

#### § 2521.4

the original deed of assignment or a certified copy thereof. Where the deed of assignment is recorded a certified copy may be made by the officer who has custody of the record. Where the original deed is presented to an officer qualified to take proof in desert-land cases, a copy certified by such officer will be accepted.

(2) An assignee must file with his deed of assignment, a statement on a form approved by the Director, showing his qualifications to take the entry assigned to him. He must show what applications or entries, if any, have been made by him or what entries assigned to him under the agricultural public land laws, and he must also show his qualifications as a citizen of the United States; that he is 21 years of age or over; and also that he is a resident citizen of the State in which the land assigned to him is situated, except in the State of Nevada, where citizenship of the United States only is required. If the assignee is not a native-born citizen of the United States, he should also furnish a statement as to his citizenship status in accordance with subpart 1811 of this chapter. If the assignee is a woman, she should in all cases state whether she is married, and if so, she must make the showing required by subpart 1811 of this chapter. Desert-land entries are initiated by the payment of 25 cents per acre, and no assignable right is acquired by the application prior to such payment. (6 L.D. 541, 33 L.D. 152.) An assignment made on the day of such payment, or soon thereafter, is treated as suggesting fraud, and such cases will be carefully scrutinized. The provisions of law authorizing the assignment of desert entries, in whole or in part, furnish no authority to a claimant under said law to make an executory contract to convey the land after the issuance of patent and thereafter to proceed with the submission of final proof in furtherance of such contract. (34 L.D. 383.) The sale of land embraced in an entry at any time before final payment is made must be regarded as an assignment of the entry, and in such cases the person buying the land must show that he possesses all the qualifications required of an assignee. (29 L.D. 453.) The assignor of a desert-land

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entry may execute the assignment before any officer authorized to take acknowledgements of deeds. The assignee must furnish a statement on a form approved by the Director as to his qualifications.

(3) No assignments of desert-land entries or parts of entries are conclusive until examined in the proper office and found satisfactory and the assignment recognized. When recognized, however, the assignee takes the place of the assignor as effectively as though he had made the entry, and is subject to any requirement that may be made relative thereto. The assignment of a desert-land entry to one disqualified to acquire title under the desert-land law, and to whom, therefore, recognition of the assignment is refused by the authorizing officer, does not of itself render the entry fraudulent, but leaves the right thereto in the assignor. In such connection, however, see 42 L.D. 90 and 48 L.D. 519.

(4) All applications for recognition of assignment of desert-land entries must be accompanied by an application service fee of \$10 which will not be returnable.

#### § 2521.4 When lands may be sold, taxed, or mortgaged.

(a) After final proof and payment have been made the land may be sold and conveyed to another person without the approval of the Bureau of Land Management, but all such conveyances are nevertheless subject to the superior rights of the United States, and the title so contained would fall if it should be finally determined that the entry was illegal or that the entryman had failed to comply with the law.

(b) Lands embraced in unperfected desert-land entries are not subject to taxation by the State authorities, nor to levy and sale under execution to satisfy judgments against the entrymen, except as hereinafter set forth in this section.

(c) Lands embraced in desert-land entries within an irrigation district which the Secretary of the Interior has approved under the Act of August 11, 1916 (39 Stat. 506; 43 U.S.C. 621-630), may be taxed and otherwise dealt with as provided by said act, and lands in desert-land entries within irrigation

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projects constructed under the Reclamation Act may be taxed as provided for by the Act of June 13, 1930 (46 Stat. 581; 43 U.S.C. 455, 455a-455c).

(d) A desert-land entryman may, however, mortgage his interest in the entered land if, by the laws of the State in which the land is situated, a mortgage of land is regarded as merely creating a lien thereon and not as a conveyance thereof. The purchaser at a sale had for the foreclosure of such mortgage may be recognized as assignee upon furnishing proof of his qualifications to take a desert-land entry by assignment. Transferees, after final proof, mortgagees, or other encumbrancers may file in the proper office written notice stating the nature of their claims, and they will thereupon become entitled to receive notice of any action taken by the Bureau of Land Management with reference to the entry.

(e) The filing of all notices of recordation of claim by transferees, mortgagees or other encumbrancer under this section must be accompanied by a service charge of \$10 which will not be returnable.

### § 2521.5 Annual proof.

(a) *Showing required.* (1) In order to test the sincerity and good faith of claimants under the desert-land laws and to prevent the segregation for a number of years of public lands in the interest of persons who have no intention to reclaim them, Congress, in the Act of March 3, 1891 (26 Stat. 1096; 43 U.S.C. 327, 328) made the requirement that a map be filed at the initiation of the entry showing the mode of contemplated irrigation and the proposed source of water supply, and that there be expended yearly for 3 years from the date of the entry not less than \$1 for each acre of the tract entered, making a total of not less than \$3 per acre, in the necessary irrigation, reclamation, and cultivation of the land, in permanent improvements thereon, and in the purchase of water rights for the irrigation thereof, and that at the expiration of the third year a map or plan be filed showing the character and extent of the improvements placed on the claim. Said act, however, authorizes the submission of final proof at an earlier date

than 4 years from the time the entry is made in cases wherein reclamation has been effected and expenditures of not less than \$3 per acre have been made.

(2) Yearly or annual proof of expenditures must consist of the statements of *two or more credible witnesses*, each of whom must have general knowledge that the expenditures were made for the purpose stated in the proof. Annual proofs must contain itemized statements showing the manner in which expenditures were made.

(b) *Acceptable expenditures.* (1) Expenditures for the construction and maintenance of storage reservoirs, dams, canals, ditches, and laterals to be used by claimant for irrigating his land; for roads where they are necessary; for erecting stables, corrals, etc.; for digging wells, where the water therefrom is to be used for irrigating the land; for stock or interest in an approved irrigation company, or for taxes paid to an approved irrigation district through which water is to be secured to irrigate the land; and for leveling and bordering land proposed to be irrigated, will be accepted. Expenditures for fencing all or a portion of the claim, for surveying for the purpose of ascertaining the levels for canals, ditches, etc., and for the first breaking or clearing of the soil are also acceptable.

(2) The value to be attached to, and the credit to be given for, an expenditure for works or improvements is the reasonable value of the work done or improvement placed upon the land, according to the market price therefor, or for similar work or improvements prevailing in the vicinity, and not the amount alleged by a claimant to have been expended nor the mere proof of expenditures, as exhibited by checks or other vouchers. (*Bradley v. Vasold*, 36 L.D. 106.)

(c) *Expenditures not acceptable.* (1) Expenditures for cultivation after the soil has been first prepared may not be accepted, because the claimant is supposed to be compensated for such work by the crops to be reaped as a result of cultivation. Expenditures for surveying the claim in order to locate the corners of same may not be accepted. The cost of tools, implements, wagons, and repairs to same, used in construction