



RICH NOLAN
President & CEO

October 5, 2020

The Honorable Andrew Wheeler
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

RE: "Executive Order on Addressing the Threat to the Domestic Supply Chain from
Reliance on Critical Minerals from Foreign Adversaries"

Dear Administrator Wheeler:

On behalf of the National Mining Association (NMA), I would like to express our support for President Trump's recent Executive Order on "Addressing the Threat to the Domestic Supply Chain from Reliance on Critical Minerals from Foreign Adversaries." The NMA and its members stand ready to assist your efforts to prepare reports, guidance, and recommendations to strengthen our nation's mineral supply chain for economic and national security applications.

The President's Executive Order correctly stated that "a stronger domestic mining and processing industry fosters a healthier and faster-growing economy for the United States." With \$6.2 trillion worth of key domestic mineral resources, the U.S. leads the world in the breadth of its commodity mineral reserves and has a combined direct and indirect employment of 1.2 million jobs. As the front end of the supply chain for nearly all manufactured goods, the NMA and our mineral producers look forward to supplying the raw materials needed for America's economic recovery and future growth.

The new Executive Order addresses these long-standing issues and builds off the President's 2017 Executive Order, 13817, by refocusing our nation's priorities on a secure supply chain of critical minerals and rare earth elements vital to key sectors of the U.S. economic. Equally important, it goes beyond the existing list of 35 metals and minerals previously identified to take a more holistic approach to providing the of the very resources that domestic manufacturers need to rebuild our economy.

The demand for these resources will only continue to grow, and the U.S. must remain competitive to attract necessary investment. The World Bank Group recently published an update of its annual report finding that the production of minerals such as graphite, lithium and cobalt would need to increase 500 percent to meet the growing demand in

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Page Two

new technologies. It is not a question of if minerals will be mined to meet every increasing demand. It is simply a question of where they will be mined.

With the Executive Order, the U.S. is taking credible action address the pitfalls, duplication and inefficiencies of our existing permitting system which currently takes between seven and 10 years – or longer – to permit a mine. Reducing these timeframes while maintaining environmental protections and ensuring access to public lands for responsible resource development will help ensure that the current trend of increased mineral import dependence from geopolitical adversaries does not continue.

As you work to implement this Executive Order, please use the NMA and its hardrock members as a resource to assist in our shared goals of a strong, secure, and reliable supply chain for critical minerals and rare earth elements. We stand ready to assist and thank you for your efforts. Should you have any questions, please contact Justin Prosser at jprosser@nma.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rich Nolan', with a stylized, cursive script.

Rich Nolan