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**THE WHITE HOUSE**  
**WASHINGTON**

**Date** 5/6/75

**TO:** John Marsh

**FROM:** **CHARLES LEPPERT**

**Please Handle** \_\_\_\_\_

**For Your Information** X

**Per Our Conversation** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other:**

*Strip  
mine file*

## SURFACE MINING CONTROL AND RECLAMATION ACT OF 1975

MAY 2, 1975.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. UDALL, from the committee of conference,  
submitted the following

### CONFERENCE REPORT

[To accompany H.R. 25]

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 25) to provide for the cooperation between the Secretary of the Interior and the States with respect to the regulation of surface mining operations, and the acquisition and reclamation of abandoned mines, and for other purposes, having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate and agree to the same with an amendment as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by the Senate amendment insert the following:

*That this Act may be cited as the "Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1975".*

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## TITLE I—STATEMENT OF FINDINGS AND POLICY

## FINDINGS

## SEC. 101. The Congress finds and declares that—

(a) extraction of coal and other minerals from the earth can be accomplished by various methods of mining, including surface mining;

(b) coal mining operations presently contribute significantly to the Nation's energy requirements; surface coal mining constitutes one method of extraction of the resource; the overwhelming percentage of the Nation's coal reserves can only be extracted by underground mining methods, and it is, therefore, essential to the national interest to insure the existence of an expanding and economically healthy underground coal mining industry;

(c) many surface mining operations result in disturbances of surface areas that burden and adversely affect commerce and the public welfare by destroying or diminishing the utility of land for commercial, industrial, residential, recreational, agricultural, and forestry purposes, by causing erosion and landslides, by contributing to floods, by polluting the water, by destroying fish and wildlife habitats, by impairing natural beauty, by damaging the property of citizens, by creating hazards dangerous to life and property, by degrading the quality of life in local communities, and by counteracting governmental programs and efforts to conserve soil, water, and other natural resources;

(d) surface mining and reclamation technology are now developed so that effective and reasonable regulation of surface coal mining operations by the States and by the Federal Government in accordance with the requirements of this Act is an appropriate and necessary means to minimize so far as practicable the adverse social, economic, and environmental effects of such mining operations;

(e) because of the diversity in terrain, climate, biologic, chemical, and other physical conditions in areas subject to mining operations, the primary governmental responsibility for developing, authorizing, issuing, and enforcing regulations for surface mining and reclamation operations subject to this Act should rest with the States;

(f) there are a substantial number of acres of land throughout major regions of the United States disturbed by surface and underground coal mining, on which little or no reclamation was conducted, and the impacts from these unreclaimed lands impose social and economic costs on residents in nearby and adjoining areas as well as continuing to impair environmental quality;

(g) while there is a need to regulate surface mining operations for minerals other than coal, more data and analyses are needed to serve as a basis for effective and reasonable regulation of such operations;

(h) surface and underground coal mining operations affect interstate commerce, contribute to the economic well-being, security, and general welfare of the Nation and should be conducted in an environmentally sound manner; and

(i) the cooperative effort established by this Act is necessary to prevent or mitigate adverse environmental effects of present and future surface coal mining operations.

## PURPOSES

*SEC. 102. It is the purpose of this Act to—*

(a) establish a nationwide program to protect society and the environment from the adverse effects of surface coal mining operations and surface impacts of underground coal mining operations;

(b) assure that the rights of surface landowners and other persons with a legal interest in the land or appurtenances thereto are fully protected from such operations;

(c) assure that surface mining operations are not conducted where reclamation as required by this Act is not feasible;

(d) assure that surface coal mining operations are so conducted as to protect the environment;

(e) assure that adequate procedures are undertaken to reclaim surface areas as contemporaneously as possible with the surface coal mining operations;

(f) assure that the coal supply essential to the Nation's energy requirements, and to its economic and social well-being is provided and strike a balance between protection of the environment and agricultural productivity and the Nation's need for coal as an essential source of energy;

(g) assist the States in developing and implementing a program to achieve the purposes of this Act;

(h) promote the reclamation of mined areas left without adequate reclamation prior to the enactment of this Act and which continue, in their unreclaimed condition, to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, prevent or damage the beneficial use of land or water resources, or endanger the health or safety of the public;

(i) assure that appropriate procedures are provided for the public participation in the development, revision, and enforcement of regulations, standards, reclamation plans, or programs established by the Secretary or any State under this Act;

(j) encourage the full utilization of coal resources through the development and application of underground extraction technologies;

(k) provide a means for development of the data and analyses necessary to establish effective and reasonable regulation of surface mining operations for other minerals;

(l) stimulate, sponsor, provide for and/or supplement present programs for the conduct of research investigations, experiments, and demonstrations, in the exploration, extraction, processing, development, and production of minerals and the training of mineral engineers and scientists in the fields of mining, minerals resources, and technology, and the establishment of an appropriate research and training center in various States; and

(m) wherever necessary, exercise the full reach of Federal constitutional powers to insure the protection of the public interest through effective control of surface coal mining operations.

## TITLE II—OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT

## CREATION OF THE OFFICE

*SEC. 201. (a) There is established in the Department of the Interior, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (hereinafter referred to as the "Office").*

(b) The Office shall have a Director who shall report directly to the Secretary and who shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and shall be compensated at the rate provided for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5 of the United States Code, and such other employees as may be required. The Director shall have the responsibilities provided under subsection (c) of this section and those duties and responsibilities relating to the functions of the office which the Secretary may assign, consistent with this Act. Employees of the Office shall be recruited on the basis of their professional competence and capacity to administer the provisions of this Act. No legal authority, program, or function in any Federal agency which has as its purpose promoting the development or use of coal or other mineral resources or regulating the health and safety of miners under provisions of the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969 (83 Stat. 742), shall be transferred to the Office.

(c) The Secretary, acting through the Office, shall—

(1) administer the programs for controlling surface coal mining operations which are required by this Act; review and approve or disapprove State programs for controlling surface coal mining operations; make those investigations and inspections necessary to insure compliance with this Act; conduct hearings, administer oaths, issue subpoenas, and compel the attendance of witnesses and production of written or printed material as provided for in this Act; issue cease-and-desist orders; review and vacate or modify or approve orders and decisions; and order the suspension, revocation, or withholding of any permit for failure to comply with any of the provisions of this Act or any rules and regulations adopted pursuant thereto;

(2) publish and promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purposes and provisions of this Act;

(3) administer the State grant-in-aid program for the development of State programs for surface coal mining and reclamation operations provided for in title V of this Act;

(4) administer the program for the purchase and reclamation of abandoned and unreclaimed mined areas pursuant to title IV of this Act;

(5) administer the surface mining and reclamation research and demonstration project authority provided for in this Act;

(6) consult with other agencies of the Federal Government having expertise in the control and reclamation of surface mining

operations and assist States, local governments, and other eligible agencies in the coordination of such programs;

(7) maintain a continuing study of surface mining and reclamation operations in the United States;

(8) develop and maintain an Information and Data Center on Surface Coal Mining, Reclamation, and Surface Impacts of Underground Mining, which will make such data available to the public and to Federal, regional, State, and local agencies conducting or concerned with land use planning and agencies concerned with surface and underground mining and reclamation operations;

(9) assist the States in the development of State programs for surface coal mining and reclamation operations which meet the requirements of the Act and, at the same time, reflect local requirements and local environmental and agricultural conditions;

(10) assist the States in developing objective scientific criteria and appropriate procedures and institutions for determining those areas of a State to be designated unsuitable for all or certain types of surface coal mining pursuant to section 522;

(11) monitor all Federal and State research programs dealing with coal extraction and use and recommend to Congress the research and demonstration projects and necessary changes in public policy which are designated to (A) improve feasibility of underground coal mining, and (B) improve surface mining and reclamation techniques directed at eliminating adverse environmental and social impacts; and

(12) perform such other duties as may be provided by law and relate to the purposes of this Act.

(d) The Director shall not use either permanently or temporarily any person charged with responsibility of inspecting coal mines under the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969, unless he finds and publishes such finding in the Federal Register, that such activities would not interfere with such inspections under the 1969 Act.

(e) The Office shall be considered an independent Federal regulatory agency for the purposes of sections 3502 and 3512 of title 44 of the United States Code.

(f) No employee of the Office or any other Federal employee performing any function or duty under this Act shall have a direct or indirect financial interest in underground or surface coal mining operations. Whoever knowingly violates the provisions of the above sentence shall, upon conviction, be punished by a fine of not more than \$2,500, or by imprisonment for not more than one year, or both. The Director shall (1) within sixty days after enactment of this Act publish regulations, in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 553, to establish the methods by which the provisions of this subsection will be monitored and enforced, including appropriate provisions for the filing by such employees and the review of statements and supplements thereto concerning their financial interests which may be affected by this subsection, and (2) report to the Congress on March 1 of each calendar year on the actions taken and not taken during the preceding calendar year under this subsection.

### TITLE III—STATE MINING AND MINERAL RESOURCES AND RESEARCH INSTITUTES

#### AUTHORIZATION OF STATE ALLOTMENTS TO INSTITUTES

SEC. 301. (a) There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of the Interior sums adequate to provide for each participating State \$200,000 for fiscal year 1975, \$300,000 for fiscal year 1976, and \$400,000 for each fiscal year thereafter for five years, to assist the States in carrying on the work of a competent and qualified mining and mineral resources research institute, or center (hereinafter referred to as "institute") at one public college or university in the State, which has in existence at the time of enactment of this title a school of mines, or division, or department conducting a program of substantial instruction and research in mining or minerals extraction or which establishes such a school of mines, or division, or department subsequent to the enactment of this title and which school of mines, or division or department shall have been in existence for at least two years. The Advisory Committee on Mining and Minerals Resources Research as created by this title shall determine a college or university to have an eligible school of mines, or division, or department conducting a program of substantial instruction and research in mining or minerals extraction wherein education and research in the minerals engineering fields are being carried out and wherein at least four full-time permanent faculty members are employed: Provided, That—

(1) such moneys when appropriated shall be made available to match, on a dollar-for-dollar basis, non-Federal funds which shall be at least equal to the Federal share to support the institute;

(2) if there is more than one such eligible college or university in a State, funds under this title shall, in the absence of a designation to the contrary by act of the legislature of the State, be paid to one such college or university designated by the Governor of the State; and

(3) where a State does not have a public college or university with an eligible school of mines, or division, or department conducting a program of substantial instruction and research in mining or minerals extraction, said advisory committee may allocate the State's allotment to one private college or university which it determines to have an eligible school of mines, or division, or department as provided herein.

(b) It shall be the duty of each such institute to plan and conduct and/or arrange for a component or components of the college or university with which it is affiliated to conduct competent research, investigations, demonstrations, and experiments of either a basic or practical nature, or both, in relation to mining and mineral resources and to provide for the training of mineral engineers and scientists through such research, investigations, demonstrations, experiments, and training may include, without being limited to: exploration; the extraction; processing; development; production of mineral resources; mining and mineral technology; supply and demand for minerals; conservation

and best use of available supplies of minerals; the economic, legal, social, engineering, recreational, biological, geographic, ecological, and other aspects of mining, mineral resources, and mineral reclamation, having due regard to the interrelation on the natural environment, the varying conditions and needs of the respective States, to mining and mineral resources research projects being conducted by agencies of the Federal and State governments, and other institutes.

#### RESEARCH FUNDS TO INSTITUTES

SEC. 302. (a) There is authorized to be appropriated annually for seven years to the Secretary of the Interior the sum of \$15,000,000 in fiscal year 1975, said sum increased by \$2,000,000 each fiscal year thereafter for six years, which shall remain available until expended. Such moneys when appropriated shall be made available to institutes to meet the necessary expenses for purposes of:

(1) specific mineral research and demonstration projects of industrywide application, which could not otherwise be undertaken, including the expenses of planning and coordinating regional mining and mineral resources research projects by two or more institutes, and

(2) research into any aspects of mining and mineral resources problems related to the mission of the Department of the Interior, which may be deemed desirable and are not otherwise being studied.

(b) Each application for a grant pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall, among other things, state the nature of the project to be undertaken, the period during which it will be pursued, the qualifications of the personnel who will direct and conduct it, the estimated costs, the importance of the project to the Nation, region, or State concerned, and its relation to other known research projects theretofore pursued or being pursued, and the extent to which it will provide opportunity for the training of mining and mineral engineers and scientists, and the extent of participation by nongovernmental sources in the project.

(c) The Secretary shall, insofar as it is practicable, utilize the facilities of institutes designated in section 301 of this title to perform such special research, authorized by this section, and shall select the institutes for the performance of such special research on the basis of the qualifications without regard to race or sex of the personnel who will conduct and direct it, and on the basis of the facilities available in relation to the particular needs of the research project, special geographic, geologic, or climatic conditions within the immediate vicinity of the institute in relation to any special requirements of the research project, and the extent to which it will provide opportunity for training individuals as mineral engineers and scientists. The Secretary may designate and utilize such portions of the funds authorized to be appropriated by this section as he deems appropriate for the purpose of providing scholarships, graduate fellowships, and postdoctoral fellowships.

(d) No grant shall be made under subsection (a) of this section except for a project approved by the Secretary of the Interior and all

grants shall be made upon the basis of merit of the project, the need for the knowledge which it is expected to produce when completed, and the opportunity it provides for the training of individuals as mineral engineers and scientists.

(e) No portion of any grant under this section shall be applied to the acquisition by purchase or lease of any land or interests therein or the rental, purchase, construction, preservation, or repair of any building.

#### FUNDING CRITERIA

SEC. 303. (a) Sums available to institutes under the terms of sections 301 and 302 of this title shall be paid at such times and in such amounts during each fiscal year as determined by the Secretary, and upon vouchers approved by him. Each institute shall set forth its plan to provide for the training of individuals as mineral engineers and scientists under a curriculum appropriate to the field of mineral resources and mineral engineering and related fields; set forth policies and procedures which assure that Federal funds made available under this title for any fiscal year will supplement and, to the extent practicable, increase the level of funds that would, in the absence of such Federal funds, be made available for purposes of this title, and in no case supplant such funds; have an officer appointed by its governing authority who shall receive and account for all funds paid under the provisions of this title and shall make an annual report to the Secretary on or before the first day of September of each year, on work accomplished and the status of projects underway, together with a detailed statement of the amounts received under any provisions of this title during the preceding fiscal year, and of its disbursements on schedules prescribed by the Secretary. If any of the moneys received by the authorized receiving officer of any institute under the provisions of this title shall by any action or contingency be found by the Secretary to have been improperly diminished, lost, or misapplied, it shall be replaced by the State concerned and until so replaced no subsequent appropriation shall be allotted or paid to any institute of such State.

(b) Moneys appropriated pursuant to this title shall be available for expenses for research, investigations, experiments, and training conducted under authority of this title. The institutes are hereby authorized and encouraged to plan and conduct programs under this title in cooperation with each other and with such other agencies and individuals as may contribute to the solution of the mining and mineral resources problems involved, and moneys appropriated pursuant to this title shall be available for paying the necessary expenses of planning, coordinating, and conducting such cooperative research.

#### DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY

SEC. 304. (a) The Secretary of the Interior is hereby charged with the responsibility for the proper administration of this title and, after full consultation with other interested Federal agencies, shall prescribe such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out its provisions. The Secretary shall furnish such advice and assistance as will best promote the purposes of this title, participate in coordinat-



ing research initiated under this title by the institutes, indicate to them such lines of inquiry as to him seem most important, and encourage and assist in the establishment and maintenance of cooperation by and between the institutes and between them and other research organizations, the United States Department of the Interior, and other Federal establishments.

(b) On or before the 1st day of July in each year after the passage of this title, the Secretary shall ascertain whether the requirements of section 303(a) have been met as to each institute and State.

(c) The Secretary shall make an annual report to the Congress of the receipts, expenditures, and work of the institutes in all States under the provisions of this title. The Secretary's report shall indicate whether any portion of an appropriation available for allotment to any State has been withheld and, if so, the reasons therefor.

#### AUTONOMY

SEC. 305. Nothing in this title shall be construed to impair or modify the legal relationship existing between any of the colleges or universities under whose direction an institute is established and the government of the State in which it is located, and nothing in this title shall in any way be construed to authorize Federal control or direction of education at any college or university.

#### MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

SEC. 306. (a) The Secretary of the Interior shall obtain the continuing advice and cooperation of all agencies of the Federal Government concerned with mining and mineral resources of State and local governments, and of private institutions and individuals to assure that the programs authorized in this title will supplement and not duplicate established mining and minerals research programs, to stimulate research in otherwise neglected areas, and to contribute to a comprehensive nationwide program of mining and minerals research, having due regard for the protection and conservation of the environment. The Secretary shall make generally available information and reports on projects completed, in progress, or planned under the provisions of this title, in addition to any direct publication of information by the institutes themselves.

(b) Nothing in this title is intended to give or shall be construed as giving the Secretary of the Interior any authority over mining and mineral resources research conducted by any other agency of the Federal Government, or as repealing, superseding, or diminishing existing authorities or responsibilities of any agency of the Federal Government to plan and conduct, contract for, or assist in research in its area of responsibility and concern with mining and mineral resources.

(c) Contracts or other arrangements for mining and mineral resources research work authorized under this title with an institute, educational institution, or nonprofit organization may be undertaken without regard to the provisions of section 3684 of the Revised Statutes (31 U.S.C. 529) when, in the judgment of the Secretary of the

Interior, advance payments of initial expense are necessary to facilitate such work.

(d) No research, demonstration, or experiment shall be carried out under this Act by an institute financed by grants under this Act unless all uses, products, processes, patents, and other developments resulting therefrom with such exception or limitation, if any, as the Secretary may find necessary in the public interest, be available promptly to the general public. Nothing contained in this section shall deprive the owner of any background patent relating to any such activities of any rights which that owner may have under that patent. There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary for the printing and publishing of the results of activities carried out by institutes under the provisions of this Act and for administrative planning and direction, but such appropriations shall not exceed \$1,000,000 in any fiscal year.

#### CENTER FOR CATALOGING

SEC. 307. The Secretary shall establish a center for cataloging current and projected scientific research in all fields of mining and mineral resources. Each Federal agency doing mining and mineral resources research shall cooperate by providing the cataloging center with information on work underway or scheduled by it. The cataloging center shall classify and maintain for public use a catalog of mining and mineral resources research and investigation projects in progress or scheduled by all Federal agencies and by such non-Federal agencies of Government, colleges, universities, private institutions, firms and individuals as may make such information available.

#### INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

SEC. 308. The President shall, by such means as he deems appropriate, clarify agency responsibility for Federal mining and mineral resources research and provide for interagency coordination of such research, including the research authorized by this title. Such coordination shall include—

- (a) continuing review of the adequacy of the Government-wide program in mining and mineral resources research;
- (b) identification and elimination of duplication and overlap between two or more agency programs;
- (c) identification of technical needs in various mining and mineral resources research categories;
- (d) recommendations with respect to allocation of technical effort among Federal agencies;
- (e) review of technical manpower needs and findings concerning management policies to improve the quality of the Government-wide research effort; and
- (f) actions to facilitate interagency communication at management levels.

#### ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SEC. 309. (a) The Secretary of the Interior shall appoint an Advisory Committee on Mining and Mineral Research composed of—

- (1) the Director, Bureau of Mines, or his delegate, with his consent;



(2) the Director of the National Science Foundation, or his delegate, with his consent;

(3) the President, National Academy of Sciences, or his delegate, with his consent;

(4) the President, National Academy of Engineering, or his delegate, with his consent;

(5) the Director, United States Geological Survey, or his delegate, with his consent; and

(6) not more than four other persons who are knowledgeable in the fields of mining and mineral resources research, at least one of whom shall be a representative of working coal miners.

(b) The Secretary shall designate the Chairman of the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee shall consult with, and make recommendations to, the Secretary of the Interior on all matters involving or relating to mining and mineral resources research and such determinations as provided in this title. The Secretary of the Interior shall consult with, and consider recommendations of, such Committee in the conduct of mining and mineral resources research and the making of any grant under this title.

(c) Advisory Committee members, other than officers or employees of Federal, State, or local governments, shall be, for each day (including traveltime) during which they are performing committee business, entitled to receive compensation at a rate fixed by the Secretary, but not in excess of the maximum rate of pay for grade GS-18 as provided in the General Schedule under section 5332 of title 5 of the United States Code, and shall, notwithstanding the limitations of sections 5703 and 5704 of title 5 of the United States Code, be fully reimbursed for travel, subsistence, and related expenses.

## TITLE IV—ABANDONED MINE RECLAMATION

### ABANDONED MINE RECLAMATION FUND

SEC. 401. (a) There is created on the books of the Treasury of the United States a trust fund to be known as the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund (hereinafter referred to as the "fund") which shall be administered by the Secretary of the Interior.

(b) The fund shall consist of amounts deposited in the fund, from time to time, derived from—

(1) the sale, lease, or rental of land reclaimed pursuant to this title;

(2) any user charge imposed on or for land reclaimed pursuant to this title, after expenditures for maintenance have been deducted; and

(3) the reclamation fees levied under subsection (d) of this section.

(c) Amounts covered into the fund shall be available for the acquisition and reclamation of land under section 405, administration of the fund and enforcement and collection of the fee as specified in subsection (d), acquisition and filling of voids and sealing of tunnels, shafts, and entryways under section 406, and for use under section 404, by the Secretary of Agriculture, of up to one-fifth of the money deposited in the fund annually and transferred by the Secretary of the Interior to

the Secretary of Agriculture for such purposes. Such amounts shall be available for such purposes only when appropriated therefor; and such appropriations may be made without fiscal year limitation.

(d) All operators of coal mining operations subject to the provisions of this Act shall pay to the Secretary of the Interior, for deposit in the fund, a reclamation fee of thirty-five cents per ton of coal produced by surface coal mining and fifteen cents per ton of coal produced by underground mining or 10 per centum of the value of the coal at the mine, as determined by the Secretary, whichever is less, except that this reclamation fee for lignite coal shall be at a rate of 5 per centum of the value of the coal at the mine, or 35 cents per ton, whichever is less. Such fee shall be paid no later than 30 days after the end of each calendar quarter occurring after the date of enactment of this Act, beginning with the first calendar quarter (or part thereof) occurring after such date of enactment and ending ten years after the date of enactment of this Act unless extended by an Act of Congress.

(e) The geographic allocation of expenditures from the fund shall reflect both the area from which the revenue was derived as well as the program needs for the funds. Fifty per centum of the funds collected annually in any State or Indian reservation shall be expended in that State or Indian reservation by the Secretary to accomplish the purposes of this title after receiving and considering the recommendations of the Governor of that State or the head of the governing body of that tribe having jurisdiction over that reservation, as the case may be: Provided, however, That if such funds have not been expended within three years after being paid into the fund, they shall be available for expenditure in any area. The balance of funds collected on an annual basis may be expended in any area at the discretion of the Secretary in order to meet the purposes of this title.

### OBJECTIVES OF FUND

SEC. 402. The primary objective for the obligation of funds is the reclamation of areas affected by previous mining; but other objectives shall reflect the following priorities in the order stated:

(a) the protection of health or safety of the public;

(b) protection of the environment from continued degradation and the conservation of land and water resources;

(c) the protection, construction, or enhancement of public facilities such as utilities, roads, recreation, and conservation facilities and their use;

(d) the improvement of lands and water to a suitable condition useful in the economic and social development of the area affected; and

(e) research and demonstration projects relating to the development of surface mining reclamation and water quality control program methods and techniques in all areas of the United States.

### ELIGIBLE LANDS

SEC. 403. The only lands eligible for reclamation expenditures under this title are those which were mined for coal or which were affected by such mining, wastebanks, coal processing, or other coal mining

processes, and abandoned or left in an inadequate reclamation status prior to the date of enactment of this Act, and for which there is no continuing reclamation responsibility under State or other Federal laws.

#### RECLAMATION OF RURAL LANDS

SEC. 404. (a) In order to provide for the control and prevention of erosion and sediment damages from unreclaimed mined lands, and to promote the conservation and development of soil and water resources of unreclaimed mined lands and lands affected by mining, the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to enter into agreements, of not more than ten years with landowners (including owners of water rights) residents and tenants, and individually or collectively, determined by him to have control for the period of the agreement of lands in question therein, providing for land stabilization, erosion, and sediment control, and reclamation through conservation treatment, including measures for the conservation and development of soil, water (excluding stream channelization), woodland, wildlife, and recreation resources, and agricultural productivity of such lands. Such agreements shall be made by the Secretary with the owners, including owners of water rights, residents, or tenants (collectively or individually) of the lands in question.

(b) The landowner, including the owner of water rights, resident, or tenant shall furnish to the Secretary of Agriculture a conservation and development plan setting forth the proposed land uses and conservation treatment which shall be mutually agreed by the Secretary of Agriculture and the landowner, including owner of water rights, resident, or tenant to be needed on the lands for which the plan was prepared. In those instances where it is determined that the water rights or water supply of a tenant, landowner, including owner of water rights, residents, or tenant have been adversely affected by a surface or underground coal mine operation which has removed or disturbed a stratum so as to significantly affect the hydrologic balance, such plan may include proposed measures to enhance water quality or quantity by means of joint action with other affected landowners, including owner of water rights, residents, or tenants in consultation with appropriate State and Federal agencies.

(c) Such plan shall be incorporated in an agreement under which the landowner, including owner of water rights, resident, or tenant shall agree with the Secretary of Agriculture to effect the land uses and conservation treatment provided for in such plan on the lands described in the agreement in accordance with the terms and conditions thereof.

(d) In return for such agreement by the landowner, including owner of water rights, resident, or tenant the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to furnish financial and other assistance to such landowner, including owner of water rights, resident, or tenant in such amounts and subject to such conditions as the Secretary of Agriculture determines are appropriate and in the public interest for carrying out the land use and conservation treatment set forth in the agreement. Grants made under this section, depending on the income-producing potential of the land after reclaiming, shall provide up to 80 per centum

of the cost of carrying out such land uses and conservation treatment on not more than one hundred twenty acres of land occupied by such owner including water rights owners, resident or tenant, or on not more than one hundred twenty acres of land which has been purchased jointly by such landowners including water rights owners, residents, or tenants under an agreement for the enhancement of water quality or quantity or on land which has been acquired by an appropriate State or local agency for the purpose of implementing such agreement; except the Secretary may reduce the matching cost share where he determines that (1) the main benefits to be derived from the project are related to improving off-site water quality, off-site esthetic values, or other off-site benefits, and (2) the matching share requirement would place a burden on the landowner which would probably prevent him from participating in the program.

(e) The Secretary of Agriculture may terminate any agreement with a landowner including water rights owners, operator, or occupier by mutual agreement if the Secretary of Agriculture determines that such termination would be in the public interest, and may agree to such modification of agreements previously entered into hereunder as he deems desirable to carry out the purposes of this section or to facilitate the practical administration of the program authorized herein.

(f) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Agriculture, to the extent he deems it desirable to carry out the purposes of this section, may provide in any agreement hereunder for (1) preservation for a period not to exceed the period covered by the agreement and an equal period thereafter of the cropland, crop acreage, and allotment history applicable to land covered by the agreement for the purpose of any Federal program under which such history is used as a basis for an allotment or other limitation on the production of such crop; or (2) surrender of any such history and allotments.

(g) The Secretary of Agriculture shall be authorized to issue such rules and regulations as he determines are necessary to carry out the provisions of this section.

(h) In carrying out the provisions of this section, the Secretary of Agriculture shall utilize the services of the Soil Conservation Service.

(i) Funds shall be made available to the Secretary of Agriculture for the purposes of this section, as provided in section 401(c).

#### ACQUISITION AND RECLAMATION OF ABANDONED AND UNRECLAIMED MINED LANDS

SEC. 405. (a) (1) The Congress declares that the acquisition of any interest in land or mineral rights in order to eliminate hazards to the environment or to the health or safety of the public from mined lands, or to construct, operate, or manage reclamation facilities and projects constitutes acquisition for a public use or purpose, notwithstanding that the Secretary plans to hold the interest in land or mineral rights so acquired as an open space or for recreation, or to resell the land following completion of the reclamation facility or project.

(2) The Secretary may acquire by purchase, donation, or otherwise, land or any interest therein which has been affected by surface mining and has not been reclaimed to its approximate original condition. Prior to making any acquisition of land under this section, the Secretary

shall make a thorough study with respect to those tracts of land which are available for acquisition under this section and based upon those findings he shall select lands for purchase according to the priorities established in section 402. Title to all lands or interests therein acquired shall be taken in the name of the United States. The price paid for land under this section shall take into account the unrestored condition of the land. Prior to any individual acquisition under this section, the Secretary shall specifically determine the cost of such acquisition and reclamation and the benefits to the public to be gained therefrom.

(3) For the purposes of this section, when the Secretary seeks to acquire an interest in land or mineral rights, and cannot negotiate an agreement with the owner of such interest or right he shall request the Attorney General to file a condemnation suit and take interest or right, following a tender of just compensation awarded by a jury to such person. When the Secretary determines that time is of the essence because of the likelihood of continuing or increasingly harmful effects upon the environment which would substantially increase the cost or magnitude of reclamation or of continuing or increasingly serious threats to life, safety, or health, or to property, the Secretary may take such interest or rights immediately upon payment by the United States either to such person or into a court of competent jurisdiction of such amount as the Secretary shall estimate to be the fair market value of such interest or rights; except that the Secretary shall also pay to such person any further amount that may be subsequently awarded by a jury, with interest from the date of the taking.

(4) For the purposes of this section, when the Secretary takes action to acquire an interest in land and cannot determine which person or persons hold title to such interest or rights, the Secretary shall request the Attorney General to file a condemnation suit, and give notice, and may take such interest or rights immediately upon payment into court of such amount as the Secretary shall estimate to be the fair market value of such interest or rights. If a person or persons establishes title to such interest or rights within six years from the time of their taking, the court shall transfer the payment to such person or persons and the Secretary shall pay any further amount that may be agreed to pursuant to negotiations or awarded by a jury subsequent to the time of taking. If no person or persons establish title to the interest or rights within six years from the time of such taking, the payment shall revert to the Secretary and be deposited in the fund.

(5) States are encouraged to acquire abandoned and unreclaimed mined lands within their boundaries and to transfer such lands to the Secretary to be reclaimed under appropriate Federal regulations. The Secretary is authorized to make grants on a matching basis to States in such amounts as he deems appropriate for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this title but in no event shall any grant exceed 90 per centum of the cost of acquisition of the lands for which the grant is made. When a State has made any such land available to the Federal Government under this title, such State shall have a preference right to purchase such lands after reclamation at fair market value less the State portion of the original acquisition price. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (1) of this subsection, reclaimed land may be sold to the State or local government in which it is located

at a price less than fair market value, which in no case shall be less than the cost to the United States of the purchase and reclamation of the land, as negotiated by the Secretary, to be used for a valid public purpose. If any land sold to a State or local government under this paragraph is not used for a valid public purpose as specified by the Secretary in the terms of the sales agreement then all right, title, and interest in such land shall revert to the United States. Money received from such sale shall be deposited in the fund.

(6) The Secretary shall prepare specifications for the reclamation of lands acquired under this section. In preparing these specifications, the Secretary shall utilize the specialized knowledge or experience of any Federal or State department or agency which can assist him in the development or implementation of the reclamation program required under this title.

(7) In selecting lands to be acquired pursuant to this section and in formulating regulations for the making of grants to the States to acquire lands pursuant to this title, the Secretary shall give priority to lands in their unreclaimed state which will meet the objectives as stated in section 402 above when reclaimed. For those lands which are reclaimed for public recreational use, the revenue derived from such lands shall be used first to assure proper maintenance of such funds and facilities thereon and any remaining moneys shall be deposited in the funds.

(8) Where land reclaimed pursuant to this section is deemed to be suitable for industrial, commercial, residential, or private recreational development, the Secretary may sell such land by public sale under a system of competitive bidding, at not less than fair market value and under such other regulations as he may promulgate to insure that such lands are put to proper use, as determined by the Secretary. If any such land sold is not put to the use specified by the Secretary in the terms of the sales agreement, then all right, title, and interest in such land shall revert to the United States. Money received from such sale shall be deposited in the fund.

(9) The Secretary shall hold a public hearing, with the appropriate notice, in the county or counties or the appropriate subdivisions of the State in which lands acquired to be reclaimed pursuant to this title are located. The hearings shall be held at a time which shall afford local citizens and governments the maximum opportunity to participate in the decision concerning the use of the lands once reclaimed.

(10) The Secretary shall utilize all available data and information on reclamation needs and measures, including the data and information developed by the Corps of Engineers in conducting the National Strip Mine Study authorized by section 233 of the Flood Control Act of 1970. In connection therewith the Secretary may call on the Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, to assist him in conducting, operating, or managing reclamation facilities and projects, including demonstration facilities and projects, conducted by the Secretary pursuant to this section.

(b) (1) The Secretary is authorized to use money in the fund to acquire, reclaim, develop, and transfer land to any State, or any department, agency, or instrumentality of a State or of a political subdivision thereof, or to any person, firm, association, or corporation if he deter-

mines that such is an integral and necessary element of an economically feasible plan for a project to construct or rehabilitate housing for persons employed in mines or work incidental thereto, persons disabled as the result of such employment, persons displaced by governmental action, or persons dislocated as the result of natural disasters or catastrophic failure from any cause. Such activities shall be accomplished under such terms and conditions as the Secretary shall require, which may include transfers of land with or without monetary consideration: *Provided, That, to the extent that the consideration is below the fair market value of the land transferred, no portion of the difference between the fair market value and the consideration shall accrue as a profit to such person, firm, association, or corporation. Land development may include the construction of public facilities or other improvements including reasonable site work and offsite improvements such as sewer and water extensions which the Secretary determines necessary or appropriate to the economic feasibility of a project. No part of the funds provided under this title may be used to pay the actual construction costs of housing.*

(2) The Secretary may carry out the purposes of this subsection directly or he may make grants and commitments for grants, and may advance money under such terms and conditions as he may require to any State, or any department, agency, or instrumentality of a State, or any public body or nonprofit organization designated by a State.

(3) The Secretary may provide, or contract with public and private organizations to provide information, advice, and technical assistance, including demonstrations, in furtherance of this subsection.

(4) The Secretary may make expenditures to carry out the purpose of this subsection, without regard to the provisions of section 403, in any area experiencing a rapid development of its coal resources which the Secretary has determined does not have essential public facilities.

#### FILLING VOIDS AND SEALING TUNNELS

SEC. 406. (a) The Congress declares that voids, and open and abandoned tunnels, shafts, and entryways resulting from any previous mining operation, constitute a hazard to the public health or safety and that surface impacts of any underground or surface mining operation may degrade the environment. The Secretary, at the request of the Governor of any state, or the Chairman of any tribe, is authorized to fill such voids, seal such abandoned tunnels, shafts, and entryways, and reclaim surface impacts of underground or surface mines which the Secretary determines could endanger life and property, constitute a hazard to the public health and safety, or degrade the environment.

(b) Funds available for use in carrying out the purpose of this Section shall be limited to those funds which must be expended in the respective states or Indian reservations under the provisions of Section 401(e).

(c) The Secretary may make expenditures and carry out the purposes of this Section without regard to provisions of Section 403 in such states or Indian reservations where requests are made by the gov-

ernor or tribal chairman and only after all reclamation with respect to abandoned coal lands or coal development impacts have been met, except for those reclamation projects relating to the protection of the public health or safety.

(d) In those instances where mine waste piles are being reworked for coal conservation purposes, the incremental costs of disposing of the wastes from such operations by filling voids and sealing tunnels may be eligible for funding providing that the disposal of these wastes meets the purposes of this section.

(e) The Secretary may acquire by purchase, donation, or otherwise such interest in land as he determines necessary to carry out the provisions of this section.

#### FUND REPORT

SEC. 407. Not later than January 1, 1976, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall report to the Congress on operations under the fund together with his recommendations as to future uses of the fund.

#### TRANSFER OF FUNDS

SEC. 408. The Secretary of the Interior may transfer funds to other appropriate Federal agencies, in order to carry out the reclamation activities authorized by this title.

### TITLE V—CONTROL OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF SURFACE COAL MINING

#### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION STANDARDS

SEC. 501. Not later than the end of the one-hundred-and-eighty-day period immediately following the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall promulgate and publish in the Federal Register regulations covering a permanent regulatory procedure for surface coal mining and reclamation operations setting mining and reclamation performance standards based on and incorporating the provisions of title V and establishing procedures and requirements for preparation, submission, and approval of State programs and development and implementation of Federal programs under this title. Such regulations shall not be promulgated and published by the Secretary until he has—

(A) published proposed regulations in the Federal Register and afforded interested persons and State and local governments a period of not less than forty-five days after such publication to submit written comments thereon;

(B) obtained the written concurrence of the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency with respect to those regulations promulgated under this section which relate to air or water quality standards promulgated under the authority of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, as amended (33 U.S.C. 1151–1175), and the Clean Air Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 1857 et seq.); and



(C) held at least one public hearing on the proposed regulations. The date, time, and place of any hearing held on the proposed regulations shall be set out in the publication of the proposed regulations. The Secretary shall consider all comments and relevant data presented at such hearing before final promulgation and publication of the regulations.

#### INITIAL REGULATORY PROCEDURES

Sec. 502. (a) No person shall open or develop any new or previously mined or abandoned site for surface coal mining operations on lands on which such operations are regulated by a State unless such person has obtained a permit from the State's regulatory authority.

(b) All surface coal mining operations on lands on which such operations are regulated by a State which commence operations pursuant to a permit issued on or after the date of enactment of this Act shall comply, and such permits shall contain terms requiring compliance with, the provisions of subsections 515(b)(2), 515(b)(3), 515(b)(5), 515(b)(10), 515(b)(13), 515(b)(19) and 515(d) of this Act.

(c) On and after one hundred and thirty-five days from the date of enactment of this Act, all surface coal mining operations on lands on which such operations are regulated by a State which are in operation pursuant to a permit issued before the date of enactment of this Act shall comply with the provisions of subsections 515(b)(2), 515(b)(3), 515(b)(5), 515(b)(10), 515(b)(13), 515(b)(19), and 515(d) of this Act, with respect to lands from which overburden and the coal seam being mined have not been removed.

(d) Upon the request of the permit applicant or permittee subsequent to a written finding by the regulatory authority and under the conditions and procedures set forth in subsection 515(c), the regulatory authority may grant variances from the requirement to restore to approximate original contour set forth in subsections 515(b)(3) and 515(d).

(e) Not later than twenty months from the date of enactment of this Act, all operators of surface coal mines in expectation of operating such mines after the date of approval of a State program, or the implementation of a Federal program, shall file an application for a permit with the regulatory authority, such application to cover those lands to be mined after the date of approval of the State program. The regulatory authority shall process such applications and grant or deny a permit within six months after the date of approval of the State program, but in no case later than thirty months from the date of enactment of this Act.

(f) No later than one hundred and thirty-five days from the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall implement a Federal enforcement program which shall remain in effect in each State in which there is surface coal mining until the State program has been approved pursuant to this Act or until a Federal program has been implemented pursuant to this Act. The enforcement program shall—

(1) include inspections of surface coal mine sites which shall be made on a random basis (but at least one inspection for every site every three months), without advance notice to the mine

operator and for the purpose of ascertaining compliance with the standards of subsections (b) and (c) above. The Secretary shall order any necessary enforcement action to be implemented pursuant to the Federal enforcement provision of this title to correct violations identified at the inspections;

(2) provide that upon receipt of inspection reports indicating that any surface coal mining operation has been found in violation of subsections (b) and (c) above, during not less than two consecutive State inspections or upon receipt by the Secretary of information which would give rise to reasonable belief that such standards are being violated by any surface coal mining operation, the Secretary shall order the immediate inspection of such operation by Federal inspectors and the necessary enforcement actions, if any, to be implemented pursuant to the Federal enforcement provisions of this title. When the Federal inspection results from information provided to the Secretary by any person, the Secretary shall notify such person when the Federal inspection is proposed to be carried out and such person shall be allowed to accompany the inspector during the inspection;

(3) for purposes of this section, the term "Federal inspector" means personnel of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement and such additional personnel of the United States Geological Survey, Bureau of Land Management, or of the Mining Enforcement and Safety Administration so designated by the Secretary, or such other personnel of the Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, or the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service as arranged by appropriate agreement with the Secretary on a reimbursable or other basis;

(4) provide that the State regulatory agency file with the Secretary and with a designated Federal office centrally located in the county or area in which the inspected surface coal mine is located copies of inspection reports made;

(5) provide that moneys authorized by section 712 shall be available to the Secretary prior to the approval of a State program pursuant to this Act to reimburse the States for conducting those inspections in which the standards of this Act are enforced and for the administration of this section.

(g) Following the final disapproval of a State program, and prior to promulgation of a Federal program or a Federal lands program pursuant to this Act, including judicial review of such a program, existing surface coal mining operations may continue surface mining operations pursuant to the provisions of section 502 of this Act.

#### STATE PROGRAMS

Sec. 503. (a) Each State in which there is or may be conducted surface coal mining operations, and which wishes to assume exclusive jurisdiction over the regulation of surface coal mining and reclamation operations, except as provided in section 521 and title IV of this Act, shall submit to the Secretary, by the end of the eighteen-month period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, a State program

which demonstrates that such State has the capability of carrying out the provisions of this Act and meeting its purposes through—

(1) a State law which provides for the regulation of surface coal mining and reclamation operations in accordance with the requirements of this Act and the regulations issued by the Secretary pursuant to this Act;

(2) a State law which provides sanctions for violations of State laws, regulations, or conditions of permits concerning surface coal mining and reclamation operations, which sanctions shall meet the minimum requirements of this Act, including civil and criminal actions, forfeiture of bonds, suspensions, revocations, and withholding of permits, and the issuance of cease-and-desist orders by the State regulatory authority or its inspectors;

(3) a State regulatory authority with sufficient administrative and technical personnel, and sufficient funding to enable the State to regulate surface coal mining and reclamation operations in accordance with the requirements of this Act;

(4) a State law which provides for the effective implementation, maintenance, and enforcement of a permit system, meeting the requirements of this title for the regulation of surface coal mining and reclamation operations for coal on lands within the State;

(5) establishment of a process for the designation of areas as unsuitable for surface coal mining in accordance with section 522;

(6) establishment, for the purposes of avoiding duplication, of a process for coordinating the review and issuance of permits for surface coal mining and reclamation operations with any other Federal or State permit process applicable to the proposed operations.

(b) The Secretary shall not approve any State program submitted under this section until he has—

(1) solicited and publicly disclosed the views of the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the heads of other Federal agencies concerned with or having special expertise pertinent to the proposed State program;

(2) obtained the written concurrence of the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency with respect to those aspects of a State program which relate to air or water quality standards promulgated under the authority of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, as amended (33 U.S.C. 1151-1175), and the Clean Air Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 1857 et seq.);

(3) held at least one public hearing on the State program within the State; and

(4) found that the State has the legal authority and qualified personnel necessary for the enforcement of the environmental protection standards.

The Secretary shall approve or disapprove a State program, in whole or in part, within six full calendar months after the date such State program was submitted to him.

(c) If the Secretary disapproves any proposed State program in whole or in part, he shall notify the State in writing of his decision

and set forth in detail the reasons therefor. The State shall have sixty days in which to resubmit a revised State program or portion thereof. The Secretary shall approve or disapprove the resubmitted State program or portion thereof within sixty days from the date of resubmission.

(d) For the purposes of this section and section 504, the inability of a State to take any action the purpose of which is to prepare, submit, or enforce a State program, or any portion thereof, because the action is enjoined by the issuance of an injunction by any court of competent jurisdiction shall not result in a loss of eligibility for financial assistance under titles IV and VII of this Act or in the imposition of a Federal program. Regulation of the surface coal mining and reclamation operations covered or to be covered by the State program subject to the injunction shall be conducted by the State pursuant to section 502 of this Act, until such time as the injunction terminates or for one year, whichever is shorter, at which time the requirements of sections 503 and 504 shall again be fully applicable.

#### FEDERAL PROGRAMS

SEC. 504. (a) The Secretary shall prepare and, subject to the provisions of this section, promulgate and implement a Federal program for a State no later than thirty months after the date of enactment of this Act if such State—

(1) fails to submit a State program covering surface coal mining and reclamation operations by the end of the eighteen-month period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act;

(2) fails to resubmit an acceptable State program within sixty days of disapproval of a proposed State program: Provided, That the Secretary shall not implement a Federal program prior to the expiration of the initial period allowed for submission of a State program as provided for in clause (1) of this subsection; or

(3) fails to implement, enforce, or maintain its approved State program as provided for in this Act.

If State compliance with clause (1) of this subsection requires an act of the State legislature, the Secretary may extend the period of submission of a State program up to an additional six months. Promulgation and implementation of a Federal program vests the Secretary with exclusive jurisdiction for the regulation and control of surface coal mining and reclamation operations taking place on lands within any State not in compliance with this Act. After promulgation and implementation of a Federal program the Secretary shall be the regulatory authority. If a Federal program is implemented for a State, subsections 522 (a), (c), and (d) shall not apply for a period of one year following the date of such implementation. In promulgating and implementing a Federal program for a particular State the Secretary shall take into consideration the nature of that State's terrain, climate, biological, chemical, and other relevant physical conditions.

(b) In the event that a State has a State program for surface coal mining, and is not enforcing any part of such program, the Secretary may provide for the Federal enforcement, under the provisions of section 521, of that part of the State program not being enforced by such State.

(c) Prior to promulgation and implementation of any proposed Federal program, the Secretary shall give adequate public notice and hold a public hearing in the affected State.

(d) Permits issued pursuant to an approved State program shall be valid but reviewable under a Federal program. Immediately following promulgation of a Federal program, the Secretary shall undertake to review such permits to determine that the requirements of this Act are not violated. If the Secretary determines any permit to have been granted contrary to the requirements of this Act, he shall so advise the permittee and provide him a reasonable opportunity for submission of a new application and reasonable time to conform ongoing surface mining and reclamation operations to the requirements of the Federal program.

(e) A State which has failed to obtain the approval of a State program prior to implementation of a Federal program may submit a State program at any time after such implementation. Upon the submission of such a program, the Secretary shall follow the procedures set forth in section 503(b) and shall approve or disapprove the State program within six months after its submittal. Approval of a State program shall be based on the determination that the State has the capability of carrying out the provisions of this Act and meeting its purposes through the criteria set forth in section 503(a) (1) through (6). Until a State program is approved as provided under this section, the Federal program shall remain in effect and all actions taken by the Secretary pursuant to such Federal program, including the terms and conditions of any permit issued thereunder, shall remain in effect.

(f) Permits issued pursuant to the Federal program shall be valid but reviewable under the approved State program. The State regulatory authority may review such permits to determine that the requirements of this Act and the approved State program are not violated. If the State regulatory authority determines any permit to have been granted contrary to the requirements of this Act or the approved State program, he shall so advise the permittee and provide him a reasonable opportunity for submission of a new application and reasonable time to conform ongoing surface mining and reclamation operations to the requirements of this Act or approved State program.

(g) Whenever a Federal program is promulgated for a State pursuant to this Act, any statutes or regulations of such State which are in effect to regulate surface mining and reclamation operations subject to this Act shall, insofar as they interfere with the achievement of the purposes and the requirements of this Act and the Federal program, be preempted and superseded by the Federal program.

(h) Any Federal program shall include a process for coordinating the review and issuance of permits for surface mining and reclamation operations with any other Federal or State permit process applicable to the proposed operation.

#### STATE LAWS

SEC. 505. (a) No State law or regulation in effect on the date of enactment of this Act, or which may become effective thereafter, shall be superseded by any provision of this Act or any regulation issued

pursuant thereto, except insofar as such State law or regulation is inconsistent with the provisions of this Act.

(b) Any provision of any State law or regulation in effect upon the date of enactment of this Act, or which may become effective thereafter, which provides for more stringent land use and environmental controls and regulations of surface coal mining and reclamation operations than do the provisions of this Act or any regulation issued pursuant thereto shall not be construed to be inconsistent with this Act. Any provision of any State law or regulation in effect on the date of enactment of this Act, or which may become effective thereafter, which provides for the control and regulation of surface mining and reclamation operations for which no provision is contained in this Act shall not be construed to be inconsistent with this Act.

(c) Nothing in this Act shall be construed as affecting in any way the right of any person to enforce or protect, under applicable State law, his interest in water resources affected by a surface coal mining operation.

#### PERMITS

SEC. 506. (a) On and after six months from the date on which a State program is approved by the Secretary, pursuant to section 503 of this Act, or on and after six months from the date on which the Secretary has promulgated a Federal program for a State not having a State program pursuant to section 504 of this Act, no person shall engage in or carry out on lands within a State any surface coal mining operations unless such person has first obtained a permit issued by such State pursuant to an approved State program or by the Secretary pursuant to a Federal program; except a person conducting surface coal mining operations under a permit from the State regulatory authority, issued in accordance with the provisions of section 502 of this Act, may conduct such operations beyond such period if an application for a permit has been filed in accordance with the provisions of this Act, but the initial administrative decision has not been rendered.

(b) All permits issued pursuant to the requirements of this Act shall be issued for a term not to exceed five years and shall be non-transferable: Provided, That a successor in interest to a permittee who applies for a new permit within thirty days of succeeding to such interest and who is able to obtain the bond coverage of the original permittee may continue surface coal mining and reclamation operations according to the approved mining and reclamation plan of the original permittee until such successor's application is granted or denied.

(c) A permit shall terminate if the permittee has not commenced the surface coal mining and reclamation operations covered by such permit within three years of the issuance of the permit, provided that with respect to coal to be mined for use in a synthetic fuel facility, the permittee shall be deemed to have commenced surface mining operations at such time as the construction of the synthetic fuel facility is initiated.

(d) (1) Any valid permit issued pursuant to this Act shall carry with it the right of successive renewal upon expiration with respect to areas within the boundaries of the existing permit. The holder of



the permit may apply for renewal and such renewal shall be issued, subsequent to public hearing upon the following requirements and written findings by the regulatory authority that—

(A) the terms and conditions of the existing permit are being satisfactorily met;

(B) the present surface coal mining and reclamation operation is in full compliance with the environmental protection standards of this Act and the approved State plan pursuant to this Act;

(C) the renewal requested does not jeopardize the operator's continuing responsibility on existing permit areas;

(D) the operator has provided evidence that the performance bond in effect for said operation will continue in full force and effect for any renewal requested in such application as well as any additional bond the regulatory authority might require pursuant to section 509; and

(E) any additional revised or updated information required by the regulatory authority has been provided. Prior to the approval of any extension of permit the regulatory authority shall provide notice to the appropriate public authorities.

(2) If an application for renewal of a valid permit includes a proposal to extend the mining operation beyond the boundaries authorized in the existing permit, the portion of the application for revision of a valid permit which addresses any new land areas shall be subject to the full standards applicable to new applications under this Act.

(3) Any permit renewal shall be for a term not to exceed the period of the original permit established by this Act. Application for permit renewal shall be made at least one hundred and twenty days prior to the expiration of the valid permit.

#### APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

SEC. 507. (a) Each application for a surface coal mining and reclamation permit pursuant to an approved State program or a Federal program under the provisions of this Act shall be accompanied by a fee as determined by the regulatory authority. Such fee shall be based as nearly as possible upon the actual or anticipated cost of reviewing, administering, and enforcing such permit issued pursuant to a State or Federal program. The regulatory authority may develop procedures so as to enable the cost of the fee to be paid over the term of the permit.

(b) The permit application shall be submitted in a manner satisfactory to the regulatory authority and shall contain, among other things—

(1) the names and addresses of (A) the permit applicant; (B) every legal owner of record of the property (surface and mineral), to be mined; (C) the holders of record of any leasehold interest in the property; (D) any purchaser of record of the property under a real estate contract; (E) the operator if he is a person different from the applicant; and (F) if any of these are business entities other than a single proprietor, the names and addresses of the principals, officers, and resident agent;

(2) the names and addresses of the owners of record of all surface and subsurface areas within five hundred feet of any part of the permit area;

(3) a statement of any current or previous surface coal mining permits in the United States held by the applicant and the permit identification;

(4) if the applicant is a partnership, corporation, association, or other business entity, the following where applicable: the names and addresses of every officer, partner, director, or person performing a function similar to a director, of the applicant, together with the name and address of any person owning, of record or beneficially either alone or with associates, 10 per centum or more of any class of stock of the applicant and a list of all names under which the applicant, partner, or principal shareholder previously operated a surface mining operation within the United States;

(5) a statement of whether the applicant, any subsidiary, affiliate, or persons controlled by or under common control with the applicant, has ever held a Federal or State mining permit which subsequent to 1960 has been suspended or revoked or has had a mining bond or similar security deposited in lieu of bond forfeited and, if so, a brief explanation of the facts involved;

(6) a copy of the applicant's advertisement to be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the locality of the proposed site at least once a week for four successive weeks, and which includes the ownership, a description of the exact location and boundaries of the proposed site sufficient so that the proposed operation is readily locatable by local residents, and the location of where the application is available for public inspection;

(7) a description of the type and method of coal mining operation that exists or is proposed, the engineering techniques proposed or used, and the equipment used or proposed to be used;

(8) the anticipated or actual starting and termination dates of each phase of the mining operation and number of acres of land to be affected;

(9) evidence of the applicant's legal right to enter and commence surface mining operations on the area affected;

(10) the name of the watershed and location of the surface stream or tributary into which surface and pit drainage will be discharged;

(11) a determination of the hydrologic consequences of the mining and reclamation operations, both on and off the mine site, with respect to the hydrologic regime, quantity and quality of water in surface and ground water systems including the dissolved and suspended solids under seasonal flow conditions and the collection of sufficient data for the mine site and surrounding area so that an assessment can be made of the probable cumulative impacts of all anticipated mining in the area upon the hydrology of the area and particularly upon water availability;

(12) when requested by the regulatory authority, the climatological factors that are peculiar to the locality of the land to be affected, including the average seasonal precipitation, the average direction and velocity of prevailing winds, and the seasonal temperature ranges;

(13) an accurate map or plan to an appropriate scale clearly showing (A) the land to be affected as of the date of application



and (B) all types of information set forth on topographical maps of the United States Geological Survey of a scale of 1:24,000 or larger, including all manmade features and significant known archeological sites existing on the date of application. Such a map or plan shall among other things specified by the regulatory authority show all boundaries of the land to be affected, the boundary lines and names of present owners of record of all surface areas abutting the permit area, and the location of all buildings within one thousand feet of the permit area;

(14) cross-section maps or plans of the land to be affected including the actual area to be mined, prepared by or under the direction of and certified by a registered professional engineer, or registered land surveyor and a professional geologist (when specific subsurface information is deemed essential and requested by the regulatory authority), or other qualified personnel at State universities showing pertinent elevation and location of test borings or core samplings and depicting the following information: the nature and depth of the various strata of overburden; the location of subsurface water, if encountered, and its quality; the nature and thickness of any coal or rider seam above the coal seam to be mined; the nature of the stratum immediately beneath the coal seam to be mined; all mineral crop lines and the strike and dip of the coal to be mined within the area of land to be affected; existing or previous surface mining limits; the location and extent of known workings of any underground mines, including mine openings to the surface; the location of aquifers; the estimated elevation of the water table; the location of spoil, waste, or refuse areas and topsoil preservation areas; the location of all impoundments for waste or erosion control; any settling or water treatment facilities; constructed or natural drainways and the location of any discharges to any surface body of water on the area of land to be affected or adjacent thereto; and profiles at appropriate cross sections of the anticipated final surface configuration that will be achieved pursuant to the operator's proposed reclamation plan;

(15) a statement of the result of test borings or core samplings from the permit area, including logs of the drill holes; the thickness of the coal seam found, an analysis of the chemical properties of such coal; the sulfur content of any coal seam; chemical analysis of potentially acid or toxic forming sections of the overburden; and chemical analysis of the stratum lying immediately underneath the coal to be mined; and

(16) information pertaining to coal seams, test borings, or core samplings as required by this section shall be made available to any person with an interest which is or may be adversely affected: Provided, That information which pertains only to the analysis of the chemical and physical properties of the coal (excepting information regarding such mineral or elemental content which is potentially toxic in the environment) shall be kept confidential and not made a matter of public record.

(c) Each applicant for a permit shall be required to submit to the regulatory authority as part of the permit application a certificate issued by an insurance company authorized to do business in the

United States certifying that the applicant has a public liability insurance policy in force for the surface mining and reclamation operations for which such permit is sought, or evidence that the applicant has satisfied other State or Federal self-insurance requirements. Such policy shall provide for personal injury and property damage protection in an amount adequate to compensate any persons damaged as a result of surface coal mining and reclamation operations and entitled to compensation under the applicable provisions of State law. Such policy shall be maintained in full force and effect during the terms of the permit or any renewal, including the length of all reclamation operations.

(d) Each applicant for a permit shall be required to submit to the regulatory authority as part of the permit application a reclamation plan which shall meet the requirements of this Act.

(e) Each applicant for a surface coal mining and reclamation permit shall file a copy of his application for public inspection with the recorder at the courthouse of the county or an appropriate official approved by the regulatory authority where the mining is proposed to occur, except for that information pertaining to the coal seam itself.

#### RECLAMATION PLAN REQUIREMENTS

SEC. 508. (a) Each reclamation plan submitted as part of a permit application pursuant to any approved State program or a Federal program under the provisions of this Act shall include, in the degree of detail necessary to demonstrate that reclamation required by the State or Federal program can be accomplished, a statement of:

(1) the identification of the entire area to be mined and affected over the estimated life of the mining operation and the size, sequence, and timing of the subareas for which it is anticipated that individual permits for mining will be sought;

(2) the condition of the land to be covered by the permit prior to any mining including:

(A) the uses existing at the time of the application, and if the land has a history of previous mining, the uses which preceded any mining; and

(B) the capability of the land prior to any mining to support a variety of uses giving consideration to soil and foundation characteristics, topography, and vegetative cover;

(3) the use which is proposed to be made of the land following reclamation, including a discussion of the utility and capacity of the reclaimed land to support a variety of alternative uses and the relationship of such use to existing land use policies and plans, and the comments of any State and local governments or agencies thereof which would have to approve or authorize the proposed use of the land following reclamation;

(4) a detailed description of how the proposed postmining land use is to be achieved and the necessary support activities which may be needed to achieve the proposed land use;

(5) the engineering techniques proposed to be used in mining and reclamation and a description of the major equipment; a plan for the control of surface water drainage and of water accumulation; a plan, where appropriate, for backfilling, soil stabilization,

and compacting, grading, and appropriate revegetation; an estimate of the cost per acre of the reclamation, including a statement as to how the permittee plans to comply with each of the requirements set out in section 515;

(6) the steps to be taken to comply with applicable air and water quality laws and regulations and any applicable health and safety standards;

(7) the consideration which has been given to developing the reclamation plan in a manner consistent with local, physical environmental, and climatological conditions and current mining and reclamation technologies;

(8) the consideration which has been given to insuring the maximum practicable recovery of the mineral resource;

(9) a detailed estimated timetable for the accomplishment of each major step in the reclamation plan;

(10) the consideration which has been given to making the surface mining and reclamation operations consistent with applicable State and local land use plans and programs;

(11) all lands, interests in lands, or options on such interests held by the applicant or pending bids on interests in lands by the applicant, which lands are contiguous to the area to be covered by the permit;

(12) the results of test borings which the applicant has made at the area to be covered by the permit, including the location of subsurface water, and an analysis of the chemical properties including acid forming properties of the mineral and overburden: Provided, That information about the mineral shall be withheld by the regulatory authority if the applicant so requests;

(13) a detailed description of the measures to be taken during the mining and reclamation process to assure the protection of (A) the quantity and quality of surface and ground water systems, both on- and off-site, from adverse effects of the mining and reclamation process, and (B) the rights of present users to such water; and

(14) such other requirements as the regulatory authority shall prescribe by regulation.

(b) Any information required by this section which is not on public file pursuant to State law shall be held in confidence by the regulatory authority.

#### PERFORMANCE BONDS

SEC. 509. (a) After a surface coal mining and reclamation permit application has been approved but before such a permit is issued, the applicant shall file with the regulatory authority, on a form prescribed and furnished by the regulatory authority, a bond for performance payable, as appropriate, to the United States or to the State, and conditional upon faithful performance of all the requirements of this Act and the permit. The bond shall cover that area of land within the permit area upon which the operator will initiate and conduct surface coal mining and reclamation operations within the initial term of the permit. As succeeding increments of surface coal mining and reclamation operations are to be initiated and conducted within the

permit area, the permittee shall file with the regulatory authority an additional bond or bonds to cover such increments in accordance with this section. The amount of the bond required for each bonded area shall depend upon the reclamation requirements of the approved permit and shall be determined by the regulatory authority on the basis of at least two independent estimates. The amount of the bond shall be sufficient to assure the completion of the reclamation plan if the work had to be performed by a third party in the event of forfeiture and in no case shall the bond be less than \$10,000.

(b) Liability under the bond shall be for the duration of the surface coal mining and reclamation operation and for a period coincident with operator's responsibility for vegetation requirements in section 515.

The bond shall be executed by the operator and a corporate surety licensed to do business in the State where such operation is located, except that the operator may elect to deposit cash, negotiable bonds of the United States Government or such State, or negotiable certificates of deposit of any bank organized or transacting business in the United States. The cash deposit or market value of such securities shall be equal to or greater than the amount of the bond required for the bonded area.

(c) The regulatory authority may accept the bond of the applicant itself without separate surety when the applicant demonstrates to the satisfaction of the regulatory authority the existence of a suitable agent to receive service of process and a history of financial solvency and continuous operation sufficient for authorization to self-insure or bond such amount.

(d) Cash or securities so deposited shall be deposited upon the same terms as the terms upon which surety bonds may be deposited. Such securities shall be security for the repayment of such negotiable certificate of deposit.

(e) The amount of the bond or deposit required and the terms of each acceptance of the applicant's bond shall be adjusted by the regulatory authority from time to time as affected land acreages are increased or decreased or where the cost of future reclamation obviously changes.

#### PERMIT APPROVAL OR DENIAL

SEC. 510. (a) Upon the basis of a complete mining application and reclamation plan or a revision or renewal thereof, as required by this Act and pursuant to an approved State program or Federal program under the provisions of this Act, including public notification and an opportunity for a public hearing as required by section 513, the regulatory authority shall grant or deny the application for a permit and notify the applicant in writing. Within ten days after the granting of a permit, the regulatory authority shall notify the State and the local official who has the duty of collecting real estate taxes in the local political subdivision in which the area of land to be affected is located that a permit has been issued and shall describe the location of the land.

(b) No permit, revision, or renewal application shall be approved unless the application affirmatively demonstrates and the regulatory

authority finds in writing on the basis of the information set forth in the application or from information otherwise available which will be documented in the approval, and made available to the applicant, that—

(1) all the requirements of this Act and the State or Federal program have been complied with;

(2) the applicant has demonstrated that reclamation as required by this Act and the State or Federal program can be accomplished under the reclamation plan contained in the permit application;

(3) the assessment of the probable cumulative impact of all anticipated mining in the area on the hydrologic balance specified in section 507(b) has been made and the proposed operation thereof has been designed to prevent significant irreparable offsite damage to hydrologic balance;

(4) the area proposed to be mined is not included within an area designated unsuitable for surface coal mining pursuant to section 522 of this Act or is not within an area under study for such designation in an administrative proceeding commenced pursuant to section 522(a)(4)(D) or section 522(c) (unless in such an area as to which an administrative proceeding has commenced pursuant to section 522(a)(4)(D) of this Act, the operator making the permit application demonstrates that, prior to the date of enactment of this Act, he has made substantial legal and financial commitments in relation to the operation for which he is applying for a permit); and

(5) the proposed surface coal mining operation, if located west of the one hundredth meridian west longitude, would not have a substantial adverse effect on alluvial valley floors underlain by unconsolidated stream laid deposits where farming can be practiced in the form of irrigated, flood irrigated or naturally subirrigated hay meadows or other crop lands (excluding undeveloped range lands), where such valley floors are significant to the practice of farming or ranching operations, including potential farming or ranching operations if such operations are significant and economically feasible.

(c) The applicant shall file with his permit application a schedule listing any and all notices of violations of this Act and any law, rule, or regulation of the United States or of any department or agency in the United States pertaining to air or water environmental protection incurred by the applicant in connection with any surface coal mining operation during the one-year period prior to the date of application. The schedule shall also indicate the final resolution of any such notice of violation. Where the schedule or other information available to the regulatory authority indicates that any surface coal mining operation owned or controlled by the applicant is currently in violation of this Act or such other laws referred to in this subsection, the permit shall not be issued until the applicant submits proof that such violation has been corrected or is in the process of being corrected to the satisfaction of the regulatory authority, department, or agency which has jurisdiction over such violation.

# REVISION OF PERMITS

SEC. 511. (a) (1) During the term of the permit the permittee may submit an application, together with a revised reclamation plan, to the regulatory authority for a revision of the permit.

(2) An application for a revision of a permit shall not be approved unless the regulatory authority finds that reclamation as required by this Act and the State or Federal program can be accomplished under the revised Reclamation Plan. The revision shall be approved or disapproved within a period of time established by the State or Federal program. The regulatory authority shall establish guidelines for a determination of the scale or extent of a revision request for which all permit application information requirements and procedures, including notice and hearings, shall apply: Provided, That any revisions which propose a substantial change in the intended future use of the land or significant alterations in the Reclamation Plan shall, at a minimum be subject to notice and hearing requirements.

(3) Any extensions to the area covered by the permit except incidental boundary revisions must be made by application for another permit.

(b) No transfer, assignment, or sale of the rights granted under any permit issued pursuant to this Act shall be made without the written approval of the regulatory authority.

(c) The regulatory authority may require reasonable revision or modification of the permit provisions during the term of such permit: Provided, That such revision or modification shall be subject to notice and hearing requirements established by the State or Federal program.

# COAL EXPLORATION PERMITS

SEC. 512. (a) Each State program or Federal program shall include a requirement that coal exploration operations which substantially disturb the natural land surface be conducted under a permit issued by the regulatory authority.

(b) Each application for a coal exploration permit pursuant to an approved State or Federal program under the provisions of this Act shall be accompanied by a fee established by the regulatory authority. Such fee shall be based, as nearly as possible, upon the actual or anticipated cost of reviewing, administering, and enforcing such permit issued pursuant to a State or Federal program. The application and supporting technical data shall be submitted in a manner satisfactory to the regulatory authority and shall include a description of the purpose of the proposed exploration project. The supporting technical data shall include, among other things

(1) a general description of the existing environment;

(2) the location of the area of exploration by either metes or bounds, lot, tract, range, or section, whichever is most applicable, including a copy of the pertinent United States Geological Survey topographical map or maps with the area to be explored delineated thereon;

(3) a description of existing roads, railroads, utilities, and rights-of-way, if not shown on the topographical map;



(4) the location of all surface bodies of water, if not shown on the topographical map;

(5) the planned approximate location of any access roads, cuts, drill holes, and necessary facilities that may be constructed in the course of exploration, all of which shall be plotted on the topographical map;

(6) the estimated time of exploration;

(7) the ownership of the surface land to be explored;

(8) a statement describing the right by which the applicant intends to pursue his exploration activities and a certification that notice of intention to pursue such activities has been given to the surface owner;

(9) provisions for reclamation of all land disturbed in exploration, including excavations, roads, drill holes, and the removal of necessary facilities and equipment; and

(10) such other information as the regulatory authority may require.

(c) Specifically identified information submitted by the applicant in the application and supporting technical data as confidential concerning trade secrets or privileged commercial or financial information which relates to the competitive rights of the applicant shall not be available for public examination.

(d) If an applicant is denied a coal exploration permit under this Act, or if the regulatory authority fails to act within a reasonable time, then the applicant may seek relief under the appropriate administrative procedures.

(e) Any person who conducts any coal exploration activities in connection with surface coal mining operations under this Act without first having obtained a permit to explore from the appropriate regulatory authority or shall fail to conduct such exploration activities in a manner consistent with his approved coal exploration permit, shall be subject to the provisions of section 518.

#### PUBLIC NOTICE AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

SEC. 513. (a) At the time of submission of an application for a surface coal mining and reclamation permit, or revision of an existing permit, pursuant to the provisions of this Act or an approved State program, the applicant shall submit to the regulatory authority a copy of his advertisement of the ownership, precise location, and boundaries of the land to be affected. At the time of submission such advertisement shall be placed in a local newspaper of general circulation in the locality of the proposed surface mine at least once a week for four consecutive weeks. The regulatory authority shall notify various local governmental bodies, planning agencies, and sewage and water treatment authorities, or water companies in the locality in which the proposed surface mining will take place, notifying them of the operator's intention to surface mine a particularly described tract of land and indicating the application's permit number and where a copy of the proposed mining and reclamation plan may be inspected. These local bodies, agencies, authorities, or companies have obligation to submit written comments within thirty days on the mining applications with respect to the effect of the proposed operation on the environment

which are within their area of responsibility. Such comments shall be made available to the public at the same locations as are the mining applications.

(b) Any person with a valid legal interest or the officer or head of any Federal, State, or local governmental agency or authority shall have the right to file written objections to the proposed initial or revised application for a permit for surface coal mining and reclamation operation with the regulatory authority within thirty days after the last publication of the above notice. If written objections are filed and a hearing requested, the regulatory authority shall then hold a public hearing in the locality of the proposed mining within a reasonable time of the receipt of such objections. The date, time, and location of such public hearing shall be advertised by the regulatory authority in a newspaper of general circulation in the locality at least once a week for three consecutive weeks prior to the scheduled hearing date. The regulatory authority may arrange with the applicant upon request by any party to the administrative proceeding access to the proposed mining area for the purpose of gathering information relevant to the proceeding. At this public hearing, the applicant for a permit shall have the burden of establishing that his application is in compliance with the applicable State and Federal laws. Not less than ten days prior to any proposed hearing, the regulatory authority shall respond to the written objections in writing. Such response shall include the regulatory authority's preliminary proposals as to the terms and conditions, and amount of bond of a possible permit for the area in question and answers to material factual questions presented in the written objections. The regulatory authority's responsibility under this subsection shall in any event be to make publicly available its estimate as to any other conditions of mining or reclamation which may be required or contained in the preliminary proposal. In the event all parties requesting the hearing stipulate agreement prior to the requested hearings, and withdraw their request, such hearings need not be held.

(c) For the purpose of such hearing, the regulatory authority may administer oaths, subpoena witnesses, or written or printed materials, compel attendance of the witnesses, or production of the materials, and take evidence including but not limited to site inspections of the land to be affected and other surface coal mining operations carried on by the applicant in the general vicinity of the proposed operation. A verbatim transcript and complete record of each public hearing shall be ordered by the regulatory authority.

#### DECISIONS OF REGULATORY AUTHORITY AND APPEALS

SEC. 514. (a) If a public hearing has been held pursuant to section 513(b), the regulatory authority shall issue and furnish the applicant for a permit and persons who are parties to the administrative proceedings with the written finding of the regulatory authority, granting or denying the permit in whole or in part and stating the reasons therefor, within thirty days of said hearings.

(b) If there has been no public hearing held pursuant to section 513(b), the regulatory authority shall notify the applicant for a permit within a reasonable time, taking into account the time needed for

proper investigation of the site, the complexity of the permit application and whether or not written objection to the application has been filed, whether the application has been approved or disapproved. If the application is approved, the permit shall be issued. If the application is disapproved, specific reasons therefor must be set forth in the notification. Within thirty days after the applicant is notified that the permit or any portion thereof has been denied, the applicant may request a hearing on the reasons for the said disapproval. The regulatory authority shall hold a hearing within thirty days of such request and provide notification to all interested parties at the time that the applicant is so notified. Within thirty days after the hearing the regulatory authority shall issue and furnish the applicant, and all persons who participated in the hearing, with the written decision of the regulatory authority granting or denying the permit in whole or in part and stating the reasons therefor.

(c) Any applicant or any person who has participated in the administrative proceedings as an objector, and who is aggrieved by the decision of the regulatory authority, or if the regulatory authority fails to act within a reasonable period of time, shall have the right of appeal for review by a court of competent jurisdiction in accordance with State or Federal law.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

SEC. 515. (a) Any permit issued under any approved State or Federal program pursuant to this Act to conduct surface coal mining operations shall require that such surface coal mining operations will meet all applicable performance standards of this Act, and such other requirements as the regulatory authority shall promulgate.

(b) General performance standards shall be applicable to all surface coal mining and reclamation operations and shall require the operation as a minimum to—

(1) conduct surface coal mining operations so as to maximize the utilization and conservation of the solid fuel resource being recovered so that re-affecting the land in the future through surface coal mining can be minimized;

(2) restore the land affected to a condition at least fully capable of supporting the uses which it was capable of supporting prior to any mining, or higher or better uses of which there is a reasonable likelihood, so long as such use or uses do not present any actual or probable hazard to public health or safety or pose any actual or probable threat of water diminution or pollution, and the permit applicants' declared proposed land use following reclamation is not deemed to be impractical or unreasonable, inconsistent with applicable land use policies and plans, involves unreasonable delay in implementation, or is violative of Federal, State, or local law;

(3) with respect to all surface coal mining operations backfill, compact (where advisable to insure stability or to prevent leaching of toxic materials), and grade in order to restore the approximate original contour of the land with all highwalls, spoil piles and depressions eliminated (unless small depressions are needed

in order to retain moisture to assist revegetation or as otherwise authorized pursuant to this Act): Provided, however, That in surface coal mining which is carried out at the same location over a substantial period of time where the operation transects the coal deposit, and the thickness of the coal deposits relative to the volume of the overburden is large and where the operator demonstrates that the overburden and other spoil and waste materials at a particular point in the permit area or otherwise available from the entire permit area is insufficient, giving due consideration to volumetric expansion, to restore the approximate original contour, the operator, at a minimum, shall backfill, grade, and compact (where advisable) using all available overburden and other spoil and waste materials to attain the lowest practicable grade but not more than the angle of repose, to provide adequate drainage and to cover all acid-forming and other toxic materials, in order to achieve an ecologically sound land use compatible with the surrounding region: And provided further, That in surface coal mining where the volume of overburden is large relative to the thickness of the coal deposit and where the operator demonstrates that due to volumetric expansion the amount of overburden and other spoil and waste materials removed in the course of the mining operation is more than sufficient to restore the approximate original contour, the operator shall after restoring the approximate contour, backfill, grade, and compact (where advisable) the excess overburden and other spoil and waste materials to attain the lowest grade but not more than the angle of repose, and to cover all acid-forming and other toxic materials, in order to achieve an ecologically sound land use compatible with the surrounding region and that such overburden or spoil shall be shaped and graded in such a way as to prevent slides, erosion, and water pollution and is revegetated in accordance with the requirements of this Act;

(4) stabilize and protect all surface areas including spoil piles affected by the surface coal mining and reclamation operation to effectively control erosion and attendant air and water pollution;

(5) remove the topsoil from the land in a separate layer, replace it on the backfill area, or if not utilized immediately, segregate it in a separate pile from other spoil and when the topsoil is not replaced on a backfill area within a time short enough to avoid deterioration of the topsoil, maintain a successful cover by quick growing plant or other means thereafter so that the topsoil is preserved from wind and water erosion, remains free of any contamination by other acid or toxic material, and is in a usable condition for sustaining vegetation when restored during reclamation, except if topsoil is of insufficient quantity or of poor quality for sustaining vegetation, or if other strata can be shown to be more suitable for vegetation requirements, then the operator shall remove, segregate, and preserve in a like manner such other strata which is best able to support vegetation;

(6) restore the topsoil or the best available subsoil which has which is best able to support vegetation;

(7) protect offsite areas from slides or damage occurring during the surface coal mining and reclamation operations, and not

deposit spoil material or locate any part of the operations or waste accumulations outside the permit area;

(8) create, if authorized in the approved mining and reclamation plan and permit, permanent impoundments of water on mining sites as part of reclamation activities only when it is adequately demonstrated that—

(A) the size of the impoundment is adequate for its intended purposes;

(B) the impoundment dam construction will be so designed as to achieve necessary stability with an adequate margin of safety compatible with that of structures constructed under Public Law 83-566 (16 U.S.C. 1006);

(C) the quality of impounded water will be suitable on a permanent basis for its intended use and that discharges from the impoundment will not degrade the water quality in the receiving stream;

(D) the level of water will be reasonably stable;

(E) final grading will provide adequate safety and access for proposed water users; and

(F) such water impoundments will not result in the diminution of the quality or quantity of water utilized by adjacent or surrounding landowners for agricultural, industrial, recreational, or domestic uses;

(9) fill all auger holes with an impervious and noncombustible material in order to prevent drainage;

(10) minimize the disturbances to the prevailing hydrologic balance at the mine-site and in associated offsite areas and to the quality and quantity of water in surface and ground water systems both during and after surface coal mining operations and during reclamation by—

(A) avoiding acid or other toxic mine drainage by such measures as, but not limited to—

(i) preventing or removing water from contact with toxic producing deposits;

(ii) treating drainage to reduce toxic content which adversely affects downstream water upon being released to water courses;

(iii) casing, sealing, or otherwise managing boreholes, shafts, and wells and keep acid or other toxic drainage from entering ground and surface waters;

(B) conducting surface coal mining operations so as to prevent, to the extent possible using the best technology currently available, additional contributions of suspended solids to streamflow or runoff outside the permit area above natural levels under seasonal flow conditions as measured prior to any mining, and avoiding channel deepening or enlargement in operations requiring the discharge of water from mines;

(C) removing temporary or large siltation structures from drainways after disturbed areas are revegetated and stabilized;

(D) restoring recharge capacity of the mined area to approximate premining conditions;

(E) replacing the water supply of an owner of interest in real property who obtains all or part of his supply of water for domestic, agricultural, industrial, or other legitimate use from an underground or surface source where such supply has been affected by contamination, diminution or interruption proximately resulting from mining;

(F) preserving throughout the mining and reclamation process the essential hydrologic functions of alluvial valley floors in the arid and semiarid areas of the country; and

(G) such other actions as the regulatory authority may prescribe;

(11) with respect to surface disposal of mine wastes, tailings, coal processing wastes, and other wastes in areas other than the mine working or excavations, stabilize all waste piles in designated areas through construction in compacted layers including the use of incombustible and impervious materials if necessary and assure the final contour of the waste pile will be compatible with natural surroundings and that the site can and will be stabilized and revegetated according to the provisions of this Act;

(12) refrain from surface coal mining within five hundred feet from active and abandoned underground mines in order to prevent break-throughs and to protect health or safety of miners: Provided, That the regulatory authority shall permit an operator to mine closer to an abandoned underground mine: Provided, That this does not create hazards to the health and safety of miners; or shall permit an operator to mine near, through or partially through an abandoned underground mine working where such mining through will achieve improved resource recovery, abatement of water pollution or elimination of public hazards and such mining shall be consistent with the provisions of the Act;

(13) design, locate, construct, operate, maintain, enlarge, modify, and remove, or abandon, in accordance with the standards and criteria developed pursuant to subsection (e) of this section, all existing and new coal mine waste piles consisting of mine wastes, tailings, coal processing wastes, or other liquid and solid wastes and used either temporarily or permanently as dams or embankments;

(14) insure that all debris, acid forming materials, toxic materials, or materials constituting a fire hazard are treated or disposed of in a manner designed to prevent contamination of ground or surface waters or sustained combustion;

(15) insure that explosives are used only in accordance with existing State and Federal law and the regulations promulgated by the regulatory authority, which shall include provisions to—

(A) provide adequate advance written notice by publication and/or posting of the planned blasting schedule to local governments and to residents who might be affected by the use of such explosives and maintain for a period of at least two years a log of the magnitudes and times of blasts; and

(B) limit the type of explosives and detonating equipment, the size, the timing and frequency of blasts based upon the physical conditions of the site so as to prevent (i) injury to



persons, (ii) damage to public and private property outside the permit area, (iii) adverse impacts on any underground mine, and (iv) change in the course, channel, or availability of ground or surface water outside the permit area;

(16) insure that all reclamation efforts proceed in an environmentally sound manner and as contemporaneously as practicable with the surface coal mining operations;

(17) insure that the construction, maintenance, and postmining conditions of access roads into and across the site of operations will control or prevent erosion and siltation, pollution of water, damage to fish or wildlife or their habitat, or public or private property: Provided, That the regulatory authority may permit the retention after mining of certain access roads where consistent with State and local land use plans and programs and where necessary may permit a limited exception to the restoration of approximate original contour for that purpose;

(18) refrain from the construction of roads or other access ways up a stream bed or drainage channel or in such proximity to such channel so as to seriously alter the normal flow of water;

(19) establish on the regraded areas, and all other lands affected, a diverse, effective and permanent vegetative cover native to the area of land to be affected and capable of self-regeneration and plant succession at least equal in extent of cover to the natural vegetation of the area; except, that introduced species may be used in the revegetation process where desirable and necessary to achieve the approved postmining land use plan;

(20) assume the responsibility for successful revegetation, as required by paragraph (19) above, for a period of five full years after the last year of augmented seeding, fertilizing, irrigation, or other work in order to assure compliance with paragraph (19) above, except in those areas or regions of the country where the annual average precipitation is twenty-six inches or less, then the operator's assumption of responsibility and liability will extend for a period of ten full years after the last year of augmented seeding, fertilizing, irrigation, or other work: Provided, That when the regulatory authority approves a long-term intensive agricultural postmining land use, the applicable five- or ten-year period of responsibility for revegetation shall commence at the date of initial planting for such long-term intensive agricultural postmining land use: Provided further, That when the regulatory authority issues a written finding approving a long-term, intensive, agricultural postmining land use as part of the mining and reclamation plan, the authority may grant exception to the provisions of paragraph (19) above; and

(21) meet such other criteria as are necessary to achieve reclamation in accordance with the purposes of this Act, taking into consideration the physical, climatological, and other characteristics of the site, and to insure the maximum practicable recovery of the mineral resources.

(c) (1) Each State program may and each Federal program shall include procedures pursuant to which the regulatory authority may permit variances for the purposes set forth in paragraph (3) of this subsection.

(2) Where an applicant meets the requirements of paragraphs (3) and (4) of this subsection a variance from the requirement to restore to approximate original contour set forth in subsection 515(b) (3) or 515(d) of this section may be granted for the surface mining of coal where the mining operation will remove an entire coal seam or seams running through the upper fraction of a mountain, ridge, or hill (except as provided in subsection (c) (4) (A) hereof) by removing all of the overburden and creating a level plateau or a gently rolling contour with no highwalls remaining, and capable of supporting postmining uses in accord with the requirements of this subsection.

(3) In cases where an industrial, commercial (including commercial agricultural), residential or public facility (including recreational facilities) development is proposed for the postmining use of the affected land, the regulatory authority may grant a variance for a surface mining operation of the nature described in subsection (c) (2) where—

(A) after consultation with the appropriate land use planning agencies, if any, the proposed development is deemed to constitute an equal or better economic or public use of the affected land, as compared with the premining use;

(B) the equal or better economic or public use can be obtained only if one or more exceptions to the requirements of section 515 (b) (3) are granted;

(C) the applicant presents specific plans for the proposed postmining land use and appropriate assurances that such use will be—

(i) compatible with adjacent land uses;

(ii) obtainable according to data regarding expected need and market;

(iii) assured of investment in necessary public facilities;

(iv) supported by commitments from public agencies where appropriate;

(v) practicable with respect to private financial capability for completion of the proposed development;

(vi) planned pursuant to a schedule attached to the reclamation plan so as to integrate the mining operation and reclamation with the postmining land use; and

(vii) designed by a registered engineer in conformance with professional standards established to assure the stability, drainage, and configuration necessary for the intended use of the site;

(D) the proposed use would be consistent with adjacent land uses, and existing State and local land use plans and programs;

(E) the regulatory authority provides the governing body of the unit of general-purpose government in which the land is located and any State or Federal agency which the regulatory agency, in its discretion, determines to have an interest in the proposed use, an opportunity of not more than sixty days to review and comment on the proposed use;

(F) a public hearing is held in the locality of the proposed surface coal mining operation prior to the grant of any permit including a variance; and

(G) all other requirements of this Act will be met.

(4) In granting any variance pursuant to this subsection the regulatory authority shall require that—

(A) the toe of the lowest coal seam mined and the overburden associated with it are retained in place as a barrier to slides and erosion;

(B) the reclaimed area is stable;

(C) the resulting plateau or rolling contour drains inward from the outcrops except at specified points;

(D) no damage will be done to natural water-courses;

(E) all other requirements of this Act will be met.

(5) The regulatory authority shall promulgate specific regulations to govern the granting of variances in accord with the provisions of this subsection, and may impose such additional requirements as he deems to be necessary.

(6) All exceptions granted under the provisions of this subsection shall be reviewed not more than three years from the date of issuance of the permit, unless the applicant affirmatively demonstrates that the proposed development is proceeding in accordance with the terms of the approved schedule and reclamation plan.

(d) The following performance standards shall be applicable to steep-slope surface coal mining and shall be in addition to those general performance standards required by this section: Provided, however, That the provisions of this subsection (d) shall not apply to those situations in which an operator is mining on flat or gently rolling terrain, on which an occasional steep slope is encountered through which the mining operation is to proceed, leaving a plain or predominantly flat area:

(1) Insure that when performing surface coal mining on steep slopes, no debris, abandoned or disabled equipment, spoil material, or waste mineral matter be placed on the downslope below the bench or mining cut, except that where necessary soil or spoil material from the initial block or short linear cut of earth necessary to obtain initial access to the coal seam in a new surface coal mining operation can be placed on a limited and specified area of the downslope below the initial cut if the permittee demonstrates that such soil or spoil material will not slide and that the other requirements of this subsection can still be met: Provided, That spoil material in excess of that required for the reconstruction of the approximate original contour under the provisions of paragraphs 515(b)(3) or 515(d)(2) or excess spoil from a surface coal mining operation granted a variance under subsection 515(c) may be permanently stored at such offsite spoil storage areas as the regulatory authority shall designate and for the purposes of this Act such areas shall be deemed in all respects to be part of the lands affected by surface coal mining operations. Such offsite spoil storage areas shall be designed by a registered engineer in conformance with professional standards established to assure the stability, drainage, and configuration necessary for the intended use of the site.

(2) Complete backfilling with spoil material shall be required to cover completely the highwall and return the site to the approximate original contour, which material will maintain stability following mining and reclamation.

(3) The operator may not disturb land above the top of the highwall unless the regulatory authority finds that such disturbance will facilitate compliance with the environmental protection standards of this section: Provided, however, That the land disturbed above the highwall shall be limited to that amount necessary to facilitate said compliance.

(4) For the purposes of this section, the term "steep slope" is any slope above twenty degrees or such lesser slope as may be defined by the regulatory authority after consideration of soil, climate, and other characteristics of a region or State.

(e) The Secretary, with the written concurrence of the Chief of Engineers, shall establish within 135 days from the date of enactment, standards and criteria regulating the design, location, construction, operation, maintenance, enlargement, modification, removal and abandonment of new and existing coal mine waste piles referred to in Section 515(b)(13) and Section 516(b)(5). Such standards and criteria shall conform to the standards and criteria used by the Chief of Engineers to insure that flood control structures are safe and effectively perform their intended function. In addition to engineering and other technical specifications the standards and criteria developed pursuant to this subsection must include provisions for: review and approval of plans and specifications prior to construction, enlargement, modification, removal or abandonment; performance of periodic inspections during construction; issuance of certificates of approval upon completion of construction; performance of periodic safety inspections; and issuance of notices for required remedial or maintenance work.

#### SURFACE EFFECTS OF UNDERGROUND COAL MINING OPERATIONS

SEC. 516. (a) The Secretary shall promulgate rules and regulations directed toward the surface effects of underground coal mining operations, embodying the following requirements and in accordance with the procedures established under section 501 of this Act.

(b) Each permit issued under any approved State or Federal program pursuant to this Act and relating to underground coal mining shall require the operator to—

(1) adopt measures consistent with known technology in order to prevent subsidence to the extent technologically and economically feasible, maximize mine stability, and maintain the value and use of such surface lands, except in those instances where the mining technology used requires planned subsidence in a predictable and controlled manner: Provided, That nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prohibit the standard method of room and pillar continuous mining;

(2) seal all portals, entryways, drifts, shafts, or other openings between the surface and underground mine working when no longer needed for the conduct of the mining operations;

(3) fill or seal exploratory holes no longer necessary for mining, maximizing to the extent practicable return of mine and processing waste, tailings, and any other waste incident to the mining operation, to the mine workings or excavations;

(4) with respect to surface disposal of mine wastes, tailings, coal processing wastes, and other wastes in areas other than the mine workings or excavations, stabilize all waste piles created by the permittee from current operations through construction in compacted layers including the use of incombustible and impervious materials if necessary and assure that the leachate will not pollute surface or ground waters and that the final contour of the waste accumulation will be compatible with natural surroundings and that the site is stabilized and revegetated according to the provisions of this section;

(5) design, locate, construct, operate, maintain, enlarge, modify, and remove, or abandon, in accordance with the standards and criteria developed pursuant to Sec. 515(e), all existing and new coal mine waste piles consisting of mine wastes, tailings, coal processing wastes, or other liquid and solid wastes and used either temporarily or permanently as dams or embankments.

(6) establish on regraded areas and all other lands affected, a diverse and permanent vegetative cover capable of self-regeneration and plant succession and at least equal in extent of cover to the natural vegetation of the area;

(7) protect offsite areas from damages which may result from such mining operations;

(8) eliminate fire hazards and otherwise eliminate conditions which constitute a hazard to health and safety of the public;

(9) minimize the disturbances to the prevailing hydrologic balance at the mine-site and in associated offsite areas and to the quantity of water in surface ground water systems both during and after coal mining operations and during reclamation by—

(A) avoiding acid or other toxic mine drainage by such measures as, but not limited to—

(i) preventing or removing water from contact with toxic producing deposits;

(ii) treating drainage to reduce toxic content which adversely affects downstream water upon being released to water courses;

(iii) casing, sealing, or otherwise managing boreholes, shafts, and wells to keep acid or other toxic drainage from entering ground and surface waters; and

(B) conducting surface coal mining operations so as to prevent, to the extent possible using the best technology currently available, additional contributions of suspended solids to streamflow or runoff outside the permit area above natural levels under seasonal flow conditions as measured prior to any mining, and avoiding channel deepening or enlargement in operations requiring the discharge of water from mines.

(10) with respect to other surface impacts not specified in this subsection including the construction of new roads or the improvement or use of existing roads to gain access to the site of such activities and for haulage, repair areas, storage areas, processing areas, shipping areas and other areas upon which are sited structures, facilities, or other property or materials on the surface, resulting from or incident to such activities, operate in accordance with the standards established under section 515 of this title for

such effects which result from surface coal mining operations: Provided, That the Secretary may make such modifications in the requirements imposed by this subparagraph as are deemed necessary by the Secretary due to the differences between surface and underground coal mining.

(c) In order to protect the stability of the land, the regulatory authority shall suspend underground coal mining under urbanized areas, cities, towns, and communities and adjacent to industrial or commercial buildings, major impoundments, or permanent streams if he finds imminent danger to inhabitants of the urbanized areas, cities, towns, and communities.

(d) The provisions of title V of this Act relating to State and Federal programs, permits, bonds, inspections and enforcement, public review, and administrative and judicial review shall be applicable to surface coal mining and reclamation operations incident to underground coal mining with such modifications to the permits application requirements, permit approval or denial procedures, and bond requirements as are deemed necessary by the Secretary due to the differences between surface and underground coal mining. The Secretary shall promulgate such modifications in accordance with the rule-making procedure established in section 501 of this Act.

#### INSPECTIONS AND MONITORING

SEC. 517. (a) The Secretary shall cause to be made such inspections of any surface coal mining and reclamation operations as are necessary to evaluate the administration of approved State programs, or to develop or enforce any Federal program, and for such purposes authorized representatives of the Secretary shall have a right of entry to, upon, or through any surface coal mining and reclamation operations.

(b) For the purpose of developing or assisting in the development, administration, and enforcement of any approved State or Federal program under this Act or in the administration and enforcement of any permit under this Act, or of determining whether any person is in violation of any requirement of any such State or Federal program or any other requirement of this Act—

(1) the regulatory authority shall require any permittee to (A) establish and maintain appropriate records, (B) make monthly reports to the regulatory authority, (C) install, use, and maintain any necessary monitoring equipment or methods, (D) evaluate results in accordance with such methods, at such locations, intervals, and in such manner as a regulatory authority shall prescribe, and (E) provide such other information relative to surface coal mining and reclamation operations as the regulatory authority deems reasonable and necessary;

(2) for those surface coal mining and reclamation operations which remove or disturb strata that serve as aquifers which significantly insure the hydrologic balance of water use either on or off the mining site, the regulatory authority shall specify those—

(A) monitoring sites to record the quantity and quality of surface drainage above and below the minesite as well as in the potential zone of influence;

(B) monitoring sites to record level, amount, and samples of ground water and aquifers potentially affected by the mining and also directly below the lower most (deepest) coal seam to be mined;

(C) records of well logs and borehole data to be maintained; and

(D) monitoring sites to record precipitation.

The monitoring data collection, and analysis required by this section shall be conducted according to standards and procedures set forth by the regulatory authority in order to assure their reliability and validity; and

(3) the authorized representatives of the regulatory authority, without advance notice and upon presentation of appropriate credentials (A) shall have the right of entry to, upon, or through any surface coal mining and reclamation operations or any premises in which any records required to be maintained under paragraph (1) of this subsection are located; and (B) may at reasonable times, and without delay, have access to and copy any records, inspect any monitoring equipment or method of operation required under this Act.

(c) The inspections by the regulatory authority shall (1) occur on an irregular basis averaging not less than one inspection per month for the surface coal mining and reclamation operations covered by each permit; (2) occur without prior notice to the permittee or his agents or employees; and (3) include the filing of inspection reports adequate to enforce the requirements of and to carry out the terms and purposes of this Act and the regulatory authority shall make copies of such inspection reports immediately and freely available to the public at a central location in the pertinent geographic area of mining. The Secretary or regulatory authority shall establish a system of continual rotation of inspectors so that the same inspector does not consistently visit the same operations.

(d) Each permittee shall conspicuously maintain at the entrances to the surface coal mining and reclamation operations a clearly visible sign which sets forth the name, business address, and phone number of the permittee and the permit number of the surface coal mining and reclamation operations.

(e) Each inspector, upon detection of each violation of any requirement of any State or Federal program or of this Act, shall forthwith inform the operator in writing, and shall report in writing any such violation to the regulatory authority.

(f) Copies of any records, reports, inspection materials, or information obtained under this title by the regulatory authority shall be made immediately available to the public at central and sufficient locations in the county, multicounty, and State area of mining so that they are conveniently available to residents in the areas of mining.

(g) No employee of the State regulatory authority performing any function or duty under this Act shall have a direct or indirect financial interest in any underground or surface coal mining operation. Whoever knowingly violates the provisions of the above sentence shall, upon conviction, be punished by a fine of not more than \$2,500, or by imprisonment of not more than one (1) year, or by both. The Secre-

tary shall (1) within 60 days after enactment of this Act, publish in the Federal Register, in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 553, regulations to establish methods by which the provisions of this subsection will be monitored and enforced by the Secretary and such State regulatory authority, including appropriate provisions for the filing by such employees and the review of statements and supplements thereto concerning any financial interest which may be affected by this subsection, and (2) report to the Congress on March 1 of each calendar year on actions taken and not taken during the preceding year under this subsection.

#### PENALTIES

Sec. 518. (a) In the enforcement of a Federal program or Federal lands program, or during Federal enforcement pursuant to section 502 or during Federal enforcement of a State program pursuant to section 521 of this Act, any permittee who violates any permit condition or who violates any other provision of this title, may be assessed a civil penalty by the Secretary, except that if such violation leads to the issuance of a cessation order under section 521, the civil penalty shall be assessed. Such penalty shall not exceed \$5,000 for each violation. Each day of a continuing violation may be deemed a separate violation for purposes of penalty assessments. In determining the amount of the penalty, consideration shall be given to the permittee's history of previous violations at the particular surface coal mining operation; the appropriateness of such penalty to the size of the business of the permittee charged; the seriousness of the violation, including any irreparable harm to the environment and any hazard to the health or safety of the public; whether the permittee was negligent; and the demonstrated good faith of the permittee charged in attempting to achieve rapid compliance after notification of the violation.

(b) A civil penalty shall be assessed by the Secretary only after the person charged with a violation described under subsection (a) of this section has been given an opportunity for a public hearing. Where such a public hearing has been held, the Secretary shall make findings of fact, and he shall issue a written decision as to the occurrence of the violation and the amount of the penalty which is warranted, incorporating, when appropriate, an order therein requiring that the penalty be paid. When appropriate, the Secretary shall consolidate such hearings with other proceedings under section 521 of this Act. Any hearing under this section shall be of record and shall be subject to section 554 of title 5 of the United States Code. Where the person charged with such a violation fails to avail himself of the opportunity for a public hearing, a civil penalty shall be assessed by the Secretary after the Secretary has determined that a violation did occur, and the amount of the penalty which is warranted, and has issued an order requiring that the penalty be paid.

(c) If no complaint, as provided in this section, is filed within thirty days from the date of the final order or decision issued by the Secretary under subsection (b) of this section, such order and decision shall be conclusive.

(d) Interest at the rate of 6 per centum or at the prevailing Department of the Treasury borrowing rate, whichever is greater, shall be charged against a person on any unpaid civil penalty assessed



against him pursuant to the final order of the Secretary, said interest to be computed from the thirty-first day after issuance of such final assessment order.

(e) Civil penalties owed under this Act, either pursuant to subsection (c) of this section or pursuant to an enforcement order entered under section 526 of this Act, may be recovered in a civil action brought by the Attorney General at the request of the Secretary in any appropriate district court of the United States.

(f) Any person who willfully and knowingly violates a condition of a permit issued pursuant to a Federal program, a Federal lands program or Federal enforcement pursuant to section 502 or during Federal enforcement of a State program pursuant to section 525 of this Act or fails or refuses to comply with any order issued under section 525 or section 526 of this Act, or any order incorporated in a final decision issued by the Secretary under this Act, except an order incorporated in a decision issued under subsection (b) of this section or section 704 of this Act, shall, upon conviction, be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000, or by imprisonment for not more than one year or both.

(g) Whenever a corporate permittee violates a condition of a permit issued pursuant to a Federal program, a Federal lands program or Federal enforcement pursuant to section 502 or Federal enforcement of a State program pursuant to section 521 of this Act or fails or refuses to comply with any order issued under section 521 of this Act, or any order incorporated in a final decision issued by the Secretary under this Act except an order incorporated in a decision issued under subsection (b) of this section or section 704 of this Act, any director, officer, or agent of such corporation who willfully and knowingly authorized, ordered, or carried out such violation, failure, or refusal shall be subject to the same civil penalties, fines, and imprisonment that may be imposed upon a person under subsections (a) and (f) of this section.

(h) Whoever knowingly makes any false statement, representation, or certification, or knowingly fails to make any statement, representation, or certification in any application, record, report, plan, or other document filed or required to be maintained pursuant to a Federal program or a Federal lands program or any order or decision issued by the Secretary under this Act, shall, upon conviction be punished by a fine of not more than \$10,000, or by imprisonment for not more than one year or both.

(i) As a condition of approval of any State program submitted pursuant to section 503 of this Act, the civil and criminal penalty provisions thereof shall, at a minimum, incorporate penalties no less stringent than those set forth in this section, and shall contain the same or similar procedural requirements relating thereto.

#### RELEASE OF PERFORMANCE BONDS OR DEPOSITS

SEC. 519. (a) The permittee may file a request with the regulatory authority for the release of all or part of a performance bond or deposit. Within thirty days after any application for bond or deposit release has been filed with the regulatory authority, the operator shall submit a copy of an advertisement placed on five successive days in a

newspaper of general circulation in the locality of the surface coal mining operation. Such advertisement shall be considered part of any bond release application and shall contain a notification of the precise location of the land affected, the number of acres, the permit number and the date approved, the amount of the bond filed and the portion sought to be released, and the type and the approximate dates of reclamation work performed, and a description of the results achieved as they relate to the operator's approved reclamation plan. In addition, as part of any bond release application, the applicant shall submit copies of letters which he has sent to adjoining property owners, local governmental bodies, planning agencies, and sewage and water treatment authorities, or water companies in the locality in which the surface coal mining and reclamation activities took place, notifying them of his intention to seek release from the bond.

(b) Upon receipt of the notification and request, the regulatory authority shall within a reasonable time conduct an inspection and evaluation of the reclamation work involved. Such evaluation shall consider, among other things, the degree of difficulty to complete any remaining reclamation, whether pollution of surface and subsurface water is occurring, the probability of continuance of future occurrence of such pollution, and the estimated cost of abating such pollution.

(c) The regulatory authority may release in whole or in part said bond or deposit if the authority is satisfied that reclamation covered by the bond or deposit or portion thereof has been accomplished as required by this Act according to the following schedule:

(1) When the operator completes the backfilling, regrading, and drainage control of a bonded area in accordance with his approved reclamation plan, the release of 60 per centum of the bond or collateral for the applicable permit area;

(2) After revegetation has been established on the regraded mined lands in accordance with the approved reclamation plan. When determining the amount of bond to be released after successful revegetation has been established, the regulatory authority shall retain that amount of bond for the revegetated area which would be sufficient for a third party to cover the cost of reestablishing revegetation and for the period specified for operator responsibility in section 515 of reestablishing revegetation. No part of the bond or deposit shall be released under this paragraph so long as the lands to which the release would be applicable are contributing suspended solids to streamflow or runoff outside the permit area above natural levels under seasonal flow conditions as measured prior to any mining and as set forth in the permit.

(3) When the operator has completed successfully all surface coal mining and reclamation activities, but not before the expiration of the period specified for operator responsibility in section 515:

Provided, however, That no bond shall be fully released until all reclamation requirements of this Act are fully met.

(d) If the regulatory authority disapproves the application for release of the bond or portion thereof, the authority shall notify the permittee, in writing, stating the reasons for disapproval and recommending corrective actions necessary to secure said release.

(e) With any application for total or partial bond release filed with the regulatory authority, the regulatory authority shall notify the municipality in which a surface coal mining operation is located by certified mail at least thirty days prior to the release of all or a portion of the bond.

(f) Any person with a valid legal interest or the officer or head of any Federal, State, or local governmental agency shall have the right to file written objections to the proposed release from bond to the regulatory authority within thirty days after the last publication of the above notice. If written objections are filed, and a hearing requested, the regulatory authority shall inform all the interested parties, of the time and place of the hearing, and hold a public hearing in the locality of the surface coal mining operation proposed for bond release within thirty days of the request for such hearing. The date, time, and location of such public hearings shall be advertised by the regulatory authority in a newspaper of general circulation in the locality twice a week for two consecutive weeks.

(g) For the purpose of such hearing the regulatory authority shall have the authority and is hereby empowered to administer oaths, subpoena witnesses, or written or printed materials, compel the attendance of witnesses, or production of the materials, and take evidence including but not limited to inspections of the land affected and other surface coal mining operations carried on by the applicant in the general vicinity. A verbatim transcript and a complete record of each public hearing shall be ordered by the regulatory authority.

#### CITIZEN SUITS

SEC. 520. (a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, any person having an interest which is or may be adversely affected may commence a civil action on his own behalf—

(1) against any person including—

(A) the United States,

(B) any other governmental instrumentality or agency to the extent permitted by the eleventh amendment to the Constitution who is alleged to be in violation of the provisions of this Act or the regulations promulgated thereunder, or order issued by the regulatory authority,

(C) any other person who is alleged to be in violation of any rule, regulation, order, or permit issued pursuant to this Act; or

(2) against the Secretary or the appropriate State regulatory authority to the extent permitted by the eleventh amendment to the Constitution where there is alleged a failure of the Secretary or the appropriate State regulatory authority to perform any act or duty under this Act which is not discretionary with the Secretary or with the appropriate State regulatory authority.

(b) No action may be commenced—

(1) under subsection (a)(1) of this section—

(A) prior to sixty days after the plaintiff has given notice in writing under oath of the violation (i) to the Secretary, (ii) to the State in which the violation occurs, and (iii) to any alleged violator; or

(B) if the Secretary or the State has commenced and is diligently prosecuting a civil action in a court of the United States or a State to require compliance with the provisions of this Act, or any rule, regulation, order, or permit issued pursuant to this Act, but in any such action in a court of the United States any person may intervene as a matter of right; or

(2) under subsection (a)(2) of this section prior to sixty days after the plaintiff has given notice in writing under oath of such action to the Secretary, in such manner as the Secretary shall by regulation prescribe, or to the appropriate State regulatory authority, except that such action may be brought immediately after such notification in the case where the violation or order complained of constitutes an imminent threat to the health or safety of the plaintiff or would immediately affect a legal interest of the plaintiff.

(c)(1) Any action respecting a violation of this Act or the regulations thereunder may be brought only in the judicial district in which the surface coal mining operation complained of is located.

(2) In such action under this section, the Secretary, or the State regulatory authority, if not a party, may intervene as a matter of right.

(d) The court, in issuing any final order in any action brought pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, may award costs of litigation to any party, whenever the court determines such award is appropriate. The court may, if a temporary restraining order or preliminary injunction is sought, require the filing of a bond or equivalent security in accordance with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

(e) Nothing in this section shall restrict any right which any person (or class of persons) may have under this or any statute or common law to seek enforcement of any of the provisions of this Act and the regulations thereunder, or to seek any other relief (including relief against the Secretary or the appropriate State regulatory authority).

(f) Any resident of the United States who is injured in any manner through the failure of any operator to comply with any rule, regulation, order, or permit issued pursuant to this Act may bring an action for damages (including attorney fees) in an appropriate United States district court.

#### ENFORCEMENT

SEC. 521. (a)(1) Whenever, on the basis of any information available to him, including receipt of information from any person, the Secretary has reason to believe that any person is in violation of any requirement of this Act or any permit condition required by this Act, the Secretary shall notify the State regulatory authority, if one exists, in the State in which such violation exists. If no such State authority exists or the State regulatory authority fails within ten days after notification to take appropriate action to cause said violation to be corrected or to show good cause for such failure and transmit notification of its action to the Secretary, the Secretary shall immediately order Federal inspection of the surface coal mining operation at which the alleged violation is occurring unless the information available to the Secretary is a result of a previous Federal inspection of such sur-

face coal mining operation. When the Federal inspection results from information provided to the Secretary by any person, the Secretary shall notify such person when the Federal inspection is proposed to be carried out and such person shall be allowed to accompany the inspector during the inspection.

(2) When, on the basis of any Federal inspection, the Secretary or his authorized representative determines that any condition or practices exist, or that any permittee is in violation of any requirement of this Act or any permit condition required by this Act, which condition, practice, or violation also creates an imminent danger to the health or safety of the public, or is causing, or can reasonably be expected to cause significant, imminent environmental harm to land, air, or water resources, the Secretary or his authorized representative shall immediately order a cessation of surface coal mining and reclamation operations or the portion thereof relevant to the condition, practice, or violation. Such cessation order shall remain in effect until the Secretary or his authorized representative determines that the condition, practice, or violation has been abated, or until modified, vacated, or terminated by the Secretary or his authorized representative pursuant to subparagraph (a) (5) of this section.

(3) When, on the basis of a Federal inspection which is carried out during the enforcement of a Federal program or a Federal lands program, Federal inspection pursuant to section 502, or section 504(b) or during Federal enforcement of a State program in accordance with subsection (b) of this section, the Secretary or his authorized representative determines that any permittee is in violation of any requirement of this Act or any permit condition required by this Act, but such violation does not create an imminent danger to the health or safety of the public, or cause or can be reasonably expected to cause significant, imminent environmental harm to land, air, or water resources, the Secretary or authorized representative shall issue a notice to the permittee or his agent fixing a reasonable time but not more than ninety days for the abatement of the violation.

If, upon expiration of the period of time as originally fixed or subsequently extended, for good cause shown and upon the written finding of the Secretary or his authorized representative, the Secretary or his authorized representative finds that the violation has not been abated, he shall immediately order a cessation of surface coal mining and reclamation operations or the portion thereof relevant to the violation. Such cessation order shall remain in effect until the Secretary or his authorized representative determines that the violation has been abated, or until modified, vacated, or terminated by the Secretary or his authorized representative pursuant to subparagraph (a) (5) of this section.

(4) When, on the basis of a Federal inspection which is carried out during the enforcement of a Federal program or a Federal lands program, Federal inspection pursuant to section 502 or section 504(b) or during Federal enforcement of a State program in accordance with subsection (b) of this section, the Secretary or his authorized representative determines that a pattern of violations of any requirements of this Act or any permit conditions required by this Act exists or has existed, and if the Secretary or his authorized representative also find that such violations are caused by the unwarranted failure of the

permittee to comply with any requirements of this Act or any permit conditions, or that such violations are willfully caused by the permittee, the Secretary or his authorized representative shall forthwith issue an order to the permittee to show cause as to why the permit should not be suspended or revoked. Upon the permittee's failure to show cause as to why the permit should not be suspended or revoked, the Secretary or his authorized representative shall forthwith suspend or revoke the permit.

(5) Notices and orders issued pursuant to this section shall set forth with reasonable specificity the nature of the violation and the remedial action required, the period of time established for abatement, and a reasonable description of the portion of the surface coal mining and reclamation operation to which the notice or order applies. Each notice or order issued under this section shall be given promptly to the permittee or his agent by the Secretary or his authorized representative who issues such notice or order, and all such notices and orders shall be in writing and shall be signed by such authorized representatives. Any notice or order issued pursuant to this section may be modified, vacated, or terminated by the Secretary or his authorized representative. A copy of any such order or notice shall be sent to the State regulatory authority in the State in which the violation occurs.

(b) Whenever the Secretary finds that violations of an approved State program appear to result from a failure of the State to enforce such State program effectively, he shall so notify the State. If the Secretary finds that such failure extends beyond thirty days after such notice, he shall give public notice of such finding. During the period beginning with such public notice and ending when such State satisfies the Secretary that it will enforce this Act, the Secretary shall enforce any permit condition required under this Act, shall issue new or revised permits in accordance with requirements of this Act, and may issue such notices and orders as are necessary for compliance therewith.

(c) The Secretary may request the Attorney General to institute a civil action for relief, including a permanent or temporary injunction, restraining order, or any other appropriate order in the district court of the United States for the district in which the surface coal mining and reclamation operation is located or in which the permittee thereof has his principal office, whenever such permittee or his agent (A) violates or fails or refuses to comply with any order or decision issued by the Secretary under this Act, or (B) interferes with, hinders, or delays the Secretary or his authorized representatives in carrying out the provisions of this Act, or (C) refuses to admit such authorized representative to the mine, or (D) refuses to permit inspection of the mine by such authorized representative, or (E) refuses to furnish any information or report requested by the Secretary in furtherance of the provisions of this Act, or (F) refuses to permit access to, and copying of, such records as the Secretary determines necessary in carrying out the provisions of this Act. Such court shall have jurisdiction to provide such relief as may be appropriate. Temporary restraining orders shall be issued in accordance with rule 65 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, as amended. Any relief granted by the court to enforce an order under clause (A) of this section shall continue in effect



until the completion or final termination of all proceedings for review of such order under this title, unless, prior thereto, the district court granting such relief sets it aside or modifies it.

(d) As a condition of approval of any State program submitted pursuant to section 503 of this Act, the enforcement provisions thereof shall, at a minimum, incorporate sanctions no less stringent than those set forth in this section, and shall contain the same or similar procedural requirements relating thereto.

#### DESIGNATING AREAS UNSUITABLE FOR SURFACE COAL MINING

SEC. 522. (a) (1) To be eligible to assume primary regulatory authority pursuant to section 503, each State shall establish a planning process enabling objective decisions based upon competent and scientifically sound data and information as to which, if any, land areas of a State are unsuitable for all or certain types of surface coal mining operations pursuant to the standards set forth in paragraph (2) and (3) of this subsection but such designation shall not prevent the mineral exploration pursuant to the Act of any area so designated.

(2) Upon petition pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, the State regulatory authority shall designate an area as unsuitable for all or certain types of surface coal mining operations if the State regulatory authority determines that reclamation pursuant to the requirements of this Act is not feasible.

(3) Upon petition pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, a surface area may be designated unsuitable for certain types of surface coal mining operations if such operations will—

(A) be incompatible with existing land use plans or programs; or

(B) affect fragile or historic lands in which such operations could result in significant damage to important historic, cultural, scientific, and esthetic values and natural systems; or

(C) affect renewable resource lands in which such operations could result in a substantial loss or reduction of long-range productivity of water supply or of food or fiber products, and such lands to include aquifers and aquifer recharge areas; or

(D) affect natural hazard lands in which such operations could substantially endanger life and property, such lands to include areas subject to frequent flooding and areas of unstable geology.

(4) To comply with this section, a State must demonstrate it has developed or is developing a process which includes—

(A) a State agency responsible for surface coal mining lands review;

(B) a data base and an inventory system which will permit proper evaluation of the capacity of different land areas of the State to support and permit reclamation of surface coal mining operations;

(C) a method or methods for implementing land use planning decisions concerning surface coal mining operations; and

(D) proper notice, opportunities for public participation, including a public hearing prior to making any designation or redesignation, pursuant to this section, and measures to protect the legal interests of affected individuals in all aspects of the State planning process.

(5) Determinations of the unsuitability of land for surface coal mining, as provided for in this section, shall be integrated as closely as possible with present and future land use planning and regulation processes at the Federal, State, and local levels.

(6) The requirements of this section shall not apply to lands on which surface coal mining operations are being conducted on the date of enactment of this Act or under a permit issued pursuant to this Act, or where substantial legal and financial commitments in such operations are in existence prior to September 1, 1974.

(b) The Secretary shall conduct a review of the Federal lands to determine, pursuant to the standards set forth in paragraphs (2) and

(3) of subsection (a) of this section, whether there are areas on Federal lands which are unsuitable for all or certain types of surface coal mining operations: Provided, however, That the Secretary may permit surface coal mining on Federal lands prior to the completion of this review. When the Secretary determines an area on Federal lands to be unsuitable for all or certain types of surface coal mining operations, he shall withdraw such area or condition any mineral leasing or mineral entries in a manner so as to limit surface coal mining operations on such area. Where a Federal program has been implemented in a State pursuant to section 504, the Secretary shall implement a process for designation of areas unsuitable for surface coal mining for non-Federal lands within such State and such process shall incorporate the standards and procedures of this section.

(c) Any person having an interest which is or may be adversely affected shall have the right to petition the regulatory authority to have an area designated as unsuitable for surface coal mining operations, or to have such a designation terminated. Such a petition shall contain allegations of facts with supporting evidence which would tend to establish the allegations. Within ten months after receipt of the petition the regulatory authority shall hold a public hearing in the locality of the affected area, after appropriate notice and publication of the date, time, and location of such hearing. After a person having an interest which is or may be adversely affected has filed a petition and before the hearing, as required by this subsection, any person may intervene by filing allegations of facts with supporting evidence which would tend to establish the allegations. Within sixty days after such hearing, the regulatory authority shall issue and furnish to the petitioner and any other party to the hearing, a written decision regarding the petition, and the reasons therefor. In the event that all the petitioners stipulate agreement prior to the requested hearing, and withdraw their request, such hearing need not be held.

(d) Prior to designating any land areas as unsuitable for surface coal mining operations, the regulatory authority shall prepare a detailed statement on (i) the potential coal resource of the area, (ii) the demand for coal resources, and (iii) the impact of such designation on the environment, the economy, and the supply of coal.

(e) Subject to valid existing rights no surface coal mining operations except those which exist on the date of enactment of this Act shall be permitted—

(1) on any lands within the boundaries of units of the National Park System, the National Wildlife Refuge Systems, the National System of Trails, the National Wilderness Preservation System,

the Wild and Scenic Rivers System, including study rivers designated under section 5(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and National Recreation Areas designated by Act of Congress;

(2) on any Federal lands within the boundaries of any national forest except surface operations and impacts incident to an underground coal mine;

(3) which will adversely affect any publicly owned park or places included in the National Register of Historic Sites unless approved jointly by the regulatory authority and the Federal, State, or local agency with jurisdiction over the park or the historic site;

(4) within one hundred feet of the outside right-of-way line of any public road, except where mine access roads or haulage roads join such right-of-way line and except that the regulatory authority may permit such roads to be relocated or the area affected to lie within one hundred feet of such road, if after public notice and opportunity for public hearing in the locality a written finding is made that the interests of the public and the landowners affected thereby will be protected; or

(5) within three hundred feet from any occupied dwelling, unless waived by the owner thereof, nor within three hundred feet of any public building, school, church, community, or institutional building, public park, or within one hundred feet of a cemetery.

#### FEDERAL LANDS

Sec. 523. (a) No later than six months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall promulgate and implement a Federal lands program which shall be applicable to all surface coal mining and reclamation operations taking place pursuant to any Federal law on any Federal lands: Provided, That except as provided in section 710 the provisions of this Act shall not be applicable to Indian lands. The Federal lands program shall, at a minimum, incorporate all of the requirements of this Act and shall take into consideration the diverse physical, climatological, and other unique characteristics of the Federal lands in question. Where Federal lands in a State with an approved State program are involved, the Federal lands program shall, at a minimum, include the requirements of the approved State program.

(b) The requirements of this Act and the Federal lands programs shall be incorporated by reference or otherwise in any Federal mineral lease, permit, or contract issued by the Secretary which may involve surface coal mining and reclamation operations. Incorporation of such requirements shall not, however, limit in any way the authority of the Secretary to subsequently issue new regulations, revise the Federal lands program to deal with changing conditions or changed technology, and to require any surface mining and reclamation operations to conform with the requirements of this Act and the regulations issued pursuant to this Act.

(c) The Secretary may enter into agreements with a State or with a number of States to provide for a joint Federal-State program covering a permit or permits for surface coal mining and reclamation

operations on land areas which contain lands within any State and Federal lands which are interspersed or checkerboarded and which should, for conservation and administrative purposes, be regulated as a single management unit. To implement a joint Federal-State program the Secretary may enter into agreements with the States, may delegate authority to the States, or may accept a delegation of authority from the States for the purpose of avoiding duality of administration of a single permit for surface coal mining and reclamation operations.

(d) Except as specifically provided in subsection (c) this section shall not be construed as authorizing the Secretary to delegate to the States any authority or jurisdiction to regulate or administer surface coal mining and reclamation operations or other activities taking place on the Federal lands.

(e) The Secretary shall develop a program to assure that with respect to the granting of permits, leases, or contracts for coal owned by the United States, that no class of purchasers of the mined coal shall be unreasonably denied purchase thereof.

#### PUBLIC AGENCIES, PUBLIC UTILITIES, AND PUBLIC CORPORATIONS

Sec. 524. Any agency, unit, or instrumentality of Federal, State, or local government, including any publicly owned utility or publicly owned corporation of Federal, State, or local government, which proposes to engage in surface coal mining operations which are subject to the requirements of this Act shall comply with the provisions of title V.

#### REVIEW BY SECRETARY

Sec. 525. (a) (1) A permittee issued a notice or order by the Secretary pursuant to the provisions of subparagraphs (a) (2) and (3) of section 521 of this title, or pursuant to a Federal program or the Federal lands program or any person having an interest which is or may be adversely affected by such notice or order or by any modification, vacation, or termination of such notice or order, may apply to the Secretary for review of the notice or order within thirty days of receipt thereof or within thirty days of its modification, vacation, or termination. Upon receipt of such application, the Secretary shall cause such investigation to be made as he deems appropriate. Such investigation shall provide an opportunity for a public hearing, at the request of the applicant or the person having an interest which is or may be adversely affected, to enable the applicant or such person to present information relating to the issuance and continuance of such notice or order or the modification, vacation, or termination thereof. The filing of an application for review under this subsection shall not operate as a stay of any order or notice.

(2) The permittee and other interested persons shall be given written notice of the time and place of the hearing at least five days prior thereto. Any such hearing shall be of record and shall be subject to section 554 of title 5 of the United States Code.

(b) Upon receiving the report of such investigation, the Secretary shall make findings of fact, and shall issue a written decision, incor-

porating therein an order vacating, affirming, modifying, or terminating the notice or order, or the modification, vacation, or termination of such notice or order complained of and incorporate his findings therein. Where the application for review concerns an order for cessation of surface coal mining and reclamation operations issued pursuant to the provisions of subparagraph (a) (2) or (3) of section 521 of this title, the Secretary shall issue the written decision within thirty days of the receipt of the application for review, unless temporary relief has been granted by the Secretary pursuant to subparagraph (c) of this section or by a United States district court pursuant to subparagraph (c) of section 526 of this title.

(c) Pending completion of the investigation required by this section, the applicant may file with the Secretary a written request that the Secretary grant temporary relief from any notice or order issued under section 521 of this title, a Federal program or the Federal lands program together with a detailed statement giving reasons for granting such relief. The Secretary shall issue an order or decision granting or denying such relief expeditiously: *Provided, That where the applicant requests relief from an order for cessation of coal mining and reclamation operations issued pursuant to subparagraph (a) (2) or (a) (3) of section 521 of this title, the order or decision on such a request shall be issued within five days of its receipt. The Secretary may grant such relief, under such conditions as he may prescribe, if—*

(1) a hearing has been held in the locality of the permit area on the request for temporary relief in which all parties were given an opportunity to be heard;

(2) the applicant shows that there is substantial likelihood that the findings of the Secretary will be favorable to him; and

(3) such relief will not adversely affect the health or safety of the public or cause significant, imminent environmental harm to land, air, or water resources.

(d) Following the issuance of an order to show cause as to why a permit should not be suspended or revoked pursuant to section 521, the Secretary shall hold a public hearing after giving written notice of the time, place, and date thereof. Any such hearing shall be of record and shall be subject to section 554 of title 5 of the United States Code. Within sixty days following the public hearing, the Secretary shall issue and furnish to the permittee and all other parties to the hearing a written decision, and the reasons therefor, concerning suspension or revocation of the permit. If the Secretary revokes the permit, the permittee shall immediately cease surface coal mining operations on the permit area and shall complete reclamation within a period specified by the Secretary, or the Secretary shall declare as forfeited the performance bonds for the operation.

#### JUDICIAL REVIEW

SEC. 526. (a) (1) Any action of the Secretary to approve or disapprove a State program or to prepare and promulgate a Federal program pursuant to this Act shall be subject to judicial review only by the appropriate United States Court of Appeals upon the filing in such court within sixty days from the date of such action of a petition

by any person who participated in the administrative proceedings related thereto and who is aggrieved by the action praying that the action be modified or set aside in whole or in part. A copy of the petition shall forthwith be sent by registered or certified mail to the Secretary, and the Attorney General and thereupon the Secretary shall certify, and the Attorney General shall file in such court the record upon which the action complained of was issued, as provided in section 2112 of title 28, United States Code.

(2) All other orders or decisions issued by the Secretary pursuant to this Act shall be subject to judicial review only in the United States district court for the locality in which the surface coal mining operation is located. Such review shall be in accordance with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. In the case of a proceeding to review an order or decision issued by the Secretary under the penalty section of this Act, the court shall have jurisdiction to enter an order requiring payment of any civil penalty assessment enforced by its judgment. The availability of review established in this subsection shall not be construed to limit the operation of the rights established in section 520.

(b) The court shall hear such petition or complaint solely on the record made before the Secretary. The findings of the Secretary if supported by substantial evidence on the record considered as a whole, shall be conclusive. The court may affirm, vacate, or modify any order or decision or may remand the proceedings to the Secretary for such further action as it may direct.

(c) In the case of a proceeding to review any order or decision issued by the Secretary under this Act, including an order or decision issued pursuant to subparagraph (c) of section 525 of this title pertaining to any order issued under subparagraph (a) (2) or (a) (3) of section 521 of this title for cessation of coal mining and reclamation operations, the court may, under such conditions as it may prescribe, grant such temporary relief as it deems appropriate pending final determination of the proceedings if—

(1) all parties to the proceedings have been notified and given an opportunity to be heard on a request for temporary relief;

(2) the person requesting such relief shows that there is a substantial likelihood that he will prevail on the merits of the final determination of the proceeding; and

(3) such relief will not adversely affect the public health or safety or cause significant imminent environmental harm to land, air, or water resources.

(d) The commencement of a proceeding under this section shall not, unless specifically ordered by the court, operate as a stay of the action, order or decision of the Secretary.

(e) Action of the State regulatory authority pursuant to an approved State program shall be subject to judicial review by the court of competent jurisdiction in accordance with State law, but the availability of such review shall not be construed to limit the operation of the rights established in section 520.

#### SPECIAL BITUMINOUS COAL MINES

SEC. 527. The regulatory authority is authorized to and shall issue separate regulations for those special bituminous coal surface mines

located west of the one hundredth meridian west longitude which meet the following criteria:

(a) the excavation of the specific mine pit takes place on the same relatively limited site for an extended period of time;

(b) the excavation of the specific mine pit follows a coal seam having an inclination of fifteen degrees or more from the horizontal, and continues in the same area proceeding downward with lateral expansion of the pit necessary to maintain stability or as necessary to accommodate the orderly expansion of the total mining operation;

(c) the excavation of the specific mine pit involves the mining of more than one coal seam and mining has been initiated on the deepest coal seam contemplated to be mined in the current operation;

(d) the amount of material removed is large in proportion to the surface area disturbed;

(e) there is no practicable alternative method of mining the coal involved;

(f) there is no practicable method to reclaim the land in the manner required by this Act; and

(g) the specific mine pit has been actually producing coal since January 1, 1972, in such manner as to meet the criteria set forth in this section, and, because of past duration of mining, is substantially committed to a mode of operation which warrants exceptions to some provisions of this title.

Such alternative regulations shall pertain only to the standards governing onsite handling of spoils, elimination of depressions capable of collecting water, creation of impoundments, and regrading to the approximate original contour and shall specify that remaining highwalls are stable. All other performance standards in this title shall apply to such mines.

#### SURFACE MINING OPERATIONS NOT SUBJECT TO THIS ACT

SEC. 528. The provisions of this Act shall not apply to any of the following activities:

(1) the extraction of coal by a landowner for his own noncommercial use from land owned or leased by him; and

(2) the extraction of coal for commercial purposes where the surface mining operation affects two acres or less.

#### ANTHRACITE COAL MINES

SEC. 529. (a) The Secretary is hereby authorized to and shall issue separate regulations according to time schedules established in the Act for anthracite coal surface mines, if such mines are regulated by environmental protection standards of the State in which they are located. Such alternative regulations shall adopt, in each instance, the environmental protection provisions of the State regulatory program in existence at the date of enactment of this Act in lieu of sections 515 and 516. Provisions of sections 509 and 519 are applicable except for specified bond limits and period of revegetation responsibility. All other provisions of this Act apply and the regulation issued by the

Secretary of Interior for each State anthracite regulatory program shall so reflect: Provided, however, That upon amendment of a State's regulatory program for anthracite mining or regulations thereunder in force in lieu of the above-cited sections of this Act, the Secretary shall issue such additional regulations as necessary to meet the purposes of this Act.

(b) The Secretary of Interior shall report to Congress biennially, commencing on December 31, 1975, as to the effectiveness of such State anthracite regulatory programs operating in conjunction with this Act with respect to protecting the environment and such reports shall include those recommendations the Secretary deems necessary for program changes in order to better meet the environmental protection objectives of this Act.

### TITLE VI—DESIGNATION OF LANDS UNSUITABLE FOR NONCOAL MINING

#### DESIGNATION PROCEDURES

SEC. 601. (a) With respect to Federal lands within any State, the Secretary of Interior may, and if so requested by the Governor of such State, shall review any area within such lands to assess whether it may be unsuitable for mining operations for minerals or materials other than coal, pursuant to the criteria and procedures of this section.

(b) An area of Federal lands may be designated under this section as unsuitable for mining operations if (1) such area consists of Federal land of a predominantly urban or suburban character, used primarily for residential or related purposes, the mineral estate of which remains in the public domain, or (2) such area consists of Federal land where mining operations would have an adverse impact on lands used primarily for residential or related purposes.

(c) Any person having an interest which is or may be adversely affected shall have the right to petition the Secretary to seek exclusion of an area from mining operations pursuant to this section or the redesignation of an area or part thereof as suitable for such operations. Such petition shall contain allegations of fact with supporting evidence which would tend to substantiate the allegations. The petitioner shall be granted a hearing within a reasonable time and finding with reasons therefor upon the matter of their petition. In any instance where a Governor requests the Secretary to review an area, or where the Secretary finds the national interest so requires, the Secretary may temporarily withdraw the area to be reviewed from mineral entry or leasing pending such review: Provided, however, That such temporary withdrawal be ended as promptly as practicable and in no event shall exceed two years.

(d) In no event is a land area to be designated unsuitable for mining operations under this section on which mining operations are being conducted prior to the holding of a hearing on such petition in accordance with subsection (c) hereof. Valid existing rights shall be preserved and not affected by such designation. Designation of an area as unsuitable for mining operations under this section shall not prevent subsequent mineral exploration of such area, except that such explora-



tion shall require the prior written consent of the holder of the surface estate, which consent shall be filed with the Secretary. The Secretary may promulgate, with respect to any designated area, regulations to minimize any adverse effects of such exploration.

(e) Prior to any designation pursuant to this section, the Secretary shall prepare a detailed statement on (i) the potential mineral resources of the area, (ii) the demand for such mineral resources, and (iii) the impact of such designation or the absence of such designation on the environment, economy, and the supply of such mineral resources.

(f) When the Secretary designates an area of Federal lands as unsuitable for all or certain types of mining operations for minerals and materials other than coal pursuant to this section he may withdraw such area from mineral entry or leasing, or condition such entry or leasing so as to limit such mining operations in accordance with his determination, if the Secretary also determines, based on his analysis pursuant to subsection 601(e), that the benefits resulting from such designation, would be greater than the benefits to the regional or national economy which could result from mineral development of such area.

(g) Any party with a valid legal interest who has appeared in the proceedings in connection with the Secretary's determination pursuant to this section and who is aggrieved by the Secretary's decision (or by his failure to act within a reasonable time) shall have the right of appeal for review by the United States district court for the district in which the pertinent area is located.

## TITLE VII—ADMINISTRATIVE AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

### DEFINITIONS

SEC. 701. For the purposes of this Act—

(1) "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior, except where otherwise described;

(2) "State" means a State of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and Guam;

(3) "Office" means the Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation, and Enforcement established pursuant to title II;

(4) "commerce" means trade, traffic, commerce, transportation, transmission, or communication among the several States, or between a State and any other place outside thereof, or between points in the same State which directly or indirectly affect interstate commerce;

(5) "surface coal mining operations" means—

(A) activities conducted on the surface of lands in connection with a surface coal mine or surface operations and surface impacts incident to an underground coal mine, the products of which enter commerce or the operations of which directly or indirectly affect interstate commerce. Such activities include excavation for the purpose of obtaining coal including such common methods as contour, strip, auger, mountaintop

removal, box cut, open pit, and area mining, and in situ distillation or retorting, leaching or other chemical or physical processing, and the cleaning, concentrating, or other processing or preparation, loading of coal for interstate commerce at or near the mine site; Provided, however, That such activities do not include the extraction of coal incidental to the extraction of other minerals where coal does not exceed 16% per centum of the tonnage of minerals removed for purposes of commercial use or sale or coal explorations subject to section 512 of this Act; and

(B) the areas upon which such activities occur or where such activities disturb the natural land surface. Such areas shall also include any adjacent land the use of which is incidental to any such activities, all lands affected by the construction of new roads or the improvement or use of existing roads to gain access to the site of such activities and for haulage, and excavations, workings, impoundments, dams, ventilation shafts, entryways, refuse banks, dumps, stockpiles, overburden piles, spoil banks, culm banks, tailings, holes or depressions, repair areas, storage areas, processing areas, shipping areas and other areas upon which are sited structures, facilities, or other property or materials on the surface, resulting from or incident to such activities;

(6) "surface coal mining and reclamation operations" means surface mining operations and all activities necessary and incident to the reclamation of such operations after the date of enactment of this Act;

(7) "lands within any State" or "lands within such State" means all lands within a State other than Federal lands and Indian lands;

(8) "Federal lands" means any land, including mineral interests, owned by the United States without regard to how the United States acquired ownership of the land and without regard to the agency having responsibility for management thereof, except Indian lands;

(9) "Indian lands" means all lands, including mineral interests, within the exterior boundaries of any Federal Indian reservation, notwithstanding the issuance of any patent, and including rights-of-way, and all lands including mineral interests held in trust for or supervised by any Indian tribe;

(10) "Indian tribe" means any Indian tribe, band, group, or community having a governing body recognized by the Secretary;

(11) "State program" means a program established by a State pursuant to section 503 to regulate surface coal mining and reclamation operations on lands within such State in accord with the requirements of this Act and regulations issued by the Secretary pursuant to this Act;

(12) "Federal program" means a program established by the Secretary pursuant to section 504 to regulate surface coal mining and reclamation operations on lands within a State in accordance with the requirements of this Act;

(13) "Federal lands program" means a program established by the Secretary pursuant to section 523 to regulate surface coal mining and reclamation operations on Federal lands;

(14) "reclamation plan" means a plan submitted by an applicant for a permit under a State program or Federal program which sets forth a plan for reclamation of the proposed surface coal mining operations pursuant to section 508;

(15) "State regulatory authority" means the department or agency in each State which has primary responsibility at the State level for administering this Act;

(16) "regulatory authority" means the State regulatory authority where the State is administering this Act under an approved State program or the Secretary where the Secretary is administering this Act under a Federal program;

(17) "person" means an individual, partnership, association, society, joint stock company, firm, company, corporation, or other business organization;

(18) "permit" means a permit to conduct surface coal mining and reclamation operations issued by the State regulatory authority pursuant to a State program or by the Secretary pursuant to a Federal program;

(19) "permit applicant" or "applicant" means a person applying for a permit;

(20) "permittee" means a person holding a permit;

(21) "fund" means the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund established pursuant to section 401;

(22) "other minerals" means clay, stone, sand, gravel, metaliferous and nonmetaliferous ores, and any other solid material or substances of commercial value excavated in solid form from natural deposits on or in the earth, exclusive of coal and those minerals which occur naturally in liquid or gaseous form;

(23) "approximate original contour" means that surface configuration achieved by backfilling and grading of the mined area so that it closely resembles the surface configuration of the land prior to mining and blends into and complements the drainage pattern of the surrounding terrain, with all highwalls, spoil piles, and depressions eliminated except that water impoundments may be permitted where the regulatory authority determines that they are in compliance with section 515(b)(8) of this Act;

(24) "operator" means any person, partnership, or corporation engaged in coal mining who removes or intends to remove more than two hundred and fifty tons of coal from the earth by coal mining within twelve consecutive calendar months in any one location;

(25) "permit area" means the area of land indicated on the approved map submitted by the operator with his application, which area of land shall be covered by the operator's bond as required by section 509 of this Act and shall be readily identifiable by appropriate markers on the site;

(26) "unwarranted failure to comply" means the failure of a permittee to prevent the occurrence of any violation of his permit or any requirement of this Act due to indifference, lack of dili-

gence, or lack of reasonable care, or the failure to abate any violation of such permit or the Act due to indifference, lack of diligence, or lack of reasonable care;

(27) "alluvial valley floors" means the unconsolidated stream laid deposits holding streams where water availability is sufficient for subirrigation or flood irrigation agricultural activities;

(28) "imminent danger to the health or safety of the public" means the existence of any condition or practice, or any violation of a permit or other requirement of this Act in a surface coal mining and reclamation operation, which condition, practice, or violation could reasonably be expected to cause substantial physical harm to persons outside the permit area before such condition, practice, or violation can be abated.

#### OTHER FEDERAL LAWS

SEC. 702. (a) Nothing in this Act shall be construed as superseding, amending, modifying, or repealing the Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970 (30 U.S.C. 21a), the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321-47), or any of the following Acts or with any rule or regulation promulgated thereunder, including, but not limited to—

(1) The Federal Metal and Nonmetallic Mine Safety Act (30 U.S.C. 721-740).

(2) The Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969 (83 Stat. 742).

(3) The Federal Water Pollution Control Act (79 Stat. 903), as amended (33 U.S.C. 1151-1175) the State laws enacted pursuant thereto, or other Federal laws relating to preservation of water quality.

(4) The Clean Air Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 1857 et seq.).

(5) The Solid Waste Disposal Act (42 U.S.C. 3251-3259).

(6) The Refuse Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. 407).

(7) The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1934 (16 U.S.C. 661-666c).

(b) Nothing in this Act shall affect in any way the authority of the Secretary or the heads of other Federal agencies under other provisions of law to include in any lease, license, permit, contract, or other instrument such conditions as may be appropriate to regulate surface coal mining and reclamation operations on land under their jurisdiction.

(c) To the greatest extent practicable each Federal agency shall cooperate with Secretary and the States in carrying out the provisions of this Act.

(d) Approval of the State programs, pursuant to section 503(b), promulgation of Federal programs, pursuant to section 504, and implementation of the Federal lands programs, pursuant to section 523 of this Act, shall constitute a major action within the meaning of section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332).

#### EMPLOYEE PROTECTION

SEC. 703. (a) No person shall discharge, or in any other way discriminate against, or cause to be fired or discriminated against, any employee or any authorized representative of employees by reason of the

fact that such employee or representative has filed, instituted, or caused to be filed or instituted any proceeding under this Act, or has testified or is about to testify in any proceeding resulting from the administration or enforcement of the provisions of this Act.

(b) Any employee or a representative of employees who believes that he has been fired or otherwise discriminated against by any person in violation of subsection (a) of this section may, within thirty days after such alleged violation occurs, apply to the Secretary for a review of such firing or alleged discrimination. A copy of the application shall be sent to the person or operator who will be the respondent. Upon receipt of such application, the Secretary shall cause such investigation to be made as he deems appropriate. Such investigation shall provide an opportunity for a public hearing at the request of any party to such review to enable the parties to present information relating to the alleged violation. The parties shall be given written notice of the time and place of the hearing at least five days prior to the hearing. Any such hearing shall be of record and shall be subject to section 554 to title 5 of the United States Code. Upon receiving the report of such investigation the Secretary shall make findings of fact. If he finds that a violation did occur, he shall issue a decision incorporating therein and his findings in an order requiring the party committing the violation to take such affirmative action to abate the violation as the Secretary deems appropriate, including, but not limited to, the rehiring or reinstatement of the employee or representative of employees to his former position with compensation. If he finds that there was no violation, he shall issue a finding. Orders issued by the Secretary under this subsection shall be subject to judicial review in the same manner as orders and decisions of the Secretary are subject to judicial review under this Act.

(c) Whenever an order is issued under this section to abate any violation, at the request of the applicant a sum equal to the aggregate amount of all costs and expenses (including attorneys' fees) to have been reasonably incurred by the applicant for, or in connection with, the institution and prosecution of such proceedings, shall be assessed against the persons committing the violation.

(d) The Secretary shall conduct continuing evaluations of potential losses or shifts of employment which may result from the enforcement of this Act or any requirement of this Act including, where appropriate, investigating threatened mine closures or reductions in employment allegedly resulting from such enforcement or requirement. Any employee who is discharged or laid off, threatened with discharge or layoff, or otherwise discriminated against by any person because of the alleged results of the enforcement or requirement of this Act, or any representative of such employee, may request the Secretary to conduct a full investigation of the matter. The Secretary shall thereupon investigate the matter, and, at the request of any interested party, shall hold public hearings on not less than five days' notice, and shall at such hearings require the parties, including the employer involved, to present information relating to the actual or potential effect of such limitation or order on employment and on any alleged discharge, layoff, or other discrimination and the detailed

reasons or justification therefor. Any such hearing shall be of record and shall be subject to section 554 of title 5 of the United States Code. Upon receiving the report of such investigation, the Secretary shall promptly make findings of fact as to the effect of such enforcement or requirement on employment and on the alleged discharge, layoff, or discrimination and shall make such recommendations as he deems appropriate. Such report, findings, and recommendations shall be available to the public. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to require or authorize the Secretary or a State to modify or withdraw any enforcement action or requirement.

#### PROTECTION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

SEC. 704. Section 1114, title 18, United States Code, is hereby amended by adding the words "or of the Department of the Interior" after the words "Department of Labor" contained in that section.

#### GRANTS TO THE STATES

SEC. 705. (a) The Secretary is authorized to make annual grants to any State for the purpose of assisting such State in developing, administering, and enforcing State programs under this Act. Such grants shall not exceed 80 per centum of the total costs incurred during the first year, 60 per centum of total costs incurred during the second year, and 40 per centum of the total costs incurred during the third and fourth years.

(b) The Secretary is authorized to cooperate with and provide assistance to any State for the purpose of assisting it in the development, administration, and enforcement of its State programs. Such cooperation and assistance shall include—

(1) technical assistance and training including provision of necessary curricular and instruction materials, in the development, administration, and enforcement of the State programs; and

(2) assistance in preparing and maintaining a continuing inventory of information on surface coal mining and reclamation operations for each State for the purposes of evaluating the effectiveness of the State programs. Such assistance shall include all Federal departments and agencies making available data relevant to surface coal mining and reclamation operations and to the development, administration, and enforcement of State programs concerning such operations.

#### ANNUAL REPORT

SEC. 706. The Secretary shall submit annually to the President and the Congress a report concerning activities conducted by him, the Federal Government, and the States pursuant to this Act. Among other matters, the Secretary shall include in such report recommendations for additional administrative or legislative action as he deems necessary and desirable to accomplish the purposes of this Act.



## SEVERABILITY

SEC. 707. If any provision of this Act or the applicability thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of this Act and the application of such provision to other persons or circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

## ALASKAN SURFACE COAL MINE STUDY

SEC. 708. (a) The Secretary is directed to contract with the National Academy of Sciences-National Academy of Engineering for an in-depth study of surface coal mining conditions in the State of Alaska in order to determine which, if any, of the provisions of this Act should be modified with respect to surface coal mining operations in Alaska.

(b) The Secretary shall report on the findings of the study to the President and Congress no later than two years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) The Secretary shall include in his report a draft of legislation to implement any changes recommended to this Act.

(d) Until one year after the Secretary has made this report to the President and Congress, or three years after the date of enactment of this Act, whichever comes first, the Secretary is authorized to suspend the applicability of any provision of this Act, or any regulation issued pursuant thereto, to any surface coal mining operation in Alaska from which coal has been mined during the year preceding enactment of this Act if he determines that it is necessary to insure the continued operation of such surface coal mining operation. The Secretary may exercise his suspension authority only after he has (1) published a notice of proposed suspension in the Federal Register and in a newspaper of general circulation in the area of Alaska in which the affected surface coal mining operation is located, and (2) held a public hearing on the proposed suspension in Alaska.

(e) There is hereby authorized to be appropriated for the purpose of this section \$250,000.

## STUDY OF RECLAMATION STANDARDS FOR SURFACE MINING OF OTHER MINERALS

SEC. 709. (a) The Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality is directed to contract with the National Academy of Sciences-National Academy of Engineering, other Government agencies or private groups as appropriate, for an in-depth study of current and developing technology for surface and open pit mining and reclamation for minerals other than coal designed to assist in the establishment of effective and reasonable regulation of surface and open pit mining and reclamation for minerals other than coal. The study shall—

(1) assess the degree to which the requirements of this Act can be met by such technology and the costs involved;

(2) identify areas where the requirements of this Act cannot be met by current and developing technology;

(3) in those instances describe requirements most comparable to those of this Act which could be met, the costs involved, and the differences in reclamation results between these requirements and those of this Act; and

(4) discuss alternative regulatory mechanisms designed to insure the achievement of the most beneficial post-mining land use for areas affected by surface and open-pit mining.

(b) The study together with specific legislative recommendations shall be submitted to the President and the Congress no later than eighteen months after the date of enactment of this Act: Provided, That, with respect to surface or open pit mining for sand and gravel the study shall be submitted no later than twelve months after the date of enactment of this Act: Provided further, that with respect to mining for oil shale and tar sands that a preliminary report shall be submitted no later than twelve months after the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) There are hereby authorized to be appropriated for the purpose of this section \$500,000.

## INDIAN LANDS

SEC. 710. (a) The Secretary is directed to study the question of the regulation of surface mining on Indian lands which will achieve the purpose of this Act and recognize the special jurisdictional status of these lands. In carrying out this study the Secretary shall consult with Indian tribes. The study report shall include proposed legislation designed to allow Indian tribes to elect to assume full regulatory authority over the administration and enforcement of regulation of surface mining of coal on Indian lands.

(b) The study report required by subsection (a) together with drafts of proposed legislation and the view of each Indian tribe which would be affected shall be submitted to the Congress as soon as possible but not later than January 1, 1976.

(c) On and after one hundred and thirty-five days from the enactment of this Act, all surface coal mining operations on Indian lands shall comply with requirements at least as stringent as those imposed by subsections 515(b)(2), 515(b)(3), 515(b)(5), 515(b)(10), 515(b)(13), 515(b)(19), and 515(d) of this Act and the Secretary shall incorporate the requirements of such provisions in all existing and new leases issued for coal on Indian lands.

(d) On and after thirty months from the enactment of this Act, all surface coal mining operations on Indian lands shall comply with requirements at least as stringent as those imposed by sections 507, 508, 509, 510, 515, 516, 517, and 519 of this Act and the Secretary shall incorporate the requirements of such provisions in all existing and new leases issued for coal on Indian lands.

(e) With respect to leases issued after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall include and enforce terms and conditions in addition to those required by subsections (c) and (d) as may be requested by the Indian tribe in such leases.

(f) Any change required by subsection (c) or (d) of this section in the terms and conditions of any coal lease on Indian lands existing on the date of enactment of this Act, shall require the approval of the Secretary.

(g) The Secretary shall provide for adequate participation by the various Indian tribes affected in the study authorized in this section and not more than \$700,000 of the funds authorized in section 715(a) shall be reserved for this purpose.

## EXPERIMENTAL PRACTICES

*SEC. 711. In order to encourage advances in mining and reclamation practices, the regulatory authority may authorize departures in individual cases on an experimental basis from the environmental protection performance standards promulgated under sections 515 and 516 of this Act. Such departures may be authorized if (i) the experimental practices are potentially more or at least as environmentally protective, during and after mining operations, as those required by promulgated standards; (ii) the mining operation is no larger than necessary to determine the effectiveness and economic feasibility of the experimental practices; and (iii) the experimental practices do not reduce the protection afforded public health and safety below that provided by promulgated standards.*

## AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS

*SEC. 712. There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary for the purposes of this Act the following sums; and all such funds appropriated shall remain available until expended:*

*(a) For the implementation and funding of sections 502, 552, 405 (b) (3), and 710 contract authority is granted to the Secretary of the Interior for the sum of \$10,000,000 to become available immediately upon enactment of this Act and \$10,000,000 for each of the two succeeding fiscal years.*

*(b) For administrative and other purposes of this Act, except as otherwise provided for in this Act, authorization is provided for the sum of \$10,000,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1975, for each of the two succeeding fiscal years the sums of \$20,000,000 and \$30,000,000 for each fiscal year thereafter.*

## RESEARCH AND DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS OF ALTERNATIVE COAL MINING TECHNOLOGIES

*SEC. 713. (a) The Secretary is authorized to conduct and promote the coordination and acceleration of, research, studies, surveys, experiments, demonstration projects, and training relating to—*

*(1) the development and application of coal mining technologies which provide alternatives to surface disturbance and which maximize the recovery of available coal resources, including the improvement of present underground mining methods, methods for the return of underground mining wastes to the mine void, methods for the underground mining of thick coal seams and very deep seams; and*

*(2) safety and health in the application of such technologies methods and means.*

*(b) In conducting the activities authorized by this section, the Secretary may enter into contracts with and make grants to qualified institutions, agencies, organizations, and persons.*

*(c) There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary, to carry out the purposes of this section, \$35,000,000 for each fiscal year beginning with the fiscal year 1976, and for each year thereafter for the next four years.*

*(d) At least 60 days before any funds are obligated for any research studies, surveys, experiments or demonstration projects to be con-*

*ducted or financed under this Act in any fiscal year, the Secretary in consultation with the Administrator of the Energy Research and Development Administration and the heads of other Federal agencies having the authority to conduct or finance such projects, shall determine and publish such determinations in the Federal Register that such projects are not being conducted or financed by any other Federal agency. On March 1 of each calendar year, the Secretary shall report to the Congress on the research studies, surveys, experiments or demonstration projects, conducted or financed under this Act, including, but not limited to, a statement of the nature and purpose of each project, the Federal cost thereof, the identity and affiliation of the persons engaged in such projects, the expected completion date of the projects and the relationship of the projects to other such projects of a similar nature.*

*(e) Subject to the patent provisions of section 306 (d) of this Act, all information and data resulting from any research studies, surveys, experiments, or demonstration projects conducted or financed under this Act shall be promptly made available to the public.*

## SURFACE OWNER PROTECTION

*SEC. 714. (a) The provisions and procedures specified in this section shall apply where coal owned by the United States under land the surface rights to which are owned by a surface owner as defined in this section is to be mined by methods other than underground mining techniques. In order to minimize disturbance to surface owners from surface coal mining of Federal coal deposits, the Secretary shall, in his discretion but, to the maximum extent practicable, refrain from leasing such coal deposits for development by methods other than underground mining techniques.*

*(b) Any coal deposits subject to this section shall be offered for lease pursuant to section 2(a) of the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 (30 U.S.C. 201a), except that no award shall be made by any method other than competitive bidding.*

*(c) Prior to placing any deposit subject to this section in a leasing tract, the Secretary shall give to any surface owner whose land is to be included in the proposed leasing tract actual written notice of his intention to place such deposits under such land in a leasing tract,*

*(d) The Secretary shall not enter into any lease of such coal deposits until the surface owner has given written consent and the Secretary has obtained such consent, to enter and commence surface mining operations, and the applicant has agreed to pay in addition to the rental and royalty and other obligations due the United States the money value of the surface owner's interest as determined according to the provisions of subsection (e).*

*(e) The value of the surface owner's interest shall be fixed by the Secretary based on appraisals made by three appraisers. One such appraiser shall be appointed by the Secretary, one appointed by the surface owner concerned, and one appointed jointly by the appraisers named by the Secretary and such surface owner. In computing the value of the surface owner's interest, the appraisers shall first fix and determine the fair market value of the surface estate and they shall then determine and add the value of such of the following losses and*

costs to the extent that such losses and costs arise from the surface coal mining operations:

(1) loss of income to the surface owner during the mining and reclamation process;

(2) cost to the surface owner for relocation or dislocation during the mining and reclamation process;

(3) cost to the surface owner for the loss of livestock, crops, water or other improvements;

(4) any other damage to the surface reasonably anticipated to be caused by the surface mining and reclamation operations; and

(5) such additional reasonable amount of compensation as the Secretary may determine is equitable in light of the length of the tenure of the ownership: *Provided, That such additional reasonable amount of compensation may not exceed the value of the losses and costs as established pursuant to this subsection and in paragraphs (1) through (4) above, or one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per acre, whichever is less.*

(f) All bids submitted to the Secretary for any such lease shall, in addition to any rental or royalty and other obligations, be accompanied by the deposit of an amount equal to the value of the surface owner's interest computed under subsection (e). The Secretary shall pay such amount to the surface owner either upon the execution of such lease or upon the commencement of mining, or shall require posting of bond to assure installment payments over a period of years acceptable to the surface owner, at the option of the surface owner. At the time of initial payment, the surface owner may request a review of the initial determination of the amount of the surface owner's interest for the purpose of adjusting such amount to reflect any increase in the Consumer Price Index since the initial determination. The lessee shall pay such increased amount to the Secretary to be paid over to the surface owner. Upon the release of the performance bonds or deposits under section 519, or at an earlier time as may be determined by the Secretary, all rights to enter into and use the surface of the land subject to such lease shall revert to the surface owner.

(g) For the purpose of this section the term "surface owner" means the natural person or persons (or corporation, the majority stock of which is held by a person or persons who meet the other requirements of this section) who—

(1) hold legal or equitable title to the land surface;

(2) have their principal place of residence on the land; or personally conduct farming or ranching operations upon a farm or ranch unit to be affected by surface coal mining operations; or receive directly a significant portion of their income, if any, from such farming or ranching operations; and

(3) have met the conditions of paragraphs (1) and (2) for a period of at least three years prior to the granting of the consent. In computing the three-year period the Secretary may include periods during which title was owned by a relative of such person by blood or marriage during which period such relative would have met the requirements of this subsection.

(h) Where surface lands over coal subject to this section are owned by any person who meets the requirements of paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection (g) but who does not meet the requirements of para-

graph (3) of subsection (g), the Secretary shall not place such coal deposit in a leasing tract unless such person has owned such surface lands for a period of three years. After the expiration of such three-year period such coal deposit may be leased by the Secretary, provided that if such person qualifies as a surface owner as defined by subsection (g) his consent has been obtained pursuant to the procedures set forth in this section.

(i) Nothing in this section shall be construed as increasing or diminishing any property rights held by the United States or by any other land owner.

(j) The determination of the value of the surface owner's interest fixed pursuant to subsection (e) or any adjustment to that determination made pursuant to subsection (f) shall be subject to judicial review only in the United States district court for the locality in which the leasing tract is located.

(k) At the end of each two-year period after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Congress a report on the implementation of the Federal coal leasing policy established by this section. The report shall include a list of the surface owners who have (1) given their consent, (2) received payments pursuant to this section, (3) refused to give consent, and (4) the acreage of land involved in each category. The report shall also indicate the Secretary's views on the impact of the leasing policy on the availability of Federal coal to meet national energy needs and on receipt of fair market value for Federal coal.

(l) This section shall not apply to Indian lands.

(m) Any person who gives, offers or promises anything of value to any surface owner or offers or promises any surface owner to give anything of value to any other person or entity in order to induce such surface owner to give the Secretary his written consent pursuant to this section, and any surface owner who accepts, receives, or offers or agrees to receive anything of value for himself or any other person or entity, in return for giving his written consent pursuant to this section shall be subject to a civil penalty of one and a half times the monetary equivalent of the thing of value. Such penalty shall be assessed by the Secretary and collected in accordance with the procedures set out in subsections 518(b), 518(c), 518(d), and 518(e) of this Act.

(n) Any Federal coal lease issued subject to the provisions of this section shall be automatically terminated if the lessee, before or after issuance of the lease, gives, offers or promises anything of value to the surface owner or offers or promises any surface owner to give anything of value to any other person or entity in order to (1) induce such surface owner to give the Secretary his written consent pursuant to this section, or (2) compensate such surface owner for giving such consent. All bonuses, royalties, rents and other payments made by the lessee shall be retained by the United States.

(o) The provisions of this section shall become effective on February 1, 1976. Until February 1, 1976, the Secretary shall not lease any coal deposits owned by the United States under land the surface rights to which are not owned by the United States, unless the Secretary has in his possession a document which demonstrates the acquiescence prior to February 27, 1975, of the owner of the surface rights to the extraction of minerals within the boundaries of his property by current surface coal mining methods.

## FEDERAL LESSEE PROTECTION

*SEC. 715. In those instances where the coal proposed to be mined by surface coal mining operations is owned by the Federal Government and the surface is subject to a lease or a permit issued by the Federal Government, the application for a permit shall include either:*

*(1) the written consent of the permittee or lessee of the surface lands involved to enter and commence surface coal mining operations on such land, or in lieu thereof;*

*(2) evidence of the execution of a bond or undertaking to the United States or the State, whichever is applicable, for the use and benefit of the permittee or lessee of the surface lands involved to secure payment of any damages to the surface estate which the operations will cause to the crops, or to the tangible improvements of the permittee or lessee of the surface lands as may be determined by the parties involved, or as determined and fixed in an action brought against the operator or upon the bond in a court of competent jurisdiction. This bond is in addition to the performance bond required for reclamation under this Act.*

## ALASKA COAL

*SEC. 716. Nothing in this Act shall be construed as increasing or diminishing the rights of any owner of coal in Alaska to conduct or authorize surface coal mining operations for coal which has been or is hereafter conveyed out of Federal ownership to the State of Alaska or pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, provided that such surface coal mining operations meet the requirements of the Act.*

## WATER RIGHTS

*SEC. 717. Nothing in this Act shall be construed as affecting in any way the right of any person to enforce or protect, under applicable law, his interest in water resources affected by a surface coal mining operation.*

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate to the title and agree to the same.

MORRIS K. UDALL,  
PATSY T. MINK,  
JOSEPH P. VIGORITO,  
JOHN MELCHER,  
TENO RONCALIO,  
JOHN F. SEIBERLING,  
M. ROBERT CARR,  
JOE SKUBITZ,  
PHILIP E. RUPPE,  
*Managers on the Part of the House.*  
HENRY M. JACKSON,  
LEE METCALF,  
J. BENNETT JOHNSTON, Jr.,  
FLOYD K. HASKELL,  
CLIFFORD P. HANSEN,  
*Managers on the Part of the Senate.*

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF  
CONFERENCE

The managers on the part of the House and the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 25) to provide for the cooperation between the Secretary of the Interior and the States with respect to the regulation of surface mining operations, and the acquisition and reclamation of abandoned mines, and for other purposes, submit this joint statement in explanation of the effect of the language agreed upon by the managers and recommended in the accompanying conference report.

## INTRODUCTION

The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975, was introduced early in the 94th Congress in both the House (H.R. 25) and the Senate (S. 7). Both bills were identical to the conference report on S. 425 which was pocket vetoed by the President last December. There were 67 differences between the House bill and the Senate amendment. Only a few of these were significant. A general overview of the structure and content of the House bill, the Senate amendment and the conference report together with a brief discussion of major provisions and specific comments on some provisions follows.

## OVERVIEW

Title I sets forth the findings and purposes of the legislation, which were melded by the conferees.

Title II establishes an Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement within the Department of the Interior and delineates the duties of its Director. The House bill also contained additional provisions to insure greater independence for the Office within the Department, and prohibited conflicts of interest on the part of employees of the Office. The Senate receded and accepted these provisions with some minor modifications requested by the Department of the Interior.

Title III establishes a grant program to fund mining and mineral resources and research institutes in public colleges and universities. These institutes are to train qualified personnel in mine-related fields, and conduct research related to mining technology. The Senate amendment had less stringent qualification requirements for these institutes than the House bill. The Senate receded.

Title IV of both the House bill and the Senate amendment established a fund and a program for the reclamation of abandoned or "orphan" mined lands, and for the relief of areas that will be impacted by the rapid development of mining.

All coal mining operators are to be assessed a fee on each ton of coal produced for deposit in the reclamation fund. The House bill provided for (1) a fee of 10 percent of the value of the coal or not to exceed 10 cents per ton on underground mined coal and 35 cents per ton on surface mined coal; (2) a 5 percent of value limitation on the fee for lignite; (3) delayed payment of the fee; (4) an adjustment clause tied to the cost of living; and (5) an offset of payments to the fund against payment of state severance taxes. The Senate amendment provided the same fee for surface mined coal and a 25 cents per ton fee for underground mined coal, but no other comparable provisions. The conferees agreed on a 15 cents per ton fee for underground-mined coal, the Senate receded on the 5 percent limitation on lignite and the House receded on its other provisions.

The Senate amendment provided explicitly for consultation with the Corps of Engineers in the reclamation program. The House receded on this point.

With regard to aid to impacted areas, H.R. 25 expanded coverage of the program to all energy resource developments, and not just coal mining. The Senate amendment expanded the program of filling and sealing mine shafts and voids to cover all types of mining but otherwise limited the use of the fund to coal mining impacts. The conferees agreed on the Senate approach with some modifications giving the Governor of each State an opportunity to use the fund for reclamation of lands affected by non-coal mining, but only after all coal mine impacts had been treated.

Title V contains the most critical portions of the two measures: the procedures and the environmental standards for the regulation of coal surface mining and reclamation. These requirements are quite detailed, but although there were a number of minor differences between the House bill and the Senate amendment, there were actually only five major differences.

(1) The House bill contained an outright ban on mining on alluvial valley floors west of the 100th meridian west longitude. The Senate amendment prohibited mining on such alluvial valley floors only when this would have a substantial adverse effect on croplands or haylands significant to the practice of farming or ranching. The House receded from its outright ban, and compromise language was accepted that modified the language in the Senate amendment. This compromise language clarified the intent of the conferees to protect potential as well as on-going farming and ranching operations.

(2) The House bill required the Corps of Engineers to supervise the disposal of all mine wastes and impoundment construction. The Senate amendment left this responsibility with the Secretary of the Interior. The conferees agreed to a compromise requiring the Corps to approve the basic standards regulating mine waste disposal and review plans but with no responsibility for on-the-ground supervision and enforcement.

(3) The House bill contained a conflict-of-interest provision not in the Senate amendment. The Senate receded.

(4) During the Secretary's review of Federal lands for areas unsuitable for mining, the Senate amendment expressly allows permits

to be granted on a case-by-case basis. H.R. 25 did not contain a similar provision. The Senate language is included in the conference report.

(5) The Senate amendment required expedited decisionmaking by the regulatory authority in the case of cessation orders. The House bill did not contain a similar provision. The House receded.

Title VI of the House bill provided a three-option program for the regulation of surface coal mining on lands held in trust for Indian tribes. The Senate amendment contained a section requiring a study to develop, in consultation with the Indian tribes, legislation for surface mining regulation that would recognize the special jurisdictional status of Indian lands. In the interim, however, mining on Indian lands would still be subject to the environmental standards of the bill. The House receded.

Title VII of the House bill and Title VI of the Senate amendment provided for the designation of areas of Federal lands unsuitable for non-coal mining. The conferees adopted the language of the Senate amendment.

Title VIII of the House bill and Title VII of the Senate amendment contain administrative and miscellaneous provisions.

The Senate amendment contained two provisions designed to cushion adverse employment impacts that might result from the implementation of the Act. The House bill contained neither provision. Both were opposed by the Administration. The Senate receded in both instances.

## MAJOR PROVISIONS

### ABANDONED MINED LAND RECLAMATION

The conference report provides for a program to reclaim previously mined lands that were abandoned without being adequately restored, and which now constitute either serious danger to public health and safety, pollute waterways by sedimentation or acidity, or, at the very least are an ignominious blight in historic mining areas. The program covers restoration on both public and private lands.

Funding for this program is derived largely from a reclamation fee to be levied on every ton of coal mined: 35 cents per ton for surface-mined coal, 15 cents per ton for underground mined coal, or 10 percent of the value of the coal, whichever is less; except that the fee will not exceed 5 percent of the value for lignite. The differential fees were adopted recognizing the differing costs and values of the various coals, and to prevent an undue economic burden on the lower grades of coal. Fifty percent of the fees collected in any one state are to be expended in that State for the purposes of reclamation or alleviating the impacts of coal development in the area.

While the primary focus of the fund in the program is the reclamation of orphan lands, the conference report also provides that, in areas where there is relatively little damage from past coal mining, the State's share of the reclamation fee revenues may be used for other purposes; namely, filling voids and sealing tunnels from non-coal mining operations, and for building an adequate infrastructure of public facilities to support the housing and population increases which will accompany the anticipated rapidly burgeoning coal mining industry.



## SURFACE MINING AND RECLAMATION STANDARDS

The informational and environmental requirements set forth in Title V are the most vital provisions of the conference report. The purpose of the bill is to end the present environmental degradation from the exploration for coal, surface coal mining and the surface impacts of underground mining, and to prevent future degradation. To this end the conference report sets forth a series of minimum uniform requirements for all such operations on both Federal and State lands. These standards deal with four basic issues: preplanning, mining practices, post-mining reclamation, and the protection of water resources. The first requires that an operator applying for a permit has done, among other things, certain research regarding adjacent land uses, the characteristics of the coal and the overburden, and hydrologic conditions. He must include in his application the planned methodology and timetable for the operation in a reclamation plan. The second set of requirements provide that mining methods be used which will minimize or obviate environmental damage or injuries to public health and safety. These include restrictions on the placement of overburden, blasting regulations, water pollution control requirements, and waste disposal standards. The third group of standards regard reclamation and restoration of the mined land to its pre-mined condition. These requirements include backfilling and regrading to approximate original contour, restoration of water quality and quantity, revegetation to pre-mining conditions and elimination of erosion and sedimentation. Protection of water resources is further discussed below.

Virtually all of the specific standards set forth in the conference report are already required in one or more of the several States regulating surface coal mining. Nonetheless, it was felt that some minimum uniform floor had to be established for the protection of the environment at a time when the growth of surface coal mining is projected to double over the next decade, often in environmentally delicate areas.

It is the understanding of the conferees that certain States may wish to impose more stringent requirements than those minimum standards set forth in the report. Some States in fact are already contemplating such measures, a move which is specifically sanctioned in this bill.

## PROTECTION OF WATER RESOURCES

Surface coal mining operations can have a significant impact on the hydrologic balance of the mined area and its environs. Some of the more significant damages to water resources which may occur from surface coal mining are: increased sedimentation, dissolved solids, and erosion, increased salinity and mineralization of affected waters, acid mine drainage, altered drainage patterns, altered stream flow, including increased flooding, destruction of aquifers, draw down or loss of ground water supplies, disturbance of downstream hydrologic balances, and, particularly in arid and semi-arid areas, disruption of the essential hydrologic functions of alluvial valley floors which are essential to other, primarily agricultural, land uses.

The legislative history in the Committee Reports on protection of water resources is particularly pertinent to the provisions in the conference report.

The conferees recognize that total prevention of all these adverse hydrologic effects from mining is impossible and thus the conference report sets attainable standards to minimize such damages, protect the hydrologic balance of impacted areas and protect the rights of persons whose water rights are affected by mining operations. Accordingly, provisions directed toward the protection of essential hydrologic functions were included in the following sections of the conference report: (1) mining permit application requirements, (2) permit approval or denial criteria, (3) specific environmental standards, (4) monitoring requirements, (5) compensation requirements for decrease in water availability to other users, and (6) special requirements for mining operations on or affecting alluvial valley floors west of the 100th meridian. Of these provisions, probably the most critical environmentally are those related to the protection of the essential hydrologic functions of alluvial valley floors in arid and semi-arid regions.

These alluvial valley floors in the West are frequently underlain with rich coal deposits. However, they also provide the only natural irrigation for haylands and croplands essential to farming and ranching operations. Unless the essential hydrologic functions of these alluvial valley floors are preserved, farming and ranching operations could suffer serious damage, and the use of these areas for future and potential farming and ranching would be precluded. Since rapid expansion of surface coal mining is projected for the West, the protection of scarce water resources and alluvial valley floors during and after mining is essential if we are to maintain the vital agricultural productivity of these areas.

Therefore, the conference report allows the issuance of a permit for surface coal mining only if the regulatory authority finds that the operation would not have a substantial adverse effect on alluvial valley floors significant to the practice of farming or ranching. These areas protected by this provision are very small. For example, the Department of the Interior estimates that approximately 97.3 percent of the total agricultural land in the Powder River Basin is undeveloped range land, which is expressly excluded from the restriction of Section 510(b)(5).

## SURFACE COAL MINING ON INDIAN LANDS

The conferees recognize that there are special jurisdictional problems with respect to the regulation of mining on Indian lands, and a lack of consensus on this issue among the various Indian tribes. For this reason, the conference report provides for a study to be completed by 1976, to determine the appropriate program for regulating surface coal mines on lands held in trust for Indian tribes.

In the interim, however, the tribes are not left without environmental protection from mining operations on their lands. The Act requires that all leases on Indian lands include certain performance standards at least as stringent as those in the Act.

Furthermore, it is entirely within the discretion of Indian tribes, bands or groups to enter into leases for mining on Indian trust lands with the approval of the Secretary of the Interior. It is also entirely within their discretion to refuse to grant leases. Although all leases, whether negotiated or advertised for bids, must be approved by the Secretary, his approval is always subsequent to the agreement between the parties, after the landowner and the lessee have reached an agreement on all conditions and actually signed the lease.

## COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

## SECTION 402.—OBJECTIVES OF THE ABANDONED MINE RECLAMATION FUND

Although this section sets forth five priorities for the use of the abandoned mine reclamation fund, the conferees have clarified the language to indicate that the primary objective of the fund is the reclamation of abandoned lands affected by coal mining, and that relief of areas impacted by rapid coal development and reclamation of non-coal mined lands are subsidiary to that goal.

## SECTION 405(a).—LAND ACQUISITION FOR RECLAMATION PROGRAM

The Secretary of the Interior is authorized in this section to acquire any necessary interest in lands in order to carry out the reclamation program authorized in Title IV. Interests may include various forms and are to be sufficient to assure that the purposes of reclamation are achieved and that the post-reclaimed land use does not contravene the reclamation itself. Under some circumstances easements might be obtained for reclamation purposes. Presumably the acquisition of easements would be less costly than the acquisition of the land in fee simple. Such easements should, of course, include provisions to assure maintenance of the reclamation.

## SECTION 405(b) (4).—PUBLIC FACILITIES IN AREAS OF RAPID COAL DEVELOPMENT

The conference report provides funds for essential public facilities only in areas impacted by coal development (including coal conversion plants if located in the coal mining area). This includes those essential public facilities necessary to accommodate the development and provides that such facilities be necessary to meet the needs specified in the subsection. It should be noted that the existence of essential facilities is not the sole test, but facility capacity must also be considered. Inadequacy or insufficient capacity of essential facilities can be as limiting as the actual lack of such facilities.

## SECTION 406(a).—FILLING VOIDS AND SEALING TUNNELS

This subsection permits the use of the abandoned mined land reclamation fund for filling voids and sealing tunnels created by any mining operation. It is however, the clear intent of the conferees that non-coal mined lands be reclaimed only after all lands affected by coal mining have been reclaimed or impacts of rapid coal mining expansion have been relieved.

## SECTION 508.—REVEGETATION

The conferees agree that a reasonable interpretation of the revegetation standards would necessitate that the mining and reclamation plan include a demonstration that the necessary seeds are or will be available when needed to achieve revegetation. It is expected that the regulations governing State and Federal programs which are to be issued by the Secretary would so specify.

The conferees intend that revegetation is required in all instances in accordance with the basic standard in section 515(b) (19). Thus if the native premining vegetation is sparse due to climatic or other natural conditions, then such conditions would be controlling in the reclamation standard.

## SECTION 510(b) (3).—ASSESSMENT OF MINE IMPACT ON HYDROLOGIC BALANCE

As part of the mining application and permit approval process, both the House bill and the Senate amendment provided that no application shall be approved unless the application affirmatively demonstrates and the regulatory finds in writing that an assessment of the probable cumulative impact of all anticipated mining in the area on the hydrologic balance has been made. The House bill further specified that the proposed mining operation has been designed to prevent irreparable off-site impact to the hydrologic balance while the Senate amendment specified that the mining operation be designed to prevent to the maximum extent possible using best available technology irreparable off-site impacts to the hydrologic balance.

The conferees resolved the difference in the language pertaining to the design of the particular mining operation by requiring that the proposed operation be designed to prevent significant irreparable off-site damage to the hydrologic balance, including damage to alluvial valley floors.

## SECTION 515(b) (1).—MAXIMIZATION OF COAL UTILIZATION AND CONSERVATION

It is the intent of the conferees in this subsection that coal will be mined in such a manner to assure maximum recovery of the resource during the course of any given mining operation. It is also their intent, that any surface mining operation be conducted so that it will not preclude future underground mining operations on that site.

## SECTION 510(b) (5).—PERMIT APPROVAL AND DENIAL FOR MINING OPERATIONS ON ALLUVIAL VALLEY FLOORS

The House bill contained an outright ban of surface mining on alluvial valley floors west of the one hundredth meridian west longitude. The Senate amendment specified that a permit or portion thereof should not be approved if the proposed mining operation would have a substantial adverse effect on crop lands or hay lands overlying alluvial valley floors where such crop lands or hay lands are significant to ranching and farming operations.

The conferees resolved these differences in virtually the same way as resolved in S. 425. The Conference Report stipulates that part or all of the mining operation is to be denied if it would have a substantial adverse effect on alluvial valley floors where farming can be practiced in the form of irrigated or naturally subirrigated hay meadows or other crop lands where such alluvial valley floors are significant to the practice of farming or ranching operations. The resolution also stipulated that this provision covered potential farming or

ranching operations if those operations were significant and economically feasible. Undeveloped range lands are excluded in each instance.

There has been considerable discussion on the potential geographical extent of this provision. For example, estimates have ranged up to nearly 50 percent, of the land over the strippable coal in the Powder River Basin being included under this provision. The conferees strongly disagree with such interpretations noting that specific investigations of representative portions of the Powder River Basin in the Gillette area, indicate that only 5 percent or so of the lands containing strippable coal deposits appeared to be alluvial valley floors. It should also be noted that the Department of the Interior advised the conferees that 97 percent of the agricultural land in the Powder River Basin is undeveloped range land, and therefore excluded from the application of this provision.

While both of these estimates are based on sample data, it is recognized that the amount of land affected in an area might well be higher and the total proportion of land affected in the entire Powder River Basin may also be higher. However, this data strongly suggests that the estimates of large scale geographic impacts of this provision are erroneous, not only in the Powder River Basin but also in other pertinent areas west of the 100th meridian.

#### SECTION 515(b)(9).—FILLING AUGER HOLES

This subsection has been misconstrued by some to mean that the entire length of an auger hole must be backfilled to satisfy this requirement. This is clearly not the intent of the conferees. It is intended only that auger holes be sealed, as tunnels and entryways must be sealed, to prevent drainage and protect public health and safety.

#### SECTION 515(b)(10)(F).—PRESERVING HYDROLOGY OF ALLUVIAL VALLEY FLOORS

The House bill specified that hydrologic integrity of alluvial valley floors must be preserved throughout the mining and reclamation operation.

The Senate amendment specified that it was necessary to do so to the maximum extent possible using the best available technology.

The conferees agreed that the essential hydrologic functions of alluvial valley floors in the arid and semi-arid areas of the country must be preserved throughout the mining and reclamation process.

The conferees adopted this stringent standard because ranching and farming operations must have bottom lands where hay or crops can be grown. Because of the low annual precipitation in the West dependable area for hay production are only those alluvial valley floors that can be irrigated by flood water spreading, diversion from stream flow, or by natural subirrigation. Some of the characteristics of alluvial valley floors which are essential for agricultural uses include: (1) sufficient runoff to allow for flood water irrigation each year; (2) development of flood plain and low terraces where water can be spread easily without significant mechanical alteration of the surface; and (3) shallow ground water where subirrigation is used,

and therefore requires a minimum of valley floor dissection so that ground water is not drained.

The conferees used the term "essential hydrologic functions" to assure that these functions would be preserved while providing the opportunity to the mining industry to mine if they can reconstitute in the reclamation process these critical areas. The areas involved are those limited sites where natural sub-irrigation occurs above strippable coal and where sufficient water is available for flood irrigation and diversion from streams.

The essential hydrologic functions are the inherent properties of alluvial valley floors controlling the availability of water under a wide range of natural conditions. Such properties include for instance: interaction between ground and surface water; varying degrees of permeability throughout the deposit; infiltration rates; flow direction and gradients; capability of accumulating, holding and releasing water through drought and seasonal cycles; stability with respect to storm or flood runoff conditions; and maintaining quality of water available to the agricultural uses.

Alluvial valley floors do not include upland areas which are generally overlain by a thin veneer of colluvial deposits composed chiefly of debris from sheet erosion, deposits by unconcentrated runoff or slope wash, together with talus, other mass movement accumulation and windblown deposits.

#### SECTION 515(b)(13).—MINE WASTE DISPOSAL

In order to assure that mine waste impoundments used for the disposal of liquid or solid waste material from coal mines are constructed or have been constructed so as to safeguard the health and welfare of downstream populations, the conferees adopted new language giving to the Army Corps of Engineers a role in determining the standards for construction, modification and abandonment of these impoundments.

Authority for the issuance of regulations and inspections of impoundments rests with the Secretary of Interior; however, such regulations should be developed by the Chief of Engineers. It is the intent of the conferees that the safety, engineering and design standards of the Corps of Engineers will apply, through the rules and regulations of the Secretary, to such structures and waste disposal banks which may serve as temporary or permanent impoundments. However, it is not the intent that the Chief of Engineers must therefore monitor or sign off on every such structure. That duty belongs to the Secretary of Interior, who may utilize appropriate skilled personnel from other Federal agencies as provided for in Title II. Concurrence of the Chief of Engineers is intended to also include his approval of the system of inspection and his participation in the training of inspectors to bring about competent and adequate enforcement of the standards.

All aspects of surveillance which do not require the actual physical inspection of individual sites would properly fall within the purview of the Chief of Engineers. Thus, the Corps' experience and expertise in the area of design, construction, maintenance, etc. which were utilized for carrying out the Congressionally authorized surveys of mine

waste embankments in West Virginia following the disastrous failure of the mine waste impoundments on Buffalo Creek, is to be applied in order to prevent similar accidents in the future. In so doing, however, an unnecessary duplication of effort by two Federal agencies and the costly drain upon available manpower is to be avoided.

#### SECTION 515(d) (1).—PLACEMENT OF SPOIL ON THE DOWNSLOPE

This subsection allows spoil from the initial cut of a steep slope mining operation to be placed on a limited and specified area of the downslope, under certain restricted conditions. The provision applies only to new mines. It applies only to the first block or short linear cut necessary to join initial access to the coal (in most instances no more than one hundred feet). The permittee must demonstrate that the soil or spoil material will not slide, erode, etc. Permanent placement of such spoil under these limiting conditions was permitted to balance the stated needs of the industry and environmental protection. The conferees are aware that initial cut spoil can be disposed of in many other ways including use in construction of haul roads or placed on less steep slope disposal areas identified in approved plan including previously mined lands not reclaimed to approximate original contour.

#### SECTION 519(c) (2).—BOND RELEASE FOR WATER POLLUTION CONTROL

After successful backfilling, regrading of the mined area the 60% of the operator's performance bond may be released. Release of a subsequent portion of the bond depends upon successful completion of revegetation and offsite siltation control. The adequacy of siltation control is to be gauged against natural levels of suspended solids as measured prior to mining, for it is the intent of the conferees that, after mining and reclamation there be no offsite degradation of water quality.

The Secretary will set the standards for measurement of suspended solid contributions. These must recognize the vast differences from region to region among major and small streams, year-round and intermittent streams, and natural variations in stream flow from year-to-year. The Secretary should also consider the availability or lack of availability of historic data.

#### SECTION 520(a).—CITIZEN SUITS

Subsection (a) assures that no operator can be sued *under this section* if he is operating in compliance with all regulations, orders, and an approved permit, even though the regulatory authority or the Secretary has failed to properly implement the Act. In such cases, the suit must be brought against the regulatory authority. The only exception to this provision occurs if the operator is itself a government agency or instrumentality, such as the Tennessee Valley Authority.

This subsection, however, in no way grants or is intended to grant immunity to an operator from any action brought by any individual under any existing statute or common law. All private rights under contract, tort, or property law are preserved. This intent is clearly reaffirmed and reiterated in subsection 520(e) of the conference report.

#### SECTION 522(b).—REVIEW OF FEDERAL LANDS

In agreeing that the Secretary may permit surface coal mining on Federal lands prior to completion of his mandatory review of the unsuitability of areas for surface mining operations, the conferees intended that in addition to evaluating the permit application under the standards of the Act, the Secretary shall also make a determination if the area should be designated as unsuitable for surface mining and if the area is unsuitable, the Secretary should deny the permit.

#### SECTION 522(e).—DESIGNATION OF AREAS UNSUITABLE FOR MINING

This subsection prohibits surface coal mining on lands within the boundaries of national forests, *subject to valid existing rights*. It is not the intent, therefore, nor is it the effect of this provision to preclude surface coal mining on private inholdings within the national forests.

The language "subject to valid existing rights" in Section 522(e) is intended to make clear that the prohibition of strip mining on the national forests is subject to previous state court interpretation of valid existing rights. For example, in West Virginia's Monongahela National Forest, strip mining of privately owned coal underlying federally owned surface has been prohibited as a result of *U.S. vs. Polino* (133 F.S. 722, 1955). In this case the court held that "stripping was not authorized by mineral reservation in a deed executed before the practice was adopted in the county where the land lies, unless the contract expressly grants stripping rights by use of direct or clearly equivalent words. The party claiming such rights must show usage or custom at the time and place where the contract is to be executed and must show that such rights were contemplated by the parties." The phrase "subject to valid existing rights" is thus in no way intended to open up national forest lands to strip mining where previous legal precedents have prohibited stripping.

#### SECTION 529.—ANTHRACITE COAL MINES

This section authorizes the Secretary, at his discretion, to promulgate certain special regulations for anthracite coal mines already regulated by a state program with standards at least as stringent as those provided in this Act. This authorization, however, applies only to the environmental standards set forth in sections 515 and 516, and portions of the bonding and bond release provisions set forth in Sections 509 and 519. All other provisions of the Act and regulations issued pursuant thereto including the reclamation fee imposed by Title IV apply to anthracite mines in the same manner as for all other coal mines.

#### SECTION 701(9).—DEFINITION OF INDIAN LANDS

In defining Indian lands, the conferees were aware of certain jurisdictional problems concerning the status of these lands. The conference report limits the definition to lands within the external boundaries of a Federal Indian reservation and to all other lands, including

mineral interests, held in trust by the Federal government for any Indian tribe. This language is not intended to change any existing jurisdiction which the states may have over such lands.

#### SECTION 702 (d).—ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

This Subsection provides that certain enumerated actions taken pursuant to the Act shall constitute major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, 42 U.S.C. 4332 (NEPA), i.e. that such actions will require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement.

The Section is not intended as a limitation or modification of NEPA but, to the contrary, the provision is viewed as being consistent with that Act. The Conferees believe that, properly interpreted and applied, the operation of NEPA will not result in any delay in the implementation of the various regulatory provisions of this environmental regulatory legislation including those actions which must be accomplished in a relatively short time period such as the establishment of the Federal Enforcement Program within 135 days after enactment.

#### SECTION 716.—ALASKA COAL

This provision applies to those lands which, as a result of the Alaska Statehood Act or the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, were conveyed from Federal to state or private ownership. Its purpose is to assure that nothing in this Act—particularly the provisions of Section 714—shall be construed as changing existing property rights with respect to lands so conveyed. The provision applies to any coal conveyed out of Federal ownership under these two laws regardless of its current ownership.

#### RELATIONSHIP OF H.R. 25 TO PRESIDENT FORD'S RECOMMENDED CHANGES

On February 6, President Ford transmitted to Congress the Administration's proposed surface coal mining bill. In his transmittal letter the President set out the 8 "critical" and 19 "important" differences between the Administration's proposal and the Conference Report on S. 425, 93d Congress.

H.R. 25 and the Senate amendment thereto each adopted some of the President's recommendations. The conference committee considered the President's views very carefully during its deliberations. Eight changes recommended by the President are adopted in the conference report. The conference report also contains language designed to meet another six of the objections raised by the President.

The President's recommendations (in the order they appear in his February 6 letter) are set out below together with an indication of the relationship of the conference report to them.

#### CRITICAL CHANGES

1. *Citizen suits. Administration Recommendation:* "S. 425 would allow citizen suits against any person for a 'violation of the provisions of this Act'. \* \* \* Citizen suits are retained in the Administration bill, but are modified \* \* \* to provide for suits against (1) the regulatory agency to enforce the act, and (2) mine operators where violations of regulations or permits are alleged."

*Conference Report*—Section 520: Modifies language to meet Administration objection.

2. *Stream siltation. Administration Recommendation:* "S. 425 would prohibit increased stream siltation—a requirement which would be extremely difficult or impossible to meet and thus could preclude mining activities. In the Administration's bill, this prohibition is modified to require the maximum practicable limitation on siltation."

*Conference Report*—Section 515(b)(11)(B): Clarifies language so as to avoid interpretation feared by Administration.

3. *Hydrologic disturbances. Administration Recommendation:* "S. 425 would establish absolute requirements to preserve the hydrologic integrity of alluvial valley floors—and prevent offsite hydrologic disturbances. \* \* \* In the Administration's bill, this provision is modified to require that any such disturbances be prevented to the maximum extent practicable so that there will be a balance between environmental protection and the need for coal production."

*Conference Report*—Section 515(b)(10)(F): Modifies language to avoid "absolute requirements" objected to by Administration.

4. *Ambiguous terms. Administration Recommendation:* "In the case of S. 425, there is great potential for court interpretations of ambiguous provisions which could lead to unnecessary or unanticipated adverse production impact. The Administration's bill provides explicit authority for the Secretary to define ambiguous terms so as to clarify the regulatory process and minimize delays due to litigation."

*Conference Report:* Does not adopt Administration recommendation.

5. *Abandoned land reclamation fund. Administration Recommendation:* "S. 425 would establish a tax of 25¢ per ton for underground mined coal and 35¢ per ton for surface mined coal to create a fund for reclaiming previously mined lands that have been abandoned without being reclaimed, and for other purposes. \* \* \* The Administration bill would set the tax at 10¢ per ton for all coal \* \* \* which would be ample."

"Under S. 425 funds accrued from the tax on coal could be used by the Federal government (1) for financing construction of roads, utilities, and public buildings on reclaimed mined lands, and (2) for distribution to States to finance roads, utilities and public buildings in any area where coal mining activity is expanding. \* \* \* The Administration bill does not provide authority for funding facilities."

*Conference Report*—Section 401(d): Reduces reclamation fee on underground mined coal to 15¢ per ton. Does not restrict the scope of the program.



6. *Impoundments. Administration Recommendation:* "S. 425 could prohibit or unduly restrict the use of most new or existing impoundments, even though constructed to adequate safety standards. In the Administration's bill, the provisions on location of impoundments have been modified to permit their use where safety standards are met."

*Conference Report*—Section 515(b)(13): Provides that Corps of Engineers will set location standards for impoundments, and thus eliminates language objected to by Administration.

7. *National forests. Administration Recommendation:* "S. 425 would prohibit mining in the national forests—a prohibition which is inconsistent with multiple use principles and which could unnecessarily lock up 7 billion tons of coal reserves. \* \* \* In the Administration bill, this provision is modified to permit the Agriculture Secretary to waive the restriction in specific areas when multiple resource analysis indicates that such mining would be in the public interest."

*Conference Report*—Section 522(e)(2): Does not adopt Administration recommendations.

8. *Special unemployment provisions. Administration Recommendation:* "The unemployment provision of S. 425 (1) would cause unfair discrimination among classes of unemployed persons, (2) would be difficult to administer, and (3) would set unacceptable precedents including unlimited benefit terms, and weak labor force attachment requirements. This provision of S. 425 is inconsistent with Public Law 93-567 and Public Law 93-572 which were signed into law on December 31, 1974, and which significantly broaden and lengthen general unemployment assistance. The Administration's bill does not include a special unemployment provision."

*Conference Report:* Adopts Administration recommendation.

#### "OTHER IMPORTANT CHANGES"

1. *Antidegradation. Administration Recommendation:* "S. 425 contains a provision which, if literally interpreted by the courts, could lead to a non-degradation standard similar to that experienced with the Clean Air Act. \* \* \* Changes are included in the Administration bill to overcome this problem."

*Conference Report*—Section 102(a): Adopts Administration recommendation.

2. *Reclamation fund. Administration Recommendation:* "S. 425 would authorize the use of funds to assist private landowners in reclaiming their lands mined in past years. Such a program would result in windfall gains to the private landowners who would maintain title to their lands while having them reclaimed at Federal expense. The Administration bill deletes this provision."

*Conference Report*—Section 404: Does not adopt Administration recommendation.

3. *Interim program timing. Administration Recommendation:* "Under S. 425, mining operations could be forced to close down simply because the regulatory authority had not completed action on a mining permit, through no fault of the operator. The Administration bill modifies the timing requirements of the interim program to minimize unnecessary delays and production losses."

*Conference Report*—Sections 504 and 506: Includes provisions designed to eliminate possibility of shutdown.

4. *Federal Preemption Administration Recommendation:* "The Federal interim program role provided in S. 425 could (1) lead to unnecessary Federal preemption, displacement or duplication of State regulatory activities, and (2) discourage States from assuming an active permanent regulatory role. \* \* \* In the Administration bill, this requirement is revised to limit the Federal enforcement role during the interim program to situations where a violation creates an imminent danger to public health and safety or significant environmental harm."

*Conference Report*—Section 502: Does not adopt Administration recommendation.

5. *Surface owner consent. Administration Recommendation:* "The requirement in S. 425 for surface owner's consent would substantially modify existing law by transferring to the surface owner coal rights that presently reside with the Federal government. S. 425 would give the surface owner the right to "veto" the mining of Federally owned coal or possibly enable him to realize a substantial windfall. In addition, S. 425 leaves unclear the rights of prospectors under existing law. The Administration is opposed to any provision which could (1) result in a lock up of coal reserves through surface owner veto or (2) lead to windfalls. In the Administration's bill surface owner and prospector rights would continue as provided in existing law."

*Conference Report*—Section 714: Does not adopt Administration recommendation.

6. *Federal lands. Administration Recommendation:* "S. 425 would set an undesirable precedent by providing for State control over mining of Federally owned coal on Federal lands. In the Administration's bill, Federal regulations governing such activities would not be preempted by State regulations."

*Conference Report*—Section 523: Does not adopt Administration recommendation.

7. *Research centers. Administration Recommendation:* "S. 425 would provide additional funding authorization for mining research centers through a formula grant program for existing schools of mining. This provision establishes an unnecessary new spending program, duplicates existing authorities for conduct of research, and could fragment existing research efforts already supported by the Federal government. The provision is deleted in the Administration bill."

*Conference Report*—Title III: Does not adopt Administration recommendation.

8. *Prohibition on mining in alluvial valley floors. Administration Recommendation:* "S. 425 would extend the prohibition on surface mining involving alluvial valley floors to areas that have the potential for farming or ranching. This is an unnecessary prohibition which could close some existing mines and which would lock up significant coal reserves. In the Administration's bill reclamation of such areas would be required, making the prohibition unnecessary."

*Conference Report*—Section 510(b)(5): Modifies this provision to make it more precise.

9. *Potential moratorium on issuing mining permits. Administration Recommendation:* "S. 425 provides for (1) a ban on the mining of lands under study for designation as unsuitable for coal mining, and (2) an automatic ban whenever such a study is requested by anyone. The Administration's bill modifies these provisions to insure expeditious consideration of proposals for designating lands unsuitable for surface coal mining and to insure that the requirement for review of Federal lands will not trigger such a ban."

*Conference Report—Section 522:* Modifies this provision to require expeditious administrative action on designations so as to avoid any moratorium.

10. *Hydrologic data. Administration Recommendation:* "Under S. 425, an applicant would have to provide hydrologic data even where the data are already available—a potentially serious and unnecessary workload for small miners. The Administration's bill authorizes the regulatory authority to waive the requirement, in whole or in part, when the data are already available."

*Conference Report—Section 507(b) (11):* Does not adopt Administration recommendation.

11. *Variances, Administration Recommendations:* "S. 425 would not give the regulatory authority adequate flexibility to grant variances from the lengthy and detailed performance specifications. The Administration bill would allow limited variances—with strict environmental safeguards—to achieve specific post-mining land uses and to accommodate equipment shortages during the interim program."

*Conference Report—Section 515(c):* Does not adopt Administration recommendation.

12. *Permit fee. Administration Recommendation:* "The requirement in S. 425 for payment of the mining fee before operations begin could impose a large 'front end' cost which could unnecessarily prevent some mine opening or force some operators out of business. In the Administration's bill, the regulatory authority would have the authority to extend the fee over several years."

*Conference Report—Section 507(a):* Adopts Administration recommendation.

13. *Preferential contracting. Administration Recommendation:* "S. 425 would require that special preference be given to reclamation contracts to operators who lose their jobs because of the bill. Such hiring should be based solely on an operators reclamation capability. The provision does not appear in the Administration's bill."

*Conference Report—Adopts Administration recommendation.*

14. *Any Class of buyer. Administration Recommendations:* "S. 425 would require that lessees of Federal coal not refuse to sell coal to any class of buyer. This could interfere unnecessarily with both planned and existing coal mining operations, particularly in integrated facilities. This provision is not included in the Administration's bill."

*Conference Report—Section 523(e):* Modifies language to accommodate Administration concern.

15. *Contract authority, Administration Recommendation:* "S. 425 would provide contract authority rather than authorizing appropriations for Federal costs in administering the legislation. This is un-

necessary and inconsistent with the thrust of the Congressional Budget Reform and Impoundment Control Act. In the Administration's bill, such costs would be financed through appropriations."

*Conference Report—Section 712(a):* Does not adopt Administration recommendation.

16. *Indian lands, Administration Recommendation:* "S. 425 could be construed to require the Secretary of the Interior to regulate coal mining on non-Federal Indian lands. In the Administration bill, the definition of Indian lands is modified to eliminate this possibility."

*Conference Report—Section 701(9):* Adopts Administration recommendation.

17. *Interest charge. Administration Recommendations:* "S. 425 would not provide a reasonable level of interest charged on unpaid penalties. The Administration's bill provides for an interest charge based on Treasury rates so as to assure a sufficient incentive for prompt payment of penalties."

*Conference Report—Section 518(d):* Adopts Administration recommendation.

18. *Prohibition on mining within 500 feet of an active mine.* "This prohibition in S. 425 would unnecessarily restrict recovery of substantial coal resources even when mining of the areas would be the best possible use of the areas involved. Under the Administration's bill, mining would be allowed in such areas as long as it can be done safely."

*Conference Report—Section 515(b) (12):* Does not adopt Administration recommendation.

19. *Haul roads. Recommendation:* "Requirements of S. 425 could preclude some mine operators from moving their coal to market by preventing the connection of haul roads to public roads. The Administration's bill would modify this provision."

*Conference Report—Section 522(e) (4):* Adopts Administration recommendation.

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