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SUBCHAPTER I—GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 1701. Congressional declaration of policy

(a) The Congress declares that it is the policy of the United States that—

(1) the public lands be retained in Federal ownership, unless as a result of the land use planning procedure provided for in this Act, it is determined that disposal of a particular parcel will serve the national interest;

(2) the national interest will be best realized if the public lands and their resources are periodically and systematically inventoried and their present and future use is projected through a land use planning process coordinated with other Federal and State planning efforts;

(3) public lands not previously designated for any specific use and all existing classifications of public lands that were effected by executive action or statute before October 21, 1976, be reviewed in accordance with the provisions of this Act;

(4) the Congress exercise its constitutional authority to withdraw or otherwise designate or dedicate Federal lands for specified purposes and that Congress delineate the extent to which the Executive may withdraw lands without legislative action;

(5) in administering public land statutes and exercising discretionary authority granted by them, the Secretary be required to establish comprehensive rules and regulations after considering the views of the general public; and to structure adjudication procedures to assure adequate third party participation, objective administrative review of initial decisions, and expeditious decisionmaking;

(6) judicial review of public land adjudication decisions be provided by law;

(7) goals and objectives be established by law as guidelines for public land use planning, and that management be on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield unless otherwise specified by law;

(8) the public lands be managed in a manner that will protect the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archeological values; that, where appropriate, will preserve and protect certain public lands in their natural condition; that will provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife and domestic animals; and that will provide for outdoor recreation and human occupancy and use;

(9) the United States receive fair market value of the use of the public lands and their resources unless otherwise provided for by statute;

(10) uniform procedures for any disposal of public land, acquisition of non-Federal land for public purposes, and the exchange of such lands be established by statute, requiring each disposal, acquisition, and exchange to be consistent with the prescribed mission of the department or agency involved, and reserving to the Congress review of disposals in excess of a specified acreage;

(11) regulations and plans for the protection of public land areas of critical environmental concern be promptly developed;

(12) the public lands be managed in a manner which recognizes the Nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber, and fiber from the public lands including implementation of the Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970 (84 Stat. 1876, 30 U.S.C. 21a) as it pertains to the public lands; and

(13) the Federal Government should, on a basis equitable to both the Federal and local taxpayer, provide for payments to compensate States and local governments for burdens created as a result of the immunity of Federal lands from State and local taxation.

(b) The policies of this Act shall become effective only as specific statutory authority for their implementation is enacted by this Act or by subsequent legislation and shall then be construed as supplemental to and not in derogation of the purposes for which public lands are administered under other provisions of law.

(Pub. L. 94-579, title I, §102, Oct. 21, 1976, 90 Stat. 2744.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This Act, referred to in subsecs. (a)(1), (3) and (b), is Pub. L. 94-579, Oct. 21, 1976, 90 Stat. 2743, as amended, known as the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Tables.

The Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970, referred to in subsec. (a)(12), is Pub. L. 91-631, Dec. 31, 1970, 84 Stat. 1876, which is classified to section 21a of Title 30, Mineral Lands and Mining.

SHORT TITLE OF 2018 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 115-141, div. O, §101, Mar. 23, 2018, 132 Stat. 1059, provided that: "This division [see Tables for classification] may be cited as the 'Wildfire Suppression Funding and Forest Management Activities Act'."

SHORT TITLE OF 2009 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 111-88, div. A, title V, §501, Oct. 30, 2009, 123 Stat. 2968, provided that: "This title [enacting sections 1748a and 1748b of this title] may be cited as the 'Federal Land Assistance, Management, and Enhancement Act of 2009' or 'FLAME Act of 2009'."

SHORT TITLE OF 1988 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 100-409, §1, Aug. 20, 1988, 102 Stat. 1086, provided that: "This Act [enacting section 1723 of this title, amending section 1716 of this title and sections 505a, 505b, and 521b of Title 16, Conservation, and enacting provisions set out as notes under sections 751 and 1716 of this title] may be cited as the 'Federal Land Exchange Facilitation Act of 1988'."

SHORT TITLE

Pub. L. 94-579, title I, §101, Oct. 21, 1976, 90 Stat. 2744, provided that: "This Act [see Tables for classification] may be cited as the 'Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976'."

SAVINGS PROVISION

Pub. L. 94-579, title VII, §701, Oct. 21, 1976, 90 Stat. 2786, provided that:

"(a) Nothing in this Act, or in any amendment made by this Act [see Short Title note above], shall be construed as terminating any valid lease, permit, patent, right-of-way, or other land use right or authorization existing on the date of approval of this Act [Oct. 21, 1976].

"(b) Notwithstanding any provision of this Act, in the event of conflict with or inconsistency between this Act and the Acts of August 28, 1937 (50 Stat. 874; 43 U.S.C. 1181a-1181j [now 43 U.S.C. 2601 et seq., see Tables for classification]), and May 24, 1939 (53 Stat. 753), insofar as they relate to management of timber resources, and disposition of revenues from lands and resources, the latter Acts shall prevail.

"(c) All withdrawals, reservations, classifications, and designations in effect as of the date of approval of this Act shall remain in full force and effect until modified under the provisions of this Act or other applicable law.

"(d) Nothing in this Act, or in any amendments made by this Act, shall be construed as permitting any person to place, or allow to be placed, spent oil shale, overburden, or byproducts from the recovery of other minerals found with oil shale, on any Federal land other than Federal land which has been leased for the recovery of shale oil under the Act of February 25, 1920 (41 Stat. 437, as amended; 30 U.S.C. 181 et seq.).

"(e) Nothing in this Act shall be construed as modifying, revoking, or changing any provision of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (85 Stat. 688, as amended; 43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.).

"(f) Nothing in this Act shall be deemed to repeal any existing law by implication.

"(g) Nothing in this Act shall be construed as limiting or restricting the power and authority of the United States or—

"(1) as affecting in any way any law governing appropriation or use of, or Federal right to, water on public lands;

"(2) as expanding or diminishing Federal or State jurisdiction, responsibility, interests, or rights in water resources development or control;

"(3) as displacing, superseding, limiting, or modifying any interstate compact or the jurisdiction or responsibility of any legally established joint or common agency of two or more States or of two or more States and the Federal Government;

"(4) as superseding, modifying, or repealing, except as specifically set forth in this Act, existing laws applicable to the various Federal agencies which are authorized to develop or participate in the development of water resources or to exercise licensing or regulatory functions in relation thereto;

"(5) as modifying the terms of any interstate compact;

"(6) as a limitation upon any State criminal statute or upon the police power of the respective States, or as derogating the authority of a local police officer in the performance of his duties, or as depriving any State or political subdivision thereof of any right it may have to exercise civil and criminal jurisdiction on the national resource lands; or as amending, limiting, or infringing the existing laws providing grants of lands to the States.

"(h) All actions by the Secretary concerned under this Act shall be subject to valid existing rights.

"(i) The adequacy of reports required by this Act to be submitted to the Congress or its committees shall not be subject to judicial review.

"(j) Nothing in this Act shall be construed as affecting the distribution of livestock grazing revenues to local governments under the Granger-Thye Act (64 Stat. 85, 16 U.S.C. 580h), under the Act of May 23, 1908 (35 Stat. 260, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 500), under the Act of March 4, 1913 (37 Stat. 843, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 501), and under the Act of June 20, 1910 (36 Stat. 557)."

SEVERABILITY

Pub. L. 94-579, title VII, §707, Oct. 21, 1976, 90 Stat. 2794, provided that: "If any provision of this Act [see Short Title note set out above] or the application thereof is held invalid, the remainder of the Act and the application thereof shall not be affected thereby."

EXISTING RIGHTS-OF-WAY

Pub. L. 94-579, title VII, §706(b), Oct. 21, 1976, 90 Stat. 2794, provided that: "Nothing in section 706(a) [see Tables for classification], except as it pertains to rights-of-way, may be construed as affecting the authority of the Secretary of Agriculture under the Act of June 4, 1897 (30 Stat. 35, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 551); the Act of July 22, 1937 (50 Stat. 525, as amended, 7 U.S.C. 1010-1212); or the Act of September 3, 1954 (68 Stat. 1146, 43 U.S.C. 931c)."

§ 1702. Definitions

Without altering in any way the meaning of the following terms as used in any other statute, whether or not such statute is referred to in, or amended by, this Act, as used in this Act—

(a) The term "areas of critical environmental concern" means areas within the public lands where special management attention is required (when such areas are developed or used or where no development is required) to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards.

(b) The term "holder" means any State or local governmental entity, individual, partnership, corporation, association, or other business entity receiving or using a right-of-way under subchapter V of this chapter.

(c) The term "multiple use" means the management of the public lands and their various resource values so that they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people; making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use to conform to changing needs and conditions; the use of some land for less than all of the resources; a combination of balanced and diverse resource uses that takes into account the long-term needs of future generations for renewable and nonrenewable resources, including, but not limited to, recreation, range, timber, minerals, watershed, wildlife and fish, and natural scenic, scientific and historical values; and harmonious and coordinated management of the various resources without permanent impairment of the productivity of the land and the quality of the environment with consideration being given to the relative values of the resources and not necessarily to the combination of uses that will give the greatest economic return or the greatest unit output.

(d) The term "public involvement" means the opportunity for participation by affected citizens in rulemaking, decisionmaking, and planning with respect to the public lands, including public meetings or hearings held at locations near the affected lands, or advisory mechanisms, or such other procedures as may be necessary to provide public comment in a particular instance.

(e) The term "public lands" means any land and interest in land owned by the United States within the several States and administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Bureau of Land Management, without regard to how the United States acquired ownership, except—

(1) lands located on the Outer Continental Shelf; and

(2) lands held for the benefit of Indians, Aleuts, and Eskimos.

(f) The term "right-of-way" includes an easement, lease, permit, or license to occupy, use, or traverse public lands granted for the purpose listed in subchapter V of this chapter.

(g) The term "Secretary", unless specifically designated otherwise, means the Secretary of the Interior.

(h) The term "sustained yield" means the achievement and maintenance in perpetuity of a high-level annual or regular periodic output of the various renewable resources of the public lands consistent with multiple use.

(i) The term "wilderness" as used in section 1782 of this title shall have the same meaning as it does in section 1131(c) of title 16.

(j) The term "withdrawal" means withholding an area of Federal land from settlement, sale, location, or entry, under some or all of the general land laws, for the purpose of limiting activities under those laws in order to maintain other public values in the area or reserving the area for a particular public purpose or program; or transferring jurisdiction over an area of Federal land, other than "property" governed by the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act, as amended (40 U.S.C. 472)¹ from one department, bureau or agency to another department, bureau or agency.

(k) An "allotment management plan" means a document prepared in consultation with the lessees or permittees involved, which applies to livestock operations on the public lands or on lands within National Forests in the eleven contiguous Western States and which:

(1) prescribes the manner in, and extent to, which livestock operations will be conducted in order to meet the multiple-use, sustained-yield, economic and other needs and objectives as determined for the lands by the Secretary concerned; and

(2) describes the type, location, ownership, and general specifications for the range improvements to be installed and maintained on the lands to meet the livestock grazing and other objectives of land management; and

(3) contains such other provisions relating to livestock grazing and other objectives found by the Secretary concerned to be consistent with the provisions of this Act and other applicable law.

(l) The term "principal or major uses" includes, and is limited to, domestic livestock grazing, fish and wildlife development and utilization, mineral exploration and production, rights-of-way, outdoor recreation, and timber production.

(m) The term "department" means a unit of the executive branch of the Federal Government

¹ See References in Text note below.