

Trump wastes no time on the Ambler Road

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[Shane Lasley](#), Mining News | Last updated Feb 10, 2025 6:15am

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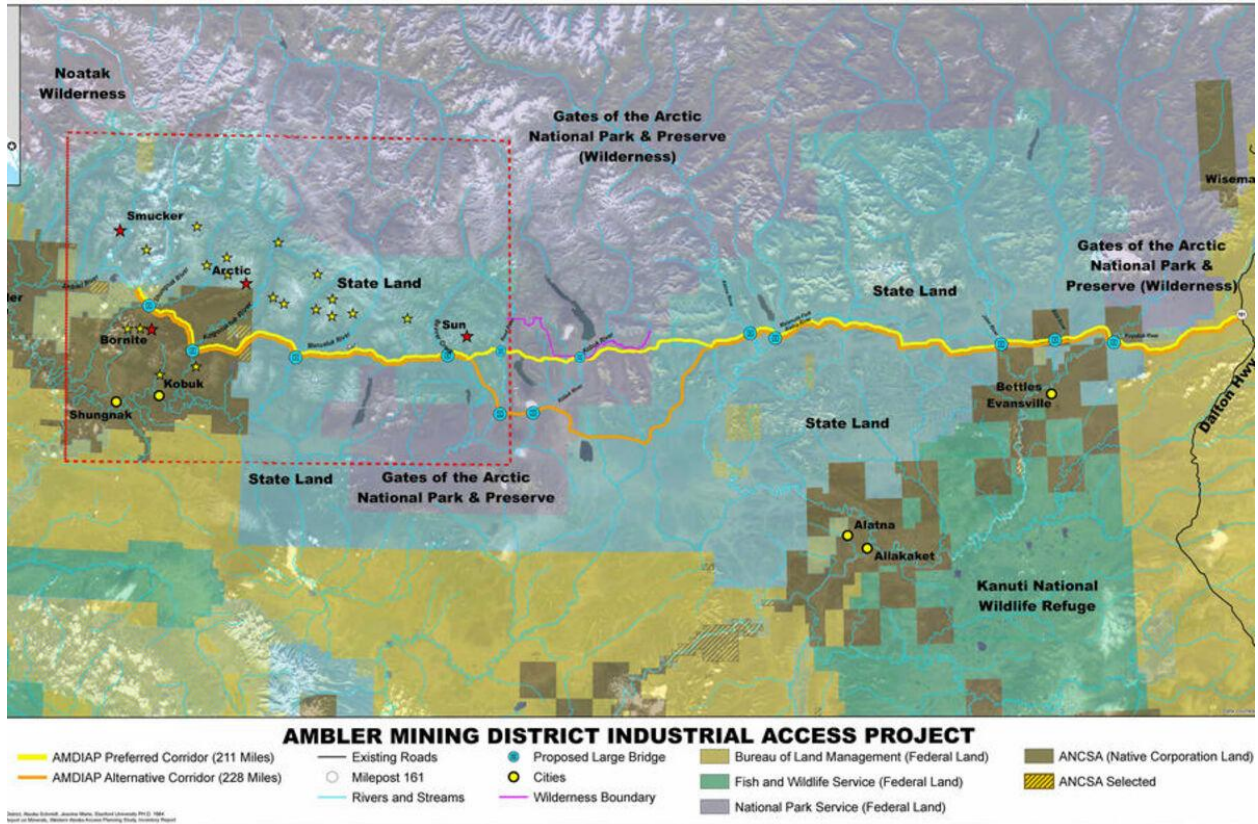
Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority 1/2

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Reinstating Ambler Road permits was part of the "Unleashing Alaska" executive order signed by President Trump on first day back in office.

With the stroke of a pen on his first day back in the Oval Office, President Donald Trump signed an executive order to reverse the previous administration's decision to revoke permits required to build a road to the Ambler Mining District, along with a series of other Biden era initiatives that are significantly impacting resource development in Alaska.

The "Unleashing Alaska's extraordinary resource potential" executive order signed by Trump shortly after being sworn into office reflects a list of [sweeping changes requested by Alaska Gov. Mike Dunleavy](#).

A 28-page "Alaska Priorities for Federal Transition" report sent to the incoming President's transition team in December detailed actions Trump should take to reverse what the Dunleavy administration characterized as a "four-year assault on Alaska's statehood and economy" by the Biden administration.

The Unleashing Alaska executive order touted the "abundant and largely untapped supply of natural resources" that America's Last Frontier State has to offer but said "an immediate end to the assault on Alaska's sovereignty and its ability to responsibly develop these resources" is required to unleash this extraordinary potential.

"Unlocking this bounty of natural wealth will raise the prosperity of our citizens while helping to enhance our Nation's economic and national security for generations to come," the executive order signed by Trump reads.

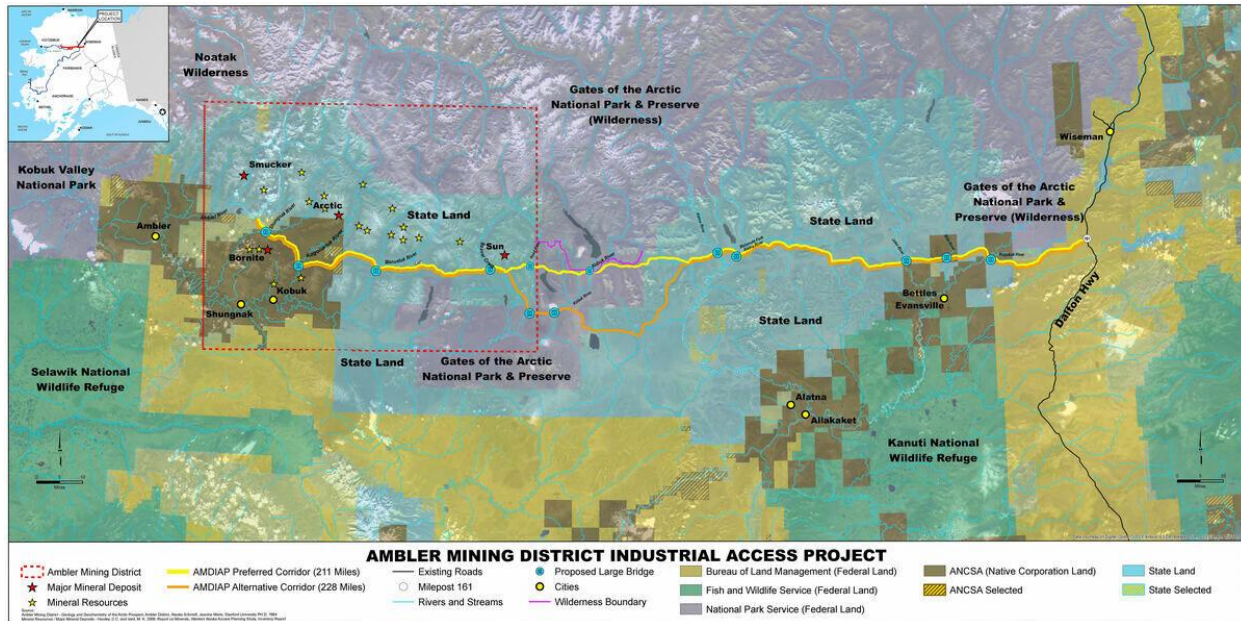
Alaska's delegation hailed the signing of the order as a major win for the 49th State.

"It is morning again in Alaska. With the stroke of a pen, President Trump has sent America and the world the unmistakable message that unleashing Alaska's energy and resources will be a top priority of his administration, literally from day 1," said Sen. Dan Sullivan.

"Today, the failed policies of the Biden Administration are now but a page in the history books – one that will soon be forgotten. The golden age of America has begun," said Rep. Nick Begich, a freshman member of the delegation. "Under the leadership of President Donald J. Trump, Alaska will be empowered to fully harness its vast energy and mineral resources, spearhead economic renewal, and solidify our position as an energy powerhouse."

Even Sen. Lisa Murkowski, who has not always seen eye-to-eye with the President, thanked Trump for helping Alaskans capitalize on their natural resources.

"President Trump is picking up right where he left off, reversing years of damaging decisions and prioritizing Alaska's unrivaled opportunities for responsible energy and mineral development," she said.



Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority

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Day one Ambler Road order

On the mineral development front, the Unleashing Alaska executive order calls for the reinstatement of federal permits to build the 211-mile road to the Ambler Mining District, a region of Northwest Alaska enriched with copper, zinc, silver, gold, cobalt, germanium, and other minerals critical to America's economic well-being and national security.

"The Ambler Mining District has extensive deposits of critical minerals and could be a secure, reliable U.S. supply-chain resource, essential for our Nation's tech-focused economy, green energy products, and military effectiveness," the Dunleavy administration penned in its Alaska priorities report to the Trump transition team.

During Trump's first term in office, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service issued a joint record of decision granting a right-of-way to build the Ambler Road across two relatively short segments of federal lands along the 211-mile route that would connect the Ambler Mining District to Alaska's highway system. Under the Biden administration, however, BLM reversed its previously issued authorization.

The Biden administration's denial of Ambler Road permits was viewed as a violation of the Congressional guarantee included in the 1980 Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA)

"Congress finds that there is a need for access for surface transportation purposes across the Western (Kobuk River) unit of the Gates of the Arctic National Preserve (from the Ambler Mining District to the Alaska Pipeline Haul Road) and the Secretary shall permit such access in accordance with the provisions of this subsection." –Section 201 (4) of ANILCA.

Under the Biden administration, BLM reversed its decision on the permits for a road that would have met the requirements of this Congressional mandate.

"This denial is a violation of ANILCA," the Dunleavy administration penned in its Alaska priorities report. "The new Trump Administration should rescind the unlawful Biden Administration ROD and issue a new decision restoring the right-of-way permits previously granted to the State.

Trump's Unleashing Alaska executive order marks the first step toward reinstating Ambler Road permits.

Federal agencies have been ordered to review the 2020 Ambler Road record of decision for any legal or other deficiencies and make sure those are rectified before reinstating the federal permits.

"No doubt this action will take time to correct, but it is a very clear signal that President Trump means business and means to carry through on his promises," said Rick Van Nieuwenhuyse, chairman of Valhalla Metals, a company exploring a high-grade minerals project along the Ambler Road route. "ANILCA guaranteed access be provided to the State of Alaska and Alaska Native corporations in order to develop the Ambler Mining District. After 45 years it is about time that we have a President who is willing to deliver on that promise!"

This move on Trump's first day back in office will help unlock the Ambler Mining District's potential to provide a secure domestic source of copper, zinc, cobalt, and other minerals critical for America's transition to green energy and tech-focused industries and is one part of a larger plan to unleash Alaska's extraordinary resource potential.

Author Bio

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Over his more than 16 years of covering mining and mineral exploration, Shane has become renowned for his ability to report on the sector in a way that is technically sound enough to inform industry insiders while being easy to understand by a wider audience.

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