

Comment.—It is recognized that the spirit of the foregoing objective and the tenor of the Act,² necessitate seeking to assure fairness and equity in the administration of the public lands, including both (1) disposition of lands or their resources, and (2) the management of lands and their resources when lands are retained in Federal Government ownership.

II. METHODS OF OPERATION

The Act sets forth some of the means by which the Commission is to accomplish its objective. For convenience, these are broken down into two categories: (1) the broad overall requirements that the Commission must fulfill before formulating its recommendations; and (2) the specific actions required to be taken in carrying out the overall mandate.

In addition, we have other actions, not specifically set forth in the law, that are necessary for the comprehensive review essential for the foundation on which the Commission's conclusions and recommendations will be based.

A. OVERALL REQUIREMENTS

1. Review each of the public land laws now in existence and the relationship of each to the others. The declaration of purpose of the Act³ cites as a basic reason for the establishment of the Commission the fact that "the public land laws of the United States have developed over a long period of years through a series of Acts of Congress which are not fully correlated with each other * * *." Now, for the first time, all the acts that comprise the public land laws of the United States will be brought before one group for review.

2. Review the public land laws to determine their adequacy to meet the current and future needs of the American people in terms of the policy declaration in the Act, that the public lands of the United States shall be retained and managed or disposed of in a manner to provide maximum benefit for the general public.

Comment.—The Declaration of Purpose⁴ of the Act states that the public land laws, "or some of them, may be inadequate to meet the current and future needs of the American people," and that for this and other reasons stated therein (and set forth in subpar. 1 above and subpar. 3 below), "it is necessary to have a comprehensive review of the public land laws."

3. Identify and evaluate the division of the administration of public lands and the laws relating thereto among several agencies of the Federal Government. The Act states⁵ this is one of the reasons for the review being undertaken by the Public Land Law Review Commission.

Comment.—Now, for the first time, there has been established an organizational structure, with participation from both the Legislative and Executive branches, that will be in a position to review the administration by the various departments and agencies involved and the rules and regulations promulgated under

² Secs. 2 and 4.

³ Sec. 2.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.