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# MINE Update

MINING INDUSTRY NEWS E-COMM UPDATE

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## This Week in The News

Congress continued negotiations over a major tax cut and spending package as Trump administration trade and deregulatory initiatives continued to advance. 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.

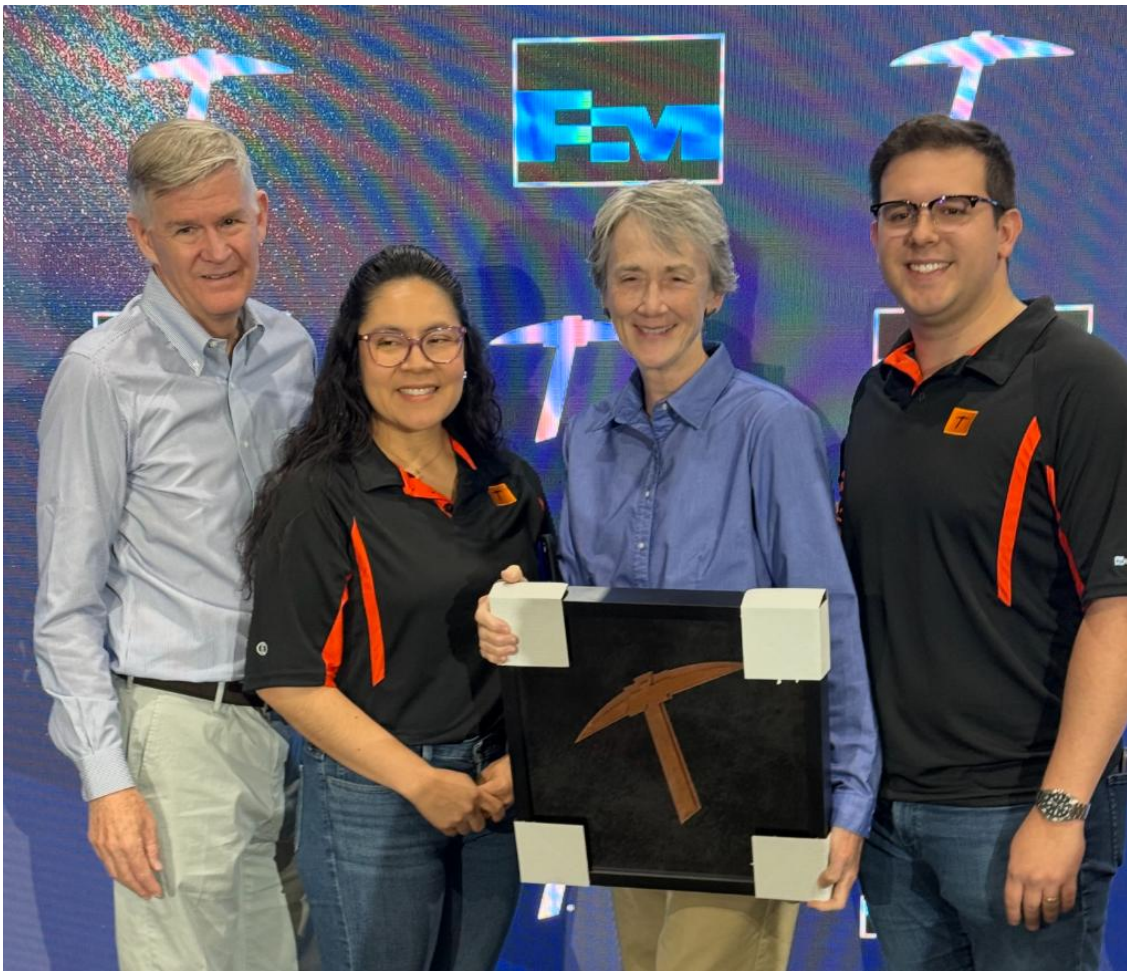
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## Safety Share

May is [National Water Safety Month](#). Check out plenty of tips for hot tubs and pools, as well as find resources for swimming lessons and what to do in an emergency.

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## Freeport-McMoRan Invests \$7 Million in the Future of Mining



Freeport-McMoRan and the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) announced this week that the company was making a \$7 million investment to help UTEP restart its mining engineering degree program. The new program, part of an

effort led by UTEP President Heather Wilson to expand mining engineering programs, aims to fill a gap in the mining workforce. The NMA's President & CEO Rich Nolan attended the announcement and later toured Freeport's El Paso copper refinery and copper rod plant.



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## Natural Resources Committee Passes Reconciliation with Mining Provisions

Early this morning, after a marathon markup session that started Tuesday at 10:15 am, the House Natural Resources Committee passed its portion of the reconciliation package. The committee was tasked with identifying at least \$1 billion in savings. Chairman Bruce Westerman (R-Ark.) calculated that the committee's bill (committee print available [here](#); section-by-section [here](#)) would contribute over \$18 billion to deficit reduction.

The bill contains numerous provisions to raise revenue by expanding domestic mining on federal lands. The text included provisions to open federal lands to coal leasing that had been encumbered by the Bureau of Land Management's

Resource Management Plans, allow for Twin Metals mine in Minnesota to proceed, open Alaska's Ambler Road project, reduce royalty rates on federal coal leases, and create a process to allow companies to pay a fee for expedited National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) consideration.

Committee Democrats proposed over 120 amendments to the bill. Just under 80 were offered. All of them were defeated. There was also one amendment offered by Representatives Mark Amodei (R-Nev.) and Celeste Maloy (R-Utah) to allow local governments in limited areas of Nevada and Utah to purchase federal land. That amendment passed and was added to the Committee's reconciliation text.

In the end, the legislation passed the committee on a vote of 26-17 with Representative Adam Gray (D-Calif.) joining all the committee Republicans supporting the legislation. It now will be added by the Budget Committee to the reconciliation provisions from the other House committees for consideration from the full House of Representatives.

Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) has said he wants the full reconciliation package to be passed out of the House of Representatives by Memorial Day, but acknowledged that the timeline may slip as the Republican caucus continues negotiations over tax provisions and reforms to social safety-net programs.

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## **NMA Testifies at WOTUS Industry Listening Session & WV Session Planned**



Last week, the NMA’s Caitlin McHale [testified](#) on behalf of NMA members at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) industry stakeholder listening session to solicit recommendations on revisions to its “waters of the United States” (WOTUS) rule. The NMA’s testimony highlighted numerous recommendations made in our written comments, including that the agencies should undergo a targeted notice-and-comment rulemaking process to revise the 2023 Rule’s preamble and regulatory text, provide clarifications around key regulatory terms such as “continuous surface connection” and “relatively permanent,” exclude most ditches from federal jurisdiction, and preserve the longstanding waste treatment system exclusion. The EPA and Corps are holding the final three sessions in their series of six listening sessions to hear stakeholder perspectives on issues related to the WOTUS definition. The remaining sessions include a May 14 public listening session (virtual and in Charleston, West Virginia) and a May 19 session for small business stakeholders (virtual and at EPA Headquarters in Washington, D.C.). A third public session is planned; details can be found [here](#).

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## **NMA Joins Members of Congress for Colorado Energy and Mineral Field Tour**



Last week, the NMA's Justin Prosser joined Members of Congress, congressional staff, and other industry stakeholders on a field tour to Colorado Springs hosted by the Western Caucus Foundation. Representatives Pete Stauber (R-Minn.), Harriet Hageman (R-Wyo.), Doug LaMalfa (R-Calif.), Troy Balderson (R-Ohio), Jeff Crank (R-Colo.), Nicholas Begich (R-Alaska), and Lauren Boebert (R-Colo.) were on the trip, which toured the [Ray D. Nixon](#) coal generation facility operated by Colorado Springs Utilities and the [Cripple Creek and Victor gold mine](#) owned by SSR Mining. They learned about the impacts of Colorado state and Biden-era regulations impacting coal generating facilities as well as extraction processes and permitting hurdles related to operating a hardrock

mine in the U.S. Additionally, Representatives and tour participants were able to explore a Caterpillar 793F haul truck at the mine site.

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## Secretary Wright Testifies before House Appropriations



This morning, Department of Energy (DOE) Secretary Chris Wright testified before the House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development. You can read his written testimony [here](#). You can watch the hearing [here](#).

Secretary Wright emphasized the need for more domestic energy and mineral production. On energy, he stated in his written testimony:

*"We need all energy sources to power the global AI race and meet growing data centers energy demand, including natural gas, nuclear, geothermal, and coal, while also ensuring the security of the grid."*

He also highlighted the importance of the president's critical minerals executive order, stating:

*"DOE is already directly supporting the goals laid out in recent executive orders on critical minerals and materials by identifying and expediting pending projects to support domestic mineral production, coordinating with other agencies including the U.S. Department of Defense, exploring the effectiveness of offtake agreements and pricing support, and developing new programs to bolster domestic mining and production."*

NMA will continue to work with the Appropriations Committee and DOE to promote policies and funding that support and expand domestic mining.

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## **NMA Provides Federal Update at Georgia Mining Association Environmental Seminar**

Last week, the NMA's Caitlin McHale provided a federal update at the Georgia Mining Association's Spring Environmental Seminar. The NMA's presentation provided an update on the Trump administration's first 100 days, including this administration's early actions on key environmental and regulatory priorities to the mining industry. The seminar was also an opportunity to hear updates from the state of Georgia and discuss important environmental and regulatory issues for the mining industry.

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## **NMA Engages with Federal Agencies at ARTBA Environmental Roundtable**

Yesterday, the NMA's Caitlin McHale and James Young participated in the American Road and Transportation Builders Association's Environmental Roundtable, joining transportation contractors, engineers, public agencies, and industry leaders in discussions with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Water, and the Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy on current and emerging environmental regulatory challenges affecting infrastructure projects. Topics included NEPA permitting timelines, Clean Water Act jurisdiction (including WOTUS, 401, and compensatory mitigation), permitting efficiency tools, and strategies for improving environmental review coordination. The roundtable provided an opportunity for the NMA to elevate member priorities and concerns in discussions with other trade associations and federal regulators.

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## **Responses Requested for NMA's Quarterly Rail Survey**



As a friendly reminder, the NMA is interested in your feedback regarding freight rail service issues involving Class I rail carriers since the beginning of 2025. To further assess these issues and impacts, the NMA would appreciate your

feedback on this anonymous 9-minute [survey](#). The data from this survey may be used for further engagement with Congress, the Surface Transportation Board, and others to illustrate the rail service or other transportation concerns of NMA members. We ask NMA members to please submit responses to the survey by Friday, May 16, 2025.

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## NMA and Third Parties In the News

[The Montana Standard \(Mont.\)](#), [Helena Independent Record \(Mont.\)](#), [Ravalli Republic \(Mont.\)](#), [The Missoulian \(Mont.\)](#), [Billings Gazette \(Mont.\)](#) and [The Pottstown Mercury \(Pa.\)](#) ran an op-ed from the NMA's Katie Sweeney in which she discusses America's ability to confront China's mineral extortion.

[The Office of Senator Mark Kelly](#) mentions the NMA in a release on the Critical Mineral Consistency Act of 2025.

[Hoodline](#) mentions the NMA in a story noting that, to solidify the United States' stronghold on key resources, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee has given the green light to the Critical Mineral Consistency Act of 2025.

## Mining and Energy News

[E&E Daily](#) reported that portions of the Republicans' party-line spending and tax bill included \$2.5 billion to boost the nation's stockpile of critical minerals.

[The Hill](#) reported that despite signs of a thaw last week, Washington and

Beijing are locked in a standoff on tariffs, and global supply chains are feeling the pressure.

**[Argus](#)** reported that Powder River basin (PRB) coal production inched higher in the first quarter from year-earlier levels after nine consecutive quarters of declines, as more buyers entered the market. Coal generation in much of the U.S. was above year-earlier levels from December through March because of colder weather and higher natural gas prices.

**[Hellenic Shipping](#)** reported that global seaborne steel exports posted a strong rise during 2024, with China having over 30 percent of the steel products market.

**[Utility Dive](#)** reported that Midcontinent Independent System Operator's (MISO) summer capacity prices jumped to \$666.50 per megawatt-day as power supplies shrink. "The results reinforce the need to increase capacity as demand is expected to grow with new large load additions," MISO said.

**[E&E News PM](#)** reported that the Trump administration is considering offering up to \$900 million for a lithium mine and processing plant in Nevada on public land. The Export-Import Bank sent a letter of interest to American Battery Technology, which is pursuing a commercial-scale lithium mine and claystone-to-lithium hydroxide refinery near Tonopah, Nevada.

**[Argus](#)** reported that coal exports out of Hampton Roads, Virginia, climbed to a 10-month high in March, as terminals scrambled to recover from weather-related delays in February.

**[Reuters](#)** reported that about 40 federal government employees from NIOSH who worked on coal mining and firefighter safety before their jobs were eliminated were asked to return to work, although it's unclear if their positions will be permanently reinstated, according to West Virginia's senator and the

agency's union.

**The Wall Street Journal** reported that the U.S. and Ukraine have signed a deal giving America access to Ukrainian minerals, energy and infrastructure, an agreement that the administration says will help compensate for assisting Kyiv in its fight against Russian invaders.

**Energywire** reported that the price of ensuring adequate electricity supply across much of the central U.S. during the summer months soared twentyfold as coal retirements, power plant capacity losses and the effect of market reforms outweighed the contribution of new power generation.

**Greenwire** reported that Interior Secretary Doug Burgum said last week the White House's National Energy Dominance Council is mulling a plan to force the U.S. government to pay a penalty to energy companies if a president cancels fossil fuel or mining projects.

**Energywire** reported that Spain and Portugal's massive blackout may be a warning for the U.S. grid as Europe and the U.S. bring more renewable power onto their electric grids.

**Argus** reported that the amount of coal generation clearing the Midcontinent Independent System Operator's (MISO) annual planning resource auction mostly declined and prices are souring this year because of coal plant retirements.

**International Copper Study Group's** recent copper forecast predicts that in 2025, world mine production will increase by 2.3 percent to 23.5 million metric tons (Mt), "benefiting mainly from additional output arising from the ramp-up of the Kamoanga (DRC) and Oyu Tolgoi (Mongolia) expansions and the commissioning of the new Malmyz mine (Russia). These rises will be partially offset by expected declines in Australia, Indonesia and Kazakhstan." Usage

growth rates have been revised down compared to the Group's September 2024 forecasts due to demand uncertainty surrounding global trade policies.

**Argus** reported that operators of U.S. coal plants must consider a number of factors in deciding whether to delay a plant's retirement, not just federal mandates, industry executives said this week.

**Mining Journal** reported that the UK government has already spent around \$100 million keeping British Steel's Scunthorpe steelworks site running after the government took control.

**Argus** reported that the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) may delay at least some planned coal unit retirements in response to a slate of executive orders and the new regulatory climate.

**NewRange Copper Nickel**, a joint venture of Teck Resources and Glencore, announced last week that their NorthMet Project has been designated by the administration as a Transparency Project for its importance to national and energy security.

**Greenwire** reported that the administration has released a list of 10 additional critical minerals mining projects to undergo expedited federal permitting, including projects in Minnesota and Nevada. The projects will now be placed on a public dashboard and undergo streamlined permitting under the FAST-41 process.

**E&E News PM** reported that House Republicans are moving to lower federal coal royalties, boost leasing and reverse Biden-era policies that halted mining in states like Alaska and Minnesota.

**Energywire** reported that eastern grid manager PJM has selected 51 "shovel-ready" electricity projects to move up in the connection queue to head off

possible energy shortages by 2030. The new projects, mostly for natural gas, battery and renewables, would add 11,793 megawatts from a combination of new projects and upgrades to existing plants.

[Associated Press](#) reported that steelmaker Cleveland-Cliffs will indefinitely idle three steel plants this summer, saying it is being buffeted by sluggish demand and pricing for some products, including high carbon steel sheets. The company said the idling of two Pennsylvania plants, one in Steelton and one in Conshohocken, and one in Riverdale, Illinois, is due to “insufficient demand and pricing” and nothing to do with President Donald Trump’s tariffs.

## Commodity Prices

## Commodity Price - Snapshot

Metals Prices	Date	Price
Cobalt Spot Price (\$/lb)	5/6/25	\$15.28
Copper Spot Price (\$/lb)	5/6/25	\$4.72
Gold Spot Price (\$/ounce)	5/6/25	\$3,377.35
Lead Spot Price (\$/lb)	5/6/25	\$0.87
Lithium Spot Price (\$/kg)	5/6/25	\$9.29
Molybdenum Spot Price (\$/kg)	5/6/25	\$63.25
Nickel Spot Price (\$/lb)	5/6/25	\$7.11
Silver Spot Price (\$/ounce)	5/6/25	\$33.02
Steel HRC Price (\$/mt)	5/6/25	\$869.70
Steel Rebar Price (\$/mt)	5/6/25	\$426.06
Zinc Spot Price (\$/lb)	5/6/25	\$1.19
Energy Prices	Date	Price
Coal Price - Australian Premium Coking Coal Futures (\$/mt)	5/6/25	\$186.00
Coal Spot Price - Central Appalachian (\$/st)	5/2/25	\$78.00
Coal Spot Price - Newcastle futures (\$/mt)	5/6/25	\$98.68
Coal Spot Price - Rotterdam futures (\$/mt)	5/6/25	\$99.45
Natural Gas Spot Price - Henry Hub (\$/mmbtu)	4/30/25	\$3.12
Uranium Spot Price (\$/lb)	5/6/25	\$70.20

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 May edition of CORESafety TV, we discuss CORESafety's Module Number four, Training and Education.



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