

§ 1.1254-1 Treatment of gain from disposition of natural resource recapture property.

(a) *In general.* Upon any disposition of section 1254 property or any disposition after December 31, 1975 of oil, gas, or geothermal property, gain is treated as ordinary income in an amount equal to the lesser of the amount of the section 1254 costs (as defined in paragraph (b)(1) of this section) with respect to the property, or the amount, if any, by which the amount realized on the sale, exchange, or involuntary conversion, or the fair market value of the property on any other disposition, exceeds the adjusted basis of the property. However, any amount treated as ordinary income under the preceding sentence is not included in the taxpayer's *gross income from the property* for purposes of section 613. Generally, the lesser of the amounts described in this paragraph (a) is treated as ordinary income even though, in the absence of section 1254(a), no gain would be recognized upon the disposition under any other provision of the Internal Revenue Code. For the definition of the term *section 1254 costs*, see paragraph (b)(1) of this section. For the definition of the terms *section 1254 property*, *oil, gas, or geothermal property*, and *natural resource recapture property*, see paragraph (b)(2) of this section. For rules relating to the *disposition* of natural resource recapture property, see paragraphs (b)(3), (c), and (d) of this section. For exceptions and limitations to the application of section 1254(a), see § 1.1254-2.

(b) *Definitions*—(1) *Section 1254 costs*—(i) *Property placed in service after December 31, 1986.* With respect to any property placed in service by the taxpayer after December 31, 1986, the term *section 1254 costs* means—

(A) The aggregate amount of expenditures that have been deducted by the taxpayer or any person under section 263, 616, or 617 with respect to such property and that, but for the deduction, would have been included in the adjusted basis of the property or in the adjusted basis of certain depreciable property associated with the property; and

(B) The deductions for depletion under section 611 that reduced the adjusted basis of the property.

(ii) *Property placed in service before January 1, 1987.* With respect to any property placed in service by the taxpayer before January 1, 1987, the term *section 1254 costs* means—

(A) The aggregate amount of costs paid or incurred after December 31, 1975, with respect to such property, that have been deducted as intangible drilling and development costs under section 263(c) by the taxpayer or any other person (except that section 1254 costs do not include costs incurred with respect to geothermal wells commenced before October 1, 1978) and that, but for the deduction, would be reflected in the adjusted basis of the property or in the adjusted basis of certain depreciable property associated with the property; reduced by

(B) The amount (if any) by which the deduction for depletion allowed under section 611 that was computed either under section 612 or sections 613 and 613A, with respect to the property, would have been increased if the costs (paid or incurred after December 31, 1975) had been charged to capital account rather than deducted.

(iii) *Deductions under section 59 and section 291.* Amounts capitalized pursuant to an election under section 59(e) or pursuant to section 291(b) are treated as section 1254 costs in the year in which an amortization deduction is claimed under section 59(e)(1) or section 291(b)(2).

(iv) *Suspended deductions.* If a deduction of a section 1254 cost has been suspended as of the date of disposition of section 1254 property, the deduction is not treated as a section 1254 cost if it is included in basis for determining gain or loss on the disposition. On the other hand, if the deduction will eventually be claimed, it is a section 1254 cost as of the date of disposition. For example, a deduction suspended pursuant to the 65 percent of taxable income limitation of section 613A(d)(1) may either be included in basis upon disposition of the property or may be deducted in a year after the year of disposition. See § 1.613A-4(a)(1). If it is included in the basis then it is not a section 1254 cost, but if it is deductible in a later year it is a section 1254 cost as of the date of the disposition.

(v) *Previously recaptured amounts.* If an amount has been previously treated as ordinary income pursuant to section 1254, it is not a section 1254 cost.

(vi) *Nonproductive wells.* The aggregate amount of section 1254 costs paid or incurred on any property includes the amount of intangible drilling and development costs incurred on nonproductive wells, but only to the extent that the taxpayer recognizes income on the foreclosure of a non-recourse debt the proceeds from which were used to finance the section 1254 costs with respect to the property. For this purpose, the term nonproductive well means a well that does not produce oil or gas in commercial quantities, including a well that is drilled for the purpose of ascertaining the existence, location, or extent of an oil or gas reservoir (e.g., a delineation well). The term *nonproductive well* does not include an injection well (other than an injection well drilled as part of a project that does not result in production in commercial quantities).

(vii) *Calculation of amount described in paragraph (b)(1)(ii)(B) of this section (hypothetical depletion offset)—(A) In general.* In calculating the amount described in paragraph (b)(1)(ii)(B) of this section, the taxpayer shall apply the following rules. The taxpayer may use the 65-percent-of-taxable-income limitation of section 613A(d)(1). If the taxpayer uses that limitation, the taxpayer is not required to recalculate the effect of such limitation with respect to any property not disposed of. That is, the taxpayer may assume that the hypothetical capitalization of intangible drilling and development costs with respect to any property disposed of does not affect the allowable depletion with respect to property retained by the taxpayer. Any intangible drilling and development costs that, if they had not been treated as expenses under section 263(c), would have properly been capitalized under § 1.612-4(b)(2) (relating to items recoverable through depreciation under section 167 or cost recovery under section 168) are treated as costs described in § 1.612-4(b)(1) (relating to items recoverable through depletion). The increase in depletion attributable to the capitalization of intangible drilling and development costs

is computed by subtracting the amount of cost or percentage depletion actually claimed from the amount of cost or percentage depletion that would have been allowable if intangible drilling and development costs had been capitalized. If the remainder is zero or less than zero, the entire amount of intangible drilling and development costs attributable to the property is recapturable.

(B) *Example.* The following example illustrates the principles of paragraph (b)(1)(vii)(A).

Example: Hypothetical depletion offset. In 1976, A purchased undeveloped property for \$10,000. During 1977, A incurred \$200,000 of productive well intangible drilling and development costs with respect to the property. A deducted the intangible drilling and development costs as expenses under section 263(c). Estimated reserves of 150,000 barrels of recoverable oil were discovered in 1977 and production began in 1978. In 1978, A produced and sold 30,000 barrels of oil at \$8 per barrel, resulting in \$240,000 of gross income. A had no other oil or gas production in 1978. A claimed a percentage depletion deduction of \$52,800 (i.e., 22% of \$240,000 gross income from the property). If A had capitalized the intangible drilling and development costs, assume that \$200,000 of the costs would have been allocated to the depletable property and none to depreciable property. A's cost depletion deduction if the intangible drilling and development costs had been capitalized would have been \$42,000 (i.e., $(\$200,000 \text{ intangible drilling and development costs} + \$10,000 \text{ acquisition costs}) \times 30,000 \text{ barrels of production} / 150,000 \text{ barrels of estimated recoverable reserves}$). Since this amount is less than A's depletion deduction of \$52,800 (percentage depletion), no reduction is made to the amount of intangible drilling and development costs (\$200,000). On January 1, 1979, A sold the oil property to B for \$360,000 and calculated section 1254 recapture without reference to the 65-percent-of-taxable-income limitation. A's gain on the sale is the entire \$360,000, because A's basis in the property at the beginning of 1979 is zero (i.e., \$10,000 cost less \$52,800 depletion deduction for 1978). Since the section 1254 costs (\$200,000) are less than A's gain on the sale, \$200,000 is treated as ordinary income under section 1254(a). The remaining amount of A's gain (\$160,000) is not subject to section 1254(a).

(2) *Natural resource recapture property—(i) In general.* The term *natural resource recapture property* means section 1254 property or oil, gas, or geothermal property as those terms are defined in this section.

(ii) *Section 1254 property.* The term *section 1254 property* means any property (within the meaning of section 614) that is placed in service by the taxpayer after December 31, 1986, if any expenditures described in paragraph (b)(1)(i)(A) of this section (relating to costs under section 263, 616, or 617) are properly chargeable to such property, or if the adjusted basis of such property includes adjustments for deductions for depletion under section 611.

(iii) *Oil, gas, or geothermal property.* The term *oil, gas, or geothermal property* means any property (within the meaning of section 614) that was placed in service by the taxpayer before January 1, 1987, if any expenditures described in paragraph (b)(1)(ii)(A) of this section are properly chargeable to such property.

(iv) *Property to which section 1254 costs are properly chargeable.* (A) An expenditure is properly chargeable to property if—

(1) The property is an operating mineral interest with respect to which the expenditure has been deducted;

(2) The property is a nonoperating mineral interest (e.g., a net profits interest or an overriding royalty interest) burdening an operating mineral interest if the nonoperating mineral interest is carved out of an operating mineral interest described in paragraph (b)(2)(iv)(A)(1) of this section;

(3) The property is a nonoperating mineral interest retained by a lessor or sublessor if such lessor or sublessor held, prior to the lease or sublease, an operating mineral interest described in paragraph (b)(2)(iv)(A)(1) of this section; or

(4) The property is an operating or a nonoperating mineral interest held by a taxpayer if a party related to the taxpayer (within the meaning of section 267(b) or section 707(b)) held an operating mineral interest (described in paragraph (b)(2)(iv)(A)(1) of this section) in the same tract or parcel of land that terminated (in whole or in part) without being disposed of (e.g., a working interest which terminated after a specified period of time or a given amount of production), but only if there exists between the related parties an arrangement or plan to avoid recapture under section 1254. In such a

case, the taxpayer's section 1254 costs with respect to the property include those of the related party.

(B) *Example.* The following example illustrates the provisions of paragraph (2)(iv)(A)(4) of this section:

Example: Arrangement or plan to avoid recapture. C, an individual, owns 100% of the stock of both X Co. and Y Co. On January 1, 1998, X Co. enters into a standard oil and gas lease. X Co. immediately assigns to Y Co. 1% of the working interest for one year, and 99% of the working interest thereafter. In 1998, X Co. and Y Co. expend \$300 in intangible drilling and development costs developing the tract, of which \$297 are deducted by X Co. under section 263(c). On January 1, 1999, Y Co. sells its 99% share of the working interest to an unrelated person. Based on all the facts and circumstances, the arrangement between X Co. and Y Co. is part of a plan or arrangement to avoid recapture under section 1254. Therefore, Y Co. must include in its section 1254 costs the \$297 of intangible drilling and development costs deducted by X Co.

(v) *Property the basis of which includes adjustments for depletion deductions.* The adjusted basis of property includes adjustments for depletion under section 611 if—

(A) The basis of the property has been reduced by reason of depletion deductions; or

(B) The property has been carved out of or is a portion of property the basis of which has been reduced by reason of depletion deductions.

(vi) *Property held by a transferee.* Property held by a transferee is natural resource recapture property if the property was natural resource recapture property in the hands of the transferor and the transferee's basis in the property is determined with reference to the transferor's basis in the property (e.g., a gift) or is determined under section 732.

(vii) *Property held by a transferor.* Property held by a transferor of natural resource recapture property is natural resource recapture property if the transferor's basis in the property received is determined with reference to the transferor's basis in the property transferred by the transferor (e.g., a like kind exchange). For purposes of this paragraph (b)(2), property described in this paragraph (b)(2)(vii) is treated as placed in service at the time

the property transferred by the transferor was placed in service by the transferor.

(3) *Disposition*—(i) *General rule.* The term *disposition* has the same meaning as in section 1245, relating to gain from dispositions of certain depreciable property.

(ii) *Exceptions.* The term *disposition* does not include—

(A) Any transaction that is merely a financing device, such as a mortgage or a production payment that is treated as a loan under section 636 and the regulations thereunder;

(B) Any abandonment (except that an abandonment is a disposition to the extent the taxpayer recognizes income on the foreclosure of a nonrecourse debt);

(C) Any creation of a lease or sublease of natural resource recapture property;

(D) Any termination or election of the status of an S corporation;

(E) Any unitization or pooling arrangement;

(F) Any expiration or reversion of an operating mineral interest that expires or reverts by its own terms, in whole or in part; or

(G) Any conversion of an overriding royalty interest that, at the option of the grantor or successor in interest, converts to an operating mineral interest after a certain amount of production.

(iii) *Special rule for carrying arrangements.* In a carrying arrangement, liability for section 1254 costs attributable to the entire operating mineral interest held by the carrying party prior to reversion or conversion remains attributable to the reduced operating mineral interest retained by the carrying party after a portion of the operating mineral interest has reverted to the carried party or after the conversion of an overriding royalty interest that, at the option of the grantor or successor in interest, converts to an operating mineral interest after a certain amount of production.

(c) *Disposition of a portion of natural resource recapture property*—(1) *Disposition of a portion (other than an undivided interest) of natural resource recapture property*—(i) *Natural resource recapture property subject to the general rules of § 1.1254-1.* For purposes of section

1254(a)(1) and paragraph (a) of this section, except as provided in paragraphs (c) (1)(ii) and (3) of this section, in the case of the disposition of a portion (that is not an undivided interest) of natural resource recapture property, the entire amount of the section 1254 costs with respect to the natural resource recapture property is treated as allocable to that portion of the property to the extent of the amount of gain to which section 1254(a)(1) applies. If the amount of the gain to which section 1254(a)(1) applies is less than the amount of the section 1254 costs with respect to the natural resource recapture property, the balance of the section 1254 costs remaining after allocation to the portion of the property that was disposed of remains subject to recapture by the taxpayer under section 1254(a)(1) upon disposition of the remaining portion of the property. For example, assume that A owns an 80-acre tract of land with respect to which A has deducted intangible drilling and development costs under section 263(c). If A sells the north 40 acres, the entire amount of the section 1254 costs with respect to the 80-acre tract is treated as allocable to the 40-acre portion sold (to the extent of the amount of gain to which section 1254(a)(1) applies).

(ii) *Natural resource recapture property subject to the exceptions and limitations of § 1.1254-2.* For purposes of section 1254(a)(1) and paragraph (a) of this section, except as provided in paragraph (b)(3) of this section, in the case of the disposition of a portion (that is not an undivided interest) of natural resource recapture property to which section 1254(a)(1) does not apply by reason of the application of § 1.1254-2 (certain nonrecognition transactions), the following rule for allocation of costs applies. An amount of the section 1254 costs that bears the same ratio to the entire amount of such costs with respect to the entire natural resource recapture property as the value of the property transferred bears to the value of the entire natural resource recapture property is treated as allocable to the portion of the natural resource recapture property transferred. The balance of the section 1254 costs remaining after allocation to that portion of

the transferred property remains subject to recapture by the taxpayer under section 1254(a)(1) upon disposition of the remaining portion of the property. For example, assume that A owns an 80-acre tract of land with respect to which A has deducted intangible drilling and development costs under section 263(c). If A gives away the north 40 acres, and if 60 percent of the value of the 80-acre tract were attributable to the north 40 acres given away, 60 percent of the section 1254 costs with respect to the 80-acre tract is allocable to the north 40 acres given away.

(2) *Disposition of an undivided interest*—(i) *Natural resource recapture property subject to the general rules of § 1.1254-1.* For purposes of section 1254(a)(1), except as provided in paragraphs (b)(2)(ii) and (b)(3) of this section, in the case of the disposition of an undivided interest in natural resource recapture property (or a portion thereof), a proportionate part of the section 1254 costs with respect to the natural resource recapture property is treated as allocable to the transferred undivided interest to the extent of the amount of gain to which section 1254(a)(1) applies. For example, assume that A owns an 80-acre tract of land with respect to which A has deducted intangible drilling and development costs under section 263(c). If A sells an undivided 40 percent interest in the 80-acre tract, 40 percent of the section 1254 costs with respect to the 80-acre tract is allocable to the transferred 40 percent interest in the 80-acre tract. However, if the amount of gain recognized on the sale of the 40 percent undivided interest were equal to only 35 percent of the amount of section 1254 costs attributable to the 80-acre tract, only 35 percent of the section 1254 costs would be treated as attributable to the undivided 40 percent interest. See paragraph (c)(3) of this section for an alternative allocation rule.

(ii) *Natural resource recapture property subject to the exceptions and limitations of § 1.1254-2.* For purposes of section 1254(a)(1) and paragraph (a) of this section, except as provided in paragraph (b)(3) of this section, in the case of a disposition of an undivided interest in natural resource recapture property (or a portion thereof) to which section 1254

(a)(1) does not apply by reason of § 1.1254-2, a proportionate part of the section 1254 costs with respect to the natural resource recapture property is treated as allocable to the transferred undivided interest. See paragraph (c)(3) of this section for an alternative allocation rule.

(3) *Alternative allocation rule*—(i) *In general.* The rules for the allocation of costs set forth in section 1254(a)(2) and paragraphs (c) (1) and (2) of this section do not apply with respect to section 1254 costs that the taxpayer establishes to the satisfaction of the Commissioner do not relate to the transferred property. Except as provided in paragraphs (c)(3) (ii) and (iii) of this section, a taxpayer may satisfy this requirement only by receiving a private letter ruling from the Internal Revenue Service that the section 1254 costs do not relate to the transferred property.

(ii) *Portion of property.* Upon the transfer of a portion of a natural resource recapture property (other than an undivided interest) with respect to which section 1254 costs have been incurred, a taxpayer may treat section 1254 costs as not relating to the transferred portion if the transferred portion does not include any part of any deposit with respect to which the costs were incurred.

(iii) *Undivided interest.* Upon the transfer of an undivided interest in a natural resource recapture property with respect to which section 1254 costs have been incurred, a taxpayer may treat costs as not relating to the transferred interest if the undivided interest is an undivided interest in a portion of the natural resource recapture property, and the portion would be eligible for the alternative allocation rule under paragraph (c)(3)(ii) of this section.

(iv) *Substantiation.* If a taxpayer treats section 1254 costs incurred with respect to a natural resource recapture property as not relating to a transferred interest in a portion of the property, the taxpayer must indicate on his or her tax return that the costs do not relate to the transferred portion and maintain the records and supporting evidence that substantiate this position.

(d) *Installment method.* Gain from a disposition to which section 1254(a)(1) applies is reported on the installment method if that method otherwise applies under section 453 or 453A of the Internal Revenue Code and the regulations thereunder. The portion of each installment payment as reported that represents income (other than interest) is treated as gain to which section 1254(a)(1) applies until all of the gain (to which section 1254(a)(1) applies) has been reported, and the remaining portion (if any) of the income is then treated as gain to which section 1254(a)(1) does not apply. For treatment of amounts as interest on certain deferred payments, see sections 483, 1274, and the regulations thereunder.

[T.D. 8586, 60 FR 2502, Jan. 10, 1995]

§ 1.1254-2 Exceptions and limitations.

(a) *Exception for gifts and section 1041 transfers—(1) General rule.* No gain is recognized under section 1254(a)(1) upon a disposition of natural resource recapture property by a gift or by a transfer in which no gain or loss is recognized pursuant to section 1041 (relating to transfers between spouses). For purposes of this paragraph (a), the term *gift* means, except to the extent that paragraph (a)(2) of this section applies, a transfer of natural resource recapture property that, in the hands of the transferee, has a basis determined under the provisions of sections 1015 (a) or (d) (relating to basis of property acquired by gift). For rules concerning the potential reduction in the amount of the charitable contribution in the case of natural resource recapture property, see section 170(e) and § 1.170A-4. See § 1.1254-3(b)(1) for determination of potential recapture of section 1254 costs on property acquired by gift. See § 1.1254-1 (c)(1)(ii) and (c)(2)(ii) for apportionment of section 1254 costs on a gift of a portion of natural resource recapture property.

(2) *Part gift transactions.* If a disposition of natural resource recapture property is in part a sale or exchange and in part a gift, the gain that is treated as ordinary income pursuant to section 1254(a)(1) is the lower of the section 1254 costs with respect to the property or the excess of the amount realized upon the disposition of the

property over the adjusted basis of the property. In the case of a transfer subject to section 1011(b) (relating to bargain sales to charitable organizations), the adjusted basis for purposes of the preceding sentence is the adjusted basis for determining gain or loss under section 1011(b).

(b) *Exception for transfers at death.* Except as provided in section 691 (relating to income in respect of a decedent), no gain is recognized under section 1254(a)(1) upon a transfer at death. For purposes of this paragraph, the term *transfer at death* means a transfer of natural resource recapture property that, in the hands of the transferee, has a basis determined under the provisions of section 1014(a) (relating to basis of property acquired from a decedent) because of the death of the transferor. See § 1.1254-3 (a)(4) and (c) for the determination of potential recapture of section 1254 costs on property acquired in a transfer at death.

(c) *Limitation for certain tax-free transactions—(1) General rule.* Upon a transfer of property described in paragraph (c)(3) of this section, the amount of gain treated as ordinary income by the transferor under section 1254(a)(1) may not exceed the amount of gain recognized to the transferor on the transfer (determined without regard to section 1254). In the case of a transfer of both natural resource recapture property and property that is not natural resource recapture property in one transaction, the amount realized from the disposition of the natural resource recapture property is deemed to be equal to the amount that bears the same ratio to the total amount realized as the fair market value of the natural resource recapture property bears to the aggregate fair market value of all the property transferred. The preceding sentence is applied solely for purposes of computing the portion of the total gain (determined without regard to section 1254) that may be recognized as ordinary income under section 1254(a)(1).

(2) *Special rule for dispositions to certain tax-exempt organizations.* Paragraph (c)(1) of this section does not apply to a disposition of natural resource recapture property to an organization (other than a cooperative described in section