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NMA emphasizes need for rapid deployment of CCS technology at House subcommittee hearing



NMA President and CEO Hal Quinn emphasized the need for rapid development and deployment of carbon capture and storage technologies at a March 10 hearing of the House Subcommittee on Energy and the Environment. NMA file photo.

NMA President and CEO Hal Quinn this week underscored the need for rapid development and deployment of technologies capable of capturing and storing carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from coal-based power plants. Quinn delivered this message at a March 10 hearing of the House Subcommittee on Energy and the Environment.

Quinn testified that the utilization of such technology is essential for addressing climate change in an economically sustainable way.

"Our current economic crisis reminds us all the more of the importance of structuring any actions responsibly so we can meet both our environmental and our economic goals," said Quinn.

Quinn told subcommittee members that as coal use in America and around the world continues to grow, it is imperative that Congress accelerate the widespread use of carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies.

Global greenhouse gas emissions are projected to grow by 57 percent in the next couple of decades, with most coming from large, rapidly growing developing countries, said Quinn. "Consequently, even if the U.S. and all advanced industrial countries stopped using coal, most of the world's CO₂ emissions sources would remain untouched," he said.

See CCS, page 2

"Card check" legislation introduced in House, Senate

House Education and Labor Committee Chairman Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.) this week introduced the "Employee Free Choice Act" (EFCA) (H.R. 1489), a card check bill that could strip American workers of their right to use a private ballot election when deciding whether to join a union.

Miller introduced the bill on March 10, with Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) introducing a companion measure in the Senate.

Under the card check system, employees could be forced to make public pronouncements on whether to join a union by signing, or refusing to sign, a union authorization card. The bill would also create a system of mandatory arbitration if a collective bargaining agreement is not reached 130 days after a union is newly certified.

A recently released study concluded that EFCA would likely increase the nation's unemployment rate and substantially decrease domestic job creation. The study, conducted by LEGC Consulting, a non-partisan firm, estimated that for every 3 percentage points gained in union membership through the card check system, the following year's unemployment rate would increase by 1 percent, and job creation would fall by approximately 1.5 million jobs.

See Card check, page 2

CCS *continued from page 1*

Quinn urged Congress to expedite CCS development to ensure that global emissions are reduced and that coal can continue to provide affordable electricity for U.S. homes and businesses at a time of deepening economic crisis and rising unemployment.

To accelerate CCS technology development, Quinn said greater federal support will be needed so that coal-based power plants, which provide half the nation's electricity, will be able to reduce CO2 emissions without switching to fuels more costly for U.S. households and businesses. Otherwise, warned Quinn, a sharp drop in coal consumption could have a devastating effect throughout the U.S. coal community, from which it would be very difficult to recover, even with CCS technology available in the future.

Quinn warned of a "valley of death" scenario where a large period of time exists between when promising technologies are developed and when they are successfully commercialized. Quinn said industries may confront a valley of death "if they are trapped in the period between a mandate requiring a certain level of performance and the availability of the technology enabling them to meet that requirement."

The valley of death scenario can be avoided, Quinn said, "if Congress harmonizes the deadlines for reducing emissions with the commercial availability of CCS technologies."

Quinn said climate change policy is a responsibility best left to Congress, warning against efforts to allow the Environmental Protection Agency to regulate CO2 emissions using the Clean Air Act.

A copy of Quinn's testimony is available at: [NMA Testimony](#). ✕

Card check *continued from page 1*

In an effort to protect workers' right to utilize secret ballot elections, Reps. John Kline (R-Minn.) and Howard McKeon (R-Calif.) last month introduced the "Secret Ballot Protection Act" (H.R. 1176), which has garnered 107 House co-sponsors. Sen. Michael Enzi (R-Wyo.), ranking member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, introduced a companion version of the bill in the Senate (s. 478), which has attracted 19 co-sponsors.

A copy of the LEGC Consulting report is available at: [Card Check Study](#). ✕

Rep. Hastings visits NMA



NMA Senior Vice President of Political Affairs Dan Gerkin welcomed Rep. Doc Hastings (R-Wash.) to NMA's Washington, D.C., offices on March 11.

Ranking House Natural Resources Committee Member Doc Hastings (R-Wash.) stressed the key role carbon capture and storage (CCS) technologies will pay in helping to cleanly meet America's future energy needs during a March 11 visit to NMA's Washington, D.C., offices.

Hastings stressed that "CCS is something that is evolving and will be successful." In meeting America's future energy needs, Hastings said the country needs a diverse energy portfolio that ensures proper utilization of the nation's vast energy wealth.

As Congress moves closer to beginning serious efforts to pass climate change legislation, Hastings said Congress' overriding principle must be to ensure that any climate change legislation does not harm the U.S. economy.

He also indicated that he expected Natural Resources committee Chairman Nick Rahall (D-WVa.) will soon move his bill to amend the General Mining Law. ✕

Show your support for mining, visit ACT Online and contact your elected officials



Now more than ever members of the mining community need to take an active role in advocating the critical role mining plays in shaping America's economic prosperity and national security.

NMA's Advocacy Campaign Team for Mining (ACT) is an online national network of mining community members who recognize the importance of being involved in the political process and are willing to make their voice heard.

In Congress and state capitols across the nation issues of enormous importance to the mining community are being debated. NMA's ACT Online homepage offers supporters the chance to contact their elected officials on a wide range of coal, mineral, metal, economic and environmental issues.

Visit [ACT Online](#) today and show your support for America's mining community. ✕

NMA Outreach: NMA regularly participates in various conferences, events and other forums to highlight key association initiatives and spotlight important developments in the mining community. Here's a look at upcoming events.

- NMA General Counsel Katie Sweeney will give a Mining Law update at the Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Institute in San Francisco, Calif., on July 25.

New report tracks worldwide metals exploration budgets

A recently released report tracking worldwide metals exploration spending shows a record amount budgeted for 2008 nonferrous exploration activity.

The report, prepared by the Metals Economics Group (MEG), a leading consulting group, found that the estimated worldwide spending budgeted for exploration totaled \$14.4 billion.

According to the report, planned exploration spending has jumped each of the past six years, with Latin America remaining the most popular destination for exploration spending.

As a region, Latin American countries accounted for 25 percent of worldwide spending, with Canada second at 19 percent and Africa third with 15 percent.

The U.S. continues to rank sixth out of seven regions surveyed, accounting for just 7 percent of budgeted global exploration spending. The Pacific/Southeast Asia region was last with 5 percent of spending.

For the first time since MEG began publishing the report in 1989, companies budgeted more on exploration for base metals, such as copper, nickel and zinc, than for gold.

In addition, the report noted that companies collectively budgeted \$1.15 billion for uranium exploration for uranium last year, marking an increase of 23 percent over 2007.

A summary of the report is available at: [Exploration Report](#).

Worldwide Nonferrous Exploration Budget Totals, 2008	
Estimated Worldwide Non-ferrous Exploration Total	\$14.4 billion
Estimated Worldwide Non-ferrous Exploration Total Excluding Uranium	\$13.2 billion

House committee postpones vote on coal ash legislation following EPA announcement

House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Nick Rahall (D-W.Va.) this week called off a committee vote on legislation he introduced earlier this year that would set new standards for coal ash impoundment ponds.

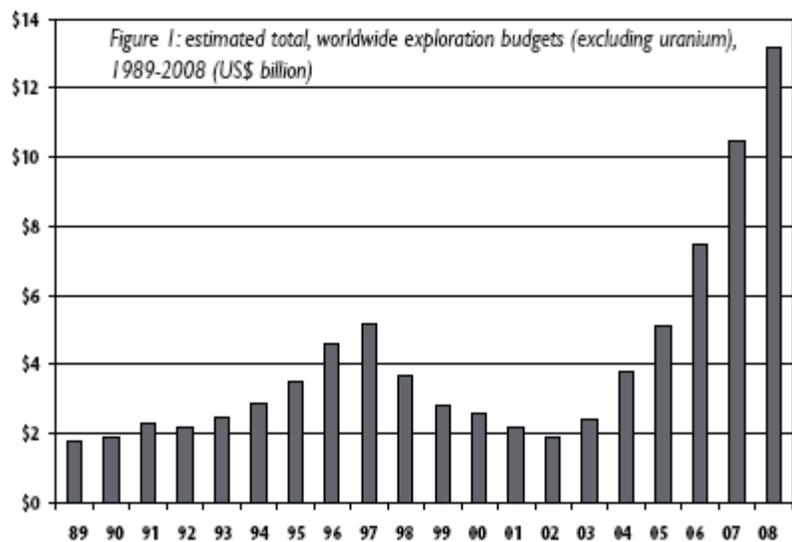
Rahall postponed the vote following a March 9 announcement by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Lisa Jackson that the agency will soon begin regulating coal combustion waste. Jackson said EPA will propose coal ash management regulations by the end of the year.

The committee was scheduled to vote on the "Coal Ash Reclamation, Environment and Safety Act of 2009" (H.R. 493) on March 11. The bill called for mandatory design and performance standards on retaining ponds.

Separately, Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Chairman Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) recently introduced a Senate resolution urging EPA to quickly move to regulate coal ash.

Boxer's resolution is non-binding, but urges EPA to immediately conduct reviews of all coal combustion waste impoundments and landfills to ensure their safety. Her resolution also calls for a report detailing how quickly the agency could issue regulations and calls on EPA to propose and finalize coal combustion waste rules as soon as possible.

Mining Market Snapshot		
Coal Figures	Cumulative year to date	Change over last year
<i>Week ended February 28, 2009</i>		
EIA Coal Production (000 tons)	186,582	-2.9%
Edison Electric Institute Electricity Output (GWh)	697,044	-2.6%
American Iron and Steel Institute Raw Steel Production (000 tons)	8,651	-52.7%
Metal Figures		
Copper Prices (\$/mt - week avg. Grade A Cash) 2/27/09		\$3,315.10
Gold Prices (\$/troy ounce - week avg. London Final) 2/27/09		\$967.40
Source: NMA Weekly Statistical Summary/Platts Metals Week		



Source: Metals Economic Group, Exploration Trends: 2008 Overview



Mining Calendar Events and conferences covering important mining issues are routinely held across the nation. The following may be of interest to members of the mining community:

March 16-17 Washington, D.C. New Energy for America: Implementing the New Administration's Energy Plan Senior officials from the Obama Administration, key members of Congress and leading private sector representatives will discuss the new administration's energy policy agenda, including efforts to advance the development of carbon capture and storage technologies. Energy Secretary Steven Chu and Interior Secretary Ken Salazar are among the senior administration officials invited to participate. House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) and Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) are both confirmed speakers. The two-day summit will be held at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center. More information is available by contacting MHayter@CityandFinancial.com.

March 18-19 Columbus, Ohio Ohio Drilling and Blasting Conference The conference, co-sponsored by the Ohio Coal Association, will examine various topics, including construction blasting, electronic detonators, blasting accident investigations, vibration control, ATF updates and more. The States of Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia are accepting eight hours of Blasters Retraining credit hours. More information is available at: [Blasting Conference](#).

March 25-27 Washington, D.C. World CTL 2009 Conference Leading public and private sector representatives from the U.S. and around the world will gather in Washington, D.C., in March for the World CTL 2009 Conference. The conference will begin on March 25 with two parallel workshops focused on practical issues surrounding project development, with two days of plenary sessions following on March 26-27. The plenary sessions will feature presentations and discussions from leading coal, oil and technology leaders. West Virginia Gov. Joe Manchin (D) and Wyoming Gov. Dave Freudenthal (D) are among the distinguished roster of presenters for the plenary sessions. More information is available at: [World CTL Conference](#).

April 28-30 Bristol, Va. Geomorphic Reclamation and Natural Stream Design at Coal Mines The federal Office of Surface Mining will host the conference, which will address advances in technical innovations in geomorphic reclamation and natural stream design and region-specific issues for Appalachia, the Midwest and the West. Additionally, there will be a field trip to four different reclamation sites exhibiting stream channel reconstruction, riparian vegetation and natural stream channel design. Registration for the conference can be made online at: [OSM Conference](#).

April 30-May 1 Sunset Beach, N.C. 32nd Annual North Carolina Mine Safety & Health Conference. More information is available by calling William Gerringe at (919) 807-2790.

May 5-6 Vancouver, Canada B.C. Mining Opportunities 2009 Hosted by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Commercial Service, the conference will help U.S. mining-related companies gain local market exposure and identify agents/distributors, manufacturer's representatives and strategic alliance partners in the industry. The two-day trade mission will also educate U.S. companies on a number of issues regarding exporting mining products and services to the Canadian market. More information is available at: [Commerce Mining Mission](#).

May 11-15 Golden, Colo. Mineral Processing: An Introduction to the Principles. Hosted by the Colorado School of Mines. More information is available at: [Mineral Processing Conference](#). Further details are available by e-mailing space@mines.edu or calling (303) 273-3321.

May 11-15 Boulder, Colo. Mining Law Short Course Hosted by the Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation. More information is available at: [Mining Law Short Course](#).

May 15-16 Gillette, Wyo. Coal Mining Summit: A Career Conference for Women and Minority Students in Engineering Hosted by Peabody Energy's Powder River Coal, LLC, the conference is open to sophomore and junior students enrolled in industrial, mechanical, electrical, civil, environmental or geological engineering programs. Topics to be covered at the conference include, sustainable development, engineering and geological sciences, as well as maintenance and reliability. The conference also includes opportunities to visit with coal mining professionals and participate on a mine tour. For more information, contact dhamilton@peabodyenergy.com.

June 9-11 Toronto, Canada BPI Mining Conference 2009 Penn State University's Department of Energy and Mineral Engineering is hosting the conference, which will include presentations from industry leaders in key mining sectors — coal, metals, and nonmetallic minerals — as well as from customers, suppliers and others with a keen interest in mining industry performance. Keynote speakers will include executive management from the world's largest and most successful mining companies and manufacturers. [BPI Conference](#).

June 28-30 Snowmass, Colo. Rocky Mountain Coal Mining Institute 105th Annual Mtg. and Convention The convention will offer technical sessions, mine rescue evaluations, scholarship awards and short course classes. Eugene Kranz, flight director of the Apollo 13 lunar mission, will be the keynote speaker. For more information, visit www.rmcmi.org.

July 1-2 Denver, Colo. 2009 NMA/NRC Uranium Recovery Workshop NMA and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission will again host a joint uranium recovery workshop offering an opportunity for industry representatives to communicate directly with federal and state regulators regarding regulatory trends and other important issues affecting the industry. For more information on this year's event, please contact NMA Legal Affairs Specialist Anthony Hagman at (202) 463-2655 or ahagman@nma.org.

Barrick, CONSOL leading effort to create University of Utah mine safety chair endowment

The University of Utah recently announced the endowment of the Western Mining Presidential Chair in Mine Safety.

The \$1.5 million endowment is being created through an effort led by Barrick Gold North America President Greg Lang and CONSOL Energy President and CEO J. Brett Harvey.

The new chair will be part of the university's Department of Mining Engineering, in the College of Mines and Earth Sciences, and will be filled by someone with skill and experience in mining engineering, mine safety or a closely related discipline.

The holder of the chair will provide specific instruction in the technology and practices of modern mine safety, for university students and the mining community at large.

"In establishing this Endowed Chair in Mine Safety, the university is sending an unmistakable message that the students who endeavor to acquire an education in the School of Mining not only will receive world-class training as mining engineers, but will graduate understanding that safety must be at the cultural core of any successful mining enterprise," said Harvey in a press release announcing the new chair. ✕

Nuclear Regulatory Commission proposes fee increases

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) recently proposed amending the licensing, inspection and annual fees it charges to applicants and licensees, and is looking to increase both its annual and hourly fees according to a March 5 proposal.

NRC must amend its fee schedule annually to implement the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990, which requires the agency to recover approximately 90 percent of its budget through fee collections.

The amount of fees the agency proposes collecting for Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 is \$864.8 million, an \$85.7 million increase over FY 2008.

NRC is accepting comments on the proposed fee structure until April 1, 2009.

Under the proposal, both NRC's hourly rate and annual fees will increase. The new hourly rate in FY 2009 will be \$257, an increase of \$19 an hour. The increase in the hourly rate purportedly is due to the higher budget supporting increased regulatory and infrastructure workload for reactor license renewals and applications from new uranium recovery and enrichment facilities.

The annual fees for uranium recovery licensees generally will increase for FY 2009 due to additional demands for uranium recovery licensing and inspection resources for existing licenses. For conventional and heap leach mills, the FY 2009 annual fee will increase significantly to \$32,200 from the \$10,300 level in FY 2008.

For the first time, NRC is proposing to change the single fee category for uranium *in situ* recovery (ISR) facilities to four categories based on the type of ISR facility. Proposed fees for these categories would be \$30,600 for basic ISR facilities, \$34,700 for expanded ISR facilities, \$10,500 for disposal incidental to existing tailing sites and \$7,300 for uranium water treatment.

Furthermore, NRC is proposing to establish new fee categories for stand-alone ISR resin facilities and resin toll milling facilities. There are currently no existing NRC licenses in these fee categories. If NRC does issue a license for these categories then it will consider establishing an annual fee for this type of license.

A copy of the NRC proposal is available at: [NRC Fee Proposal](#). ✕

New report tracks coal plant construction

A new report recently released by the American Public Power Association (APPA) documents that almost half of new power plants being built in the U.S. are coal-fueled facilities.

APPA's third annual report tracking new power generation construction shows coal-based plants accounting for approximately 43 percent of new plants currently under construction. The coal-based plants will produce approximately 18,200 megawatts (MW) of energy out of a total of nearly 42,000 MW of new generation under construction.

Coal-based power plants rank first among new electricity generation plants under construction, with natural gas fired plants ranking second accounting for 40.8 percent of plants being built.

For plants that have received permits, but have not begun construction, coal-based plants represent 22 percent of new generation, representing approximately 6,700 MW of new generation.

Coal-fueled plants rank third on the list of permitted plants, with natural gas plants totaling 47 percent of permitted construction and wind farms accounting for 25.6 percent.

A copy of the report is available here: [APPA Report](#). ✕

**Mining Week archives
are available on the
NMA web site.
www.nma.org**

DOE begins carbon dioxide injection project in lignite coal seam

A U.S. Department of Energy team of regional partners recently began injecting carbon dioxide (CO₂) into a deep lignite coal seam in Burke County, N.D., to demonstrate the economic and environmental viability of geologic CO₂ storage in the U.S. Great Plains region.

The Lignite Field Validation Test is being conducted by the Plains CO₂ Reduction (PCOR) Partnership, one of seven regional partnerships under the department's Regional Carbon Sequestration Partnership Program. The PCOR Partnership plans to inject approximately 400 tons of CO₂ into a 10-foot thick lignite seam at a depth of approximately 1,100 feet.

The results of the PCOR Partnership's Phase I characterization activities indicated that the region's low-rank coal seams have the capacity to store up to 8 billion tons of CO₂. Phase I results also suggested that more than 17 trillion cubic feet of methane could be incrementally produced from low-rank coal seams. To date, no field studies have been conducted on the ability of lignite coal seams to store CO₂.

The PCOR Partnership is managed by the University of North Dakota Energy and Environmental Research Center and includes more than 80 public and private partners in all or part of nine states and four Canadian provinces

More information is available at: [DOE Lignite Project](#). ☒

Peabody to host career conference for women and minority students

Peabody Energy's Powder River Coal affiliate will host a conference in mid-May designed to spotlight coal mining career opportunities for women and minority engineering students. The conference is scheduled for May 15-16 in Gillette, Wyo. The deadline for registering for the conference is March 9.

The conference is open to sophomore and junior students enrolled in industrial, mechanical, electrical, civil, environmental or geological engineering programs. Topics to be covered at the conference include sustainable development, engineering and geological sciences, as well as maintenance and reliability. The conference also includes opportunities to visit with coal mining professionals and participate on a mine tour.

For more information, contact dhamilton@peabodyenergy.com. ☒

World CTL 2009 conference set for this month in Washington, D.C.

Leading public and private sector representatives from the U.S. and around the world will gather in Washington, D.C., this month for the World CTL 2009 Conference. The March 25-27 conference will focus on a range of topics, including energy security, environmental performance, technological developments and project updates.

The conference is endorsed by the World Coal Institute, World Energy Council and the World Petroleum Council.

The conference will begin on March 25 with two parallel workshops focused on practical issues surrounding project development, with two days of plenary sessions following on March 26-27. The plenary sessions will feature presentations and discussions from leading coal, oil and technology leaders.

West Virginia Gov. Joe Manchin (D) and Wyoming Gov. Dave Freudenthal (D) are among the distinguished roster of presenters for the plenary sessions.

More information on the conference is available at [World CTL Conference](#). ☒

Newsbits

White House Council on Environmental Quality Chairwoman Nancy Sutley this week appointed **Van Jones of Green for All** to the council, where he is expected to work as a special green jobs advisor tasked with helping create creating jobs that improve energy efficiency and utilize renewable resources. At a recent global warming march in Washington, D.C., Jones delivered a speech highly critical of clean coal technologies and instead called for investments in wind and solar energy efficiency programs...**Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar** on March 10 named **Will Shafroth**, a land conservationist executive and founding director of the Colorado Conservation Trust and Great Outdoors Colorado Trust Fund, as new deputy assistant secretary for fish, wildlife and parks. More information is available at: [DOI Appointment](#)...The **U.S. Department of Energy** recently agreed to partner with **Air Products** to design and construct a carbon dioxide (CO₂) purification system in support of an oxyfuel technology development project. The project, being conducted in association with a separate cooperative agreement between DOE and **Alstom Power, Inc.**, will use Alstom's boiler simulation facility in Windsor, Connecticut. CO₂ purification is essential to the compression, transport and potential storage of greenhouse gas emissions from power plants. The development project at the 15 megawatt thermal equivalent facility, to be conducted over two years beginning in mid-2009, is part of DOE's efforts to develop new and cost-effective technologies for the capture of CO₂ from the existing fleet of U.S. coal-fired power plants. More information is available at: [CO₂ Purification](#).



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