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NEWS RELEASE

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New Coalition to Support Federal Mineral Science and Information Activities

Alexandria, VA and Denver, CO – Fifteen organizations have formed the new Mineral Science and Information Coalition (MSIC) to advocate for reinvigorated minerals science and information functions in the federal government. Reliable supplies of mineral resources underpin the U.S. economy and national security. To maintain robust supply chains of critical mineral materials and make well-informed land-use decisions, the U.S. government and industry must have accurate, timely information on mineral resources and on the domestic and global flow of minerals and mineral materials.

Over the past decade federal programs in minerals science, research, information, data collection and analysis have been severely weakened. Funding for the U.S. Geological Survey's Mineral Resources Program has decreased by 30 percent in constant dollar terms during this time. The Coalition asks Congress and the administration to increase investment in and support for federal minerals research, information gathering, analysis, and forecasting to sustain economic prosperity and ensure national security.

"The data collected and produced by the U.S. Geological Survey are exceptionally important to a wide array of both producers and users," said American Geosciences Institute Executive Director Dr. P. Patrick Leahy, the Coalition's chairman. "However, anytime you lose 30 percent of your buying power you have to go through the process of prioritization."

Current members of the Minerals Science and Information Coalition include the Aluminum Association, American Exploration & Mining Association, American Geosciences Institute, Associated Equipment Distributors, Association of American State Geologists, Geological Society of America, Industrial Minerals Association – North America, Interstate Mining Compact Commission, Materials Research Society, National Electrical Manufacturers Association, National Mining Association, National Stone, Sand and Gravel Association, Portland Cement Association, Society for Mining, Metallurgy & Exploration Inc., and the Society of Economic Geologists. Other groups are in the process of joining the Coalition.

For more information or to get involved with the Mineral Sciences and Information Coalition please contact Maeve Boland with the American Geosciences Institute (AGI) (mboland@agiweb.org) or John Hayden with the Society for Mining, Metallurgy & Exploration Inc. (SME) (hayden@smenet.org).

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The Minerals Sciences and Information Coalition consists of trade associations, professional societies, scientists, engineers, and groups representing the extractive industries; geoscience, physical, chemical, and material science professionals; processors, manufacturers, and other mineral and material supply-chain users; state government; and other consumers of federal minerals science and information.

SME is a professional society (nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation) whose more than 15,000 members represent all professions serving the minerals industry in more than 100 countries. SME members include engineers, geologists, metallurgists, educators, students and researchers. SME advances the worldwide minerals community through information exchange and professional development.

SME exists to be THE resource and advocate for the mining community.

For further details, see www.smenet.org