



Secretary Brooke L. Rollins

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250**

SECRETARY'S MEMORANDUM 1078-005

March 19, 2025

**EXPANDING ENERGY AND MINERAL OPPORTUNITIES ON FEDERAL FOREST
LANDS**

1. PURPOSE

This Secretarial Memorandum implements provisions of President Donald J. Trump's January 20, 2025, Executive Order (EO) 14154, titled *Unleashing American Energy*, which directs the removal of barriers imposed on the development and use of our Nation's energy and natural resources. By removing the impediments, America's natural resources can be unleashed to restore American prosperity.

USDA's focus must be on advancing innovation to improve energy and critical minerals identification, permitting, leasing, development, production, transportation, refining, distribution, exporting, and generation capacity of the United States to provide a reliable, diversified, growing, and affordable supply of energy for our Nation.

2. AUTHORITIES

This Memorandum is issued under the authority of the Organic Administration Act of 1897 (16 U.S.C. §§ 472-475, 477-482, 551); Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960 (16 U.S.C. §§ 528-531), Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974, as amended (16 U.S.C. §§ 1601-1613); Mining Law of 1872, as amended (30 U.S.C. §§ 21-54); Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 (30 U.S.C. § 181 *et seq.*); Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands of 1947 (30 U.S.C. 351 *et seq.*); the Materials Act of 1947 (30 U.S.C. §§ 601-615); as well as other statutory authorities governing the development of mineral and energy resources and the management, administration and protection of the National Forest System. Other authorities include but are not limited to EO 14154.

3. BACKGROUND

President Trump rescinded a number of Executive Orders from the Biden Administration and declared that it is in the national interest to unleash America's affordable and reliable energy and natural resources by:

- a. encouraging energy exploration and production on Federal lands and waters in order to meet the needs of our citizens and solidify the United States as a global energy leader long into the future;
- b. establishing our position as the leading producer and processor of nonfuel minerals, including rare earth minerals, which will create jobs and prosperity at home, strengthen supply chains for the United States and its allies, and reduce the global influence of malign and adversarial states;
- c. protecting the United States' economic and national security and military preparedness by ensuring that an abundant supply of reliable energy is readily accessible in every State and territory of the Nation;
- d. ensuring that all regulatory requirements related to energy are grounded in clearly applicable law;
- e. ensuring that the global effects of a rule, regulation, or action shall, whenever evaluated, be reported separately from its domestic costs and benefits, in order to promote sound regulatory decision making and prioritize the interests of the American people;
- f. ensuring that no Federal funding is employed in a manner contrary to the principles set forth above, unless required by law.

4. DIRECTIVE

I hereby direct the Chief of the Forest Service to promptly review relevant agency policies and submit an action plan to me in 30 days for implementation of the policy in section 3. Tasks necessary for this review include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Take all necessary steps to ensure any actions taken to implement the revoked Executive Orders are terminated, including but not limited to, terminating any contract or agreement on behalf of entities or programs abolished in the revoked Executive Orders;
- b. The Chief shall review and include in the action plan all agency actions related to Section 1 taken between January 20, 2021, and January 21, 2025, for consistency with

EO 14154 and this memo, and identify steps to remedy inconsistencies in those actions by suspension, revision, or rescission;

- c. Identify, at a minimum, the following, and propose timelines for implementation:
- i. actions that prioritize reducing barriers to the use of Federal lands for development and management of new and existing mineral and energy resources and infrastructure, consistent with multiple-use, sustained-yield principles;
 - ii. actions to ensure the potential for the occurrence of all mineral and energy resources, including critical minerals, are considered in Land Management Plan revisions;
 - iii. actions to review and, as appropriate, amend relevant Land Management Plans to ensure proper consideration of mineral and energy resources;
 - iv. actions to ensure that, unless required by law, applicable existing or new rules, guidance, and policies relating to the development of mineral and energy resources on Federal land do not bias government or private-sector decision making in favor of renewable energy projects as compared to oil, gas, or other mineral resource projects;
 - v. actions to revise regulations, policies, and procedures to increase the timeliness and efficiency of processing proposed operations submitted under the authority of the 1872 Mining Law, as amended, including those for critical minerals;
 - vi. actions to implement policies and procedures to increase the range of options available for mineral proponents to comply with 36 CFR 228 Subpart A specific to long-term financial assurances for reclamation;
 - vii. actions to implement policies and procedures to increase the efficiency in the Forest Service's oil and gas leasing analyses and authorizations, including surface use plan of operations contained in applications for permits to drill;
 - viii. actions to implement new or revised regulations, policies, and procedures to increase the efficiency in the Forest Service's coal, non-coal solids and geothermal leasing consent;
 - ix. actions to review, and as appropriate, revise agency policies and practices to ensure alignment with Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) regulations applicable to non-federal hydropower projects on federal lands and to ensure consistent application of policy and practice across the agency;
 - x. actions to review and, as appropriate, revise all pending and draft applications for withdrawal of public lands from mineral entry, consistent with existing law;
 - xi. actions to assist, where appropriate, in the development of, and to utilize the U.S. Geological Survey's list of critical minerals in the agency's decision making processes; and

- xii. actions to assist and facilitate, where appropriate, the U.S. Geological Survey's efforts to accelerate the ongoing, detailed geologic mapping of the United States, with a focus on locating previously unknown deposits of critical minerals.
- d. In addition to the reviews above, the Chief is hereby directed to include in the action plan a review that includes all existing critical minerals projects that could be expedited.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

The Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment is responsible for implementing all aspects of this memo, in coordination with the Office of General Counsel. In the absence of an Under Secretary, the Chief of the U.S. Forest Service will carry out the responsibilities assigned in this Order.

6. EFFECTS OF THE MEMO

This memo is intended to improve the internal management of the Department and to assure implementation of the above-referenced Executive Order. This memo and any resulting report or recommendations are not intended to, and do not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities or entities, its officers or employees, or any other person. To the extent there is any inconsistency between the provisions of this memo and any Federal laws or regulations, the laws or regulations will control.

7. EFFECTIVE DATE

This memo is effective immediately and will remain in effect until amended, superseded, or revoked, or the action plan referenced in section 4 is submitted, whichever occurs first.

/s/ Brooke L. Rollins
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture