

Short Title: Putting US Minerals to Work

Paragraph: Putting US Minerals to Work: The US is blessed with an abundance of minerals (e.g., copper, gold, silver, platinum, molybdenum) that are critical to our way of life and to our economic and national security. Yet, money invested in US minerals exploration has declined by 66% since 1997—leading to greater dependence on outside sources and the loss of high paying mining jobs. We need a national minerals strategy to ensure a reliable supply of materials and to keep high-wage jobs at home.

Description: Putting US Minerals to Work

Of the 20 nations that account for nearly 90 percent of the world's mineral reserves, based on value, the US ranks among the top five. Much of that reserve is on federal lands in the 11 Western States and Alaska. Importantly, few countries have the combination of mining technology, engineering expertise and infrastructure to develop these resources in an environmentally responsible manner.

Further, US and worldwide demand for minerals and metals has never been greater. Last year, the major minerals-consuming industries in the US added \$1.7 trillion to our Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to produce cars, refrigerators, airplanes, medical equipment, machinery, computers and the like. Yet, the US Geological Survey reported in January that:

- Of all the money invested in global mineral exploration in 2002, the US share was just 7%--a 66% decline from just 1997;
- The US is already 100 percent import-dependent on 16 major minerals. These range from bauxite to titanium critical for our national defense; and
- Over 10,000 jobs have been lost at US metals mines since the mid-1990s—jobs that are consistently the highest paying in the state.

Why has this happened? Surveys of mining exploration companies cite two primary reasons:

- Opponents of mining are very vocal and supporters are too passive—leaving the impression that mining simply isn't wanted by a community. This perception of "Not in My Back Yard" or NIMBY, has led some mining companies to abandon the US and to look elsewhere to invest and create jobs; and
- The length, complexity and uncertainty of the US permitting process—particularly for permitting new mining operations on federal lands—makes other countries more attractive.

To turn these trends around, we need public policy that provides regulatory certainty for investment decision-makers and creates a level playing field for US operators—making our country an attractive place to do business.

Your elected officials need to hear from you that Putting US Minerals to Work is important to you, our way of life and our economic and national security.

To learn about the importance of mining in your state,  
[http://www.nma.org/statistics/state\\_statistics\\_2002.asp](http://www.nma.org/statistics/state_statistics_2002.asp)

For more information, contact the National Mining Association, [www.nma.org](http://www.nma.org)