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MINE Update

MINING INDUSTRY NEWS E-COMM UPDATE

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This Week in The News

Budget reconciliation remained the top order of business on Capitol Hill as deregulatory initiatives continued to advance at federal agencies. 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

It's National Safe Boating Week. National Safety Council has a host of [recreational boating safety tips](#).

NMA Comments on Section 232 Investigation into Critical Minerals

On Friday, the NMA submitted [comments](#) on the Department of Commerce's Section 232 National Security Investigation of Imports of Processed Critical Minerals and Derivative Products to determine whether current imports threaten U.S. national security. The NMA comments address the threats posed to U.S. national security and suggest appropriate mitigation measures including incentivizing domestic processing, smelting and refining capacities, improving permitting and judicial regimes, research and development funding, increasing access to public lands and collaborating with our closest trading partners. Thank you to the NMA members who provided input in developing these comments.

NMA Provides Testimony in Support of Domestic Mineral Supply Chains



Today, the NMA's Katie Sweeney testified before the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations at a hearing titled, "Examining Ways to Enhance Our Domestic Critical Mineral Supply Chains." Katie highlighted the importance of a robust domestic mining and processing industry to meet the needs of U.S. economic and national security priorities while also providing recommendations to counter market manipulation practices employed by geopolitical adversaries. Please find a link to the hearing and witness testimony [here](#) as well as the NMA's press release [HERE](#). In addition to Katie Sweeney, Abigail Hunter (Executive Director of SAFE's Center for Critical Minerals Strategy); Casey Hammond (Principal at Capitol Pillar LLC); and Alex Herrgott (President of the Permitting Institute) testified on behalf of the majority. David Howell (Director of Strategy at the Battery Advocacy for Technology Transformation Coalition) testified on behalf of the minority. In advance of the hearing, NMA worked with committee staff and engaged individual member offices on the committee to provide additional information and background materials as well as hearing questions relevant to NMA member priorities.

Final Push to Pass OBBB Through House



At the time of writing, House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) and President Trump are still rallying the House Republican Conference to pass H.R. 1, One Big Beautiful Bill Act, out of the House. The Speaker has set his sights on completing House action on the bill this week. Once the House acts, the Senate is expected to make significant changes that will have to be reconciled with the House bill before being sent to the President for his signature. Senate Majority Leader Thune has expressed his desire to finish the process by the July 4th recess. Text of the House bill before the House Rules Committee can be found [here](#). Redline of what passed the individual committees compared to what is before House Rules can be found [here](#). Additional changes are expected to allow the bill to clear the full House. NMA has been and will continue to work with the House and Senate to support and expand provisions important to the mining industry.

Senate Finance Hearing on Critical Supply Chains



Last week, the Senate Finance Committee held a hearing titled, "*Trade in Critical Supply Chains*," which brought renewed focus to the strategic vulnerabilities facing the United States in critical minerals sourcing and processing. Among the witnesses was Dr. Gracelin Baskaran, Director for Critical Minerals Security at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

During the hearing, Senator Mike Crapo (R-Idaho) raised concerns about China's growing control over key supply chains. In response, Dr. Baskaran underscored a key distinction: while China produces only about 10 percent of the world's supply of lithium, cobalt, nickel, and copper, it imports significant quantities of raw minerals from other nations and dominates global processing capacity for many of these resources. This centralized control allows China to exert influence over the global flow of critical minerals essential for clean energy technologies, defense systems, and advanced manufacturing.

Dr. Baskaran further highlighted the United States' comparatively small global share of production in several key materials, including graphite, cobalt, and rare earth elements, warning that domestic resource limitations leave the U.S. reliant on international partners. She emphasized that building resilient supply chains will require strategic investments in refining and processing infrastructure, collaboration with resource-rich allies such as Canada and Australia, as well as increased domestic mining.

Interior Department Seeks Public Input to Reduce Regulatory Burdens

This week, the Department of the Interior (DOI) [published](#) a request for information (RFI) to identify existing regulations that can be modified or repealed to ensure that DOI administrative actions do not undermine the national interest and that DOI achieves a meaningful reduction in regulatory burdens. **Comments on the RFI are due June 20, 2025.**

The RFI is part of the DOI's implementation of recent directives from the President's Executive Order (EO) 14154, "Unleashing American Energy" that established the policy of the United States to ensure all regulatory requirements related to energy are grounded in clearly applicable law and promote sound regulatory decision making, and DOI Secretary's Order 3418 that implements the requirements of the EO and directs all Assistant Secretaries to promptly review all agency actions and submit a plan to consider how to comply with the EO. The RFI also complies with EO 14192 "Unleashing Prosperity through Deregulation" which states it is the priority of the executive branch to be prudent and financially responsible in the expenditure of funds and to alleviate unnecessary regulatory burdens placed on the American people.

DOI is seeking input from the public on "ways to achieve a meaningful reduction in regulatory burdens while continuing to achieve DOI's legal obligations, mission, and regulatory objectives." To that end, DOI provided a list of nine questions expanding on this request, including, among others, whether there are regulations that: (1) "simply make no sense or have become unnecessary, ineffective, or ill-advised"; (2) have become outdated and can be modernized; (3) are necessary but should be modified to better accomplish the objective at a lower cost; (4) obstruct, delay, curtail, or pose significant costs

to siting, permitting, or delivery of energy infrastructure projects; (5) are unnecessarily complicated or could be streamlined; and (6) have been overtaken by technological developments that warrant modification or rescission. Additional details are provided in [NMA's memorandum](#) summarizing this comment opportunity.

DOE and USGS Nominees Advance Towards Senate Vote

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee advanced several of President Trump's nominations for the Department of Energy (DOE) and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) this week. Jonathan Brightbill's nomination to become general counsel at DOE was advanced on a 12-8 vote. He served in the DOJ's Environment and Natural Resources Division during Trump's first term. Connor Prochaska, who previously served as chief of staff of the Advanced Research Projects Agency - Energy, was nominated as that agency's director and passed out of committee 13-7.

Ned Mamula was nominated for director of the USGS and advanced on a vote of 11-9. Mamula will have a large role in moving forward the administration's mineral priorities if confirmed.

Next all three of the nominees will be considered by the full Senate.

NMA Comments on Endangered Species Act Rulemakings

Earlier this week, the NMA submitted comments on two Endangered Species Act (ESA) regulations proposed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (collectively, the Services). The Services [proposed](#) to rescind the regulatory definition of “harm” under the ESA, citing the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo*, which determined agency regulations must match the single, best meaning of the statute. The NMA supported the rescission of the regulatory definition due to historic abuse of habitat designations by the Services, but requested guidance on ESA implementation going forward without the definition. NMA’s comments on the proposal to rescind the regulatory definition of “harm” are available [here](#).

The FWS also [extended](#) the comment period on the [proposal](#) to list the Monarch Butterfly as a threatened species with protective regulations under section 4(d) of the ESA and to designate critical habitat. The NMA took no position on the listing determination, but did request that if the FWS determined that the butterfly should be listed as a threatened species, that mining and mining activities be included in the 4(d) rule that exempts the section 9 prohibitions against species take. NMA’s comments on the proposal to list the Monarch Butterfly are available [here](#).

House Appropriations Hearing on FY26 Interior Budget Proposal

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies held a hearing on the Department of the Interior’s fiscal year 2026 budget request. Secretary Doug Burgum testified on the Department’s commitment to enhancing U.S. mineral security, with a renewed focus on baseload power development and the expansion of critical and rare earth mineral production. He highlighted efforts to update the U.S. Geological

Survey's (USGS) list of critical minerals and to expand nationwide geological mapping. However, the proposed \$5 billion budget cut and planned elimination of nearly 5,000 Interior employees drew bipartisan pushback. Lawmakers questioned how the Department could realistically meet its ambitious mineral development goals while reducing operational capacity.

In response, Burgum defended the cuts as part of a broader reorganization aimed at eliminating inefficiencies and redirecting resources toward high-priority missions. He stated that any "critical" roles necessary to meet energy and mineral goals would be refilled or restructured as needed.

Zeldin Defends Deep EPA Cuts in House and Senate Budget Hearings



EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin faced back-to-back appearances this week before the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment and the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, defending the Trump administration's proposal to cut EPA's base discretionary budget nearly in half—from \$9.1 billion to \$4.2 billion in FY2026. The hearings showcased growing

partisan divisions over the future role of the agency.

In the House, Republicans largely praised Zeldin's deregulatory agenda and rollback of Obama- and Biden-era rules targeting the power sector. Rep. Julie Fedorchak (R-N.D.) warned that prior 111(d) rules "had grave consequences on our power grid" and thanked Zeldin for reversing course. Democrats focused on the potential impacts of budget cuts on environmental grants, research facilities, and public health programs in their districts.

At the Senate EPW hearing, Chair Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.Va.) backed Zeldin's approach to refocus EPA on its "core mission" without stifling economic development—an implicit nod to the agency's shift away from climate-driven rulemaking. Democrats raised concerns about the administration's efforts to claw back previously authorized grant funding and restructure the agency in ways that would curtail its climate and enforcement roles.

House Hearing Highlights Role of Federal Lands and Coal in Meeting Soaring Tech-Driven Power Demand

The House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing today examining how federal lands and energy policy can support America's growing technological edge. Lawmakers and witnesses warned that surging electricity demand from artificial intelligence, crypto mining, and data centers risks outpacing the nation's energy infrastructure—unless domestic production of dispatchable resources like coal and natural gas is expanded.

The hearing spotlighted a suite of executive orders from President Trump aimed at declaring a national energy emergency, unlocking federal lands for energy

and mineral development, and fast-tracking permitting reforms. Republican members pointed to the urgent need for baseload generation to support U.S. technological competitiveness and national security, particularly in the face of growing threats from China.

Emily Arthun, President of the American Coal Council and NMA member, testified that coal remains critical to meeting these challenges. She emphasized the importance of coal leasing on federal lands and warned that regulatory uncertainty and permitting delays risk sidelining a resource that is abundant, reliable, and ready to support the next wave of innovation.

NMA Files Comments on EPA's New Regional Haze Policy

The NMA filed [comments](#) to support the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) new approach to the Clean Air Act's Regional Haze Program. As we previously informed you, EPA's [proposal](#) to approve West Virginia's regional haze state implementation plan (SIP) for the second planning period included a new policy "that, where visibility conditions for a Class I area impacted by a State are below the ["uniform rate of progress"] and the State has considered the four statutory factors, the State will have presumptively demonstrated reasonable progress for the second planning period for that area." See NMA's [memorandum](#) distributed on April 21, 2025.

This new policy could be a game-changer because many Class I areas are well ahead of the progress needed to meet the 2064 goal. For such areas, EPA's proposed presumption would allow states greater autonomy than allowed under previous administrations to decide no further controls are necessary, so long as the state also supported that determination by considering the factors typically used by states to define "reasonable progress" (i.e., cost, time to comply, other

energy and environmental factors, and remaining useful life). EPA has used this new approach again in a [proposal](#) published today in the *Federal Register* to approve South Dakota's regional haze SIP. The NMA's comments provide support for this important policy

NMA Files Comments on EPA Multi-Sector General Permit for Industrial Stormwater Discharges

The NMA filed [comments](#) on the EPA's multi-sector general permit (MSGP) for industrial stormwater discharges. [Recall](#) the MSGP authorizes stormwater discharges from industrial facilities across 30 sectors, including Sector G (metal mining), Sector H (coal mines and coal mining-related facilities), and Sector J (mineral mining and dressing). EPA renews the MSGP every five years, and many states use EPA's MSGP as a template or guide for their own stormwater permitting programs.

The NMA's comments encourage EPA to reconsider and significantly revise the MSGP to better align with the permitting efficiency priorities of the current administration and specifically address sections related to (1) the additional implementation measure framework; (2) impaired waters monitoring; (3) indicator monitoring for PFAS; (4) 6PPD and 6PPD-quinone (5) training requirements; and (6) the incorporation of the construction general permit. The NMA also joined a [coalition letter](#) led by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce urging reconsideration of the MSGP's new PFAS requirements.

NMA Joins South Dakota Mineral Industries Association Annual Banquet

Last week, Martha Newell from the NMA served as the keynote speaker at the Annual Banquet of the South Dakota Mineral Industries Association in Rapid City, SD. The event brought together key stakeholders, including NMA members Coeur Mining and Caterpillar, from across the region to discuss pressing issues and opportunities facing the mining industry today.

The visit included tours of the Sanford Lab Homestake Visitor Center and [Coeur's Wharf Mine](#), providing insights into the state's mining history and the current challenges faced by new developments. Martha also participated in a roundtable discussion hosted at the South Dakota [School of Mines and Technology](#), which included state Representative Mike Derby.

The discussions focused on actions currently being taken in Washington that impact the mining industry, strategies for growing the workforce for skilled labor and college-educated professionals, and ways to improve public perceptions of modern mining.

MINExpo INTERNATIONAL® Big Winner at Fastest 50 Grand Awards



Members of the NMA team traveled to Orlando for the Trade Show Executive's Fastest 50 Grand Awards which recognizes the fastest-growing trade shows in the U.S. MINExpo INTERNATIONAL was eligible for awards in three categories and won all three. MINExpo won in the categories of "The Fastest-Growing Non-Annual Show by Percentage of Growth in Exhibitors and Attendance in 2024", "The Fastest-Growing Non-Annual Show in Sheer Numbers in Net Square Feet, Exhibitors and Attendance in 2024," and "The Fastest-Growing Non-Annual Show by Blended Growth in 2024." MINExpo 2024 was not only a record-setter for the association but it's now also officially an award-winner.

NMA and Third Parties In the News

The [Frankfort State Journal](#) (Ky.), [Clermont Sun](#) (Ohio), [The Weirton Daily Times](#) (W.Va.) and [Las Vegas Sun](#) (Nev.) all ran an op-ed by Katie Sweeney in which she argues while working with trading partners is certainly part of the answer to boosting America's mineral security, our domestic productive potential is the difference right beneath our feet.

[The Verge](#) mentions the NMA in a story on China's export controls for rare earth minerals and magnets, which are impacting the shift to electric vehicles.

From our third parties, [Townhall](#) (D.C.) carries an op-ed by Jeff Ryer, Executive Director of CASE, Consumer Action for a Strong Economy, a free-market oriented consumer advocacy organization, in which he argues Congress should act to ensure the 45X credit supports American production at every level of the supply chain.

Mining and Energy News

[Greenwire](#) reported that the administration is shrinking permitting for a uranium mine in Utah down to just 14 days, part of a process that critics have warned is ill-advised and sure to be legally challenged.

[Argus](#) reported that coal generation in the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) rose by 20 percent on the year in April, as overall power demand grew and natural gas generation fell. Generators dispatched 4.17 million MWh of coal power into the grid in April, up from 3.49 million MWh a year earlier.

[S&P Global](#) reported that China's ongoing property market woes are a drag on steel demand since new home construction is a key demand driver.

[Greenwire](#) reported that President Trump is driving a 21st-century gold rush that's supercharging conservation battles on public lands across the West.

[Argus](#) reported that Northern Appalachian coal production rose from year-earlier levels for the first time in almost two years during the first quarter, more than offsetting continued declines in central Appalachian output.

[Greenwire](#) reported that President Trump has unveiled a plan for Saudi Arabia to invest \$600 billion in U.S. industries — including critical minerals, artificial intelligence and energy.

In a recent **[Today in Energy](#)** report, EIA found that retail electricity prices have increased faster than the rate of inflation since 2022, and are expected to continue increasing through 2026, based on forecasts in the agency's Short-term Energy Outlook. Parts of the country with relatively high electricity prices may experience greater price increases than those with relatively low electricity prices.

[Energywire](#) reported that electricity supply across the central U.S. and New England could be challenged this summer if extended extreme heat waves coincide with periods of weak wind and solar power, according to the North American Electric Reliability Corp. The four major central U.S. grid systems that are ranked as "elevated" risk areas by NERC this summer include MISO, SPP, ERCOT and NEISO.

[Greenwire](#) reported that a district judge in West Virginia has halted the administration's plan to fire federal workers and dismantle programs dedicated to studying and screening for diseases like black lung in coal miners.

[Ucore Rare Metals Inc.](#) announced that Ucore and the Department of Defense agreed to an initial \$18.4 million in funding toward a rare earth processing facility in Alexandria, Louisiana.

[Washington Examiner](#) reported that the Department of the Interior announced it would be fast-tracking the permitting process for a Utah uranium mine to meet urgent energy demands.

[Utility Dive](#) reported from Reuters that U.S. officials have discovered undisclosed communication devices on the power inverters of some Chinese-

manufactured solar panels. The devices could give adversaries a way to disable power grids, damage energy infrastructure and trigger blackouts, specialists say.

[The Verge](#) reported that China has implemented new export controls for rare earth minerals and magnets. The changes could upend the shift to electric vehicles.

[Argus](#) reported that parts of North America are at elevated risk of potential electricity supply shortfalls this summer if there are periods of extreme peak demand, according to a recent reliability outlook from NERC.

Commodity Prices

Commodity Price - Snapshot

Metals Prices	Date	Price
Cobalt Spot Price (\$/lb)	5/19/25	\$15.28
Copper Spot Price (\$/lb)	5/20/25	\$4.61
Gold Spot Price (\$/ounce)	5/20/25	\$3,285.86
Lead Spot Price (\$/lb)	5/20/25	\$0.89
Lithium Spot Price (\$/kg)	5/20/25	\$8.76
Molybdenum Spot Price (\$/kg)	5/20/25	\$63.92
Nickel Spot Price (\$/lb)	5/20/25	\$7.02
Silver Spot Price (\$/ounce)	5/20/25	\$33.01
Steel HRC Price (\$/mt)	5/20/25	\$891.92
Steel Rebar Price (\$/mt)	5/20/25	\$427.71
Zinc Spot Price (\$/lb)	5/20/25	\$1.23
Energy Prices	Date	Price
Coal Price - Australian Premium Coking Coal Futures (\$/mt)	5/20/25	\$188.75
Coal Spot Price - Central Appalachian (\$/st)	5/16/25	\$79.00
Coal Spot Price - Newcastle futures (\$/mt)	5/20/25	\$99.49
Coal Spot Price - Rotterdam futures (\$/mt)	5/19/25	\$96.00
Natural Gas Spot Price - Henry Hub (\$/mmbtu)	5/14/25	\$3.30
Uranium Spot Price (\$/lb)	5/19/25	\$71.30

Sources: publically available data from eia.gov, dailymetalprice.com, tradingeconomics.com, sgxgroup.com, investing.com

CORESafety



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



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