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# MINE Update

MINING INDUSTRY NEWS E-COMM UPDATE

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## This Week in The News

It's a big week in Washington. Budget bill negotiations continue in the Senate while the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) launched formal action to repeal Biden-era power plant regulations for carbon and mercury and the Supreme Court unanimously limited National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews. With major changes continuing to roll forth in all three branches of government, 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

Summer is upon us. It's time to brush up on [sun safety](#).

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### EPA Administrator Zeldin Announces Repeal of Coal Plant Air Regulations



EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin today announced the proposed repeal of the Carbon Air Pollution Standards and the Mercury Air Toxics Standards (MATS). The NMA and other industry representatives attended the event, along with Senator Kevin Cramer (R-N.D.), Representative Troy Balderson (R-Ohio), Representative Dan Meuser (R-Pa.), Representative Rob Bresnahan (R-Pa.), Representative Michael Rulli (R-Ohio), Representative Riley Moore (R-W.Va.) and other elected officials and impacted stakeholders.

In repealing the Clean Power Plan 2.0, the EPA is taking comment on two approaches: the main proposal is a wholesale elimination of greenhouse gas

emissions standards for power plants. Under this approach, EPA focuses on the Clean Air Act's "significant contributions finding" under Section 111, concluding that greenhouse gasses from coal, natural gas and oil power plants do not significantly endanger the public health and welfare. EPA's determination would nullify greenhouse gas rules such as the Clean Power Plan 2.0 for existing coal plants, and the Obama era rules for new coal plants. The second more tailored approach finds that carbon, capture, sequestration and storage is not adequately demonstrated or achievable, and therefore not a reasonable Best System of Emission Reduction for power plants. EPA would also rescind the natural gas co-firing requirements as unlawful generating shifting. If finalized, EPA's repeal is expected to save up to \$19 billion in regulatory compliance cost savings.

On MATS, the EPA is proposing to repeal the Biden 2024 MATS amendments, reverting the standards back to the 2012 standards. The EPA pointed out that both under the prior Trump and Biden administrations, residual risk reviews were performed and found no new requirements were necessary, so this proposed action reverts to the standards that were adequate to address any potential public health concerns. In addition, EPA found that the unnecessary 2024 Biden EPA stricter technology standards are not only unnecessary but also not cost effective. The proposal is expected to save up to \$1 billion in regulatory compliance costs.

During the morning stakeholder session, EPA acknowledged that the endangerment finding is not part of this rulemaking package, noting that the agency would address it in a separate announcement. EPA provided no timeframe for this additional policy change. A more detailed NMA memo is forthcoming.

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# Supreme Court Limits Expansive NEPA Reviews

In a victory for the mining industry, the U.S. Supreme Court last week issued an [opinion](#) in the case *Seven County Infrastructure Coalition v. Eagle Co.* regarding the scope of NEPA reviews by federal agencies and the deference afforded agencies. The NMA filed an *amici curiae*, or friend of the court, [brief](#) asking the Court to provide more clarity and set parameters around NEPA reviews from federal agencies. By requiring NEPA analyses of actions and effects outside of an agency's authority to control, federal agencies are constantly forced to stray from NEPA's purpose for informed decision making. We emphasized that the circuit court split exacerbated the need for proper NEPA guardrails and outlined how regulated entities, such as the mining industry, overwhelmingly bear the brunt of the unintended consequences and subsequent litigation from outside parties.

The unanimous 8-0 decision reversed a lower court decision requiring the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to consider environmental effects of upstream and downstream projects that are separate in time or place from the original action. Justice Kavanaugh delivered the majority opinion of the Court, joined by Chief Justice Roberts and Justices Thomas, Alito, and Barrett, ruling that the lower courts failed to afford "substantial judicial deference" to the STB, while also addressing the appropriate scope of NEPA reviews. Justice Gorsuch recused himself from the case. Justice Sotomayor penned a concurring opinion, joined by Justices Kagan and Jackson, agreeing with the reversal of the D.C. Circuit decision but on a narrower basis.

Noting that "some courts have assumed an aggressive role in policing agency compliance with NEPA," and "engaged in overly intrusive (and unpredictable) review in NEPA cases," the majority Court found "it important to reiterate and

clarify the fundamental principles of judicial review applicable in [NEPA] cases.” According to the Court: “The bedrock principle of judicial review in NEPA cases can be stated in a word: Deference.”

Relying on NEPA’s textual focus on “proposed action,” meaning “the project at hand,” the Court directs:

“So long as the EIS addresses environmental effects from the project at issue, courts should defer to agencies' decisions about where to draw the line— including (i) how far to go in considering indirect environmental effects from the project at hand and (ii) whether to analyze environmental effects from other projects separate in time or place from the project at hand.”

Accordingly, “[c]ourts should afford substantial deference and should not micromanage those agency choices so long as they fall within a broad zone of reasonableness.”

A detailed summary of the Court’s opinion is available [here](#).

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## **NMA Continues Mineral Discussion with Chairman Palmer**



The NMA's Katie Sweeney and Justin Prosser met yesterday with House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations Chairman Gary Palmer (R-Ala.) and Vice Chairman Troy Balderson (R-Ohio). The meeting was held to continue discussions which began at a recent hearing, linked [here](#), before the subcommittee where Katie testified on the importance of a robust domestic mining and processing industry to meet the needs of U.S. economic and national security priorities. Chairman Palmer is taking a leading role within the committee on efforts to decouple U.S. mineral reliance on China and other geopolitical adversaries. Katie and Justin discussed the need for more domestic processing and refining capacity utilizing U.S. mineral feedstocks as well as the need for practical solutions to address market manipulation activities impacting domestic mineral supply chains. The NMA will continue to work with Chairman Palmer, Vice Chair Balderson, and committee staff to support solution-oriented policies that promote robust domestic mineral supply chains.

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## **DOI Secretary Burgum Testifies in the House and Senate on FY26 Budget**



Today, Department of the Interior (DOI) Secretary Doug Burgum testified before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee on the President's Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 budget request for the agency. His testimony primarily focused on discussing the agency's efforts to address regulatory hurdles that restrict resource development and improve access to federal lands. He spoke about the benefits of domestic coal production in providing affordable and reliable energy for artificial intelligence and manufacturing as well as the need to mine and process hardrock minerals that are essential to the U.S. economy and national security. He went on to state that "our natural resources are natural assets and should be responsibly developed to grow our economy, help balance the budget, and generate revenue for American taxpayers."

Tomorrow, the Secretary will also testify before the House Natural Resources Committee on the DOI's FY26 budget. Ahead of both hearings, the NMA worked with committee staff and member offices to provide background and questions for the Secretary related to NMA member priorities. Moving forward, the NMA will work to support congress and the administration's efforts to strengthen energy and mineral supply chain for U.S. economic and national security.

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## House Energy Subcommittee Department of Energy FY26 Budget Hearing

This week, the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy held a [hearing](#) titled, “The Fiscal Year 2026 Department of Energy Budget.” The Honorable Chris Wright, Secretary of Energy, testified on the President’s Fiscal Year 2026 budget request with emphasis on addressing energy affordability and reliability as well as funding for energy development and minerals projects. During his appearance, Secretary Wright spoke about the need to grow onshore mineral processing and refining, reaffirmed his commitment to coal for baseload generation. For more information you can read NMA’s memo on the hearing [here](#).

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## House Energy and Commerce Spotlight Clean Air Act Reform to Speed Infrastructure Permitting

The House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment held a [hearing](#) today focused on modernizing the Clean Air Act’s permitting framework. Members reviewed two updated bills derived from the NMA supported [H.R. 7650](#), the Air Quality Standards Implementation Act from the 118th Congress, now split into the [CLEAR Act](#) and the [Clean Air and Building Infrastructure Improvement Act](#).

The hearing, titled “Short-Circuiting Progress: How the Clean Air Act Impacts Building Necessary Infrastructure for Onshoring American Innovation,” highlighted growing concerns that overly rigid air quality rules are hindering investment in manufacturing, energy, and critical materials infrastructure.

Republican members and industry witnesses—including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Georgia Environmental Protection Division—argued that the current NAAQS process is unpredictable and disconnected from real-world permitting timelines. The proposed legislation would extend the NAAQS review cycle from five to ten years, allow greater state flexibility before the Environmental Protection Agency imposes a federal implementation plan, and prevent new air standards from stalling project permits.

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## **EPA Solicits Public Feedback on Draft Risk Assessment for Sewage Sludge Containing PFOA and PFOS**

The EPA [released](#) the [Draft Sewage Sludge Risk Assessment](#) for Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) and Perfluorooctane Sulfonic Acid (PFOS) for public comment. The draft risk assessment reflects the EPA’s latest scientific understanding of the potential risks to human health and the environment posed by the presence of [PFOA and PFOS in sewage sludge](#) that is land applied as a soil conditioner or fertilizer (on agricultural, forested, and other lands), surface disposed (e.g., placed in a sewage sludge-only landfill called a monofill), or incinerated. Sewage sludge, commonly referred to as biosolids, is a nutrient-rich solid that is derived from the wastewater treatment process. If this risk assessment is approved, it may impact mining sites that use, or previously used, biosolids for various reasons (e.g., mining reclamation, beneficial reuse, soil stabilization). The NMA’s concern is that previous land application of biosolids could be considered a source of historical contamination at mining facilities. EPA recently [extended](#) the comment period on this risk assessment to Aug. 14, 2025. Additional details and opportunity to provide feedback are summarized [here](#).

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## House Energy Subcommittee Advances Bills to Support Grid Reliability

The House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy advanced 13 bills last week focused on strengthening electric grid reliability, improving interagency coordination, and preserving fuel-secure generation. Several measures endorsed by the NMA would delay premature coal retirements, constrain regulatory overreach, and reestablish a formal advisory role for coal at the Department of Energy (DOE). Among the bills that passed along party lines were the H.R. 3616, the [Reliable Power Act](#) and H.R. 3632, the [Power Plant Reliability Act](#), which would expand FERC's authority to block regulations that threaten reliability and require advance notice for generation retirements. H.R. 3015, the [National Coal Council Reestablishment Act](#) would make permanent the Council's role advising DOE on coal and energy reliability. Other bills supported by the NMA include H.R. 3628, the [State Planning for Reliability and Affordability Act](#), directing states to evaluate long-term resource reliability, and the H.R. 3157, the [State Energy Accountability Act](#), which increases transparency on the impacts of renewable mandates. The NMA continues to work with the full Committee to refine and advance these measures.

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## Kentucky Mine Rescue Competitions Showcase Best in Safety



The Western Kentucky Safety Days mine rescue competitions took place May 20–22, 2025, in Madisonville, Kentucky and brought together dedicated mine rescue teams from across the region to test their skills, teamwork and technical expertise. Over several days, teams competed in various categories, demonstrating their preparedness for emergency situations and their commitment to safety in the mining industry. NMA member company teams who were recognized included Warrior Coal’s Warrior Mine Rescue team, River View Coal’s River View Team, Sunrise Coal Company’s Sunrise Coal Mine Rescue Team, Prairie State’s Lively Grove Mine Rescue Team, Gibson County Coal’s Gibson South Mine Rescue Team, and Hamilton County Coal Alliance’s Coal Team. This year’s competition underscored the unwavering dedication of mine rescue teams to safety and emergency preparedness. Congratulations to all participating teams and those that secured top placements in their respective categories.

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## **Save-The-Date: Oct. 23-24 Environment & Lands Committee Meeting**

We are excited to announce the dates for the Fall Environment and Lands Committee meeting in Washington, D.C. **Please mark your calendar for this two-day program on Oct. 23 and Oct. 24, 2025.** This meeting will be held in the conference center located on the second floor of the NMA office building at 101 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. Like years past, this meeting is designed for in-person attendance. Virtual attendance options will not be provided. The NMA team is developing an informative program where members will: (1) receive an overarching staff update on priority rulemaking and policy matters; (2) have an opportunity to engage in strategy discussions and network with colleagues; and (3) hear directly from a slate of key executive branch and congressional staff that are working on our priorities with opportunities for direct engagement. Additional information will be shared on the agenda later this summer. If you plan to attend this meeting, please fill out this [RSVP form](#) so that we have an accurate list of attendees for planning purposes.

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## NMA and Third Parties In the News

[Harrisburg Patriot News](#) (Pa.) 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.

[Newsweek](#) mentions the NMA in an op-ed that argues for manufacturing to continue growing our economy, creating jobs and developing the best products in the world, the United States must update its permitting laws and procedures.

[E&E Greenwire](#) quotes the NMA in reporting that President Donald Trump's mad dash to unleash more mining is running into unfavorable market realities.

From our third parties, [Real Clear Energy](#) (D.C.) carries an op-ed by Robert Chase, a registered professional engineer in Ohio, in which he argues to counter China, we must revisit strategic storage, a great policy success, and invest once again in American security.

## Mining and Energy News

[Argus](#) reported that coal generation in the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) rose from year-earlier levels in May, as natural gas and wind power use continued to decline.

[E&E News PM](#) reported that EPA is ordering significant changes to the state-issued Clean Air Act permit for the South32 Hermosa mining project in southern Arizona's Patagonia Mountains to address concerns raised by environmental groups.

[Coal Hub](#) reported that within the next decade, global steelmakers face major capital expenditure decisions about the relining (replacement of refractory brickwork) upgrades for coal-based blast furnaces, according to analysis of 13 major steel producers by the Australasian Centre for Corporate Responsibility (ACCR).

[Argus](#) reported that coal producer Core Natural Resources will pause operations at its Itmann mine in August due to weaker than expected coking coal demand.

[Politico Pro](#) and [Energywire](#) reported that the administration issued a waiver allowing it to expand the use of the Defense Production Act in a bid to boost production of critical minerals and weapons in the U.S.

[\*\*Associated Press\*\*](#) reported that President Trump hiked nearly all of his tariffs on steel and aluminum imports to 50 percent in a move that may impact businesses from automakers to home builders and likely push up prices for consumers.

[\*\*Argus\*\*](#) reported that coal generation in the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) was at its highest level for any May since 2022 even as electricity demand in the grid's footprint was lower.

[\*\*Washington Examiner\*\*](#) reported that major automakers are considering moving auto-parts manufacturing to China as a way to navigate the country's hold on rare earths.

The [\*\*World Steel Association's\*\*](#) recent *2025 World Steel in Figures* report shows global steel production has remained relatively stable since 2020 with nearly 1.9 billion metric tons produced in 2024. Of that total, basic oxygen furnace (BOF) or blast furnace technologies using coal still represent the dominant steelmaking process at 70.4 percent of global steel production.

The [\*\*Bureau of Land Management\*\*](#) is requesting input on Warrior Met Coal's two proposed coal leases (expansions) in Alabama.

[\*\*Argus\*\*](#) reported that U.S. thermal coal exports rose from year-earlier levels for a second month in April, led by greater shipments to India, Morocco, Japan and Canada.

[\*\*Washington Examiner\*\*](#) reported that Graphite One, a mining company, has won the first approval for a mining project for critical minerals in Alaska under the federal government's fast-track permitting program.

The [\*\*Interior Department\*\*](#) announced last week that it has approved coal

producer Signal Peak's mining plan to resume expansion work on acreage of federal and non-federal land associated with the company's Bull Mountains coal mining complex in Montana.

[Energywire](#) reported that the grid spanning the central U.S. should have adequate electric generation next summer, but the longer-term outlook is clouded with uncertainty, according to analysis by the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) and state regulators.

[E&E News PM](#) reported that a federal judge declined to intervene in the advancement of the Resolution copper mine in Arizona opposed by tribal members but also ruled that the Forest Service cannot move ahead with the land exchange until 60 days after completing and issuing a final environmental impact statement.

## Commodity Prices

<b>Commodity Prices - Snapshot</b>				
<b>Metals Prices</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Price</b>
Cobalt Spot Price (\$/lb)	6/3/24	\$15.28	6/10/24	\$15.12
Copper Spot Price (\$/lb)	6/3/24	\$4.82	6/10/24	\$4.87
Gold Spot Price (\$/ounce)	6/3/24	\$3,358.20	6/10/24	\$3,327.65
Lead Spot Price (\$/lb)	6/3/24	\$0.90	6/10/24	\$0.90
Lithium Spot Price (\$/kg)	6/3/24	\$8.38	6/10/24	\$8.39
Molybdenum Spot Price (\$/kg)	6/3/24	\$66.29	6/10/24	\$66.73
Nickel Spot Price (\$/lb)	6/3/24	\$6.99	6/10/24	\$6.94
Silver Spot Price (\$/ounce)	6/3/24	\$34.25	6/10/24	\$36.76
Steel HRC Price (\$/mt)	6/3/24	\$870.71	6/10/24	\$879.80
Steel Rebar Price (\$/mt)	6/3/24	\$407.78	6/10/24	\$411.01
Zinc Spot Price (\$/lb)	6/3/24	\$1.22	6/10/24	\$1.20
<b>Energy Prices</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Price</b>
Coal Price - Austr. Prem. Coking Coal Futures (\$/mt)	6/3/24	\$183.00	6/10/24	\$177.00
Coal Spot Price - Central Appalachian (\$/st)	5/30/24	\$79.00	6/6/24	\$79.00
Coal Spot Price - Newcastle futures (\$/mt)	6/3/24	\$104.14	6/10/24	\$103.53
Coal Spot Price - Rotterdam futures (\$/mt)	6/3/24	\$98.90	6/10/24	\$102.70
Natural Gas Spot Price - Henry Hub (\$/mmbtu)	5/28/24	\$3.14	6/4/24	\$2.82
Uranium Spot Price (\$/lb)	6/3/24	\$71.90	6/10/24	\$70.50

Sources: publicly available data from [eia.gov](https://www.eia.gov), [dailymetalprice.com](https://www.dailymetalprice.com), [tradingeconomics.com](https://www.tradingeconomics.com), [sgx.com](https://www.sgx.com), [investing.com](https://www.investing.com)

**CORESafety**



In the June edition of CORESafety TV, we discuss CORESafety's Module Number five, Organizational Safety Culture.



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