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Subpart 2520—Desert-Land Entries: General

AUTHORITY: R.S. 2478; 43 U.S.C. 1201.

SOURCE: 35 FR 9581, June 13, 1970, unless otherwise noted.

§ 2520.0-1 Purpose.

(a) It is the purpose of the statutes governing desert-land entries to encourage and promote the reclamation, by irrigation, of the arid and semiarid public lands of the Western States through individual effort and private capital, it being assumed that settlement and occupation will naturally follow when the lands have thus been rendered more productive and habitable.

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§ 2520.0-3 Authority.

The Act of March 3, 1877 (19 Stat. 377; 43 U.S.C. 321-323) as amended by the Act of March 3, 1891 (26 Stat. 1096; 43 U.S.C. 231, 323, 325, 327-329), provides for the making of desert-land entries in the States of Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

§ 2520.0-5 Definitions.

(a) As used in the desert-land laws and the regulations of this subpart:

(1) *Reclamation* requires conducting water in adequate amounts and quality to the land so as to render it available for distribution when needed for irrigation and cultivation.

(2) *Cultivation* requires the operation, practice, or act of tillage or preparation of land for seed, and keeping the ground in a state favorable for the growth of crops.

(3) *Irrigation* requires the application of water to land for the purpose of growing crops.

(4) *Crop* includes any agricultural product to which the land under consideration is generally adapted and which would return a fair reward for the expense of producing it.

(5) *Water supply*, to be adequate, must be sufficient to irrigate successfully and to reclaim all of the irrigable land embraced in an entry.

(6) *Water right* means the authority, whether by prior ownership, contract, purchase, or appropriation in accordance with state law, to use water on the land to be irrigated.

§ 2520.0-7 Cross references.

(a) For assignment of desert-land entries within Government reclamation projects, see §2524.5(a).

(b) For provisions under Appeals and Hearings see parts 1840 and 1850 of this chapter.

(c) For relinquishments, in general, see subpart 1825 of this chapter.

(d) For residence and cultivation requirements under the homestead laws, see §2511.4-2(a).

§ 2520.0-8 Land subject to disposition.

(a) *Land that may be entered as desert land.* (1) As the desert-land law requires

the artificial irrigation of any land entered thereunder, lands which are not susceptible of irrigation by practicable means are not deemed subject to entry as desert lands. The question as to whether any particular tract sought to be entered as desert land is in fact irrigable from the source proposed by the applicant will be investigated and determined before the application for entry is allowed. In order to be subject to entry under the desert-land law, public lands must be not only irrigable but also surveyed, unreserved, unappropriated, non-mineral (except lands withdrawn, classified, or valuable for coal, phosphate, nitrate, potash, sodium, sulphur, oil, gas or asphaltic minerals, which may be entered with a reservation of such mineral deposits, as explained in subpart 2093, nontimbered, and such as will not, without artificial irrigation, produce any reasonably remunerative agricultural crop by the usual means or methods of cultivation. In this latter class are those lands which, one year with another for a series of years, will not without irrigation produce paying crops, but on which crops can be successfully grown in alternate years by means of the so-called dry-farming system. (37 L.D. 522 and 42 L.D. 524.)

(2) Applications to make desert-land entries of lands embraced in applications, permits, or leases under the Act of February 25, 1920 (41 Stat. 437), if in all other respects complete, will be treated in accordance with §§ 2093.0-3 to 2093.0-7. Applications to make desert-land entries of lands within a naval petroleum reserve must be rejected, as no desert-land entry may be allowed for such lands.

(3) Land that has been effectually reclaimed is not subject to desert land entry.

(b) *Quantity of lands that may be entered.* An entry of lands under the Act of March 3, 1877, is limited to 320 acres, subject to the following additional limitations:

(1) An entry of lands within an irrigation district which the Secretary of the Interior or his delegate has approved under the Act of August 11, 1916 (39 Stat. 506; 43 U.S.C. 621-630), is limited to 160 acres.

(2) An entryman may have a desert-land entry for such a quantity of land as, taken together with all land acquired and claimed by him under the other agricultural land laws since August 30, 1890, does not exceed 320 acres in the aggregate, or 480 acres if he shall have made an enlarged homestead entry of 320 acres (Acts of August 30, 1890; 26 Stat. 391; 43 U.S.C. 212; and of February 27, 1917; 39 Stat. 946; 43 U.S.C. 330).

(c) *Entries restricted to surveyed lands.* Unsurveyed public land withdrawn by Executive Orders 6910 and 6964 of November 26, 1934, and February 5, 1935, respectively, is not subject to appropriation, under the desert-land laws, until such appropriation has been authorized by classification. (See parts 2410, 2420, and 2430.)

(d) *Economic unit requirements, compactness.* (1) One or more tracts of public lands may be included in a desert land entry and the tracts so entered need not be contiguous. All the tracts entered, however, shall be sufficiently close to each other to be managed satisfactorily as an economic unit. In addition, the lands in the entry must be in as compact a form as possible taking into consideration the character of available public lands and the effect of allowance of the entry on the remaining public lands in the area.

(2) In addition to the other requirements of the regulations in this part, applicants for desert land entry must submit with their applications information showing that the tracts applied for are sufficiently close to each other to be managed satisfactorily as an economic unit and that the lands in the application are as compact as possible in the circumstances.

(3) In determining whether an entry can be allowed in the form sought, the authorized officer of the Bureau of Land Management will take into consideration such factors as the topography of the applied for and adjoining lands, the availability of public lands near the lands sought, the private lands farmed by the applicant, the farming systems and practices common to the locality and the character of the lands sought, and the practicability of farming the lands as an economically feasible operating unit.