

§ 228.2

through which use of the surface of National Forest System lands in connection with operations authorized by the United States mining laws (30 U.S.C. 21-54), which confer a statutory right to enter upon the public lands to search for minerals, shall be conducted so as to minimize adverse environmental impacts on National Forest System surface resources. It is not the purpose of these regulations to provide for the management of mineral resources; the responsibility for managing such resources is in the Secretary of the Interior.

§ 228.2 Scope.

These regulations apply to operations hereafter conducted under the United States mining laws of May 10, 1872, as amended (30 U.S.C. 22 *et seq.*), as they affect surface resources on all National Forest System lands under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Agriculture to which such laws are applicable: *Provided, however,* That any area of National Forest lands covered by a special Act of Congress (16 U.S.C. 482a-482q) is subject to the provisions of this part and the provisions of the special act, and in the case of conflict the provisions of the special act shall apply.

§ 228.3 Definitions.

For the purposes of this part the following terms, respectively, shall mean:

(a) *Operations.* All functions, work, and activities in connection with prospecting, exploration, development, mining or processing of mineral resources and all uses reasonably incident thereto, including roads and other means of access on lands subject to the regulations in this part, regardless of whether said operations take place on or off mining claims.

(b) *Operator.* A person conducting or proposing to conduct operations.

(c) *Person.* Any individual, partnership, corporation, association, or other legal entity.

(d) *Mining claim.* Any unpatented mining claim or unpatented millsite authorized by the United States mining laws of May 10, 1872, as amended (30 U.S.C. 22 *et seq.*).

(e) *Authorized officer.* The Forest Service officer to whom authority to

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review and approve operating plans has been delegated.

§ 228.4 Plan of operations—notice of intent—requirements.

(a) If the District Ranger determines that any operation is causing or will likely cause significant disturbance of surface resources, the operator shall submit a proposed plan of operations to the District Ranger.

(1) Unless the District Ranger determines that an operation is causing or will likely cause a significant disturbance of surface resources, the requirements to submit a plan of operations shall not apply:

(i) To operations which will be limited to the use of vehicles on existing public roads or roads used and maintained for National Forest purposes;

(ii) To individuals desiring to search for and occasionally remove small mineral samples or specimens;

(iii) To prospecting and sampling which will not involve removal of more than a reasonable amount of mineral deposit for analysis and study;

(iv) To marking and monumenting a mining claim; or

(v) To subsurface operations.

(2) Except as provided in this paragraph, a notice of intent to operate is required from any person proposing to conduct operations which might cause disturbance of surface resources. Such notice of intent shall be submitted to the District Ranger having jurisdiction over the area in which the operations will be conducted. Each notice of intent to operate shall provide information sufficient to identify the area involved, the nature of the proposed operations, the route of access to the area of operations, and the method of transport. If a notice of intent is filed, the District Ranger will, within 15 days of receipt thereof, notify the operator whether a plan of operations is required. A notice of intent need not be filed:

(i) Where a plan of operations is submitted for approval in lieu thereof;

(ii) For operations excepted in paragraph (a)(1) of this section from the requirement to file a plan of operations; or

(iii) For operations which will not involve the use of mechanized