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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

After weeks of wrangling, the House passed its budget reconciliation bill before departing for the Memorial Day recess. The budget focus will shift to the Senate when Congress returns to session next week. Meanwhile, energy-focused executive orders and deregulatory activities continued to roll forth. 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

Simple daily safety reminders can be a key contributor to developing a safety-first culture or lifestyle. Here are [70 tips](#) to get you started.

One Big Beautiful Bill Clears House, Senate's Turn Next



On Thursday, following all night negotiations and a push from President Trump, House Republicans rallied around H.R. 1, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBA), and passed their version of reconciliation by a vote of [215-214](#). Reps. Thomas Massie (R-Ky.) and Warren Davidson (R-Ohio) joined all the Democrats in voting no. Rep. Andy Harris (R-Md.) voted present. The House-passed bill can be seen [here](#).

The action now moves to the Senate. 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, although most observers believe the more likely date will be before Congress leaves for

August recess. The NMA will continue to work with the House and Senate to support and expand mining industry priorities in the final bill.

Coal is a Critical Material



The Intrinsic Role of Coal in Achieving Steel Dominance

On Thursday, the Department of Energy (DOE) announced it was adding metallurgical coal to its Critical Materials list. DOE's notice can be found [here](#), with an analysis of why coal is critical to steel is available [here](#), and a description of what qualifies as a critical material along with the updated list found [here](#). DOE's actions are a follow up to President Trump's April 8 executive order (EO) "Reinvigorating America's Beautiful Clean Coal Industry." The EO directed the Secretary of Energy to determine if coal used in the production of steel meets the definition of a critical material. Read the NMA's comment [here](#).

DOE Uses Emergency Authority to Support Generation in MISO Region



Last Friday, the Department of Energy [issued an emergency](#) order under its Federal Power Act Section 202(c) authority to direct Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), in coordination with Consumers Energy, to ensure that the J.H. Campbell Power Plant in West Olive, Michigan remains available for operation, minimizing any potential generation shortfall that could lead to unnecessary power outages. The plant was set to close this week. To support its action, the order cited tight reserve margins expected during the summer 2025 period, and the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) 2025 Summer Reliability Assessment which stated, “[d]emand forecasts and resource data indicate that MISO is at elevated risk of operating reserve shortfalls during periods of high demand or low resource output.”

President Trump Signs Four Executive Orders on Nuclear Energy



President Trump last week signed four executive orders (EOs) supporting nuclear energy and designed to accelerate the construction of nuclear power plants in the United States. At the White House signing ceremony, Department of the Interior Secretary Doug Burgum said America led the postwar world on "all things nuclear" until we "stagnated" and "choked it with overregulation." The orders include:

- [**Reinvigorating the Nuclear Industrial Base**](#)
- [**Reforming Nuclear Reactor Testing at The Department of Energy**](#)
- [**Ordering the Reform of The Nuclear Regulatory Commission**](#)
- [**Deploying Advanced Nuclear Reactor Technologies for National Security**](#)

Sec. Burgum added, "This is a huge day for the nuclear industry... Mark this day on your calendar. This is going to turn the clock back on over 50 years of overregulation."

EPA Memo Clarifies Scope of Clean Water Act Section 401 Certification

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) last week [announced](#) a [memorandum](#) clarifying the scope of the Clean Water Act (CWA) section 401 certification process. The memorandum clarifies EPA's longstanding view that CWA section 401 is limited to "addressing only water-quality related impacts" and that it would be "inconsistent with CWA section 401 to deny or condition a certification based on potential impacts not connected to water quality (e.g. based solely on potential impacts to air quality, traffic, noise, project preference, or economic impacts that have no direct connection to water quality." Importantly, the memorandum specifically recognizes that energy and critical mineral projects that are key to economic growth and EPA's "Powering the Great American Comeback" initiative are often subject to this process. The NMA welcomes this development, as clarifying the scope of CWA section 401 certification has been a longstanding priority for the mining industry. EPA also plans to open a docket to solicit recommendations from the public on additional areas of implementation challenges and regulatory uncertainty regarding the scope of certification to be addressed through additional guidance or rulemaking.

NMA Member Testifies Before Senate Banking Committee



On Thursday, NMA member Perpetua Resources' McKinsey Lyon testified before the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs at a hearing titled, "Securing America: Key Authorities Under the Defense Production Act." Please find a link to the hearing video and witness testimony [here](#). Ms. Lyon, Perpetua's Vice President of External Affairs, delivered strong testimony (linked [here](#)) in support of reauthorizing the Defense Production Act (DPA) and the DPA's benefits of providing a crucial "lifeline" to qualifying mining companies, allowing them to remain solvent in the face of market manipulation tactics from geopolitical adversaries like China. She also discussed the cost of permitting delays on mining projects and told the committee that "America's excellence is rooted in innovation, hard work and competition. The DPA is a powerful tool to supercharge this excellence when we need it the most. It is the temporary scaffolding. American businesses need to be resilient in hard times, so that we can respond to our nation's needs." Bipartisan members of the committee discussed the benefits of the DPA and its ability to support necessary and mission critical elements of the Department of Defense. Other witnesses included Jared Brown, Executive Director of Global Shield, Dr. John G. McGinn, Executive Director of the Greg and Camille Baroni Center for Government Contracting at the Costello College of Business, George Mason University; and Dr. Rush Doshi, Starr Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. The

NMA will continue to advocate for reauthorization of the DPA and its continued use to support important domestic mining projects.

Senate Markup of DOL Nominees and POTUS Chooses Permitting Council Head

On Thursday, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee [voted to advance](#) several key Department of Labor nominees, including positions with direct impact on the mining industry. Among those approved were:

- **Wayne Palmer**, nominated to lead the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA)
- **Marco Rajkovich**, nominated to serve on the independent commission that reviews contested MSHA citations
- **Henry Mack**, nominated to head the Employment and Training Administration

All three nominees now await confirmation by the full Senate.

Also of note, President Donald Trump chose **Emily Domenech** to head the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council. Domenech worked for both current Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) and former Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.).

Trump Energy, Interior and Labor Secretaries Outline FY26 Priorities

Last week, the Secretaries of Energy, Interior and Labor testified before House and Senate Appropriations Committees to defend the administration's Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) budget proposals. While partisan dynamics influenced the questioning, all three hearings underscored the administration's focus on reducing spending, increasing domestic energy production, and reforming federal programs.

Energy Secretary Chris Wright appeared before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, where Democratic senators pressed for answers on DOE grant cancellations and program eliminations. Republican members largely supported DOE's cost-cutting approach, while raising questions about funding for specific projects in their states.

Interior Secretary Doug Burgum emphasized the need to reduce permitting barriers and empower local land managers during hearings in both chambers.

At her hearing, Labor Secretary Lori Chavez-DeRemer told lawmakers she intends to visit workers in all 50 states and overhaul federal job training programs to eliminate waste, fraud and abuse—framing the effort as part of the President's "mandate from workers," including union labor.

During the hearing, Senator Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.Va.) raised concerns about the Department's plans to close several Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) offices in West Virginia, specifically citing locations in Summersville, Mount Hope and Welch. She also emphasized the importance of workforce development and asked how the Department can better engage with the private sector, particularly through partnerships that connect high school students to skilled trade opportunities.

The proposed budget includes a consolidation of existing federal grant and training programs into a new "Make America Skilled Again" grant, aimed at strengthening apprenticeships and expanding upskilling opportunities to meet

current labor market demands.

The NMA will continue to work with Congress and the administration on mining priorities in the FY26 appropriations process.

NMA Participates in Congressional Roundtable on Critical Mineral Technologies and Innovation

Last week, the House Bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus convened a roundtable on Critical Mineral Technologies and Innovation, focusing on actionable steps Congress can take to strengthen the domestic critical minerals supply chain. Industry leaders from across the value chain—including exploration, extraction, refining, manufacturing and end-use—joined lawmakers to identify both near- and long-term policy solutions to enhance U.S. competitiveness and national security. There was broad consensus that permitting reform is essential to meeting future mineral demand. Participants also emphasized the importance of collaborating with allies and expanding “friend-shoring” efforts for mineral extraction and processing as the U.S. works to scale up its own capabilities.

NMA and Third Parties In the News

[Fairbanks Daily News Miner](#) (Alaska), [Wheeling Intelligencer](#) (W.Va.), [Monticello Times](#) (Minn.), [Victoria Advocate](#) (Texas), [Kokomo Tribune](#) (Ind.) and [Montana Right Now](#) (Mont.) 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 [Cowboy State Daily](#) quotes Katie Sweeney in a story on Wyoming's rare earth mining companies, which are scaling up for what could be the biggest opportunity in decades with a growing demand for minerals that power everything from smartphones to fighter jets.

[E&E News PM](#) quotes the NMA in a story on the legal fight over Resolution Copper.

From our third parties, [DC Journal](#) (D.C.) carries an op-ed by Terry Jarrett, who was appointed to the Missouri Public Service Commission in 2007, in which he argues the Spanish blackout is a warning of reliability risks for the U.S.

Mining and Energy News

[The Hill](#) reported that the administration has authorized the relaunch of operations at a southeastern Utah uranium mine — marking its first use of a newly fast-tracked environmental review process.

[E&E News PM](#) reported that the Commerce Department will impose tariffs of up to 720 percent on some Chinese graphite — despite pushback from Tesla and Panasonic.

[New York Times](#) reported that with demand for steel down and a trade war underway, miners in the Iron Range of Minnesota are feeling the hit. But they hope better times are ahead.

[Perpetua Resources Corp.](#) announced last week that it had received its final Clean Water Act Section 404 permit needed for its Stibnite Gold-antimony

project in Idaho.

Politico Pro reported that supply chains of key critical minerals like copper, lithium and graphite have grown more concentrated in China in recent years, despite efforts by the U.S. and its allies to diversify their sources, according to the International Energy Agency's annual Global Critical Minerals Outlook.

Energywire reported that the U.S. will have to double the pace of new electricity generation to meet a steep jump in energy demand, according to a new report from consulting firm ICF International. The report projects that U.S. electricity demand will grow 25 percent between 2023 and 2030, and 78 percent by 2050.

In EIA's recent **Today in Energy** the agency looked at battery minerals graphite, lithium and cobalt using UN Comtrade data. EIA found that China has a major role at each stage of the global battery supply chain and dominates interregional trade of raw and processed battery minerals - accounting for 44 percent of trade.

Argus reported on Virginia Maritime Association survey data finding that total Hampton Roads, Virginia coal exports, estimated at 2.8 million short tons, were 21 percent lower in April 2025 compared to April 2024. Unfavorable seaborne coal prices and lower overseas demand may be having an impact.

The **Silver Institute's** recent survey of U.S. jewelry stores showed that retail sales of silver jewelry grew in 2024 with silver representing an increasing percentage share of jewelry sales.

Greenwire reported that the Interior Department has begun the process of evaluating a possible offshore mineral lease sale in U.S. waters off American Samoa, the first such auction of its kind in more than three decades.

[Greenwire](#) reported that the world's sources of critical minerals are increasingly concentrated in just a few countries, most notably China, leaving the global economy vulnerable to supply cutoffs that could disrupt industry and hit consumers with higher prices, according to the recent IEA global critical minerals outlook 2025 report.

The **[World Steel Association's](#)** latest monthly crude steel production survey for April found that crude steel production for the countries reporting was 155.7 million metric tons in April, a 0.3 percent decrease compared to April 2024. The U.S. produced 6.6 million tons, down 0.3 percent.

[E&MJ](#) reported that Energy Fuels, a leading U.S. producer of uranium, rare earth elements (REE), and other critical minerals reported that uranium mining rates at its Pinyon Plain mine in Arizona reached record levels in April.

[Reuters](#) reported that President Trump now supports the latest proposed \$14.9 billion "planned partnership" deal for Nippon Steel to buy U.S. Steel Corp., saying it would create jobs and help the American economy.

[Energywire](#) reported that the Department of Energy has designated metallurgical coal as a critical material, a move the department says will boost the U.S. steel sector.

[Argus](#) reported that U.S. coal output is on track this quarter to exceed year-earlier levels in every major basin, reflecting recent domestic buyer interest and the resolution of disruptions that affected mining operations last year.

[Energywire](#) reported that on Sunday, MISO ordered Louisiana utilities Entergy and Cleco to implement rotating outages to reduce demand by 600 megawatts to maintain the reliability of the broader bulk power grid with about 100,000 customers losing power for part of the day, mostly in and around New Orleans.

Commodity Prices

Commodity Price - Snapshot		
Metals Prices	Date	Price
Cobalt Spot Price (\$/lb)	5/27/25	\$15.28
Copper Spot Price (\$/lb)	5/27/25	\$4.70
Gold Spot Price (\$/ounce)	5/27/25	\$3,295.75
Lead Spot Price (\$/lb)	5/27/25	\$0.90
Lithium Spot Price (\$/kg)	5/27/25	\$8.61
Molybdenum Spot Price (\$/kg)	5/27/25	\$64.83
Nickel Spot Price (\$/lb)	5/27/25	\$6.97
Silver Spot Price (\$/ounce)	5/27/25	\$32.90
Steel HRC Price (\$/mt)	5/27/25	\$823.23
Steel Rebar Price (\$/mt)	5/27/25	\$421.53
Zinc Spot Price (\$/lb)	5/27/25	\$1.22
Energy Prices	Date	Price
Coal Price - Australian Premium Coking Coal Futures (\$/mt)	5/27/25	\$186.50
Coal Spot Price - Central Appalachian (\$/st)	5/23/25	\$79.00
Coal Spot Price - Newcastle futures (\$/mt)	5/27/25	\$100.10
Coal Spot Price - Rotterdam futures (\$/mt)	5/27/25	\$94.30
Natural Gas Spot Price - Henry Hub (\$/mmbtu)	5/21/25	\$3.19
Uranium Spot Price (\$/lb)	5/27/25	\$72.00

Sources: publicly 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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