

§ 15908. Preservation of geological and geophysical data

(a) Short title

This section may be cited as the “National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program Act of 2005”.

(b) Program

The Secretary shall carry out a National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program in accordance with this section—

- (1) to archive geologic, geophysical, and engineering data, maps, well logs, and samples;
- (2) to provide a national catalog of such archival material; and
- (3) to provide technical and financial assistance related to the archival material.

(c) Plan

Not later than 1 year after August 8, 2005, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a plan for the implementation of the Program.

(d) Data archive system

(1) Establishment

The Secretary shall establish, as a component of the Program, a data archive system to provide for the storage, preservation, and archiving of subsurface, surface, geological, geophysical, and engineering data and samples. The Secretary, in consultation with the Advisory Committee, shall develop guidelines relating to the data archive system, including the types of data and samples to be preserved.

(2) System components

The system shall be comprised of State agencies that elect to be part of the system and agencies within the Department of the Interior that maintain geological and geophysical data and samples that are designated by the Secretary in accordance with this subsection. The Program shall provide for the storage of data and samples through data repositories operated by such agencies.

(3) Limitation of designation

The Secretary may not designate a State agency as a component of the data archive system unless that agency is the agency that acts as the geological survey in the State.

(4) Data from Federal land

The data archive system shall provide for the archiving of relevant subsurface data and samples obtained from Federal land—

- (A) in the most appropriate repository designated under paragraph (2), with preference being given to archiving data in the State in which the data were collected; and
- (B) consistent with all applicable law and requirements relating to confidentiality and proprietary data.

(e) National catalog

(1) In general

As soon as practicable after August 8, 2005, the Secretary shall develop and maintain, as a component of the Program, a national catalog that identifies—

- (A) data and samples available in the data archive system established under subsection (d);

(B) the repository for particular material in the system; and

(C) the means of accessing the material.

(2) Availability

The Secretary shall make the national catalog accessible to the public on the site of the Survey on the Internet, consistent with all applicable requirements related to confidentiality and proprietary data.

(f) Advisory Committee

(1) In general

The Advisory Committee shall advise the Secretary on planning and implementation of the Program.

(2) New duties

In addition to its duties under the National Geologic Mapping Act of 1992 (43 U.S.C. 31a et seq.), the Advisory Committee shall perform the following duties:

(A) Advise the Secretary on developing guidelines and procedures for providing assistance for facilities under subsection (g)(1).

(B) Review and critique the draft implementation plan prepared by the Secretary under subsection (c).

(C) Identify useful studies of data archived under the Program that will advance understanding of the Nation’s energy and mineral resources, geologic hazards, and engineering geology.

(D) Review the progress of the Program in archiving significant data and preventing the loss of such data, and the scientific progress of the studies funded under the Program.

(E) Include in the annual report to the Secretary required under section 5(b)(3)¹ of the National Geologic Mapping Act of 1992 (43 U.S.C. 31d(b)(3)) an evaluation of the progress of the Program toward fulfilling the purposes of the Program under subsection (b).

(g) Financial assistance

(1) Archive facilities

Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary shall provide financial assistance to a State agency that is designated under subsection (d)(2) for providing facilities to archive energy material.

(2) Studies

Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary shall provide financial assistance to any State agency designated under subsection (d)(2) for studies and technical assistance activities that enhance understanding, interpretation, and use of materials archived in the data archive system established under subsection (d).

(3) Federal share

The Federal share of the cost of an activity carried out with assistance under this subsection shall be not more than 50 percent of the total cost of the activity.

(4) Private contributions

The Secretary shall apply to the non-Federal share of the cost of an activity carried out

¹ See References in Text note below.

with assistance under this subsection the value of private contributions of property and services used for that activity.

(h) Report

The Secretary shall include in each report under section 8 of the National Geologic Mapping Act of 1992 (43 U.S.C. 31g)—

- (1) a description of the status of the Program;
- (2) an evaluation of the progress achieved in developing the Program during the period covered by the report; and
- (3) any recommendations for legislative or other action the Secretary considers necessary and appropriate to fulfill the purposes of the Program under subsection (b).

(i) Maintenance of State effort

It is the intent of Congress that the States not use this section as an opportunity to reduce State resources applied to the activities that are the subject of the Program.

(j) Definitions

In this section:

(1) Advisory Committee

The term “Advisory Committee” means the advisory committee established under section 5 of the National Geologic Mapping Act of 1992 (43 U.S.C. 31d).

(2) Program

The term “Program” means the National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program carried out under this section.

(3) Secretary

The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the United States Geological Survey.

(4) Survey

The term “Survey” means the United States Geological Survey.

(k) Authorization of appropriations

There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2029, to remain available until expended.

(Pub. L. 109–58, title III, §351, Aug. 8, 2005, 119 Stat. 711; Pub. L. 116–260, div. Z, title VII, §7002(l), Dec. 27, 2020, 134 Stat. 2575.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The National Geologic Mapping Act of 1992, referred to in subsec. (f)(2), is Pub. L. 102–285, May 18, 1992, 106 Stat. 166, which is classified principally to sections 31a to 31h of Title 43, Public Lands. Par. (3) of section 5(b) of the Act was redesignated par. (4) by Pub. L. 111–11, title XI, §11001(f)(2)(B), Mar. 30, 2009, 123 Stat. 1415, and is now classified to section 31d(b)(4) of Title 43. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 31a of Title 43 and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

2020—Subsec. (k). Pub. L. 116–260 substituted “\$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2029, to remain available until expended” for “\$30,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2006 through 2010”.

§ 15909. Gas hydrate production incentive

(a) Purpose

The purpose of this section is to promote natural gas production from the natural gas hy-

drate resources on the outer Continental Shelf and Federal lands in Alaska by providing royalty incentives.

(b) Suspension of royalties

(1) In general

The Secretary may grant royalty relief in accordance with this section for natural gas produced from gas hydrate resources under an eligible lease.

(2) Eligible leases

A lease shall be an eligible lease for purposes of this section if—

(A) it is issued under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (43 U.S.C. 1331 et seq.), or is an oil and gas lease issued for onshore Federal lands in Alaska;

(B) it is issued prior to January 1, 2016; and

(C) production under the lease of natural gas from gas hydrate resources commences prior to January 1, 2018.

(3) Amount of relief

The Secretary shall conduct a rulemaking and grant royalty relief under this section as a suspension volume if the Secretary determines that such royalty relief would encourage production of natural gas from gas hydrate resources from an eligible lease. The maximum suspension volume shall be 30 billion cubic feet of natural gas per lease. Such relief shall be in addition to any other royalty relief under any other provision applicable to the lease that does not specifically grant a gas hydrate production incentive. Such royalty suspension volume shall be applied to any eligible production occurring on or after the date of publication of the advanced notice of proposed rulemaking.

(4) Limitation

The Secretary may place limitations on royalty relief granted under this section based on market price.

(c) Application

This section shall apply to any eligible lease issued before, on, or after August 8, 2005.

(d) Rulemakings

(1) Requirement

The Secretary shall publish the advanced notice of proposed rulemaking within 180 days after August 8, 2005, and complete the rulemaking implementing this section within 365 days after August 8, 2005.

(2) Gas hydrate resources defined

Such regulations shall define the term “gas hydrate resources” to include both the natural gas content of gas hydrates within the hydrate stability zone and free natural gas trapped by and beneath the hydrate stability zone.

(e) Review

Not later than 365 days after August 8, 2005, the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, shall carry out a review of, and submit to Congress a report on, further opportunities to enhance production of natural gas from gas hydrate resources on the outer Continental Shelf and on Federal lands in Alaska