

are final for the Department. These decisions and findings are effective upon issuance.

(b) Decisions under this part, other than those in paragraph (a) of this section, that adversely affect a tribe and for which an appeal is pending are not final for the Department and are not effective while the appeal is pending, unless:

(1) The tribe had an opportunity for a hearing before the decision was issued;

(2) The tribe had a reasonable amount of time to comply with the TERA after the decision was issued; and

(3) The Interior Board of Indian Appeals (Board), the Secretary, or Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs issued a written decision that, notwithstanding a reasonable period given the tribe to comply with the TERA, the tribe has failed to take the actions necessary to comply with the TERA.

(c) All other decisions rendered by the Board or the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs in an appeal from a Director's decision under subparts E, F, or G of this part are effective when issued.

## PART 225—OIL AND GAS, GEOTHERMAL, AND SOLID MINERALS AGREEMENTS

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AUTHORITY: Indian Mineral Development Act of 1982, 25 U.S.C. 2101–2108; and 25 U.S.C. 2 and 9.

SOURCE: 59 FR 14971, Mar. 30, 1994, unless otherwise noted.

### Subpart A—General

#### § 225.1 Purpose and scope.

(a) The regulations in this part, administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, govern minerals agreements for the development of Indian-owned minerals entered into pursuant to the Indian Mineral Development Act of 1982, 25 U.S.C. 2101–2108 (IMDA). These regulations are applicable to the lands or interests in lands of any Indian tribe, individual Indian or Alaska native the title to which is held in trust by the United States or is subject to a restriction against alienation imposed by the United States. These regulations are intended to ensure that Indian mineral owners are permitted to enter into minerals agreements that will allow the Indian mineral owners to have more responsibility in overseeing and greater flexibility in disposing of their mineral resources, and to allow development in the manner which the Indian mineral owners believe will maximize their best economic interest and minimize any adverse environmental or cultural impact resulting from such development. Pursuant to section 4 of the IMDA (25 U.S.C. 2103(e)), as part of this greater flexibility, where the Secretary has approved a minerals agreement in compliance with the provisions of 25 U.S.C. chap. 23 and any other applicable provision of law, the United States shall not

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be liable for losses sustained by a tribe or individual Indian under such minerals agreement. However, as further stated in the IMDA, the Secretary continues to have a trust obligation to ensure that the rights of a tribe or individual Indian are protected in the event of a violation of the terms of any minerals agreement, and to uphold the duties of the United States as derived from the trust relationship and from any treaties, executive orders, or agreements between the United States and any Indian tribe.

(b) The regulations in this part shall become effective and in full force on April 29, 1994, and shall be subject to amendment at any time by the Secretary; *Provided*, that no such regulation that becomes effective after the date of approval of any minerals agreement shall operate to affect the duration of the minerals agreement, the rate of royalty or financial consideration, rental, or acreage unless agreed to by all parties to the minerals agreement.

(c) The regulations of the Bureau of Land Management, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, and the Minerals Management Service that are referenced in §§ 225.4, 225.5, and 225.6 are supplemental to these regulations, and apply to minerals agreements for development of Indian mineral resources unless specifically stated otherwise in this part or in other Federal regulations. To the extent the parties to a minerals agreement are able to provide reasonable provisions satisfactorily addressing the issues of valuation, method of payment, accounting, and auditing, governed by the Minerals Management Service regulations, the Secretary may approve alternate provisions in a minerals agreement.

(d) Nothing in these regulations is intended to prevent Indian tribes from exercising their lawful governmental authority to regulate the conduct of persons, businesses, or minerals operations within their territorial jurisdiction.

### § 225.2 Information collection.

It has been determined by the Office of Management and Budget that the Information Collection Requirements

contained in part 225 do not require review under the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*).

### § 225.3 Definitions.

As used in this part, the following terms have the specified meaning except where otherwise indicated.

*Area Director* means the Bureau of Indian Affairs Official in charge of an Area Office.

*Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs* means the Assistant Secretary—Indian Affairs of the Department of the Interior, a designee of the Secretary of the Interior who may be specifically authorized by the Secretary to disapprove minerals agreements (25 U.S.C. 2103(d)) and to issue orders of cessation and/or minerals agreement cancellations as final orders of the Department.

*Authorized Officer* means any employee of the Bureau of Land Management authorized by law or by lawful delegation of authority to perform the duties described herein and in 43 CFR parts 3160, 3180, 3260, 3280, 3480 and 3590.

*Director's Representative* means the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement Director's Representative authorized by law or by lawful delegation of authority to perform the duties described in 30 CFR part 750 and 25 CFR part 216.

*Gas* means any fluid, either combustible or noncombustible, that is produced in a natural state from the earth and that maintains a gaseous or rarefied state at ordinary temperature and pressure conditions.

*Geothermal resources* means: (1) All products of geothermal processes, including indigenous steam, hot water, and hot brines;

(2) Steam and other gases, hot water, and hot brines, resulting from water, gas, or other fluids artificially introduced into geothermal formations;

(3) Heat or other associated energy found in geothermal formations; and

(4) Any by-product derived therefrom.

*In the best interest of the Indian mineral owner* refers to the standards to be applied by the Secretary in considering whether to take administrative action affecting the interests of an Indian mineral owner. In considering whether it is "in the best interest of the Indian