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# MINE Update

MINING INDUSTRY NEWS E-COMM UPDATE

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## This Week in The News



President Donald Trump began his second term with a barrage of executive orders as the Senate moved on the confirmation process for some of his Cabinet nominees. 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.

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## Safety Share

The National Weather Service has [cold weather safety tips](#). You know why we need them.

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## NMA Hosts Inaugural Reception



Monday, January 20 was cold in D.C. but the NMA's offices were warm. NMA members and their families joined together for an inauguration watch party at the NMA headquarters where guests were treated to a front row seat for the

arrival by motorcade of President Donald J. Trump and Vice President JD Vance at the Capitol for their swearing in. The NMA offices shook from the cannon fire of the 21-gun salute after President Trump took office. Guests also got to see former President Joe Biden's final ride on Marine One as it crested the Capitol headed for Joint Base Andrews.





## Swift Executive Actions on Mining Industry Priorities

On Monday, following his swearing-in, President Trump's White House released a memorandum detailing the priorities for the Trump administration. In the memo, President Trump made clear that his administration will rescind harmful regulations on energy production and mining. Please find a link to the NMA's memo on the White House priorities [here](#). Specifically, the memorandum states that "the President will unleash American Energy by ending Biden's policies of climate extremism, streamline permitting, and reviewing for rescission all regulations that impose undue burdens on energy production and use, including mining and processing of non-fuel minerals." Following the priorities memo, President Trump signed **26 executive orders (EOs) and other presidential memoranda**, many of which will have a positive impact on mining and energy development priorities. These EOs and executive actions provide new opportunities for NMA members on priority regulatory and permitting issues. The NMA memo summarizing the energy executive order and actions can be found [here](#). In addition, the NMA team will continue to

review the President's actions and will communicate updates, including a forthcoming review of the regulatory freeze and rescission of prior executive orders and actions.

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## Senate ENR Holds Confirmation Hearing on Nominee for DOI Secretary



Last Thursday, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee held a hearing to consider the nomination of North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum to be Secretary of the Interior. Prior to becoming Governor, Burgum was the CEO of a North Dakota-based software company and also founded a real estate development firm and a venture capital firm. Please find a link to the hearing [here](#), a link to the Governor's written testimony [here](#), and a link to the NMA's memo on the hearing [here](#). In his responses to Senators on the committee, Governor Burgum highlighted his desire to produce domestic energy and mineral resources "cleaner, smarter and safer than anywhere in the world" while seeking to create balance between protecting public lands and developing our nation's resources.

Ahead of the hearing, the NMA worked with committee staff and member offices to provide questions for the nominees related to NMA priorities including energy reliability and affordability, energy and mineral development on federal lands, permitting reforms, as well as the prioritization of domestic mining projects and supply chains. The NMA also sent a letter to the committee in support of Governor Burgum's (linked [here](#)) confirmation by the committee. The committee is scheduled to hold its markup on both Burgum and Chris Wright's nomination to be Secretary of Energy [tomorrow morning](#).

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## **New NMA Polling: Americans Want Support for Domestic Mining and a Reversal of Biden Power Plant Overreach**

New polling conducted by Maru Public Opinion for the NMA shows Americans want a course correction on overregulation and more focus on domestic sourcing for minerals. The polling, conducted January 14-15, 2025, of 1,553 Americans, found:

- Eighty-eight percent of Americans believe the United States should utilize a comprehensive energy strategy that includes a diverse mix of fuels including natural gas, coal, renewables and nuclear power; just 12 percent disagree (8 percent somewhat and just 4 percent strongly).
- Half of Americans (51 percent) believe the Trump administration should withdraw the EPA's power plant regulations to allow coal plants to continue operating until sufficient replacement capacity has been built and is brought online; just 25 percent oppose.

- Seventy percent of Americans want the U.S. to ramp up domestic minerals production to reduce our reliance on China; just 12 percent oppose.

See the press release [here](#).

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## EPW Schedules Markup on Lee Zeldin for EPA Administrator



The Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee will hold a markup Thursday morning on the nomination of former Congressman Lee Zeldin to be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Zeldin, who served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 2013 to 2023 and was the Republican nominee for governor of New York in 2022, participated in a hearing last week (a link to the NMA's memo on the hearing can be found [here](#)) where he emphasized his commitment to bipartisan collaboration and the "rule of law." He pledged to address pressing environmental and health

issues with a focus on their economic impacts and compliance.

Ahead of the hearing, the NMA worked with committee staff and member offices to provide questions for the nominees related to NMA priorities including energy reliability and affordability. In addition, the NMA submitted a [letter of support](#) to EPW Senators for Zeldin, highlighting the significance of his leadership for energy reliability, domestic mineral development, and economic growth.

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## Senate ENR Chairman Mike Lee Attends a Fundraiser Lunch at NMA Office



Last Thursday, MINEPAC, COALPAC, Coeur Mining, Inc. PAC, Freeport-McMoRan Inc. Citizenship Committee, Peabody Energy PAC, Rio Tinto America Inc. PAC, and Vern Lund, CEO, NTEC, sponsored a fundraising lunch for the new Chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources (ENR) Committee, Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah). Sen. Lee was previously the Ranking Member of the Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining in the 118th Congress. Accompanying the Chairman for the event were

his Chief of Staff, Mark Wait; his State Director, Justin Anthony; and the Republican Staff Director for Senate ENR, Wendy Baig. Sen. Lee and his staff fielded various questions and asked for input on mining-related from the lunch guests. The lunch attendees were fortunate enough to spend over two hours with the Chairman and his staff who all showed a keen interest in mining and energy development and its importance to the U.S. economy.

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## Mark Christie Appointed Chair of FERC



Following his swearing-in, President Trump appointed Commissioner Mark Christie as Chair of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), succeeding Willie Phillips. Christie, a former Virginia utility regulator and FERC Commissioner since 2021, is known for his focus on grid reliability and affordable power, particularly in coal-reliant regions. Christie has been a vocal advocate for addressing the challenges of declining dispatchable power sources, such as coal, essential for meeting base-load demand. His appointment is expected to bring a pragmatic approach to balancing grid stability with growing electricity demands. Christie's close relationship with Rep. Morgan Griffith (R-Va.), Energy and Commerce Environment

Subcommittee Chair and Congressional Coal Caucus Co-chair, may further influence FERC's priorities, particularly regarding coal-fired generation and policies benefiting coal-dependent communities. The NMA welcomes Commissioner Christie's leadership and looks forward to continuing its productive relationship with him as Chair of FERC.

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## **BLM Finalizes Two State Sage-Grouse Plans; Leaves Other State Plans in Limbo**



Last week, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) **finalized** two Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) plans for the states of Oregon and Colorado. The BLM indicated it was able to resolve all potential inconsistencies identified by the Governor of Oregon, and that the state of Colorado did not file a consistency review. The BLM was unable to finalize the plans for eight other states due to either the ongoing Governor's consistency reviews for each state's plans, or other outstanding administrative processes. For those eight states, until a Record of Decision is signed the BLM will continue to manage GRSG on public lands under the 2015 plans. Although the BLM's timing for finalization of the other eight state plans is unclear at this time, the BLM's failure to finalize all

the plans for GRSG under the Biden administration leaves them vulnerable to additional changes in the incoming Trump administration.

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## NMA and Third Parties In the News

[E&E Greenwire](#) quotes Rich Nolan on President Donald Trump's day one focus on accelerating mining and processing of minerals — from rare earths to coal and uranium.

The NMA is quoted by [S&P Global](#) in a story on optimism in the U.S. coal sector that incoming President Donald Trump will roll back regulations to alter the future of the diminished industry.

[Washington Examiner](#) (D.C.) carries an op-ed by William Shughart II, a distinguished research adviser and senior fellow with the Independent Institute and the J. Fish Smith professor in public choice at Utah State University's Jon M. Huntsman School of Business, in which he argues the nation's fleet of coal-fueled power plants is a vital asset that can help maintain grid reliability, address rising power demands, and guide us toward our energy future.

[MSN.com](#) (USA), [Harrisburg Patriot News](#) (Pa.), [Jacksonville Journal Courier](#) (Ill.), [Mesabi Tribune](#) (Minn.), [St. Louis Post Dispatch](#) (Mo.) and [The Missoulian](#) (Mont.) carry an op-ed by Terry Jarrett, an energy attorney and consultant who has served on both the board of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners and the Missouri Public Service Commission, in which he argues policymaking must preserve the dispatchable power generation that coal plants provide during a deep freeze.

[Boston Herald](#) (Mass.), [Charleston Gazette-Mail](#) (W.Va.), [Nashua Telegraph](#) (N.H.) and [Antigo Daily Journal](#) (Wis.) carry an op-ed by Syd Peng, the Charles E Lawall Chair of Mining Engineering emeritus in the Department of Mining Engineering at West Virginia University, in which he argues the United States should champion advanced coal technology and make it a pragmatic, balanced energy strategy.

## Mining and Energy News

[Montana Free Press](#) reported that Montana's largest coal mine, Navajo Transitional Energy Company's Spring Creek Mine, is set for a five-year expansion that could increase its coal production by 19 million tons.

[Hellenic Shipping](#) reported that the planned tariffs from the Trump administration could cloud the 2025 copper demand outlook and move prices further from market fundamentals.

[Argus](#) reported that coal generation in the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) rose year-over-year in December for the fourth time in all of 2024, supported by higher overall power demand.

[Mining Journal](#) reported that American steel producers Cleveland Cliffs and Nucor are considering a potential joint offer for U.S. Steel, according to media reports.

[Mining.com](#) reported from Reuters that Ukraine has stopped production at its coking coal mine in Pokrovsk, which feeds the country's steel industry, because of the proximity of advancing Russian forces.

[Greenwire](#) reported that the Biden administration in its eleventh hour is

pushing to protect hundreds of thousands of acres in southern Nevada, a move that could slow plans to mine for lithium in sensitive areas, including on the edges of a desert refuge.

[\*\*Argus\*\*](#) reported that U.S. coal generation is forecast to decrease this year before partially recovering in 2026, driven by gains in natural gas prices, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration's January Short Term Outlook.

[\*\*Mining.com\*\*](#) reported on how higher prices and demand for uranium is colliding with Navajo country opposition in the case of the Energy Fuels Pinyon Plain uranium mine in Arizona.

[\*\*Argus\*\*](#) reported that U.S. coal state legislators have introduced a bill in the U.S. House of Representatives designed to reduce delays when leasing coal on federal lands.

[\*\*U.S. Department of Defense News\*\*](#) reported that "secure sourcing of critical minerals is critical to the defense industrial base, which uses them to produce virtually every Defense Department system, from unmanned aerial systems and fighter jets to submarines," said Adam Burstein, technical director for strategic and critical materials in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Industrial Base Policy, who spoke recently at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island.

[\*\*Fox News\*\*](#) reported that domestic critical minerals mining in the U.S. – including in much-talked-about jurisdictions such as Greenland – is key to removing the dangerous leverage that BRICS nations hold over our economic and national security.

[\*\*Mining Journal\*\*](#) reported that the "threat of war is a new driver of mineral markets" and that a fragmenting geopolitical outlook weighed on attendee

minds at the Future Minerals conference in Riyadh.

[\*\*Politico Pro\*\*](#) reported that Natural Resources Committee Chair Bruce Westerman (R-Ark.) said last week that Republicans are discussing directing approvals for specific large mining projects that have been stalled as part of their reconciliation.

The [\*\*U.S. Department of Energy's\*\*](#) (DOE) Loan Programs Office announced last week the closing of a \$996 million loan guarantee to Ioneer Rhyolite Ridge LLC to develop a domestic supply of lithium carbonate for electric vehicle (EV) batteries from the Rhyolite Ridge Lithium-Boron Project in Esmeralda County, Nevada.

[\*\*Climatewire\*\*](#) reported that Maryland is facing an electricity crunch with a \$3 billion budget deficit, rising electricity costs, spiking electricity demand and a bottleneck in bringing new power sources online that have emerged as major challenges to the state's climate ambitions. Maryland imports about 40 percent of its power and has few coal plants left due to retirements in recent years.

[\*\*Argus\*\*](#) reported that coal has become more economical for generation than natural gas in parts of the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) thanks to higher gas prices and relatively cold weather.

[\*\*The U.S. Department of Energy\*\*](#) announced that \$32.75 million for 12 projects that will advance cost effective and environmentally responsible processes to produce and refine critical minerals and materials here in the U.S.

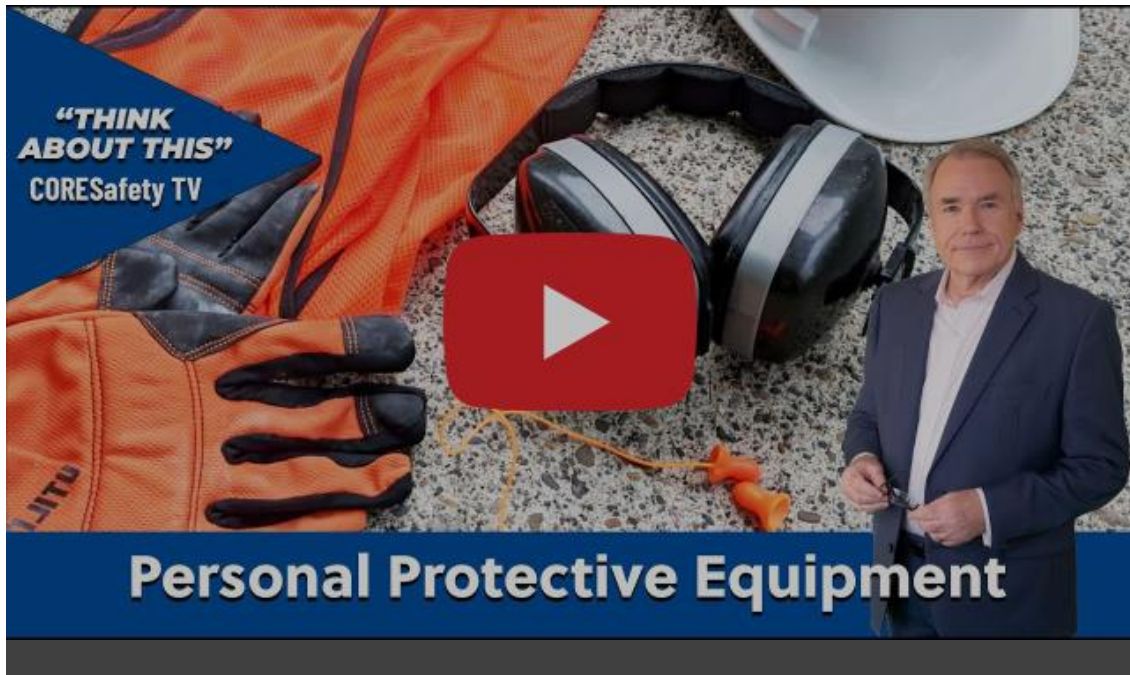
## Commodity Prices

## Commodity Price - Snapshot

Metals Prices	Date	Price
Cobalt Spot Price (\$/lb)	1/20/25	\$11.02
Copper Spot Price (\$/lb)	1/20/25	\$4.29
Gold Spot Price (\$/ounce)	1/20/25	\$2,744.50
Lead Spot Price (\$/lb)	1/20/25	\$0.89
Lithium Spot Price (\$/kg)	1/20/25	\$10.64
Molybdenum Spot Price (\$/kg)	1/20/25	\$64.13
Nickel Spot Price (\$/lb)	1/20/25	\$7.28
Silver Spot Price (\$/ounce)	1/20/25	\$30.25
Steel HRC Price (\$/mt)	1/20/25	\$694.32
Steel Rebar Price (\$/mt)	1/20/25	\$452.80
Zinc Spot Price (\$/lb)	1/20/25	\$1.34
Energy Prices	Date	Price
Coal Price - Australian Premium Coking Coal Futures (\$/mt)	1/20/25	\$196.00
Coal Spot Price - Central Appalachian (\$/st)	1/17/25	\$77.30
Coal Spot Price - Newcastle futures (\$/mt)	1/20/25	\$117.45
Coal Spot Price - Rotterdam futures (\$/mt)	1/20/25	\$112.20
Natural Gas Spot Price - Henry Hub (\$/mmbtu)	1/15/25	\$4.43
Uranium Spot Price (\$/lb)	1/17/25	\$73.95

Sources: publicly available data from [eia.gov](http://eia.gov), [dailymetalprice.com](http://dailymetalprice.com), [tradingeconomics.com](http://tradingeconomics.com), [sgxgroup.com](http://sgxgroup.com), [investing.com](http://investing.com)

**CORESafety**



In the January edition of CORESafety TV, we discuss personal protective equipment.



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