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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Applying for or Renewing a Special Land Use Permit for Mineral Exploration on Arizona State Trust Land

The Arizona State Land Department (Department) encourages all prospective applicants to review these frequently asked questions (FAQs) prior to applying for or renewing a Special Land Use Permit (SLUP) for mineral exploration. The FAQs are only intended to provide guidance and are not intended to provide legal or technical advice. A meeting may be scheduled with the Department to answer questions regarding applying for or renewing a SLUP for mineral exploration.

1. When do I need a SLUP for mineral exploration on Arizona State Trust Land (STL)?

A SLUP for mineral exploration is needed for the following reasons:

- To conduct split estate exploration work (i.e., the Department only owns the surface estate, the subsurface mineral estate is owned by another entity).
- To obtain access to other STL.
- To conduct certain types of exploration or mining related activities (i.e., long-term groundwater monitoring, etc.).
- To conduct certain surface geophysical surveys on Mineral Exploration Permits (MEPs) that have a requirement to place the power source a distance away from the location of the survey.

2. What steps are necessary for pursuing a SLUP for mineral exploration?

- **Step 1:** Make an in-person appointment with the Department's Public Records Section, either online or by telephone, to determine if the section of interest is available.
- **Step 2:** If the section is available, visit the "*ASLD Community Portal*" on the Department's website, www.land.az.gov, and create an account, or log into an existing account if one has already been established.
- **Step 3:** Select "*Special Land Use Permit*" and follow the prompts.
- **Step 4:** Using the Salesforce Map to choose the section(s), modify the legal description (using the Public Land Survey System (PLSS)) and acreage to conform to the map discussed below.
- **Step 5:** Submit a U.S.G.S. topographic map that includes, at a minimum, the following information:
 - A north Arrow
 - Map Scale
 - SLUP boundary
 - Ingress and egress routes and other roads
 - Water sources
 - Other structures, such as residences, utilities, old mine workings, etc.
- **Step 6:** Depending on the purpose of the SLUP, documentation of proof of control of the subsurface mineral estate, either through a federal mining claim or an agreement with the owner of the private mineral estate, may need to be submitted.
- **Step 7:** The \$300.00 application fee must be submitted.

3. What are the fees and costs associated with a SLUP for mineral exploration?

The fees and costs for a SLUP for mineral exploration include the following direct (invoiced by the Department) and indirect (not invoiced by the Department) items:

- Direct
 - An application fee of \$300.00.
 - An annual rental fee of \$1,800.00.
 - A reclamation bond of \$3,000.00 per SLUP or a \$15,000.00 Blanket Bond covering five or more SLUPs and/or MEPs. The bond may be either cash, Certificate of Deposit, or Surety Bond.
 - Native plant fees if the proposed plan requires the removal or destruction of native plants
- Indirect
 - Cultural resource survey(s)
 - Native plant survey(s)
 - Insurance Requirements – See No. 8 below.

Arizona Administrative Code (A.A.C.) R12-5-1201

4. What kind of geologic investigation is considered “exploration activity” on a SLUP for mineral exploration?

Exploration activities include, but are not limited to:

- Geological mapping
- Surface and subsurface sampling, analysis and/or assaying
- Geophysical surveys
- Drilling wells (mineral exploration, monitoring, etc.)
- Groundwater monitoring (water level and water quality)

The above-list is non-exhaustive; exploration activities may be evaluated by the Department on a case-by-case basis.

5. Which commodities may be explored with a SLUP for mineral exploration?

The commodities that may be explored for under a SLUP for mineral exploration include but are not limited to:

- Base metals (copper, molybdenum, lead, etc.)
- Precious metals (gold, silver, etc.)
- Industrial minerals (salt, potash, lithium, gypsum, specialty clays, cement-grade limestone, etc.)
- Brines (salt, lithium, potash, etc.)
- Uranium
- Rare Earth Elements (cerium, lanthanum, neodymium, praseodymium, yttrium, etc.)
- Lithium
- Semi-precious gems (fire agate, etc.)
- Zeolites (chabazite, etc.)

Other commodity types, including oil & gas, geothermal, and aggregate type material (e.g., sand and gravel, boulders, etc.), require a SLUP with additional requirements.

6. How much acreage can be included in a SLUP for mineral exploration?

The minimum acreage for a SLUP for mineral exploration is determined by the associated mineral right, either federal (typically BLM) or private. Depending on the surface use, greater than five sections may be

allowable under a SLUP for mineral exploration. For additional clarification, please contact the Minerals Section at ms@azland.gov prior to submitting an application for large acreages.

7. How do I get started with exploration activities under a SLUP for mineral exploration?

Prior to initiating any exploration or any other ground disturbing activity, a Geologic Field Operations Plan (GFOP) must be submitted for review and approval by the Department. For additional information about GFOPs, please see *Frequently Asked Questions Geologic Field Operations Plan*.

8. What are the insurance requirements for a SLUP for mineral exploration?

The insurance and indemnification requirements are set by the State through the Arizona Department of Administration and are not negotiable. For all permit and lease insurance requirements, please see the FAQs for *“Insurance Requirements”*.

9. How long is a SLUP for mineral exploration valid for?

A SLUP is issued for an initial term of two (2) years.

A.A.C. R12-5-1101.4

10. Can a SLUP for mineral exploration be renewed?

Yes, if additional time is required a SLUP for mineral exploration can be renewed for a term no greater than five years. A renewal application fee of \$300.00 must be paid.

11. What happens if I do not renew a SLUP for mineral exploration?

The SLUP for mineral exploration automatically expires at the end of its term.

12. If the SLUP for mineral exploration expires, what happens to the reclamation bond?

The reclamation bond will be held by the Department until it has been determined that all ground disturbing work has been reclaimed. If the permitted area has been reclaimed, the reclamation bond will be released. If the permitted area has not been reclaimed, the Department may pursue reclamation using the posted reclamation bond.