

The Rundown

By: CLEARPATH
ACTION



Join us on social below!



ClearPath Action Rundown August 1st, 2025

Happy August recess and congratulations to...

DJ Nordquist, a former ClearPath advisory board member, on her appointment as a Deputy Director-General of the World Trade Organization.

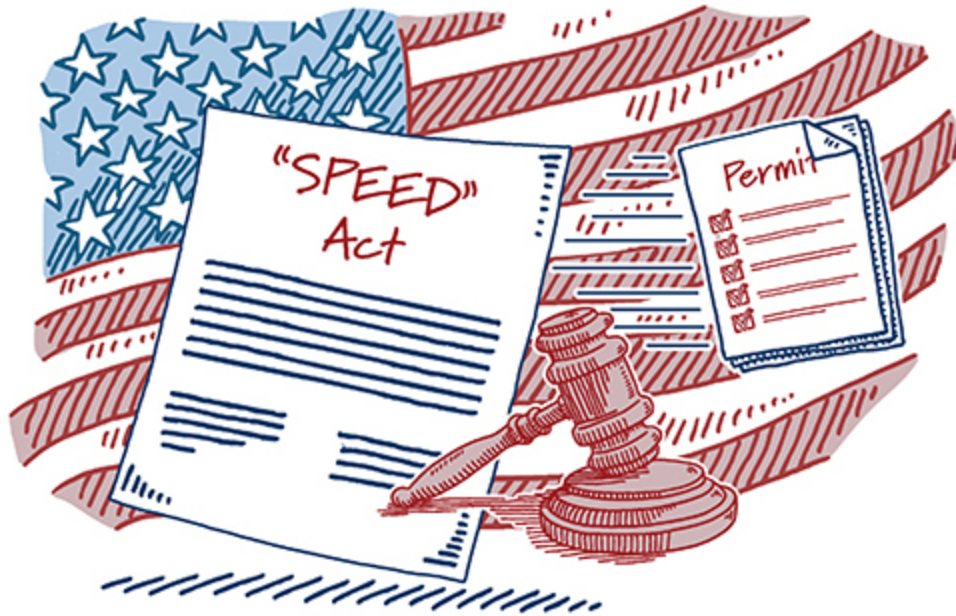
David Wright for reappointment as Commissioner to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

Ho Nieh for his nomination to be NRC Commissioner...

...and thank you, NRC Commissioner **Annie Caputo** for her service on the Commission.

The Rundown will be back at the top of your inbox on Friday, August 15th.

1. SPEEDING up permitting



To meet rising energy demand, infrastructure projects will need to be built at an unprecedented pace and scale. However, the current U.S. permitting process is overly confusing, duplicative, expensive and obstructs development.

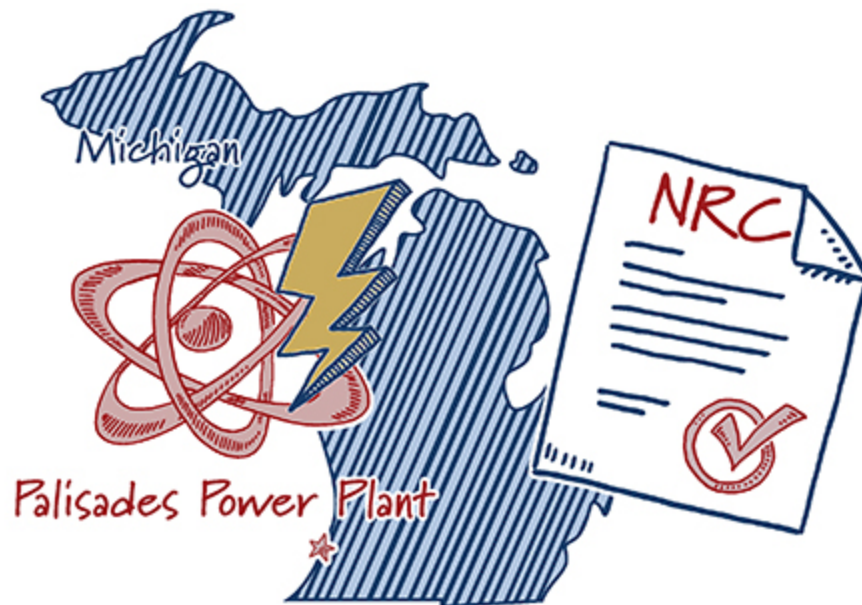
House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Bruce Westerman (R-AR) and Rep. Jared Golden (D-ME) introduced the "Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development Act" or "**SPEED**" Act, which:

- Streamlines NEPA analysis across environmental laws and levels of government;
- Codifies agency judicial deference and narrows the scope of NEPA in accordance with the Supreme Court's **Seven County** ruling;
- Limits judicial review and relief and establishes strict deadlines for legal challenges and resolution;
- Expands categorical exclusions; and
- Clarifies that federal funding alone does not trigger NEPA.

What's clear: "This bipartisan bill is an impressive package that balances both speed and safety. If enacted, the bill would provide much-needed predictability for project developers to meet the pressing challenges of rising energy demand," said **ClearPath Action CEO Jeremy Harrell**.

Plug in: Learn more from ClearPath Action [here](#).

2. Historic milestone for nuclear: from decommissioned to operational



The possibility of ramping up existing nuclear resources in the U.S. is coming back to life. The NRC **approved** Holtec's request to transition the Palisades Nuclear Plant from decommissioning to operating.

With this approval, Palisades:

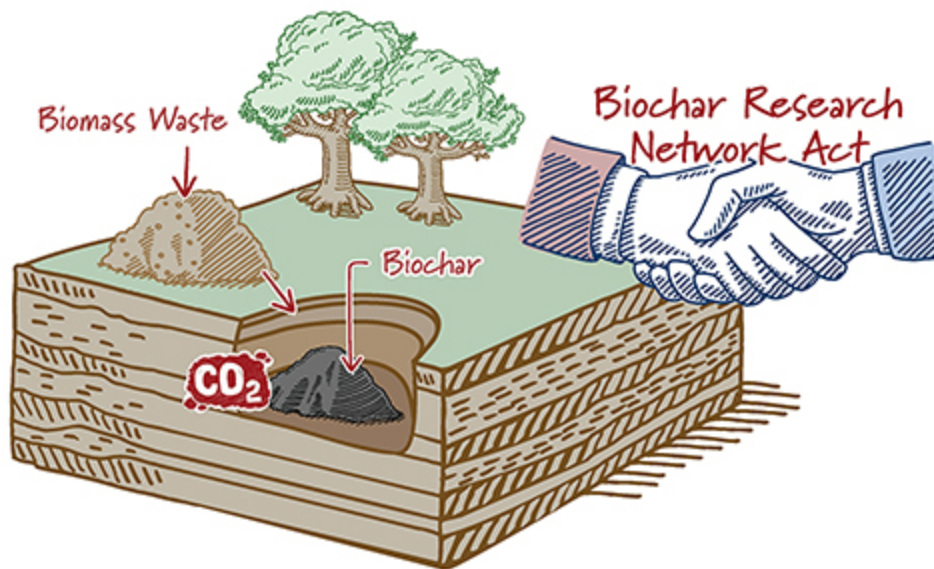
- Is authorized to receive new fuel; and
- Aims to restart operations on August 25.

... and once in service:

- Will generate more than 800 MW of safe, reliable, and carbon-free baseload power, enough to power more than 800,000 households.

What's clear: The NRC's decision reflects its review of Palisades' testing, inspections and maintenance and marks the first time a previously shut-down U.S. nuclear plant has received approval to return to operations. The restart of Palisades will enhance grid reliability, and help meet growing energy demand in Michigan and beyond.

3. Catch up on the Biochar Act

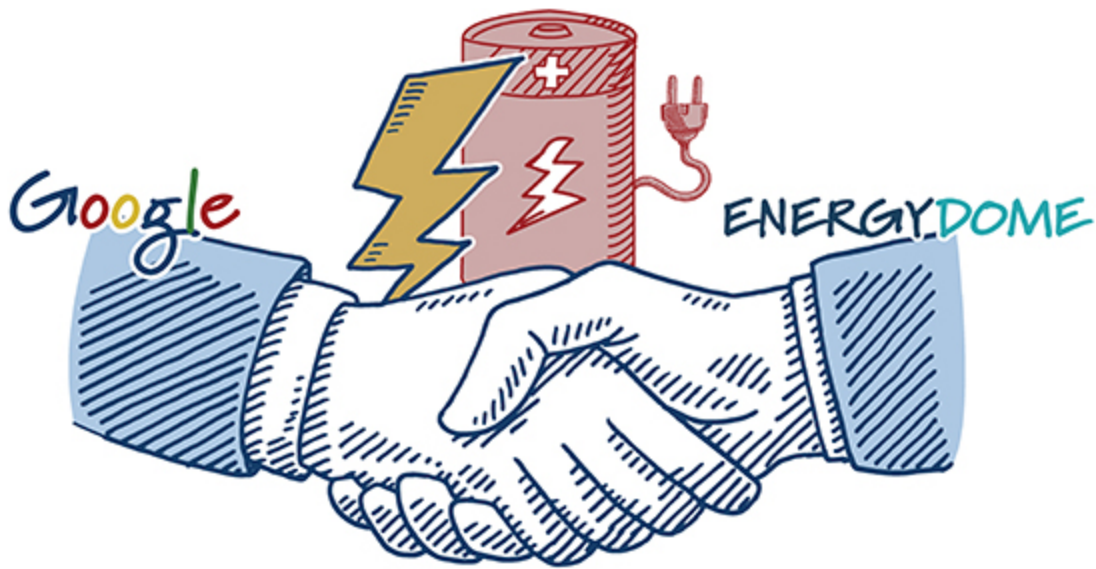


The U.S. must find ways to develop and deploy more innovative agriculture technology to compete globally. Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA) introduced the [Biochar Research Network Act](#), which facilitates research for production and use of biochar to increase crop productivity, support rural communities, and sequester carbon. This bill would:

- **Establish** a national biochar research network of up to 20 sites to test the full range of biochar benefits across soils, regions, land uses and application methods;
- **Enhance** process efficiencies of producing biochar and co-products, like biofuels; and
- **Increase** regional understanding of biochar application and optimal feedstocks for biochar production.

Dig into it: Biochar is a carbon-stable material produced by pyrolysis, which heats up biomass in the absence of oxygen. The resulting biochar is able to store carbon for hundreds to thousands of years.

4. Google x Energy Dome: ramping up LDES



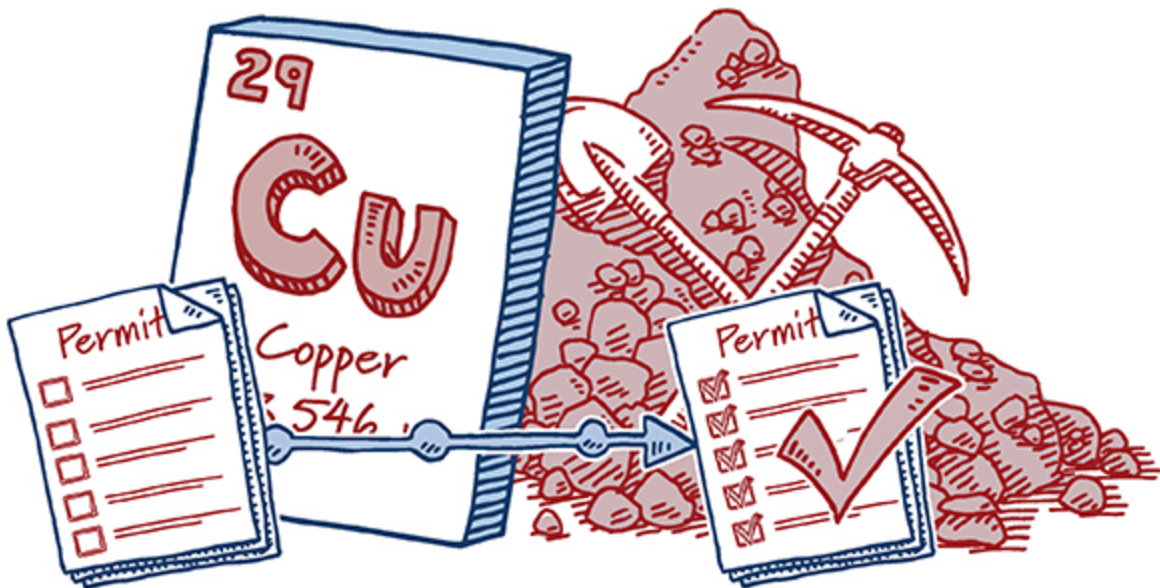
Innovative long-duration energy storage (LDES) technologies are beginning to commercialize. Google announced its first long-term partnership with Energy Dome to deploy their CO₂ Battery technology globally. These efforts support Google's goal to run its operations on 24/7 carbon-free energy by 2030.

Energy Dome's **technology**:

- Utilizes CO₂ in a unique closed-loop system to hold carbon-free energy for 8-24 hours and then dispatch it to the grid when needed; and
- Can add clean, dispatchable power to electricity systems, supporting the resilience of grids as they integrate renewable energy sources and making reliable, affordable electricity available 24/7.

What's clear: Google aims to accelerate the cost declines and learnings that can enable a **portfolio of technologies** such as LDES, advanced nuclear and next-generation geothermal to achieve commercial scale much faster.

5. NEW op-ed: More American Energy Needs More Minerals and Better Permitting



America has a golden opportunity to create thousands of jobs and increase onshore production of essential minerals such as copper. The U.S. needs to continue to increase domestic production and reform permitting, building off of President Trump's [Executive Order](#).

This matters because:

- Demand for copper is expected to [double by 2030](#), while supply is expected to fall by [30 percent by 2035](#);
- The average mining project loses [one-third](#) of its value due to bureaucratic delays; and
- China leads the world in copper refining, with over half the world's smelting capacity.

What's clear: America has vast natural resources. Obtaining these resources quickly through permitting reform is key to guaranteeing America stays competitive globally while ensuring national security and creating good, high-paying jobs.

Plug in: ClearPath's [Jeremy Harrell](#) writes more about this in his latest op-ed, [More American Energy Needs More Minerals and Better Permitting](#), featured in RealClearEnergy.

6. NRC improves environmental reviews

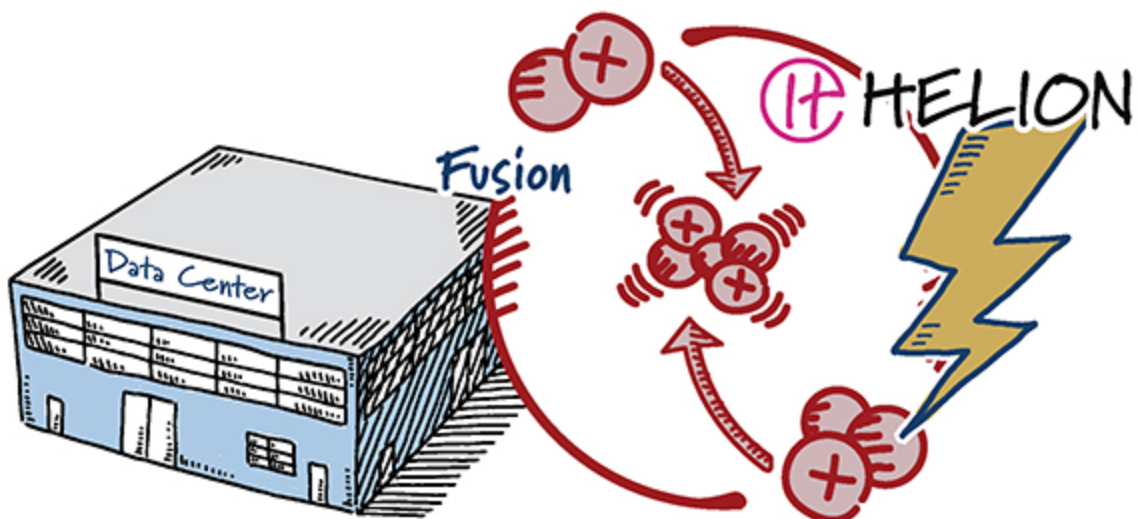


The NRC took a major step toward ensuring that environmental regulations are not unnecessarily burdensome and **align** with the bipartisan ADVANCE Act.

- Commissioners **unanimously approved** implementing the National Environmental Policy Act revisions in the Fiscal Responsibility Act.
- This demonstrates the commitment to meeting Congress's and the Administration's mandate to create an efficient, effective and predictable regulatory framework.

Plug in: This vote builds upon ClearPath's work on the New Reactor Generic Environmental Impact Statement to further improve the NRC's environmental review process. The NRC staff are currently incorporating **public comments related to the New Reactor GEIS**.

7. Nuclear fusion plant to power Microsoft data centers



Helion Energy, a fusion energy company, started construction on a site for a planned nuclear fusion power plant aimed to produce power in 2028. This project aims to:

- Be the first commercial fusion power plant in history;
- Take advantage of existing grid infrastructure to accelerate deployment;
- Provide clean energy to Microsoft data centers under a power purchase agreement signed in 2023.

What's Clear: Data giants like Microsoft, Google, and Amazon are looking for new, clean, firm power sources, and are investing in innovative American technologies to meet growing demand.



Plug in: In August 2024, ClearPath brought a group of Republican Senate energy staff during a Clean Energy Innovation Academy trip to visit Helion's test plant, Polaris.

8. What we're hearing:



Mariannette Miller-Meeks

“The fact that we preserved energy credits in an environment when no one thought we’d be able to preserve them was a tremendous success, and so we’ll continue to talk about those and then work to get more energy addition, which is what we need,”
said Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA) on the OBBBA.

9. Coming down the pipeline

- **August 7** – **Andrea Steiner** will speak on the panel, “Time Management Hacks for Busy Leaders,” at American Clean Power’s **EmpowHER** conference.
-

10. The Circuit



Jeremy Harrell spoke on the “Navigating Change: Energy & Climate Policy Under the New U.S. Administration” fireside chat with Alix Steel at the Dynamo Energy Summer Summit.

11. ICYMI

- Global investment in **fusion energy** grew by \$2.64 billion in 2024, an almost 3x increase from the previous year.
 - Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum **directed** the department to finance and expedite the extraction of critical minerals, including uranium, from mine tailings and waste.
 - JPMorgan and Microsoft closed on a **\$210 million loan** with Chestnut Carbon and committed to buying a large share of the project's high-quality carbon removal credits.
 - Nearly **300 grid modernization bills** were introduced across state legislatures in Q2 2025, in an effort to address increased energy demand.
-



ClearPath believes America must lead the world in innovation over regulation... markets over mandates...providing affordable, reliable, clean energy.

That's all from us. Thanks for reading and have a great weekend!

- Did someone forward this to you? **[Sign up here](#)**.
- Miss a week? Catch up on our **[Rundown archive](#)**.
- Follow us on Twitter: **[@ClearPathAction](#)** / **[@jharrell](#)**

View this Rundown **[online](#)**.

ClearPath · 300 New Jersey Ave NW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20001, United States

This email was sent to digrado@clearpath.org · [Unsubscribe](#)

Created with [NationBuilder](#). Build the Future.