coal, the accuracy of which shall be sworn to by the operator and notarized. Such statement shall include an identification of the permittee of the surface coal mining operation, any operator in addition to

the permittee, the owner of the coal, the preparation plant, tripple,¹ or loading point for the coal, and the person purchasing the coal from the operator. The report shall also specify the number of the permit required under section 1256 of this title and the mine safety and health identification number. Each quarterly report shall contain a notification of any changes in the information required by this subsection since the date of the preceding quarterly report. The information contained in the quarterly reports under this subsection shall be maintained by the Secretary in a computerized database.

(d) Penalty

(1) Any person, corporate officer, agent or director, on behalf of a coal mine operator, who knowingly makes any false statement, representation or certification, or knowingly fails to make any statement, representation or certification required in this section shall, upon conviction, be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000, or by imprisonment for not more than one year, or both.

(2) The Secretary shall conduct such audits of coal production and the payment of fees under this subchapter as may be necessary to ensure full compliance with the provisions of this subchapter. For purposes of performing such audits the Secretary (or any duly designated officer, employee, or representative of the Secretary) shall, at all reasonable times, upon request, have access to, and may copy, all books, papers, and other documents of any person subject to the provisions of this subchapter. The Secretary may at any time conduct audits of any surface coal mining and reclamation operation, including without limitation, tipples and preparation plants, as may be necessary in the judgment of the Secretary to ensure full and complete payment of the fees under this subchapter.

(e) Civil action to recover fee

Any portion of the reclamation fee not properly or promptly paid pursuant to this section shall be recoverable, with statutory interest, from coal mine operators, in any court of competent jurisdiction in any action at law to compel payment of debts.

(f) Cooperation from other agencies

All Federal and State agencies shall fully cooperate with the Secretary of the Interior in the enforcement of this section. Whenever the Secretary believes that any person has not paid the full amount of the fee payable under subsection (a) the Secretary shall notify the Federal agency responsible for ensuring compliance with the provisions of section 4121 of title 26.

(g) Allocation of funds

(1) Except as provided in subsection (h), monies deposited into the fund shall be allocated by the Secretary to accomplish the purposes of this subchapter as follows:

(A) 50 percent of the reclamation fees collected annually in any State (other than fees collected with respect to Indian lands) shall be allocated annually by the Secretary to the State, subject to such State having each of the following:

¹ So in original. Probably should be “tipple.”