

**CHAPTER 14—GRANTS OF DESERT LANDS  
TO STATES FOR RECLAMATION**

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**§ 641. Grant of desert land to States authorized**

To aid the public-land States in the reclamation of the desert lands therein, and the settlement, cultivation and sale thereof in small tracts to actual settlers, the Secretary of the Interior with the approval of the President is, as of August 18, 1894, authorized and empowered, upon proper application of the State to contract and agree, from time to time, with each of the States in which there may be situated desert lands as defined by the Act approved March 3, 1877, and the Act amendatory thereof, approved March 3, 1891, binding the United States to donate, grant, and patent to the State free of cost for survey or price such desert lands, not exceeding one million acres in each State, as the State may cause to be irrigated, reclaimed, occupied, and not less than twenty acres of each one hundred and sixty acre tract cultivated by actual settlers, as thoroughly as is required of citizens who may enter under the desert-land law within ten years from the date of approval by the Secretary of the Interior of the State's application for the segregation of such lands; and if actual construction of reclamation works is not begun within three years after the segregation of the lands or within such further period not exceeding three years, as shall be allowed by the Secretary of the Interior, the said Secretary of the Interior, in his discretion, may restore such lands to the public domain; and if the State fails, within ten years from the date of such segregation, to cause the whole or any part of the lands so segregated to be so irrigated and reclaimed, the Secretary of the Interior may, in his discretion, continue said segregation for a period not exceeding five years, or may, in his discretion, restore such lands not irrigated and reclaimed to the public domain upon the expiration of the ten-year period or of any extension thereof.

Before the application of any State is allowed or any contract or agreement is executed or any segregation of any of the land from the public domain is ordered by the Secretary of the Interior, the State shall file a map of the said land proposed to be irrigated which shall exhibit a plan showing the mode of the contemplated irrigation and which plan shall be sufficient to

thoroughly irrigate and reclaim said land and prepare it to raise ordinary agricultural crops and shall also show the source of the water to be used for irrigation and reclamation.

Any State contracting under this section is authorized to make all necessary contracts to cause the said lands to be reclaimed, and to induce their settlement and cultivation in accordance with and subject to the provisions of this section; but the State shall not be authorized to lease any of said lands or to use or dispose of the same in any way whatever, except to secure their reclamation, cultivation, and settlement.

As fast as any State may furnish satisfactory proof according to such rules and regulations as may be prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior, that any of said lands are irrigated, reclaimed, and occupied by actual settlers, patents shall be issued to the State or its assigns for said lands so reclaimed and settled: *Provided*, That said States shall not sell or dispose of more than one hundred and sixty acres of said lands to any one person, and any surplus of money derived by any State from the sale of said lands in excess of the cost of their reclamation, shall be held as a trust fund for and be applied to the reclamation of other desert lands in such State.

(Aug. 18, 1894, ch. 301, § 4, 28 Stat. 422; Mar. 3, 1901, ch. 853, § 3, 31 Stat. 1188; Jan. 6, 1921, ch. 10, 41 Stat. 1085; Pub. L. 94-579, title VII, § 704(a), Oct. 21, 1976, 90 Stat. 2792.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Act approved March 3, 1877, referred to in text, is act Mar. 3, 1877, ch. 107, 19 Stat. 377, as amended, popularly known as the Desert Lands Act, which is classified generally to sections 321 to 323, 325, 327 to 329 of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Tables.

The Act amendatory thereof, approved March 3, 1891, referred to in text, is act Mar. 3, 1891, ch. 561, 26 Stat. 1095, which enacted sections 161, 162, 165, 173, 174, 185, 202, 212, 321, 323, 325, 327 to 329, 663, 671, 687a-6, 718, 728, 732, 893, 946 to 949, 989, 2505, and 2506 of this title, former section 1181 of this title, sections 471, 607, 611, 611a, and 613 of Title 16, Conservation, section 426 of Title 25, Indians, former section 495 of Title 25, and sections 30, 36, 44, 45, 48, and 52 of Title 30, Mineral Lands and Mining. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Tables.

AMENDMENTS

1976—Pub. L. 94-579 struck out provisions authorizing Secretary of the Interior to promulgate regulations for reservation of lands by the State.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1976 AMENDMENT

Pub. L. 94-579, title VII, § 704(a), Oct. 21, 1976, 90 Stat. 2792, provided that the amendment made by section 704(a) is effective on and after Oct. 21, 1976.

SHORT TITLE

This section is popularly known as the "Carey Act".

SAVINGS PROVISION

Amendment by Pub. L. 94-579 not to be construed as terminating any valid lease, permit, patent, etc., existing on Oct. 21, 1976, see section 701 of Pub. L. 94-579, set out as a note under section 1701 of this title.

**§ 641a. Issuance of quitclaim deeds; patents for segregated lands**

The Secretary of the Interior shall issue quitclaim deeds to the public-land States for all