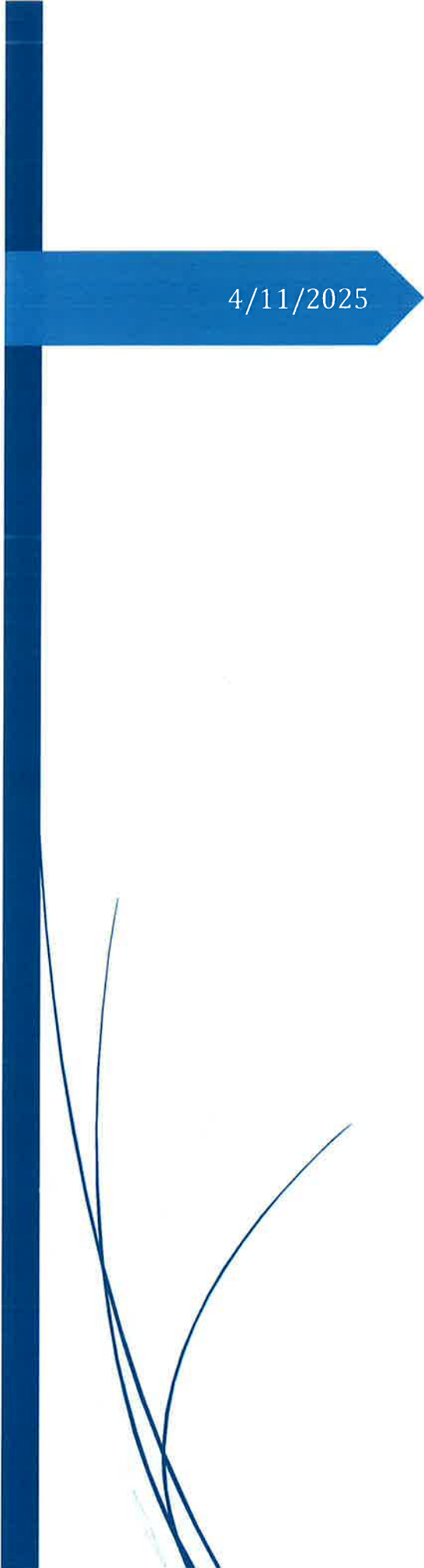




4/11/2025

Unlocking Alaska's Mineral Potential

**State of Alaska Report in Response to
Executive Order 14241**

**Prepared for: The White House, Department of
the Interior, and the National Energy
Dominance Council**

Drafted By: Representative Rauscher HD - 29, Craig Valdez
Prepared by the Office of Representative George Rauscher

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April 2025

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Governor Mike Dunleavy
STATE OF ALASKA

April 11, 2025

Mr. Doug Burgum
Secretary of the Interior
United States Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Secretary Burgum,

In just over two months since being sworn in, the Administration of President Donald Trump has moved swiftly to improve the nation's economy and national security and develop its natural resources. As the Governor of Alaska, I am excited for the opportunities that these policy actions create in the area of mineral development.

Beginning with the January 20 Executive Order, Unleashing Alaska's Extraordinary Resource Potential, Section 2(a) makes it "the policy of the United States to fully avail itself of Alaska's vast lands and resources for the benefit of the Nation and the American citizens who call Alaska home." The Executive Order was followed by your Secretarial Order 3422, which directs the Department to take all necessary steps to access Alaska's natural resources. Then, on March 20, your Department issued a follow-up suite of actions calculated to carry out implementation of the President's Order. Among other things, it revoked withdrawals in Interior Alaska in order to promote mineral development.

I am immensely grateful for those Executive and Secretarial Orders that emphasize Alaska's resource potential and direct policy to produce those resources.

The attachment to this letter outlines the State of Alaska's response to the March 20, 2025, Executive Order, Immediate Measures to Increase American Mineral Production, which directs the Secretaries of the Departments of Defense, Interior, Agriculture, and Energy to identify as many sites as possible on Federal land that may be suitable for mineral development. As you are aware, Alaska has roughly 222 million acres of federal land within its borders, and we have dozens of areas to look for further mineral opportunities on public lands in our State.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit information and to work with you to achieve the President's policies for developing Alaska's resources. This attachment was put together with the help of Alaska State Representative George Rauscher's office. Representative Rauscher is a long-time leading advocate for mining and resource development in the Alaska State Legislature. Alaska is open for business and stands to significantly enrich the President's efforts to advance domestic mineral production.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Dunleavy".

Mike Dunleavy
Governor

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Executive Summary

Alaska holds an estimated 15% of the nation's critical mineral supply potential but accounts for less than 4% of active mineral operations on federal lands. This disparity reflects significant untapped opportunity, and a need for federal alignment to unlock access to Alaska's lands for responsible development to advance national priorities.

This report provides a strategic and actionable overview of Alaska's critical mineral potential in direct response to Executive Order 14241, Immediate Measures to Increase American Mineral Production. It includes:

- A policy overview of EO 14241 and how Alaska supports its goals
- Detailed project pages outlining location, mineral profiles, infrastructure, and specific federal actions required
- A section aligning Alaska's projects with U.S. national mineral strategy
- An appendix for quick reference by policymakers and agency staff

With over 220 million acres of federal land and significant untapped mineral wealth, Alaska is uniquely positioned to reduce U.S. dependence on foreign critical mineral imports. This briefing identifies near-term opportunities that can be advanced with federal coordination, permitting reform, and determination.

Focus Areas:

High-Potential Federal Lands

- Palmer Project (copper, zinc, silver, barite)
- Ambler Mining District
- Denali Highway Corridor
- Rare Earth element zones near Fairbanks
- Highly Mineralized and underexplored Tongass National Forest due to 2001 Roadless Rule
- Prince of Wales Island

Key Federal Policy Priorities

- Lifting Public Land Order 5150
- Exempting the Tongass from the 2001 Roadless Rule
- Revising the Central Yukon Resource Management Plan
- Ending 17(d)(1) land withdrawals under ANCSA
- Utilizing domestic financing tools through the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation

Together, these priorities represent a practical roadmap to reduce mineral import reliance, strengthen energy and defense resilience, and create economic opportunity across Alaska.

How This Fits the National Strategy

Alaska plays a pivotal role in advancing the goals of the United States' critical minerals strategy. As directed under Executive Order 14241, and consistent with Department of Defense priorities, the U.S. Geological Survey's Critical Minerals List, other minerals lists, and the Administration's defense objectives, Alaska's mineral resources represent some of the most consequential, extensive, and accessible domestic supplies in the nation.

Each project area detailed in this report satisfies one or more of the federal criteria for prioritization:

- Supports the domestic supply of minerals deemed critical or strategic to national security, energy resilience, or advanced manufacturing.
- Reduces dependence on foreign-controlled supply chains, particularly for minerals dominated by geopolitical competitors.
- Aligns with FAST-41 permitting reform efforts and federal goals to accelerate timelines under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act
- Offers workforce development and high-wage employment in economically underserved regions.
- Has near-term permitting potential or established infrastructure connections, positioning it for early-stage advancement.

Alaska's unique mineral position is not theoretical, it is operational. The projects identified in this report are located in geologically verified regions, supported by existing claims, and in many cases already undergoing planning, permitting, or exploration. Their advancement would directly reinforce U.S. efforts to reshore supply chains, build industrial resilience, and create secure long-term access to rare earths, battery metals, and industrial inputs vital to energy and defense infrastructure.

Executive Order 14241 Section 5, Land Use Mineral Projects, subsection (a) directs Departments to submit, within 10 days, a list of projects for which a plan of operations or other application have been submitted and in the next 10 days following, identify priority projects that can be immediately approved or permits can be immediately issued, or take actions to expedite and issue relevant permits and approvals. The Secretary of Interior and the National Energy Dominance Council Chair indicated the White House was first focused on "shovel ready" projects. The list of projects and sites that meet this criterion was submitted by companies that were already mining and exploring in Alaska prior to the March 30 deadline.

After providing agency decision-makers with a curated set of realistic, near-term mineral opportunities, this report supports the next step of Fast implementation of Executive Order 14241. It is intended to facilitate interagency coordination, surface-level policy alignment, and determined executive-level action in support of America's broader mineral security strategy.

Palmer Project

Southeast Alaska. The Palmer Project is located in Southeast Alaska, approximately 35 miles northwest of the town of Haines, near the Canada–U.S.

Project Summary & National Relevance

The Palmer Project is a volcanogenic massive sulfide (VMS) deposit containing copper, zinc, silver, gold, and barite.

Minerals & Strategic Value

Copper, Zinc, Silver, Gold, Barite, all vital to U.S. industrial, energy, and defense applications, including power grids, EVs, communications, and strategic mineral reserves. Barite in particular is key element for drilling mud for oil and gas development.

Stage of Development

The project is in the advanced exploration stage with an approved Plan of Operations. Feasibility and baseline data collection has been ongoing for several years. Environmental review and pre-permitting work are expected within the next three years.

Economic Impact

The Palmer Project comprises 340 federal unpatented mining claims and 63 state claims. Based on current VMS mineral resource projections, the in-ground value is estimated to exceed \$3.5 billion. Project development would create high-paying jobs and increase Southeast Alaska's contribution to national mineral security.

border. The site lies within the Porcupine Mining District and includes both federal and state claims. 59.243°N, 135.574°W

Located near Haines, Alaska, the project benefits from both state and federal mineral claims with road access to tidewater, the Palmer Project is uniquely positioned for low-cost infrastructure development and represents the foundation of a new strategic mining district in Southeast Alaska.

Infrastructure & Permitting

The site has road access and proximity to deepwater port facilities, minimizing logistical and capital hurdles. Federal permitting is achievable with interagency coordination and prioritization under EO 14241.

Workforce & Economic Opportunity

Palmer would drive year-round employment in the Haines region, Southeast Alaska and could support regional training programs in mining, logistics, and environmental stewardship.

Federal Actions Needed

- Prioritize Palmer under EO 14241 and FAST-41
- Support coordination between BLM and State of Alaska on dual-claim permitting
- Recognize barite copper and zinc as strategic minerals in federal rulemaking
- Include the Palmer District in Earth MRI mapping and USGS data acquisition.

Bokan Mountain

Location: Prince of Wales Island, Southeast Alaska. The Bokan Mountain Property is located approximately 37 miles southwest of the business and commercial center of Ketchikan, Alaska. The approximate geographic center of the Property lies at 54° 55' north latitude and 132° 08' west longitude.

Project Summary & National Relevance

Bokan Mountain hosts one of the highest-grade heavy rare earth elements (HREE) deposits in the United States. Located on Prince of Wales Island in Southeast Alaska, the project has completed a preliminary feasibility study and represents a unique opportunity to establish a secure domestic supply chain for rare earths critical to defense systems, clean energy technologies, and advanced manufacturing. Its advancement supports national goals to reduce dependence on foreign-controlled HREE sources, particularly China.

Minerals & Strategic Value

Heavy Rare Earth Elements (HREEs), including dysprosium, terbium, and yttrium, are essential to permanent magnets, precision-guided munitions, wind turbines, and electric vehicle motors. Bokan is one of the few domestic sources of these high-value elements.

Stage of Development

The project is at the feasibility stage, with detailed technical studies nearly completed. Environmental permitting is underway alongside ongoing community engagement and pre-development planning.

Infrastructure & Permitting

The site has marine access with existing trails and barge landings. Road and power infrastructure will be needed for full development and are achievable with state and federal support. Permitting is underway and would benefit from federal prioritization and streamlined review.

Workforce & Economic Opportunity

Bokan would generate high-wage jobs in mining, engineering, logistics, and environmental monitoring. Its development aligns directly with U.S. efforts to rebuild the domestic rare earth supply chain and strengthen the defense industrial base.

Federal Actions Needed

- Qualify Bokan for Department of Defense Title III and Defense Production Act funding
- Designate Bokan as a priority critical mineral site under EO 13817 and EO 14241
- Expedite permitting through FAST-41 and coordinated DOI processes

Ambler Mining District

Location: Northwest Arctic Alaska
(67.1°N, 157.5°W)

The Ambler Mining District is located in the southern Brooks Range of Northwest Alaska, near the villages of Ambler, Kobuk, and Shungnak. It lies approximately 162 miles west of the Dalton Highway and 168 miles east of Kotzebue. The proposed 211-mile Ambler Road would provide industrial access across state, federal, and Alaska Native corporation lands.

Project Summary & National Relevance

The Ambler District is one of the largest undeveloped high-grade copper-zinc belts in the world. It hosts multiple advanced exploration targets, including the Arctic and Bornite deposits, both containing copper, zinc, lead, silver, and gold. These metals are essential to energy, transportation, and defense infrastructure. The district's development hinges on the Ambler Access Project—a 211-mile controlled industrial road that would connect the region to the Dalton Highway at milepost 161.

With federal coordination, the Ambler District could emerge as a nationally significant source of critical and strategic minerals. The area's vast resource potential, combined with its lack of current infrastructure, makes it a priority for federal permitting, planning, and investment.

Minerals & Strategic Value

Copper, Zinc, Lead, Silver, Gold, essential for grid infrastructure, batteries, and defense electronics.

Stage of Development

Advanced exploration and pre-development. Further progress is contingent on road access approval and environmental permitting.

Infrastructure & Permitting

There is no current road access to the mineral belt. Development depends on completing the Ambler Road, which must pass through BLM- and NPS-managed lands under ANILCA right-of-way provisions.

Workforce & Economic Opportunity

Development would generate substantial employment in rural Alaska and deliver long-term economic benefits to nearby Alaska Native communities and corporations.

Federal Actions Needed

- Approve and fund Ambler Road through BLM and NPS processes.
- Elevate Ambler Access as a strategic national project under EO 14241.
- Include Ambler District in USGS critical mineral assessments.
- Fulfill mandatory Congressional policy direction in Section 201(4)(b) of ANILCA to provide access from the Ambler Mining District to the Haul Road.

Denali Highway Corridor

Location: Southcentral Interior Alaska (63.1°N, 147.7°W)

The Denali Highway Corridor lies within a non-park segment of the Denali region in Southcentral Interior Alaska. It is accessible by the Denali Highway, which runs between Paxson and Cantwell. The area contains multiple known polymetallic and nickel-bearing prospects but remains largely underexplored due to outdated federal land withdrawals and limited recent geophysical work.

Project Summary & National Relevance

The Denali Highway Corridor holds significant potential for the domestic production of base and battery metals, including nickel, copper, and platinum group elements. These resources are vital for electric vehicles, energy storage, and defense-related alloys.

The region's road accessibility and proximity to existing power infrastructure and the Alaska Railroad corridor give it a competitive logistical advantage. Renewed interest in domestic nickel and critical minerals supply makes this corridor a priority for coordinated federal exploration and permitting support.

Minerals & Strategic Value

Nickel, Copper, Platinum Group Metals, crucial for batteries, EVs, stainless steel production, and high-strength alloys.

Stage of Development

Early exploration. Requires renewed geophysical surveys and access.

Infrastructure & Permitting

The corridor is accessible via the Denali Highway. However, large tracts are restricted under ANCSA 17(d)(1) withdrawals, limiting access to federal claims. Additional investment is needed in survey data and potential rail logistics planning.

Workforce & Economic Opportunity

The area's road access enables efficient workforce mobilization and equipment transport. Development would support long-term exploration jobs and future mining operations in central Alaska.

Federal Actions Needed

- Lift blanket ANCSA 17(d)(1) withdrawals in the corridor.
- Support new geophysical surveys via Earth MRI.
- Designate corridor as a priority exploration zone in BLM land planning.

Rare Earth Deposits near Fairbanks

Location: Interior Alaska (64.838°N, 147.72°W)

The area surrounding Fairbanks in Interior Alaska hosts several known rare earth elements (REE) and polymetallic occurrences. These include both light and heavy rare earths, along with copper, antimony, and zinc prospects. The region is geologically favorable and distinguished by its proximity to infrastructure, making it one of the most accessible and cost-effective locations for strategic mineral development in Alaska. Especially when paired with cheap AKLNG.

Project Summary & National Relevance

Rare earth deposits near Fairbanks offer a strategic opportunity to build a domestic supply chain for minerals essential to defense and advanced manufacturing. Unlike many U.S. REE prospects, these sites benefit from immediate access to roads, rail, utilities, and workforce—dramatically lowering development costs and timelines. Prior drilling and geophysical studies have confirmed mineralized zones that merit further exploration.

This region presents a compelling case for federal prioritization due to its balance of mineral potential and logistical readiness. Coordinated investment in exploration and permitting could unlock a viable

domestic source of rare earths and base metals.

Minerals & Strategic Value

Light and Heavy Rare Earth Elements, Copper, Zinc, and Antimony, essential for EVs, solar panels, wind turbines, electronics, and military systems.

Stage of Development

Undeveloped. Prior drilling and assessments have confirmed mineralized zones. Additional geological work and permitting are needed to advance exploration.

Infrastructure & Permitting

The area is near Fairbanks, with direct access to highways, rail, electric power, and telecommunications. This reduces the capital intensity typically required for remote projects.

Workforce & Economic Opportunity

Proximity to Fairbanks allows direct access to skilled labor, including partnerships with the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), vocational training programs, and existing supply chains.

Federal Actions Needed

- Prioritize for streamlined permitting and environmental review under EO 14241
- Coordinate geological mapping and assessments with USGS and State of Alaska
- Preserve public access to mineralized federal lands near population centers

Tongass National Forest Mineral, and Hydropower Opportunities

Southeast Alaska (56.5°N, 133.5°W)

The Tongass National Forest, the largest in the U.S., spans 16.9 million acres and contains 148 documented mineral deposits and over 930 mineral tracts with known or likely potential. Despite this, development remains minimal due to restrictive federal policies, especially the 2001 Roadless Rule, which limits road access needed for mineral and hydropower development.

Project Summary & National Relevance

The Tongass Mineral Belt is Southeast Alaska's largest underutilized mineral zone, with polymetallic deposits of copper, zinc, silver, gold, and rare earth elements (REEs). Historic assessments, including the 2008 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), identified many high-potential tracts, but road access restrictions and permitting delays have stalled progress.

A 1991 U.S. Geological Survey study estimated discovered minerals at \$37.1 billion and undiscovered at \$28.3 billion (1988 prices). Adjusted for inflation and current values, the Tongass likely holds over \$100 billion in mineral potential, making it one of the most valuable undeveloped belts in the U.S.

Minerals & Strategic Value

Copper, Zinc, Silver, Gold, Rare Earth Elements, essential for EVs, power grids, communications, and defense technologies.

Stage of Development

Largely undeveloped despite legacy exploration, geological mapping, and FEIS-validated mineral tracts. New assessments are needed.

Infrastructure & Permitting

The primary barrier is lack of road access due to the 2001 Roadless Rule restrictions. Limited infrastructure exists near population centers and ports. Expanded mapping and USDA willingness to encourage mining are needed to develop this VMS area that is the size of West Virginia for the benefit of the nation.

Workforce & Economic Opportunity

Access to even a portion of mineral tracts would stimulate rural employment across Southeast Alaska, including opportunities for Alaska Native corporations and regional communities.

Federal Actions Needed

- Permanently exempt the Tongass from the 2001 Roadless Rule
- Reopen and update FEIS/DEIS documents related to previously studied mineral tracts
- Direct the U.S. Forest Service to prioritize road access, permitting and mineral project development within the Forest
- Direct the US Forest Service to prioritize hydropower development within the Forest.

Appendix A: Project Summary Table

Project	Region	Minerals	Stage	Federal Action Needed
Palmer Project	Haines Area, Southeast Alaska	Copper, Zinc, Silver, Gold, Barite, vital for electrification, communications, and industrial minerals.	Advanced exploration. Plan of Operations approved; environmental review anticipated within three years.	Prioritize Palmer under EO 14241 and FAST-41. Support coordination between BLM and State of Alaska on dual-claim permitting. Recognize barite, copper and zinc as strategic minerals in federal rulemaking. Include Palmer in Earth MRI and USGS mapping efforts.
Bokan Mountain (POW Island)	Prince of Wales Island, Southeast Alaska	Heavy Rare Earth Elements (HREEs), vital to permanent magnets, defense systems, and high-tech manufacturing.	Feasibility stage. Environmental permitting and stakeholder engagement underway.	Qualify Bokan for DoD Title III and Defense Production Act funding programs. Include Bokan in critical mineral priority designations under EO 13817 and EO 14241. Fast-track permitting via FAST-41 and DOI coordination.
Ambler Mining District	Northwest Arctic Alaska	Copper, Zinc, Lead, Silver, Gold, essential for grid infrastructure, batteries, and electronics.	Exploration and pre-development contingent on road access approval.	Approve and fund Ambler Road through BLM and NPS processes. Elevate Ambler Access as a strategic national project under EO 14241. Include Ambler District in USGS critical mineral assessments.
Denali Highway Corridor	Southcentral Interior Alaska	Nickel, Copper, Platinum Group Metals, crucial for	Early exploration. Requires renewed geophysical	Lift blanket ANCSA 17(d)(1) withdrawals in the corridor.

		batteries, EVs, and stainless steel.	surveys and access.	Support new geophysical surveys via Earth MRI. Designate corridor as a priority exploration zone in BLM land planning.
Rare Earth Deposits near Fairbanks	Interior Alaska, near Fairbanks	Light and Heavy Rare Earth Elements, Copper, and Zinc, all key for tech and energy industries.	Undeveloped with prior drilling and assessment.	Prioritize for permitting and environmental review streamlining. Coordinate state-federal geological assessments. Ensure continued public access to mineralized areas near developed zones.
Tongass National Forest Mineral Belt	Southeast Alaska	Copper, Zinc, Silver, Gold, REEs, varied deposits across multiple tracts.	Largely undeveloped despite known deposits and historic assessments.	Permanently exempt the Tongass from the 2001 Roadless Rule for mineral access corridors. Reopen and update FEIS/DEIS where tracts were previously studied. Direct USFS to prioritize mineral exploration and permitting zones.