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MINE Update

MINING INDUSTRY NEWS E-COMM UPDATE

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This Week in The News

EDITOR'S NOTE: The National Mining Association's (NMA) *COVID-19 Update* is now the *Mining Industry News E-Comm Update* – or *MINE Update*. With less immediate fast-turn news around the pandemic, we are transitioning to a regular weekly update on the association's advocacy work. Moving forward, this weekly *MINE Update* will replace the *Coal Advocacy Report (CAR)*, *Minerals Advocacy Report (MAR)* and *Mining Month* newsletters that were distributed on a monthly basis prior to the onset of the pandemic.

A Senate vote to pass a continuing resolution that avoids a government shutdown is expected today even as Senate leaders map a course to confirm Amy Coney Barrett to the U.S. Supreme Court before the November elections. With the House expected to conclude business this week until after the elections, last minute negotiations over additional pandemic economic response legislation continue to sputter. With the election near, the NMA's efforts to advance mining's interests with congressional committees and federal agencies continues. Plus we have updates on the economy and how energy and mining markets are faring.

Safety Share

Harvard University maintains a comprehensive library of [free occupational safety resources](#) including fact sheets, checklists and toolbox talks on a wide variety of subjects.

House Passes Energy Package

Late last week, the House passed a broad energy package that seeks to boost spending and secure new demonstration projects for a host of clean energy technologies through Department of Energy (DOE) research and development. The House approved [H.R. 4447](#), the "Clean Energy and Jobs Innovation Act," in a [220-185](#) vote. The legislation includes several amendments that promote the development of carbon capture technology. It also includes the NMA-supported provisions found in the Critical Materials Caucus Co-Chair Eric Swalwell's (D-CA) "Securing Energy Critical Elements and American Jobs Act of

2019," which would authorize DOE to carry out the Energy Critical Materials (ECM) program for the purposes of research, development, demonstration and commercial application to assure the long-term, secure and sustainable supply of ECMs to satisfy U.S. national and economic security. NMA's memo with more [details on the package can be found here](#). The bill now heads to the Senate, where lawmakers are attempting to pass their own energy bill, which includes the bipartisan American Mineral Security Act.



House Launches Critical Materials Caucus with NMA

Last Thursday, House Critical Materials Caucus Co-Chairs Rep. Eric Swalwell (D-CA) and Rep. Guy Reschenthaler (R-PA) held a virtual launch event to discuss the need to reduce our nation's dependence on foreign sources of critical minerals and rare earth elements. To watch a recording of the virtual event and receive copies of the presentations, please [find a link here](#). Later this week the two members will join NMA's event discussing "Reinventing Our Domestic Minerals Supply Chain in a Post-Pandemic World," held in coordination with RealClearPolitics. To watch a recording of this virtual event, please find a link [here](#).



FPISC Advances Mining's Designation as FAST-41-Covered Sector

Earlier this year, the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council (FPISC) [voted](#) to add non-energy mining to the list of covered sectors eligible for the expedited permitting process available under section 41 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST-41). To address concerns raised by White House counsel, last week FPISC [submitted a proposed rule](#) for Office of Management and Budget (OMB) review that would codify that vote. Enacted in 2015, FAST-41 created FPISC to improve the timeliness, predictability, and transparency of the federal environmental review and authorization process for covered infrastructure projects. Improving our nation's infrastructure will increase access to raw materials made available through domestic mining and is an important step to addressing permitting delays targeting the mining industry. NMA is working to ensure quick interagency review and advocating for a 30-day comment period to allow finalization of the rule by the end of 2020 or very early 2021.

House China Task Force Releases Report and Recommendations

Today, the House China Task Force released its long-anticipated [report](#) detailing a legislative strategy and policy recommendations to address China's growing influence in the U.S. economy. The report correctly acknowledges that China controls the bulk of the global supply of critical and strategic minerals, and the vital nature of these resources for America's economic and national security. The report goes on to make several recommendations related to mineral and supply chain security, including the reference that "Congress and the administration must remove regulatory barriers to domestic mining, in part to ensure a sufficient domestic supply of critical minerals and rare earth elements for multiple applications, including renewable energy infrastructure, electric vehicles, and telecommunications equipment." The report also supports efforts to strengthen our nation's supply chain security by urging the overhaul of "the federal permitting process for mineral development and prioritizing advancements in mineral refining." NMA will leverage the report and its recommendations to support advocacy efforts related to minerals permitting reform.

New House COVID-19 Legislation Introduced

This week, the U.S. House Democratic leadership released a new COVID-19 relief bill. The \$2.2 trillion bill is being offered as an alternative to the House-passed [HEROES Act](#) and to respond to requests from some House Democratic members to have a new relief bill to vote on prior to the November elections. House leadership released a [summary](#) of the new bill, also called the HEROES Act. Also available is the [legislative text](#) and [one pager](#). Expect a partisan vote on this bill later this week if an agreement is not reached between the administration and House Democratic leadership on a further COVID-19 relief package.

House Boundary Waters Markup

Today, the House Natural Resources Committee held a full committee markup on 19 pieces of legislation, including Rep. Betty McCollum's "Boundary Waters Wilderness Protection and Pollution Prevention Act" ([H.R. 5598](#)), which would reinstate a nearly 240,000 acre mineral withdrawal in Northern Minnesota initiated in the waning days of the Obama administration and rescinded by President Trump. The mineral withdrawal, focused on stopping the Twin Metals Project, would sterilize future mineral development in an area that has depended on – and supported – mining for more than a century. NMA has continued to express opposition to a withdrawal and to H.R. 5598. NMA's letter of opposition to the bill can be found [HERE](#).

Rep. Barr Highlights Coal to Rare Earths Legislation

Congressman Andy Barr's office this week issued a [press release](#) highlighting his recently-introduced H.R. 8198, the National Security Through America's Resources and Permitting Reform Act of 2020, which aims to spur U.S. domestic mineral production amid a serious shortage and overdependence on China utilizing coal. The bill aims to support the domestic production of rare-earth elements, critical minerals and carbon, which are used in advanced technology, clean energy development and military equipment such as the F-35 fighter aircraft. NMA's Rich Nolan is quoted in the press release.

Upcoming Board Meeting

NMA's Fall Board of Directors and Annual Members Meeting will be held **October 6 - 8, 2020**, as a virtual meeting. Confirmed speakers for the General Session on Tuesday, October 6 are:

- Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon
- White House Council on Environmental Quality Chair Mary Neumayr
- The Honorable Steve Daines (R-MT)
- The Honorable Daniel Cameron, Attorney General of Kentucky

The Mineral and Coal CEO meetings will be held the afternoon of Wednesday, October 7, and the Board of Directors and Annual Members Meeting will be the afternoon of Thursday, October 8. A preliminary agenda, registration and sponsorship information [are available here](#). Please note that only individuals who register for each meeting will receive meeting information and be permitted access to each session. [Sponsorships](#) have been very popular with one opportunity remaining as a meeting sponsor.

NMA and Third-Party Voices

The NMA and its third parties continue to work with media and place editorials across the country on the importance of our industry to the country and economy.

Rich Nolan is quoted in a [Politico](#) story on the Trump administration and coal, highlighting the important role that the regulatory reset had in stopping the significant declines that began with the regulatory overreach of the prior administration.

[WTVQ](#) quotes Rich Nolan in its coverage of Rep. Andy Barr's National Security Through America's Resources and Permitting Reform Act of 2020, which would support the use of coal to offset an over-dependence on certain minerals from China.

[The Washington Examiner](#) quotes NMA in its coverage of the China Task Force report.

[E&E Daily](#) highlights NMA as one of the supporters of legislation to codify President Trump's rewrite of National Environmental Policy Act rules.

[The Washington Examiner](#) (DC) carries an op-ed by Mackubin Owens, senior national security fellow of the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia, in which he argues

that the U.S. must reinvigorate U.S. mining and material supply chains in order to confront China's industrial ambitions.

[Inside Sources](#) (DC) carries an op-ed by James Clad, former U.S. deputy assistant secretary of defense for Asia, in which he argues that the minerals industry must be reshored in order to stand up against China.

The [Arizona Capitol Times](#) (AZ) carries an op-ed by Michael Stumo, CEO for the Coalition for a Prosperous America, in which he argues if Congress is serious about bolstering our national and economic security, it must prioritize the rebuilding of the key industries of minerals and metals mining.

[The Eastern New Mexico News](#) (NM) carries an op-ed by Jim Constantopoulos, a geology professor at Eastern New Mexico University, in which he argues that rebuilding the American mining and mineral processing sectors will achieve supply chain security and go far in confronting the immense geopolitical and economic leverage Beijing has worked tirelessly to cultivate.

Energy and Mining News

Argus Coal News (subscription) reported on recent Virginia Maritime Administration data for August showing Hampton Roads shipments down nearly 43 percent likely due to a combination of temporary port closures in response to hurricane Isaias and lower demand for coal overseas as consuming countries experience an economic downturn related to the Coronavirus.

[Reuters reports on the International Energy Agency's analysis](#) on the importance of carbon capture arguing that "a sharp rise in the deployment of carbon capture, utilization and storage (CCUS) technology is needed globally if countries are to meet net-zero emissions targets designed to slow climate change."

[The World Steel Association's latest steel production report](#) shows “world crude steel production for the 64 countries reporting to the World Steel Association was 156.2 million metric tons in August 2020, a 0.6% increase compared to August 2019.”

The Wall Street Journal reported this year ranks as one of the [best on record](#) for investors in gold.

[The International Copper Study Group \(ICSG\)](#) reported that world copper mine production declined by 1% in the first half of 2020. ICSG also noted that “world mine production is estimated to have declined by 4% in April-May as these two months were the most affected by the COVID-19 related global lockdown that resulted in temporary mine shutdowns/reduced production levels. However, world mine production started to recover in May as lockdown measures eased and June output reached the same level as June 2019.”

[Reuters reported](#) on the recently released annual World Nuclear Industry Status Report indicating that the number of nuclear reactor units operating globally is at a 30-year low, while new plants struggle for investment. The report notes, “Some 408 nuclear reactors were in operation in 31 countries as of July 2020, a decline of 9 units from mid-2019 and 30 fewer than the 2002 peak of 438.”

[Mining.com](#) reported that metal mining and material supply could be a constraint in producing a \$25,000 Tesla that drives itself.

[Northern Miner](#) reported on analysis by financial services group, Raymond James, that indicates it is forecasting “higher average prices for copper, nickel



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