

# CEO Mine Recap

By Rich Nolan • Dec 02, 2024

Smart Brevity® count: 4 mins...1054 words

With the election now in the rearview mirror, from where I sit in Washington, this cycle was anything but predictable. Looking solely at the elections, Republicans took control not only of the White House, but narrowly the House and the Senate as well. Mining formally became a bipartisan campaign issue with both presidential candidates proactively discussing the importance of domestic mining on the campaign trail and in their economic plans. And legal cases impacting our industry have been before our nation’s highest court multiple times—with some wins and some disappointments.

Whether it was fluctuating commodity prices, China and Russia’s market manipulation, an unrelenting regulatory assault or workforce challenges, this industry came together in the face of adversity to demonstrate unwavering strength. Through technological innovations that increase productivity and safety, and innovative mergers and acquisitions that allow producers to better meet the rising global demand for mined materials, U.S. mining showed how it delivers in any environment.

If you ask me what I’m feeling at the end of this year it’s optimism. Yes, we still face headwinds. But I truly believe tremendous opportunities are within our grasp and the NMA team is poised to partner with you to take advantage of all of them in 2025.

## Majority of Cabinet Picks Are In

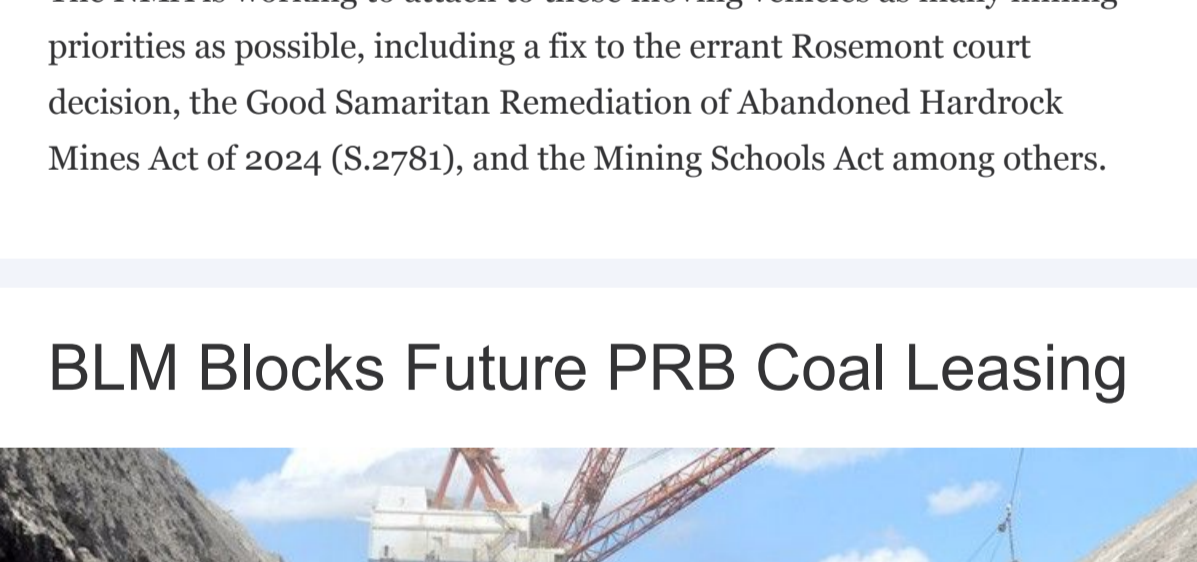


President-elect Donald Trump announced his nominations for the next Trump administration and, while each holds the potential to impact our industry, these are the leaders with whom our industry is most likely to interact.

- Gov. Doug Bergum (R-N.D.), Department of the Interior (DOI).** Bergum was elected governor of North Dakota in 2016. As governor, he strongly favored an all-of-the-above energy policy, supporting the use of carbon capture technologies to reduce carbon emissions while continuing to use fossil fuels. He will also lead a newly created National Energy Council, a multi-agency effort to boost U.S. energy production and eliminate regulations and red tape that slow development in the U.S.
- Chris Wright, Department of Energy.** Wright is the founder, CEO and Chairman of the Board of Liberty Energy, a Denver-based hydraulic fracturing company. He is a strong supporter of fossil fuel production and use. Prior to founding Liberty, he was CEO of Pinnacle and Chairman of Stroud Energy, a shale gas producer. As Secretary of Energy, Wright will also be a member of the National Energy Council.
- Lee Zeldin, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).** Zeldin is an attorney and former four-term congressman from Long Island, N.Y. In an unsuccessful 2022 bid for governor of New York, he ran on a deregulatory platform, emphasizing the need for domestic energy production.
- Congresswoman Lori Chavez-DeRemer (R-Ore.), Department of Labor.** Chavez-DeRemer was first elected in 2023 as the first Republican woman to represent Oregon in the House and one of the first two Hispanic women elected to Congress from Oregon. She served one term in the House before being defeated in 2024. She was one of only three House Republicans to co-sponsor the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act and one of only eight Republicans to co-sponsor the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act.
- Jamieson Greer, U.S. Trade Representative.** Greer served as chief of staff to Trump’s former U.S. trade representative, Robert Lighthizer, who championed tariffs on Chinese imports and the renegotiation of the North American free trade deal with Canada and Mexico during Trumps first term.
- Scott Bessent, Secretary of the Treasury.** Bessent currently leads a macro hedge fund, has worked for George Soros, has taught at Yale, and made his name on Wall Street by betting against currencies. He has a reputation as a fiscal hawk, and he has proposed a “3-3-3” approach to the economy: grow the economy by 3 percent by deregulating, cut the deficit to 3 percent of GDP with spending freezes, and maximize domestic energy production.

For a full list of all reported names associated with cabinet-level positions, please click [here](#).

## What to Expect in the Lame Duck



Despite the spotlight on the election and Cabinet picks, key pieces of legislation have moved in the last month, including the NMA-backed bipartisan Critical Mineral Consistency Act of 2024 (H.R. 8446) and the Mining Schools Act (H.R. 2685).

With three weeks in December to complete its works, Congress needs to pass a continuing resolution to fund the government beyond December 20, and is expected to pass a disaster supplemental, the defense authorization bill and the water resources development act.

In the mix is also a package of bills colloquially know as a “lands package,” which the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee is negotiating with the House Resources Committee.

The NMA is working to attach to these moving vehicles as many mining priorities as possible, including a fix to the errant Rosemont court decision, the Good Samaritan Remediation of Abandoned Hardrock Mines Act of 2024 (S.2781), and the Mining Schools Act among others.

## BLM Blocks Future PRB Coal Leasing



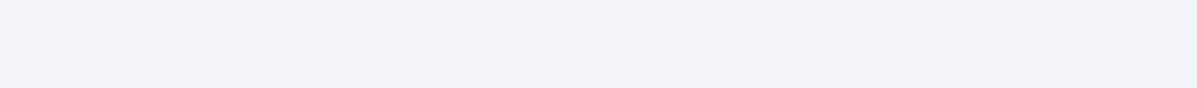
Last week the Biden administration published two final plans to end new federal coal leases in Montana and Wyoming, home to 40 percent of U.S. coal production.

**What they said.** “The decision is to make no federal coal available for future leasing...The BLM would not accept new coal lease applications, only existing coal leases could be developed, which would continue through their associated lease terms,” said BLM in its decision.

**What we said.** The NMA immediately fired back saying, in part, “These reckless land grabs in the administration’s final days ignore our energy reality — our grid is stretched to its limits with energy demand only increasing and [our] nation continues to need federal coal to provide affordable and reliable electricity to American homes and businesses... We have repeatedly voiced our strong objection to BLM, and will be pursuing our options in the courts.”

We will keep you posted on our next steps on the legal front.

## BLM Finalizes Sage Grouse Plans



BLM [announced](#) its Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Resource Management Plan Amendment (RMP) for its Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) [Range-wide Planning](#).

Here’s what you need to know:

- It increases protections for the sage grouse and potentially creates additional hurdles for mining on federal land.
- It does not propose new areas of critical environmental concern for designation and does not contemplate a mineral withdrawal.

Protests on the final plan are due Dec. 16, 2024, and the team is hard at work preparing the NMA’s response.

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