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2026 STATE ISSUES OF CONCERN FOR THE ALASKA MINING INDUSTRY

Alaska's Permitting System

- Promote and defend Alaska's stringent permitting process to demonstrate that Alaska is open for business and is a key location to grow America's domestic mining industry.
- Adequately resource State regulatory agencies to attract and retain qualified personnel with the expertise to efficiently and durably permit large resource projects that will grow Alaska's economy.
- Reinforce and promote the mission of the Office of Project Management and Permitting to manage and streamline permitting activity for large projects.
- The Alaska Department of Natural Resources Office of Project Management and Permitting (OPMP) should be modernized by adopting best practices like those in the federal FAST-41 program—including transparent project tracking, improved interagency coordination, public engagement, and digital tools—to streamline permitting processes, ensure accountability, and enhance stakeholder involvement for resource development projects in Alaska.

Water Policy

- Require that Alaska's Water Quality Standards are scientifically supportable and developed using site-specific criteria, with ongoing evaluation as needed.
- Support Legislation and Administrative policy that requires designation of Tier 3 waters can only be made by a vote of the Legislature.
- Require that instream flow reservations are held only by the state.
- Support funding for State primacy over the CWA Section 404 permitting program and ADEC administration of the program concerning the fill of State 404 waters and wetlands in Alaska.
- Closely monitor EPA and USACE post-Sackett actions, and work to define adjacent wetlands in Alaska by limiting jurisdictional waters to only those with a continuous surface connection to a traditionally navigable water or tributary.
- Direct that a consistent and practicable statewide CWA 404 Compensatory Mitigation policy following the fundamentals agreed to the 2018 Memorandum of Agreement signed by USACE and EPA, and ensure that projects have access to reasonable and workable wetland mitigation tools.

Fiscal Policy

Implement a comprehensive, long-term fiscal plan that ensures sustainable spending levels using budget reductions, use of Permanent Fund earnings, new revenues from broad-based sources, and strategies to grow a strong private sector.

Equitable Local Taxation

Reserve the authority to levy metal mining severance taxes solely to the Legislature.

Ballot Initiative Reform

- Support legislation, or a Constitutional amendment to reform the ballot initiative process, including measures that would nullify a ballot initiative if a court finds any portion to be unconstitutional.
- Prevent management of Alaska's natural resources outside of the regulatory process.

Funding Disclosure for Nonprofit Advocacy

Enact legislation to require disclosure when funds from nonprofit organizations are used to affect natural resource policy, permitting, litigation, and initiative proposals.

Land and Mineral Management

- Oppose all proposed policies that are designed to elevate one resource over another and recognize that Alaska mining projects successfully co-exist with the natural environment and other industries.
- Improve the status of Alaska's baseline mapping and collect resource data, such as airborne geophysical mapping as a means for increasing future State revenues.
- Support and promote funding and establishment of a State Data Repository for historic exploration and geological data to house, digitize, and make available to the public records voluntarily donated to the repository.



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Land and Mineral Management Cont.

- Advocate the requirement of future exploration programs on state lands to provide the State its collected exploration data annually, with appropriate controls to hold data proprietary for a period of time prior to being public information.
- Pursue and defend guaranteed access, including RS2477s, for all uses across all state and federal lands.
- Require a thorough evaluation of mineral potential and access prior to any land allocations such as parks, preserves, or land disposals.
- Ensure the Trust Land Office meets its obligation to develop the mining lands (including the conversion of federal mining claim inholdings to Trust land) specifically transferred to the Alaska Mental Health Trust pursuant to the 1994 settlement of the Alaska Mental Health Trust Case to support Trust beneficiaries.

Support Alaska Statehood Defense efforts

- Oppose any federal encroachment on States' rights, such as the use of preemptive federal veto actions and imposition of excessive permitting requirements.
- Oppose unwarranted Endangered Species Act listings and critical habitat designations in Alaska and insist all decisions are based on sound science.
- Assist ANCSA Native Corporations in being recognized in federal government-to-government consultations.
- Coordinate amongst federal actions to rescind Public Land Orders issued under ANCSA Section 17(d)(1) where such actions would not harm the statutory right of Alaska Native Corporations to select and receive conveyance of the federal lands that they were promised in ANCSA.
- Ensure that neither the review process for placing tribal lands into trust, nor the final designation of a parcel as trust land, results in any temporary or permanent restrictions on access to, and development of, resources on adjacent lands.
- Support exemption of the Tongass National Forest from the 2001 Roadless Rule.
- Pursue blanket Federal approval of all State-designated navigable waterways as State managed, with the burden on the Federal agencies to prove otherwise.

Mining Education and Training

- Maintain a highly trained Alaskan workforce through support of all mining and geology related degree and occupational certificate programs in the UA system, including the UAF College of Engineering and Mines, the Mining and Petroleum Training Service, UAS Center for Mine Training, and the Prince William Sound College Millwright Program.
- Support University of Alaska efforts for the Alaska Critical Mineral Collaborative and endorsement of the application for a \$160M NSF Regional Innovation program to establish the Alaska Critical Minerals Accelerator.
- Provide State of Alaska support for Alaska Resource Education to educate an upcoming workforce about natural resource industry careers.

Statewide Policy Impacts

- Support infrastructure projects that leverage responsible resource development to sustain and grow the State's economy.
- Ensure that public infrastructure is open to all users and maintenance comes from public revenue or broad-based funding sources.
- Support continued successful collaboration between the State of Alaska and our Canadian neighbors on responsible resource development within the transboundary region.
- Support timely legislative approval of the \$70 million supplemental appropriation needed to meet Alaska's federal fiscal year 2026 transportation match and unlock federal infrastructure dollars already designated for the state. Predictable investment in transportation infrastructure is critical to mining development, workforce access, supply chains, and the long-term competitiveness of Alaska's resource economy.