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MINE Update
MINING INDUSTRY NEWS E-COMM UPDATE

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This Week in The News

With one week remaining until the inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden and with Democrats assuming majority control in the U.S. Senate, the situation in our nation's capital remains tense. Following last week's attack on the U.S. Capitol, the House of Representatives today voted to impeach President Donald Trump. With Biden administration appointees poised to begin filling executive branch positions immediately, the National Mining Association (NMA) remains focused on actively engaging to advance mining's interests at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue. Plus we have updates on how mining and energy markets are faring.

Safety Share

Here are [five questions to ask](#) before adopting a vaccine policy for your company.

NMA Condemns Violence at the U.S. Capitol, Urges Peaceful Transfer of Power

The NMA last week [issued a statement on the horrific violence at the U.S. Capitol](#), and this morning [issued a statement on next week's Inauguration, urging a peaceful transfer of power](#). The brief statement on the attack on the Capitol was issued even as events were still unfolding and was distributed immediately across the NMA's social channels to journalists and others.

Mining Workforce Provisions in COVID Package

The bipartisan spending [deal](#) recently passed by Congress included strong NMA-backed workforce provisions designed to ensure the hardrock mining industry is developing future generations of skilled, technically-trained, domestic workers to cover all aspects of industry functions from forecasting and analysis to exploration and production. The workforce assessment and curriculum study required under Sec. 7002 (k) will provide a strong path forward to ensuring the hardrock industry has workers with the necessary skillsets and education required to continue advancing modern mining techniques and technologies. For more detailed information on the workforce provisions, please find a link to the NMA's memo [here](#). The NMA has begun to engage with the National Academy of Sciences to collaborate on implementation of their work and research. The NMA will also be a resource to the Department of Labor (DOL) and Department of the Interior (DOI) as they begin their analysis and work to ensure that specified deadlines are met to provide relevant congressional committees with necessary data required by the legislation.

DOE Loans for Critical Minerals Projects

In early December, the Department of Energy (DOE) issued new [guidance](#) directing the agency's [Loan Program Office](#) (LPO) to “interpret the Title XVII Program and the Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing (ATVM) Program broadly to encourage applications from potential projects involving the production, manufacture, recycling, processing, recovery, or reuse of Critical Minerals and other minerals.” Please find the NMA’s memo on the guidance [here](#). Following the issuance, the NMA team and interested member companies held a conference call with LPO Senior Advisor John Lushetsky to discuss how potential minerals projects might qualify under Title XVII and the ATVM programs and what steps must be taken to initiate the process. In continued conversations with Mr. Lushetsky, a career official, he stated that possible policy changes to the LPO’s guidance in the Biden administration are unknown at this time but that critical minerals will continue to be an area of interest to the new administration. In addition, the \$40 billion in unspent DOE loan authority provided under the 2009 stimulus package remains available to the Title XVII and the ATVM programs making qualified critical minerals projects eligible. The NMA will continue to work with DOE to support access to lending capacity in the next administration.

EPA Finalizes Significant Contribution Finding Under the Clean Air Act Section 111(b)

Today the U.S. EPA issued what was expected to be a long-awaited final [rule](#) to provide more flexible emission standards for new and modified coal fired power plants and the elimination of the Obama era conclusion that partial carbon capture and storage (CCS) was the best system of emission reduction for such plants. Instead, the rule retains the existing standard and CCS requirement and finalizes an issue only addressed in a footnote in the proposed rule: significant contribution finding (SCF) for purposes of regulating source categories for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, under section 111(b) of the Clean

Air Act (CAA) for electric generating units (EGUs). Pursuant to the rule, EPA articulates a framework under which source categories are considered to contribute significantly to dangerous air pollution due to their GHG emissions if the amount of those emissions exceeds 3 percent of total U.S. GHG emissions. The final rule notes that only EGUs currently meet the SCF but that oil and gas production and processing GHG emissions are very close to that 3 percent value.

NMA's Rich Nolan Addresses West Virginia Coal Association

On Tuesday, the NMA's President and CEO, Rich Nolan, addressed the West Virginia Coal Association at its Annual Mining Symposium. Speaking just after Senators Shelley Moore Capito and Joe Manchin, Mr. Nolan discussed the challenges that lie ahead as well as opportunities for bipartisan cooperation on our agenda. The full text of his remarks can be found [here](#).

NMA and Third-Party Voices

Rich Nolan is quoted in a Reuters story that was picked up by [Mining.com](#), [KFGO](#) and [News 18](#) on mining regulations and actions being taken by the administration in its final days before leaving office this month.

The NMA's Katie Sweeney is quoted in an [E&E Greenwire](#) story on FAST-41.

The NMA is quoted in a [S&P Global](#) story on the U.S. coal sector and challenges that may lie ahead on the political front under a Biden presidency and a U.S. Congress controlled by Democrats.

Mining and Energy News

The Guardian published: “Green economy plans fuel new [metals and energy 'supercycle.'](#)”

[Reuters reported](#) that Goldman Sachs believes there may be a pending commodity supercycle post COVID-19.

[The U.S. Geological Survey reported on 3rd quarter production data](#) for 14 selected mineral commodities noting that construction materials production was up 7.9%, base metals production was up mostly, and precious metals production results mixed with gold down 3% and silver up 22%.

[E&E News reported on EIA's recent Quarterly Coal Report](#) data indicating that the coal industry rebounded in the third quarter of last year - a 18% increase over the previous quarter.

[S&P Global](#) reported on EIA's latest weekly coal production [numbers](#) for week-ended January 2 showing coal production increased 12.5% from the previous week, noting that “weekly production across all four major basin jumped week on week, led by Wyoming and Montana joint output.”

Coal exports from Hampton Roads reached a [four-month high](#) in November.

S&P Global published: “Weak U.S. [thermal coal export recovery](#) projected in 2021 with weak Atlantic Basin demand.”

EIA reported wholesale electricity prices were generally [lower and less volatile](#) in 2020 than 2019.

The State of Utah [joined in a lawsuit](#) against a California port city attempting to block coal exports.

[Argus Media reported](#) that coal-based generation in the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) rose on a year-over-year basis in December for only the second time in all of 2020, as nuclear and natural gas power slipped.

[Argus Media](#) reported that U.S. thermal coal exports rose in November.



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