

Public Law 109–125
109th Congress

An Act

Dec. 7, 2005
[H.R. 584]

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to recruit volunteers to assist with, or facilitate, the activities of various agencies and offices of the Department of the Interior.

Department of
the Interior
Volunteer
Recruitment Act
of 2005.
43 USC 1451
note.
43 USC 1475b
note.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Department of the Interior Volunteer Recruitment Act of 2005”.

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to recruit and use volunteers to assist with, or facilitate, the programs of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the United States Geological Survey, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the Office of the Secretary.

43 USC 1475b.

SEC. 3. VOLUNTEER AUTHORITY.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of the Interior may recruit, train, and accept, without regard to the civil service classification laws, rules, or regulations, the services of individuals, contributed without compensation as volunteers, for aiding in or facilitating the activities administered by the Secretary through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the United States Geological Survey, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the Office of the Secretary.

(b) **RESTRICTIONS ON ACTIVITIES OF VOLUNTEERS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In accepting such services of individuals as volunteers, the Secretary shall not permit the use of volunteers in law enforcement work, in regulatory and enforcement work, in policymaking processes, or to displace any employee.

(2) **PRIVATE PROPERTY.**—No volunteer services authorized by this Act may be conducted on private property unless the officer or employee charged with supervising the volunteer obtains appropriate consent to enter the property from the property owner.

(3) **HAZARDOUS DUTY.**—The Secretary may accept the services of individuals in hazardous duty only upon a determination by the Secretary that such individuals are skilled in performing hazardous duty activities.

(4) **SUPERVISION.**—The Secretary shall ensure that an appropriate officer or employee of the United States provides adequate and appropriate supervision of each volunteer whose services the Secretary accepts.

(c) **PROVISION OF SERVICES AND COSTS.**—The Secretary may provide for services and costs incidental to the utilization of volunteers, including transportation, supplies, uniforms, lodging, subsistence (without regard to place of residence), recruiting, training, supervision, and awards and recognition (including nominal cash awards).

(d) **FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF VOLUNTEERS.**—

(1) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, a volunteer shall not be deemed a Federal employee and shall not be subject to the provisions of law relating to Federal employment, including those provisions relating to hours of work, rates of compensation, leave, unemployment compensation, and Federal employee benefits.

(2) Volunteers shall be deemed employees of the United States for the purposes of—

(A) the tort claims provisions of title 28, United States Code;

(B) subchapter I of chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code; and

(C) claims relating to damage to, or loss of, personal property of a volunteer incident to volunteer service, in which case the provisions of section 3721 of title 31, United States Code, shall apply.

(3) Volunteers under this Act shall be subject to chapter 11 of title 18, United States Code, unless the Secretary, with the concurrence of the Director of the Office of Government Ethics, determines in writing published in the Federal Register that the provisions of that chapter, except section 201, shall not apply to the actions of a class or classes of volunteers who carry out only those duties or functions specified in the determination.

Federal Register,
publication.

Approved December 7, 2005.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 584:

SENATE REPORTS: No. 109–156 (Comm. on Energy and Natural Resources).
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 151 (2005):

Mar. 14, considered and passed House.

Nov. 16, considered and passed Senate.