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MINE Update
MINING INDUSTRY NEWS E-COMM UPDATE

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Brought to you by the National Mining Association

This Week in The News

The Senate is rushing to bring what appears to be a late breaking bipartisan infrastructure agreement to the Senate floor this evening with the final text of the bill yet to be made public. While House members are scheduled to fly home Friday to commence an extra-long August recess, expectations are growing that the break may be cut short. 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 the mining and energy markets are faring.

Safety Share

A Black & Veatch safety video provides a graphic demonstration of the [effectiveness of hard hats](#).

House Oversight Hearing on the Mining Law



Yesterday, the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Minerals Resources held an oversight hearing on mining law. A YouTube replay of the hearing and all the testimony offered may be found [here](#). Although the title of the subcommittee hearing was, “The Toxic Legacy of the Mining Law of 1872,” Majority Committee leadership released two Government Accountability Office reports evaluating [mining regulation](#) and [leasing processes](#) among other countries and states. The NMA and its member companies helped the committee secure two witnesses, [Debra Struhsacker](#), co-founder of the Women’s Mining Coalition, and [Jim Cress](#), partner with Bryan Cave, to represent

the mining industry. Both represented the industry's positions effectively, explaining continuing difficulties in federal permitting processes, the environmental work, financial assurances and bonding, royalty structures, the necessity of the claims system, among other topics. Trout Unlimited's (TU) witness, Lauren Duncan, offered examples of working with multiple industry stakeholders, including NMA members, in reclamation work and explained that industry has been a needed partner in TU's work and that additional streamlining would create more reclamation opportunities. The NMA also worked to ensure pro-mining allies on the subcommittee were able to strongly contribute to witness questioning and a thoughtful conversation on domestic mining. Through our social media platforms, the [NMA provided targeted information throughout the hearing](#) to better inform the public and reporters. For a full description of the hearing, witnesses, testimony, contributions from members on both sides of the aisle, see NMA's hearing memo [here](#).

NMA Meets with DOI's Tommy Beaudreau and Lara Daniel-Davis



This week, NMA President & CEO Rich Nolan and members of the senior team met with Department of the Interior (DOI) Deputy Secretary Tommy Beaudreau and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management on a variety of NMA

priorities ranging from permit timelines, new procedures the NMA secured in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, sage grouse and land withdrawals, critical minerals, and coal royalty reviews. The NMA offered to work with the Department in a variety of ways including best practices for consultations which Deputy Secretary Beaudreau identified as a priority and the interagency review evaluating mining regulations. However, the NMA also raised permitting timing concerns offering language enacted into law late last year setting 45-day clocks on Federal Register clearance process, acknowledging DOI headquarters review but reminding the DOI officials of the new timing in the law and offering to work towards its consistent implementation. DOI fully expects to be involved in assisting Congress in its review of the General Mining Law and related legislation. Regarding the department's next steps on sage grouse, Beaudreau indicated that the existing plans are under review and may be revised to address the latest science. Daniel Davis also indicated that DOI, as directed by a recent court decision, will determine next steps on the 10 million acres sage grouse habitat mineral withdrawal initiated in the Obama administration. Additionally, citing other priorities, the DOI officials indicated that revisiting coal royalties is a longer-term priority with an initial focus on oil and natural gas. The NMA will continue to work with the highest-level officials at DOI voicing concerns, offering to help best guide their priorities, and reaching more efficient and responsive permitting processes.

DOL Crafts Short-Term Strategic Plan

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) recently published its broad [strategic plan](#) (the Plan), which contains goals that agencies like the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) will strive to achieve over the 2022-2026 timeframe. The Plan states that OWCP is charged with providing workers' compensation benefits for workers who are injured or become ill on the job, and MSHA must work to prevent fatalities, disease and injury from mining, and secure safe and healthful working conditions for America's miners. The NMA has been actively engaged in opposing policies such as OWCP's planned increase in the costs associated with operator

self-insurance for liabilities under the Black Lung Benefits Act and supporting regulatory changes such as updating MSHA's standards for testing and approving permissible electrical equipment for use in underground mines. DOL asked for public comments, which must be submitted by August 6, 2021, and the NMA plans to give our perspectives.

Bipartisan Policy Center Hosts Critical Minerals Panel



Yesterday afternoon, the Bipartisan Policy Center worked closely with the NMA to host a [virtual panel](#) featuring Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-Ark.), U.S. Department of Energy Deputy Secretary David Turk, representatives from General Motors and the National Audubon Society, and Rio Tinto's Paramita Das, General Manager for Global Marketing and Development who spoke about Rio Tinto's sustainability goals, recycling, and production of critical minerals from byproducts and waste. If you missed the panel, it is available for replay on BPC's YouTube channel.

Met Coal Exports Increasing



U.S. mines have experienced a stark turnaround and boost in exports to China, reaching the highest level since 2013, [Bloomberg News reported on Thursday](#). According to Virginia-based metallurgical coal miner Coronado Global Resources Inc., the Frontier Unity bulk vessel left the port of Newport News with a 136,400-ton cargo bound for steelmakers in China, which was the biggest shipment of its kind from a U.S. east coast port.

EPA Announces its Intent to Revise 2020 Power Plant ELG Rule

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) this week announced its intent to revise the 2020 rule governing technology-based effluent limitations guidelines and standards (ELGs) for the steam electric power generating point source category. The NMA strongly supported EPA's 2020 changes to the regulations as necessary to address technical issues that prevented implementation of the 2015 rules, particularly as applied to two

waste streams: flue gas desulfurization wastewater and bottom ash transport water. Important for the mining industry, EPA plans to keep the 2020 rule in place rather than reverting to the Obama-era regulations as it undergoes the rulemaking process.

NMA and Third-Party Voices

The NMA's Katie Sweeney is quoted in [The Washington Post](#) on the Environmental Protection Agency's announcement that it will revisit requirements for how coal-fueled power plants dispose of wastewater.

The NMA is mentioned in an [Argus](#) report that leaders of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources have come to an agreement on extending abandoned mine land fees charged to producers, potentially clearing the way for collections to last beyond the end of the fiscal year.

The NMA is mentioned in a story from [JD Supra](#) on the U.S. House of Representatives passage of H.R. 2467, PFAS Action Act of 2021.

[Mining Magazine](#) reports global economic recovery starts with mining, and the heart of that recovery will be on display at MINExpo INTERNATIONAL® 2021.

From our third parties, [The Detroit News](#) (Mich.) carries an op-ed by Mark Perry, professor emeritus at the University of Michigan in Flint and a senior fellow at The American Enterprise Institute, in which he states coal provides an essential insurance policy to the energy grid.

Mining and Energy News

[**S&P Global reported**](#) on the auto industry's interest in investment and sourcing of lithium from U.S. geothermal brines.

[**Wood Mackenzie's recent analysis**](#) on commodities indicates that an industrial metals supercycle is on the horizon - metals needed to electrify society like cobalt, lithium, copper, nickel, and aluminum, with China dominating renewable value chains.

[**The International Copper Study Group's**](#) latest data [**release**](#) for July showed world copper mine production increased by 4 percent in the first four months of 2021, with concentrate production increasing by around 6 percent and solvent extraction-electrowinning (SX-EW) declining by about 4 percent. Production in the U.S. remained essentially unchanged, according to the release.

[**The Wall Street Journal reported**](#) that batteries have gotten a lot cheaper due to economies of scale, but rising commodity prices for raw materials like lithium and cobalt could upend that trend.

[**Mining Journal's recent uranium outlook**](#) report predicts new buying cycle growth in uranium in response to the improving outlook for nuclear power – particularly in the U.S. and Europe.

[**Politico Pro**](#) reported the U.S. defense industrial base should find a way to wean itself off of rare earth minerals from China, according to new recommendations from a bipartisan Congressional task force.

[**Reuters and others**](#) reported on a recent DOE energy employment [**report**](#) indicating that the energy industry lost 10 percent of its workforce in 2020.

[**Axios**](#) reported that environmental ministers from the G20 face a stark reality as they gather this week in Italy: Coal is proving quite resilient despite steep declines in some economies.

G20 environment ministers [**ended talks without agreeing**](#) to phase out domestic coal-fueled power generation and funding for such plants abroad.

Weekly U.S. [coal train loadings](#) averaged 81.3 trains per day in the week ended July 16, up 9.8 trains per day from the previous week and up 16.8 trains per day from the year-ago week.

[The Energy Information Administration's](#) recent *Today in Energy* [release](#) indicates that the heat wave in the Northwest U.S. in late June led to more regional demand for electricity use as people turned up their air conditioners, dehumidifiers, fans and other cooling equipment.

[E&E News reported](#) on recent air emissions benchmarking [analysis](#) showing that “U.S. power-sector carbon emissions had their largest year-over-year decline in more than 20 years, falling 10 percent between 2019 and 2020.”

[The World Steel Association's](#) latest steel report for July shows world steel production was 167.9 million metric tons (Mt) in June 2021, an 11.6 percent increase compared to June 2020.

[Bloomberg reported](#) that China's import ban on Australian coal is proving a boon to U.S. producers.

U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration announced \$300 million in new funding to support economic revitalization in [coal and energy communities](#). (A webinar describing [how to apply for funding](#) will be held August 5, 2021.)

Bloomberg reported natural gas futures soared to [\\$4 per million BTU](#) for the first time since December 2018.

U.S. Energy Information Administration showed summer natural gas prices are the [highest since 2014](#).

After an [E&E News story](#) about a leaked document, President Biden's administration

[released draft guidance](#) for how federal agencies will be expected to administer environmental justice policies.



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