

§ 292.66

health, safety, or the environment, or where such harm is already occurring, the authorized officer may take immediate action to stop the threat or damage without prior notice. In such case, written notice and explanation of the action taken shall be given the operator as soon as reasonably practicable following the suspension.

(2) In those cases that do not present a threat of imminent harm to public health, safety, or the environment, the authorized officer must first notify the operator in writing of the basis for the suspension and provide the operator with reasonably sufficient time to respond to the notice of the authorized officer or to bring the mineral operations into conformance with applicable laws, regulations, or the terms and conditions of the approved plan of operations.

(b) Except as otherwise provided in this section, the authorized officer shall notify the operator not less than 30 days prior to the date of the proposed suspension.

OUTSTANDING MINERAL RIGHTS

§ 292.66 Operating plan requirements—outstanding mineral rights.

(a) Proposals for mineral operations involving outstanding mineral rights within the SRNRA must be documented in an operating plan and submitted in writing to the authorized officer.

(b) An operating plan for operations involving outstanding mineral rights within the SRNRA must include the following:

(1) The name and legal mailing address of the operator, owner, and any lessees, assigns, and designees;

(2) A copy of the deed or other legal instrument that conveyed the outstanding mineral rights;

(3) Sketches or maps showing the location of the outstanding mineral rights, the proposed area of operations, including, but not limited to, existing and/or proposed roads or access routes identified for use, any new proposed road construction, and the approximate location and size of the areas to be disturbed, including existing or proposed structures, facilities, and other improvements to be used;

(4) A description of the type of operations which includes, at a minimum, a list of the type, size, location, and number of structures, facilities, and other improvements to be used;

(5) An identification of the hazardous materials and any other toxic materials, petroleum products, insecticides, pesticides, and herbicides that will be used during the mineral operation and the proposed means for disposing of such substances;

(6) An identification of the character and composition of the mineral wastes that will be used or generated and a proposed method or strategy for their placement, control, isolation, remediation, or removal; and

(7) A reclamation plan to reduce or control on-site and off-site damage to natural resources resulting from mineral operations. The plan must:

(i) Provide reclamation to the extent practicable;

(ii) Show how public health and safety are maintained;

(iii) Identify and describe reclamation measures to include, but not limited to, the following:

(A) Reduction and/or control of erosion, landslides, and water runoff;

(B) Rehabilitation of wildlife and fisheries habitat to be disturbed by the proposed mineral operation; and

(C) Protection of water quality.

(iv) Demonstrate how the area of surface disturbance will be reclaimed to a condition or use that is consistent with the Six Rivers National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.

§ 292.67 Operating plan approval—outstanding mineral rights.

(a) Upon receipt of an operating plan, the authorized officer must review the information related to the ownership of the outstanding mineral rights and notify the operator that:

(1) Sufficient information on ownership of the outstanding mineral rights has been provided; or

(2) Sufficient information on ownership of outstanding mineral rights has not been provided, including an explanation of the specific information that still needs to be provided, and that no

further action on the plan of operations will be taken until the authorized officer's receipt of the specified information.

(b) If the review shows outstanding mineral rights have not been verified, the authorized officer must notify the operator in writing that outstanding mineral rights have not been verified, explain the reasons for such a finding, and that the proposed mineral operation cannot be conducted.

(c) If the review shows that outstanding mineral rights have been verified, the authorized officer must notify the operator in writing that outstanding mineral rights have been verified and that review of the proposed operating plan will proceed.

(d) The authorized officer shall review the operating plan to determine if all of the following criteria are met:

- (1) The operating plan is consistent with the rights granted by the deed;
- (2) The operating plan is consistent with the Six Rivers National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan; and

(3) The operating plan uses only so much of the surface as is necessary for the proposed mineral operations.

(e) Upon completion of the review of the operating plan, the authorized officer shall notify the operator in writing of one of the following:

(1) The operating plan meets all of the criteria of paragraphs (d)(1) through (d)(3) of this section and, therefore, is approved;

(2) The operating plan does not meet one or more of the criteria in paragraphs (d)(1) through (d)(3) of this section. Where feasible, the authorized officer may indicate changes to the operating plan that would satisfy the criteria in paragraphs (d)(1) through (d)(3) of this section and, thus, if accepted by the operator, would result in approval of the operating plan.

(f) To conduct mineral operations beyond those described in an approved operating plan, the owner or lessee must submit, in writing, an amended operating plan to the authorized officer at the earliest practicable date. New operations covered by the proposed amendment may not begin until the authorized officer has reviewed and responded in writing to the proposed

amendment. The authorized officer shall review a proposed amendment of an approved operating plan to determine that the criteria in paragraphs (d)(1) through (d)(3) of this section are met.

MINERAL MATERIALS

§ 292.68 Mineral material operations.

Subject to the provisions of part 228, subpart C, and part 293 of this chapter, the authorized officer may approve contracts and permits for the sale or other disposal of mineral materials, including but not limited to, common varieties of gravel, sand, or stone. However, such contracts and permits may be approved only if the material is not within a designated wilderness area and is to be used for the construction and maintenance of roads and other facilities within the SRNRA or the four excluded areas identified by the Act.

OTHER PROVISIONS

§ 292.69 Concurrent reclamation.

Plans of operations involving locatable minerals, operating plans involving outstanding mineral rights, and contracts or permits for mineral materials should all provide, to the maximum extent practicable, that reclamation proceed concurrently with the mineral operation.

§ 292.70 Indemnification.

The owner and/or operator of mining claims and the owner and/or lessee of outstanding mineral rights are jointly and severally liable in accordance with Federal and State laws for indemnifying the United States for the following:

(a) Costs, damages, claims, liabilities, judgments, injury and loss, including those incurred from fire suppression efforts, and environmental response actions and cleanup and abatement costs incurred by the United States and arising from past, present, and future acts or omissions of the owner, operator, or lessee in connection with the use and occupancy of the unpatented mining claim and/or mineral operation. This includes acts or omissions covered by Federal, State,