



Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council Annual Report to Congress



Fiscal Year 2025



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Acknowledgements

The Executive Director of the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council (Permitting Council) prepared this report pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 4370m-7(a)(1)(A), with review by the Permitting Council Members, and opportunity to include comments concerning the performance of their agency, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 4370m-7(a)(1)(B).

The Permitting Council is a federal agency charged with making the federal permitting process more efficient by improving the accountability, transparency and predictability of the federal environmental review and authorization process for certain critical infrastructure projects. The Permitting Council comprises the Executive Director, who serves as the Permitting Council Chair, and 15 other members, including the Deputy Secretary (or equivalent) from 13 federal agencies, the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

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Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council



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Department of Housing and Urban Development



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Department of the Interior



Report Summary & Highlights

Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 4370m-7(a)(1), as amended, this Annual Report to Congress details the progress of the Permitting Council in implementing Title 41 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST-41) during Fiscal Year (FY) 2025. This report includes an introduction to FAST-41 and the Permitting Council; a description of the FAST-41 covered project portfolio; and an evaluation of progress made in implementing FAST-41 during FY 2025. The report, which has been reviewed by the Permitting Council pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 4370m-7(a)(1)(B), is submitted to Congress by the Permitting Council Executive Director and published on the [Permitting Council website](#).

FAST-41 requires the Executive Director to submit to Congress, on a quarterly basis, a separate report evaluating agency compliance with the provisions of FAST-41, including a description of the implementation and adherence of each agency to the Coordinated Project Plan (CPP) and permitting timetable requirements.¹ These Quarterly Agency Performance Reports, which the Executive Director submits under separate cover, can be found [here](#).

This Annual Report was developed by compiling data from the Permitting Dashboard and Quarterly Agency Performance Reports, through discussions with Permitting Council staff and in consultation with Permitting Council agencies. The Permitting Council staff requested that agencies share accomplishments from FY 2025 that highlight FAST-41 implementation successes and examples that advance the state of practice for permitting across the Federal Government. This input is reflected throughout the report.

Previous reports to Congress for FY 2016-2024 can be found [here](#).

¹ 42 U.S.C. § 4370m-7(a)(2).

FY 2025 FAST-41 Implementation Highlights

- ▶ 85 total active projects, including 43 mining projects
- ▶ 62 new projects, including 42 mining projects and 2 pipeline projects
- ▶ 10 completed projects, including 4 mining projects
- ▶ First manufacturing sector covered project
- ▶ First use of FAST-41 transparency authority
- ▶ First-of-its-kind memorandum of understanding (MOU) executed with the State of Alaska

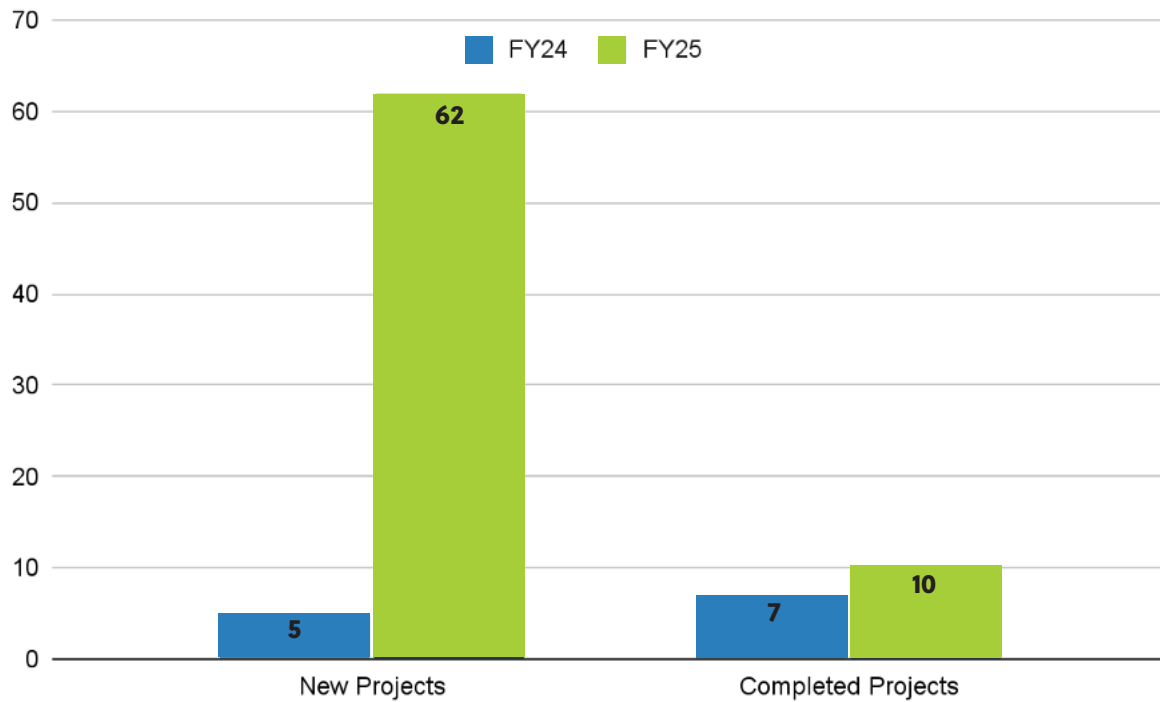


Figure 1: Growth in the FAST-41 Portfolio. The active project portfolio (including both covered and transparency projects) more than doubled, growing 158 percent (from 33 projects to 85 projects) between FY 2024 and FY 2025.

About FAST-41 and the Permitting Council

Established in 2015 pursuant to FAST-41, 42 U.S.C. 4370m et seq., the Permitting Council helps facilitate predictable, transparent and accountable federal environmental reviews and authorizations² for infrastructure projects covered by FAST-41 (i.e., “covered projects”)³ and projects posted in the interest of transparency (i.e., “transparency projects”). The Permitting Council also develops best practices for improving environmental review and authorizations and works closely with Federal Government agencies and stakeholders to identify and resolve the permitting roadblocks that can slow down the buildout of critical infrastructure.

FAST-41 coverage provides agencies, Congress, project sponsors and the public with the following benefits:

- **Transparency:** The centerpiece of FAST-41 is the [Federal Permitting Dashboard](#),⁴ where federal agencies must publicly post and actively manage the comprehensive, integrated permitting timetable required for each FAST-41 project. These publicly posted timetables give a real-time accounting of the progress on each required review and authorization for the project, providing transparency for all stakeholders, from project sponsors to affected community members.
- **Predictability:** Foundational tools like the permitting timetable and CPP bring a level of predictability to FAST-41 covered projects. The structure ensures close coordination with the project sponsors and cooperating agencies in the management of covered projects and helps project sponsors make plans and commit resources more reliably. Features such as dispute resolution procedures and Executive Director review and approval of significant permitting timetable modifications help avoid unexpected delay.
- **Accountability:** FAST-41 brings a level of accountability to federal permitting that is often missing from the traditional process. The program’s specific tracking and reporting requirements and restrictions on modifications of permitting timetables and delays help to hold federal agencies accountable for schedule implementation and help ensure deliberate and timely decision making.

2 The term “environmental review” is defined in the statute as, “the agency procedures and processes for applying a categorical exclusion or for preparing an environmental assessment, an environmental impact statement, or other document required under the National Environmental Policy Act.” 42 U.S.C. § 4370m(11). The term “authorization” means “any license, permit, approval, finding, determination, or other administrative decision issued by an agency and any inter-agency consultation that is required or authorized under Federal law in order to site, construct, reconstruct, or commence operations of a covered project administered by a Federal agency or, in the case of a State that chooses to participate in the environmental review and authorization process in accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 4370m–2(c)(3)(A), a State agency.” 42 U.S.C. § 4370m(3).

3 The full definition of “covered project,” which includes criteria that projects must meet to qualify for coverage under the FAST-41 program, is found in 42 U.S.C. § 4370m(6).

4 The Dashboard is currently hosted and maintained by the Department of Transportation (DOT) and is used as a transparency and compliance tool for many types of infrastructure projects in which the Federal government is involved. A fraction of the projects on the Dashboard are FAST-41 projects and can be found here: [FAST-41 Covered Projects](#) and [FAST-41 Transparency Projects](#).

The covered project provisions of FAST-41 establish a voluntary program for qualifying infrastructure projects; project sponsors must apply for and obtain FAST-41 coverage for their projects.⁵ Covered projects may include infrastructure projects across the following industry sectors: mining, renewable and conventional energy production, electricity transmission, surface transportation, aviation, ports and waterways, water resource projects, broadband, pipelines, manufacturing, semiconductors, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning, high-performance computing and advanced computer hardware and software, quantum information science and technology, data storage and data management, cybersecurity, carbon capture, and energy storage. The Permitting Council may, by majority vote, engage in a federal rulemaking to add FAST-41 sectors.

The FAST-41 transparency project authority provides that the Executive Director may direct a lead agency to post to the Dashboard a project that is under review by the lead agency if the Executive Director determines that a Dashboard entry for that project is in the interest of transparency.⁶ The lead agency must create and maintain a comprehensive permitting timetable and publish information regarding public involvement opportunities for the project.⁷

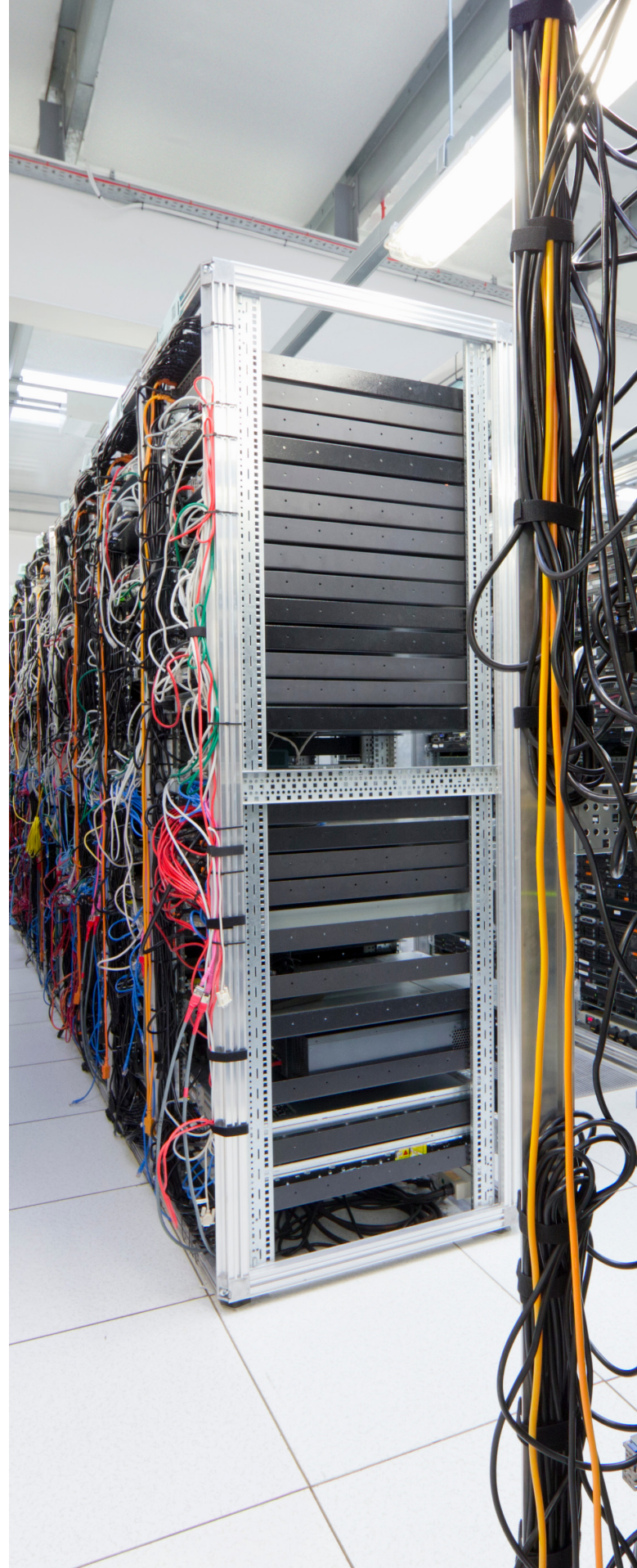
FAST-41 does not dictate particular project-related outcomes or affect the level of environmental review a project receives.⁸ The statute instead requires transparency and deliberate coordination of federal effort in making environmental review and permitting decisions. FAST-41 expressly does not alter or supersede any applicable statutory or regulatory requirement, environmental law, regulation,

5 See 42 U.S.C. §§ 4370m-2(a)(1), (b)(2)(A)(ii).

6 See 42 U.S.C. §§ 4370m-2(b)(2)(A)(iii)(I).

7 See 42 U.S.C. §§ 4370m-2(b)(2)(A)(iii)(II).

8 See 42 U.S.C. §§ 4370m-6(d) & (e).





A drill rig at the Graphite Creek project under the Northern Lights

required review process, or public involvement procedure. FAST-41 does not predetermine the outcome of any federal decision-making process with respect to any covered or transparency project, or mandate completion of reviews for FAST-41 projects before reviews of other projects.

FAST-41 provides transparency into the federal permitting process through management of a comprehensive, integrated federal permitting timetable for each FAST-41 project, which is on the public-facing Permitting Dashboard, and accounts for, organizes and coordinates all necessary federal environmental reviews and authorizations for a FAST-41 project. Managing a permitting timetable in compliance with FAST-41 requires close communication among the participating federal agencies and between the federal agencies and project sponsors. In circumstances where a state chooses to participate in the federal environmental review and decision-making process for a covered project, this would also require close coordination among the federal agencies and participating state agencies.

The Permitting Council fosters intergovernmental cooperation as well as cooperation with industries and communities to develop more efficient, transparent and effective processes for permitting infrastructure. The Permitting Council works closely with the permitting agencies and project sponsors to identify emerging issues, facilitate solutions and maintain progress towards permitting deadlines.

FAST-41 also established the Environmental Review Improvement Fund (ERIF) to make funds available to the Executive Director to implement FAST-41 and support the role of the Permitting Council as a federal center for permitting excellence. Congress also authorized the Executive Director to transfer funds from the ERIF to other federal agencies and state, Tribal and local governments, to facilitate timely and efficient environmental reviews and authorizations for FAST-41 projects.⁹

Additionally, the Executive Director creates recommended performance schedules for FAST-41 sectors for agencies to use as baselines for developing their FAST-41 covered project permitting timetables, and the Permitting Council establishes recommendations for best practices for agencies to implement when undertaking environmental reviews and authorizations for FAST-41 covered infrastructure projects, facilitating the development of critical infrastructure investments.

⁹ 42 U.S.C. § 4370m-8(d).

Description of Covered Project Portfolio

The Permitting Council maintains a portfolio of infrastructure projects that have obtained coverage under FAST-41. This section describes active (planned and in progress), completed, newly covered, paused and canceled projects in the FAST-41 covered project portfolio during FY 2025.

Active Covered Projects

Projects undergoing active review are projects that were planned or in progress at any time in FY 2025. There were 52 active FAST-41 covered projects in FY 2025. Figure 2 shows the location of FAST-41 covered projects undergoing active federal review at some point in FY 2025.

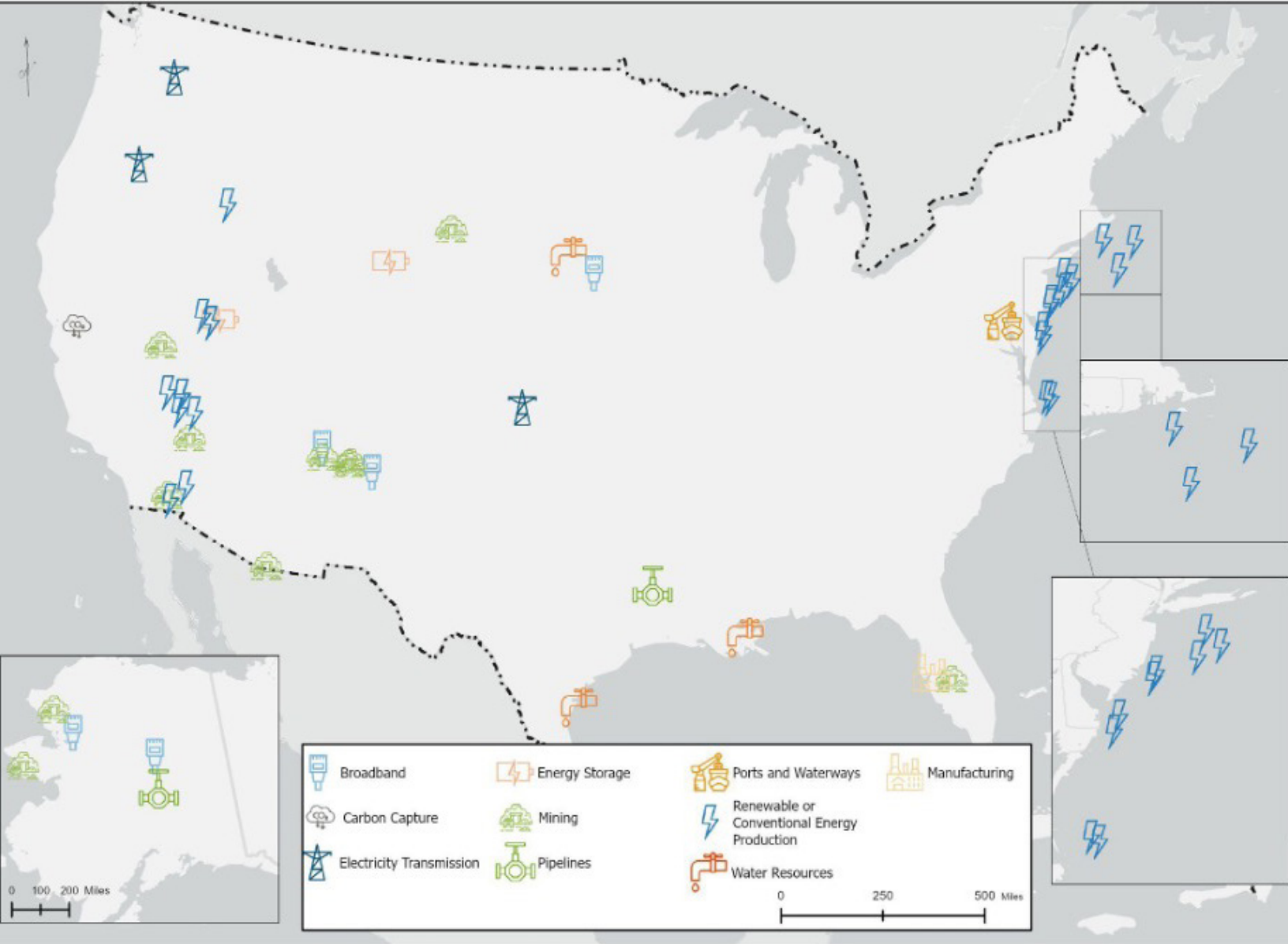


Figure 2: Covered projects undergoing active federal review at some point in FY 2025

For the 52 FAST-41 covered projects undergoing active federal review at some point during FY 2025, Figure 3 summarizes the status as of September 30, 2025 (the end of FY 2025).

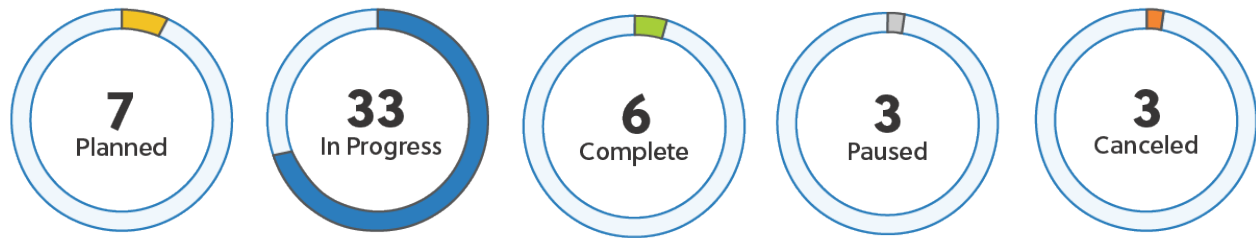


Figure 3: The status of each covered project in the Permitting Council portfolio as of the end of FY 2025

Completed Covered Projects

In FY 2025 the Permitting Council saw the completion of six FAST-41 covered projects, which were within the broadband, energy production, electricity transmission and water resources sectors

- [Alaska FiberOptic Project Segment 1](#) (Alaska; lead agency: NTIA)
- [Atlantic Shores South](#) (New Jersey; lead agency: BOEM)
- [Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line](#) (Idaho and Oregon; lead agency: BLM)
- [Harbor Island Seawater Desalination Facility](#) (Texas; lead agency: USACE)
- [Maryland Offshore Wind Project](#) (Maryland and Delaware; lead agency: BOEM)
- [Winnebago Tribe Broadband Connectivity Project](#) (Iowa and Nebraska; lead agency: NTIA)

Completed Covered Project Highlights

- The **Harbor Island Seawater Desalination Facility**, located near Port Aransas, Texas, will provide up to 100 million gallons per day of drinkable water. The project successfully completed the federal permitting process two months earlier than initially expected.
- The **Winnebago Tribe Broadband Connectivity Project**, located in Winnebago, Nebraska, will provide broadband service to the reservation and adjacent communities to connect residents with reliable and affordable high-speed internet.



Newly Covered Projects

Project sponsors initiated FAST-41 coverage for 29 new projects from across the country in FY 2025. The newly added projects are:

- ▶ [Alaska Liquefied Natural Gas \(LNG\) Project](#) (Alaska)¹⁰
- ▶ [Attentive Energy Two Offshore Wind Project](#) (New Jersey)
- ▶ [Bluepoint Wind 1](#) (New York and New Jersey)
- ▶ [Castle Mountain Mine Phase 2 Project](#) (California and Nevada)
- ▶ [Cobra Master Development Plan](#) (Texas)
- ▶ [Crownpoint / Church Rock Uranium Project](#) (New Mexico)
- ▶ [Desert Charger Energy Project](#) (California)
- ▶ [Dewey Burdock In-Situ Recovery \(ISR\) Uranium Project](#) (South Dakota)
- ▶ [Grants Precision ISR Project](#) (New Mexico)
- ▶ [Graphite Creek Project](#) (Alaska)
- ▶ [Harbor Island Seawater Desalination Facility](#) (Texas)
- ▶ [Hell's Kitchen Critical Minerals & Power](#) (California)
- ▶ [Kawich Solar Project](#) (Nevada)
- ▶ [La Jara Mesa Project](#) (New Mexico)
- ▶ [Larrea Solar Project](#) (Nevada)
- ▶ [Mosey Solar Project](#) (Nevada)
- ▶ [NANA Regional Broadband Network \(NRBN\)](#) (Alaska)
- ▶ [Navajo Nation Department of Education E-Rate Funded Broadband Project](#) (New Mexico)
- ▶ [Navajo Nation Gallup McKinley County Schools E-Rate Funded Broadband Project](#) (New Mexico)
- ▶ [Pantheon Solar Project](#) (Nevada)
- ▶ [Pelican Carbon Sequestration Hub](#) (California)
- ▶ [Riverview East Stack Extension](#) (Florida)
- ▶ [Royal Slope Power Transmission Line Project](#) (Washington)
- ▶ [Samantha Solar](#) (Nevada)
- ▶ [Santee Sioux Tribe Water Capacity and Infrastructure Improvements](#) (Nebraska and South Dakota)
- ▶ [South Bennett Solar](#) (Idaho)
- ▶ [South Fort Meade – South of State Road \(SR\) 64 Parcels](#) (Florida)
- ▶ [Tonopah Flats Lithium Project](#) (Nevada)
- ▶ [Vineyard Mid-Atlantic Offshore Wind Project](#) (New York and Massachusetts)

The addition of these new projects across 10 different sectors and 12 states signals an increasing awareness of the value of participating in the FAST-41 program, including the benefits of transparency, predictability and accountability in the federal process that come from collaboratively developing and actively managing public-facing project permitting timetables, regardless of sector or geographic location.

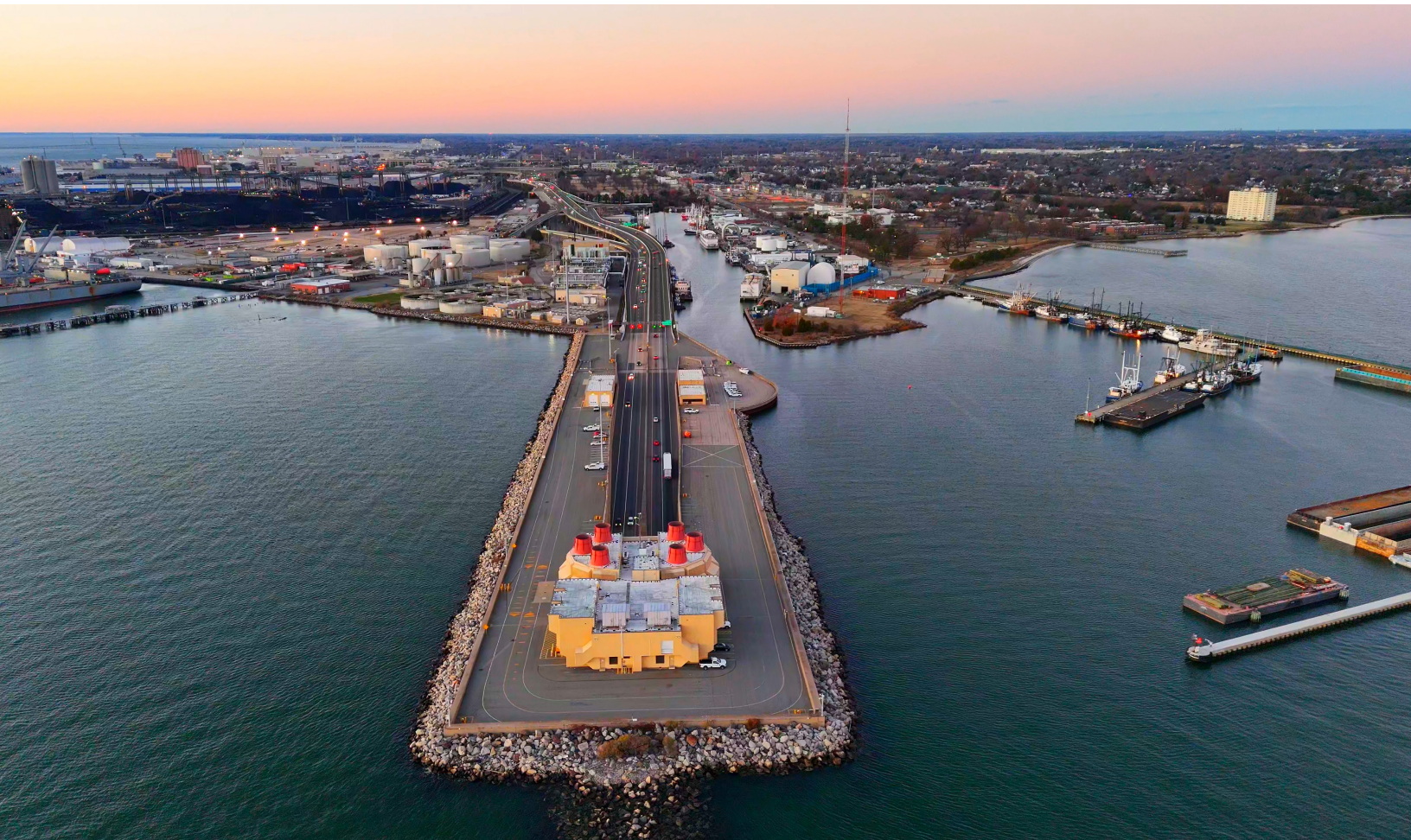
¹⁰ Alaska LNG first received FAST-41 coverage in 2017 and achieved initial federal approval in 2020. The project sponsor reactivated the project's FAST-41 coverage in February 2025.

Paused Covered Projects

Under certain circumstances, a facilitating or lead agency may request that the Executive Director “pause” the FAST-41 process for a covered project. The permitting timetables for [Beacon Wind](#) and [Ocean Wind 1](#) were paused prior to FY 2025 and remained paused for the duration of FY 2025. [Atlantic Shores North](#), [Grain Belt Express Transmission - Phase 1](#) and [Perkins Renewable Energy Project](#) were paused in FY 2025. Details regarding these paused projects may be found on each project’s page on the Permitting Dashboard.

Canceled Covered Projects

Canceled projects are those for which the environmental review and authorization process will not be completed. A cancellation may occur for a variety of reasons (e.g., a project sponsor could withdraw its application from federal review, or the lead agency could make a determination that the federal environmental review and authorization for the covered project will not move forward). The permitting timetable for [Liberty Development and Production Plan](#) was paused starting in FY 2020 and canceled in FY 2025. FAST-41 coverage for [Kitty Hawk North Wind Project](#), [Mid-Breton Sediment Diversion](#) and [Stagecoach Wind](#) was canceled during FY 2025. Details regarding these canceled projects may be found on each project’s page on the Permitting Dashboard.



Highlights of Progress Made Implementing FAST-41

The Permitting Council and the agencies represented on the Permitting Council have made significant progress advancing transparency, predictability and accountability in the environmental review and authorization process in FY 2025, supporting administration priorities in the following policy areas:

- ▶ **Mining:** Facilitating domestic mineral production to create jobs, fuel prosperity and reduce our reliance on foreign nations.
- ▶ **Energy:** Expanding the identification, leasing, development, production, transportation, refining and generation capacity of reliable, domestic, dispatchable energy to protect our nation’s national and economic security.
- ▶ **Permitting Efficiency:** Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of environmental review and permitting processes.

Mining

The mining sector represents nearly two-thirds of the growth in the FAST-41 portfolio during FY 2025.¹¹ Before the FY, there was only one mining project on the Permitting Dashboard. During FY 2025, there were 43 active mining projects across 19 states added to the Dashboard, representing over half of the Permitting Council’s active project portfolio, listed in the table below. At the completion of FY 2025, the mining sector included 10 covered projects and 33 transparency projects.

Table 1: Covered and transparency mining projects undergoing active federal review at some point in FY 2025

State	Project	Resource
Nevada 8 projects	3PL Railroad Valley Exploration Project	exploration: lithium, boron, tungsten, sodium, potassium, and phosphate
	Angel Island	lithium
	Golden Mile Mine Project	gold
	Muncy Creek Mineral Exploration Project	exploration: copper, molybdenum, zinc, silver
	Polaris Exploration Project	exploration: gold
	Silver Peak Lithium Mine	lithium
	South Railroad Project	gold, silver
	Tonopah Flats Lithium Project	lithium
Arizona 4 projects	Antler Copper Project	copper
	Bronco Creek Exploration Project	copper, lead, zinc
	Resolution Copper Project	copper, molybdenum
	South32 Hermosa Critical Minerals Project	manganese, zinc

¹¹ Of the 64 projects added to the Dashboard in FY 2025, 42 were mining.

Table 1: Covered and transparency mining projects undergoing active federal review at some point in FY 2025, continued.

State	Project	Resource
Montana 4 projects	Becky's Mine Modification	bentonite
	Blue Copper	exploration: copper, tungsten, zinc, gallium, germanium
	Libby Exploration Project	copper, silver
	Stillwater Mine	platinum, palladium
New Mexico 4 projects	Crownpoint / Church Rock Uranium Project	uranium
	Grants Precision ISR Project	uranium
	La Jara Mesa Project	uranium
	Roca Honda Project	uranium
Florida 3 projects	Maxville Expansion	monazite, zircon, titanium
	South Fort Meade – South of SR 64 Parcels	phosphate
	Trail Ridge South	monazite, zircon, titanium
Alaska 3 projects	Aqqaluk Pit Exploration and Expansion	zinc
	Graphite Creek Project	graphite
	Greens Creek Surface Exploration	exploration: gold, silver, lead, zinc
Arkansas 2 projects	Liberty Owl	lithium
	South West Arkansas Project	lithium
California 2 projects	Castle Mountain Mine Phase 2 Project	gold, silver
	Hell's Kitchen Critical Minerals & Power	lithium
Idaho 2 projects	Caldwell Canyon Mine Project	phosphate
	Stibnite Gold Project	gold, antimony
Oregon 2 projects	Grassy Mountain Mine Project	gold, silver
	McDermitt Exploration Project	exploration: lithium
Alabama 1 project	Warrior Met Coal Mines	coal
Georgia 1 project	Amelia A&B	titanium oxide, zircon
Michigan 1 project	Michigan Potash	potash, salt
Minnesota 1 project	NorthMet Project	copper, nickel
Missouri 1 project	Doe Run Project	lead, zinc, copper
North Carolina 1 project	Kings Mountain Lithium Material Processing Plant	lithium
South Dakota 1 project	Dewey Burdock ISR Uranium Project	uranium
Utah 1 project	Lisbon Valley Copper Project	copper
Wyoming 1 project	Sweetwater Project	uranium

Transparency Mining Projects. On March 20th, 2025, the President issued an Executive Order (EO) on “[Immediate Measures to Increase American Mineral Production](#).”¹² The EO directed that the Chair of the National Energy Dominance Council, in consultation with the heads of relevant agencies, submit to the Executive Director mineral production projects to be considered as transparency projects on the Permitting Dashboard.¹³ In response, the Executive Director published 35 transparency projects in FY 2025.¹⁴ Figure 4 shows the location of these projects.

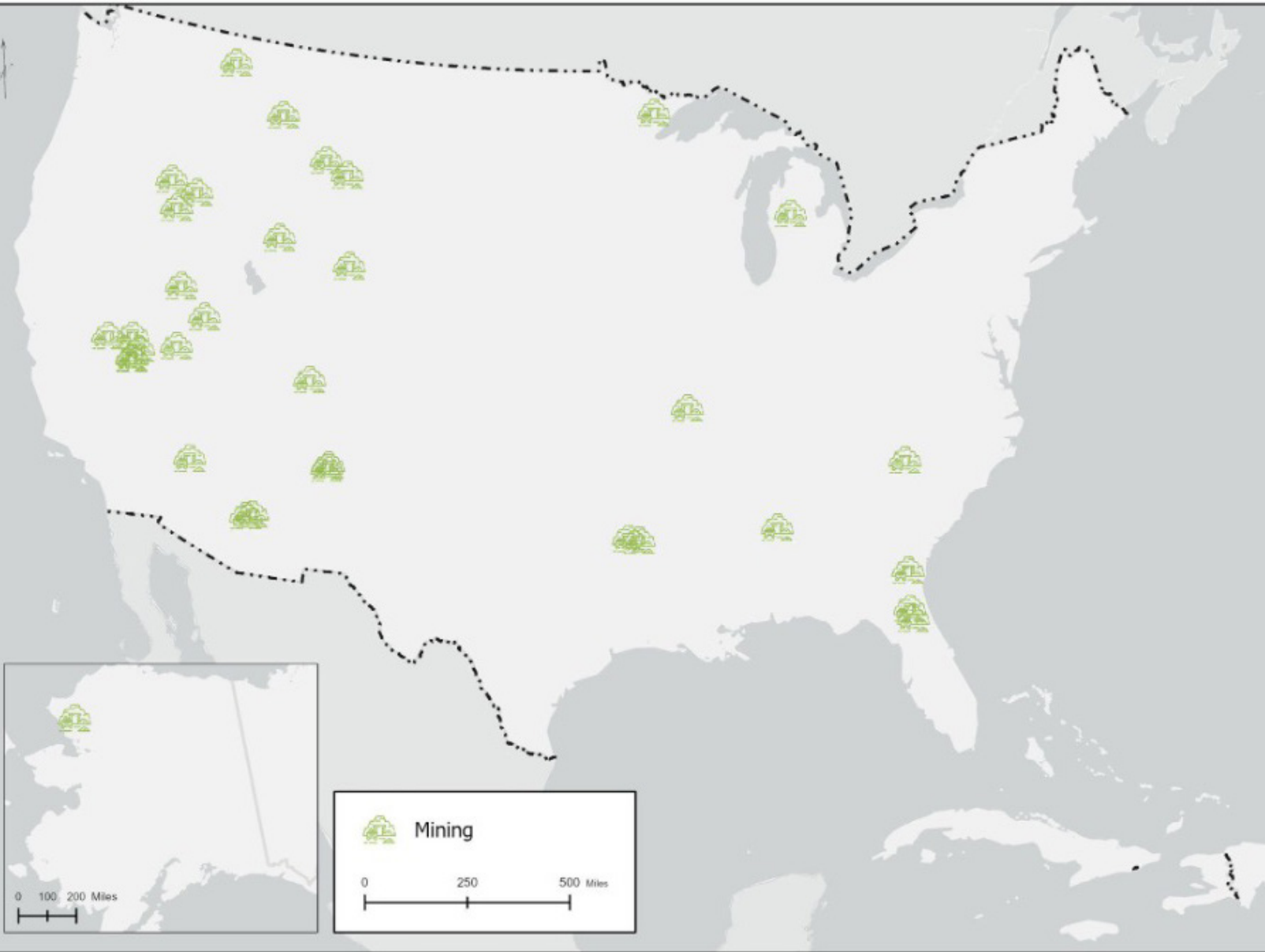


Figure 4: Transparency projects undergoing active federal review at some point in FY 2025

12 Exec. Order No. 14241, 90 Fed. Reg. 13673 (March 20, 2025).

13 *Id.* § 3(b).

14 La Jara Mesa Project and Tonopah Flats Lithium Project were originally posted to the Permitting Dashboard as transparency projects and later transitioned to covered project status.

In FY 2025 the Permitting Council saw the completion of four FAST-41 transparency projects.

Completed Mining Project Highlights

- ▶ 3PL Railroad Valley Exploration Project is located in Nevada and involves mineral exploration activities; commodities of interest include lithium, boron, tungsten, sodium, potassium and phosphate.
- ▶ Amelia A&B is located in Georgia and will excavate sands to extract titanium oxide, zircon and other minerals.
- ▶ Aqqaluk Pit Exploration and Expansion is expanding current zinc mining operations from the existing Aqqaluk pit at the Red Dog Mine in Alaska.
- ▶ Stibnite Gold Project, located in central Idaho, will entail open pit mining and processing of gold and antimony, new road construction, utility upgrades, reclamation and restoration activities.



CEO of project sponsor Perpetua Jon Cherry, Governor Brad Little of Idaho, US Army General Reim and USDA Deputy Under Secretary Kristin Sleeper celebrate the kickoff of the Stibnite Gold Project.

Covered Mining Projects

By the end of FY 2025, the Permitting Council added 9 covered mining projects to the FAST-41 portfolio, bringing the total number of covered mining projects to 10. Two of these projects—La Jara Mesa Project and Tonopah Flats Lithium Project—were originally added to the Permitting Dashboard as transparency projects and transitioned to covered project status during the FY.

New Project Highlight

In July 2025, the [Riverview East Stack Extension project](#) was added as the first-ever FAST-41 covered manufacturing sector project, and if permitted will support production of critical fertilizer products to increase food production nationwide. The purpose of the project is to increase waste storage capacity to enable continued operation of a fertilizer manufacturing plant where phosphate ore is processed into sulfuric acid, phosphoric acid, fluorosilicic acid and ammoniated phosphate fertilizer products.



Focused Outreach and Support

Also driving growth in the mining portfolio was focused outreach by the Executive Director including engagement with industry groups and in-person meetings with potential project sponsors to raise awareness of the FAST-41 process. In addition, the Permitting Council is providing interagency funding that specifically advances mining projects (e.g., to the Department of Agriculture (USDA)—see page 22 for additional detail).



The Executive Director visited the Nikolai Nickel Project site in Alaska with then-potential project sponsor Alaska Energy Metals Development Corporation. The project was added to the Permitting Dashboard under the FAST-41 Transparency authority in early FY 2026.

Deep Seabed Mining

The Permitting Council voted to establish a collaboration group to identify federal permitting requirements and develop template timelines for deep seabed mining projects. Deep seabed mining is a sector of focus for clarifying permitting requirements and improving transparency due to the nascency of the activities and alignment with President Trump’s priorities. The collaboration group completed their initial compilation in November and the template timelines are now available for application to proposed deep seabed mining projects under federal purview.

Energy

On January 20th, 2025, the President issued an EO on "[Declaring a National Energy Emergency](#)."¹⁵ The EO established the national need for a reliable, diversified and affordable supply of energy and directed agencies to expedite completion of energy projects by using emergency authorities.¹⁶ Also on January 20th, 2025, the President issued an EO on "[Unleashing American Energy](#)."¹⁷ The EO established policy direction to encourage energy exploration on Federal lands and waters and ensure that an abundant supply of reliable energy is readily accessible across the Nation.¹⁸

The Permitting Council has engaged in extensive outreach with industry and potential project sponsors about the value FAST-41 can bring to the timely permitting of energy projects.



"The FAST-41 program has been invaluable in streamlining the permit process. [Black Bear Natural Gas Development] project, under ordinary circumstances, would have taken 3 years or more to get approved. We are on track for approval within 14 months. This is a result of all interested agencies coming together to understand the project and its challenges. [FAST-41] presents to each agency their objectives and goals and a clear path to reach those goals. These projects are not completed without extreme effort and organization from all agencies involved."

Scott St. John, Vice President of Engineering and Regulatory Compliance at Reagan Smith, the environmental consultant for the Cobra Master Development Plan and Black Bear Natural Gas Development projects.

"Boardwalk is pleased to partner with the Permitting Council on the Kosciusko Junction Project. From our first engagement with the Permitting Council at the Developers Summit, Council staff have ensured coordination among the permitting agencies at every step of the process. The FAST-41 program provides a transparent pathway from application to construction where all stakeholders are aligned, and our participation supports our commitment to building best-in-class infrastructure to deliver secure, affordable and responsible energy."

Mike McMahon, Chief Legal and Regulatory Officer at Boardwalk Pipelines

Boardwalk Pipelines, the project sponsor for the Kosciusko Junction Pipeline Project, submitted a FAST-41 Initiation Notice in FY 2025, and the project was added to the Permitting Dashboard in early FY 2026.



¹⁵ Exec. Order No. 14156, 90 Fed. Reg. 8433 (January 20, 2025).

¹⁶ *Id.* §§ 1, 2, & 3.

¹⁷ Exec. Order No. 14154, 90 Fed. Reg. 8433 (January 20, 2025).

¹⁸ *Id.* § 2.

Project sponsors initiated FAST-41 coverage for two pipeline projects in FY 2025.

New Project Highlight:

[Cobra Master Development Plan](#) would, if permitted, bring access to natural gas supply critical to meet growing domestic demand, both in the project’s East Texas region and nationally. The project includes installation of 4 well pads with 8 wells on each pad and an approximately 4.31 mile, 20-inch trunk pipeline and associated infrastructure for the extraction and transportation of natural gas. Based in Shelby County, Texas, the project is within the Sabine National Forest. The approval of the project will allow development of existing Federal mineral leases in the area to increase over the next 10-15 years.

The Forest Service plans to apply a combination of categorical exclusions (CEs) that cover the actions in their entirety, as permitted by revised USDA for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations, resulting in a 67 percent faster anticipated NEPA timeline compared to if the Forest Service had relied on an environmental assessment. The CEs include the following:

- ▶ Drilling an oil or gas well within a developed field for which an approved land use plan or any environmental document prepared pursuant to NEPA analyzed such drilling as a reasonably foreseeable activity, so long as such plan or document was approved within five (5) years prior to the date of spudding the well. This CE will tier to a Bureau of Land Management [Environmental Assessment](#) completed in May 2025.
- ▶ Approval, modification, or continuation of special uses that require less than 20 acres of National Forest Service lands.



The Cobra Master Development Plan interdisciplinary team conducted a site visit to the location of the proposed project in Sabine National Forest.

New Project Highlight:

[Alaska LNG Project](#) rejoined the portfolio of projects undergoing active federal review in FY 2025 to allow for permit renewals and updated Biological Opinions to be added to the permitting timetable. The project will produce up to 20 million metric tons per annum of liquefied natural gas. The project sponsor, recognizing the discipline, transparency and predictability that FAST-41 brings to the permitting process, approached the Permitting Council for assistance shepherding them through the process and holding agencies accountable. Despite the government shutdown in early FY 2026, Permitting Council agencies continued to advance this project, with Federal permitting for the project completing ahead of schedule in December 2025.



Permitting Efficiency

Through exercising FAST-41's transparency authority, engaging with state partners, making technology investments and implementing best practices, the Permitting Council is advancing the efficiency of the environmental review and authorization process.

Transparency Provision

In FY 2025, the Permitting Council made first use of the transparency authority under FAST-41, enhancing the Dashboard to accommodate the 35 projects posted under the transparency provision. Transparency projects are distinct from covered projects and are posted in the interest of transparency.¹⁹ Inclusion on the Dashboard as transparency projects makes the environmental review and authorizations schedules publicly available, leading to greater accountability and driving a more efficient process. The public nature of the Dashboard enables all stakeholders, from project sponsors and community members to federal agency leaders, to have an up-to-date accounting of where each project stands in the review process. In contrast, covered projects are entitled to development of CPPs, statutory procedures for modifying permitting timetables and dispute resolution.

The transparency provision provides a pathway to FAST-41 coverage. For example, La Jara Mesa Project and Tonopah Flats Lithium Project were originally posted to the Permitting Dashboard as transparency projects and later transitioned to become covered projects. Through the transparency authority, project sponsors have gained exposure to the Permitting Council and FAST-41, including the higher level of accountability available to covered projects, driving increased participation in the FAST-41 covered project program.

FAST-41 Kickoff Meetings

The lead or facilitating agency hosts an interagency kickoff meeting for the development of the initial permitting timetable when a project obtains FAST-41 coverage. These meetings provide a forum for the project sponsor to brief agencies on the proposed project and for agencies to collaboratively identify necessary reviews and authorizations for the project, discuss dependencies and the critical path in building the project schedule and raise potential issues and concerns for resolution. Agencies have institutionalized these kickoff meetings as a standard practice in their implementation of FAST-41 to set clear expectations for all parties and ensure timely development of realistic permitting timetables.



¹⁹ 42 U.S.C. § 4370m-42(b)(2)(A)(iii).



The Executive Director and Governor Mike Dunleavy of Alaska at the MOU signing ceremony.

Alaska Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

The Permitting Council and the State of Alaska developed a first-of-its-kind agreement providing for federal permitting assistance, as the state and the federal government continue to work together to streamline the permitting process for critical infrastructure projects across Alaska. The MOU outlines the intention of the state and federal government to cooperatively identify projects for FAST-41 coverage and transparency status. As part of the agreement, the Permitting Council will provide federal permitting support to select projects in the state, ensuring focused technical assistance, transparency, accountability and predictability in the permitting process. The Permitting Council will provide the State of Alaska with a wide variety of support, including:

- ▶ Assisting the state in determining the FAST-41 eligibility of projects;
- ▶ Providing dedicated Permitting Council staff for each covered project, with regularly scheduled coordination calls on at least a monthly basis;
- ▶ Developing tools to aid in the implementation of FAST-41, from a unique state FAST-41 application template to fact sheets and other tools;
- ▶ Engaging with project sponsors of projects in the state portfolio to provide FAST-41 briefings as requested.

Since the execution of this MOU, two new mining projects in Alaska—Donlin Gold and Nikolai Nickel—have been added to the Permitting Dashboard in early FY 2026. The Permitting Council is engaged in discussions with other states to establish similar MOUs to drive increased participation in FAST-41.

Permitting Improvement and Innovation through Technology

On April 15, 2025, the President issued a memorandum, "[Updating Permitting Technology for the 21st Century](#)." The memorandum establishes policy direction that federal agencies shall make maximum use of technology to streamline environmental review and permitting processes and directed CEQ to issue a [Permitting Technology Action Plan](#) and [data standard](#) which agencies are to implement. The Permitting Council has leveraged the ERIF to drive permitting improvement and innovation across federal agencies, including the examples highlighted below. In addition, the Permitting Council began reviewing interagency information technology (IT) funding agreements to ensure alignment with administration priorities and CEQ's Action Plan and to hold agencies accountable for measurable and meaningful permitting improvements achieved through ERIF investments.

Agency Technology Highlights

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) designed and initially released Environmental Screening and Permitting Tracking Tool (ESAPTT), a tool to streamline NEPA reviews and permitting for NTIA's largest funding program, the Broadband, Equity, Access and Development (BEAD). ESAPTT allows states and territories receiving BEAD funds to screen projects to identify CEs and potential environmental effects, to transmit and maintain NEPA documents and to track and manage subgrant permits and timelines. ESAPTT also provides a centralized platform to automate NTIA's CE and extraordinary circumstance review, transmit and store environmental documentation and track and escalate permitting issues. BEAD funding recipients are expected to fully access the system in FY 2026, and NTIA estimates the tool will result in NEPA approvals within two weeks for approximately 90 percent of projects and eliminate 3 to 6 months of environmental processing time per project.

USDA Forest Service created an online portal for special uses proposals and applications, replacing labor-intensive paper-based processes with automated workflows, real-time status tracking and streamlined internal reviews. As a result, the agency achieved an 84 percent reduction in applications exceeding the 270-day statutory review period. In addition, USDA also automated the previously-manual transposition of Rural Business-Cooperative Service loan/grant application data into the Centralized Environmental Review Tracker, estimated to save over 2,900 labor hours per year, allowing staff to focus effort on substantive reviews.

Agency Prioritization Highlights

USDA created energy dominance teams deployable across USDA agencies to expedite environmental reviews and permitting processes for administration priority projects, including energy and critical mineral mining projects.

The Environmental Protection Agency enhanced efforts to streamline and optimize the permitting process for Class VI underground injection wells under the Safe Drinking Water Act and accelerate primacy decisions, resulting in the sixth time a state has received primacy for Class VI wells and the fifth approval under President Trump's leadership.

Looking Ahead—Plans for FY 2026

In FY 2026, the Permitting Council will continue to advance the administration's goals of protecting our national security and fueling economic prosperity by leveraging our authorities to streamline the environmental review and authorization of priority infrastructure projects.

AI and ERIF IT Investments

On July 23, 2025, the President issued an EO on "[Accelerating Federal Permitting of Data Center Infrastructure](#)."²⁰ The EO provided that the Executive Director may designate qualifying data centers and the infrastructure that powers them as Transparency projects and shall expedite the transition of those Transparency projects to Covered projects.²¹ In FY 2026, the Permitting Council expects to implement these provisions as qualifying projects are identified.

Furthering the administration's AI agenda, the Permitting Council has been cultivating awareness of, and interest in, FAST-41 among potential project sponsors in sectors relevant to AI such as manufacturing, semiconductors, AI and machine learning, high-performance computing and advanced computer hardware and software, quantum information science and technology, data storage and data management and cybersecurity through speaking engagements at industry events and direct engagement with relevant companies.

The Permitting Council is reviewing proposals from agencies to develop IT solutions in alignment with the President's goals in priority infrastructure sectors and CEQ's Permitting Technology Action Plan. In FY 2026, the Permitting Council will identify selected proposals for funding that achieve the following priorities:

- ▶ Provides quantifiable savings to the American people;
- ▶ Leverages AI to the greatest extent possible;
- ▶ Provides interoperable and scalable solutions;
- ▶ Considers long-term operations and user-centered designs;
- ▶ Advances permitting efficiency, transparency and predictability for FAST-41 projects and
- ▶ Improves environmental reviews and authorizations government-wide.

Engagement with State, Local and Tribal Governments

The Permitting Council will continue outreach and engagement with non-federal governments to improve the environmental review and authorization process nationwide; for example, by facilitating communication between parties, including states. The Permitting Council will explore funding to state, local and Tribal governments that demonstrate that they can speed permitting timetables, reduce environmental review costs and meaningfully contribute to the advancement of priority projects in the FAST-41 portfolio.

²⁰ Exec. Order No. 14318, 90 Fed. Reg. 35385 (July 23, 2025).

²¹ *Id.* § 6.

After Action Reviews (AARs)

The Permitting Council continued its effort to conduct AARs on covered projects that have completed the environmental review and authorization process to understand and inform impact and value for all participants in FAST-41, including project sponsors, FAST-41 lead agencies and Permitting Council staff. In FY 2026, the Permitting Council will apply learnings from this effort to build on areas of identified benefit and implement strategies to scale positive impact.

Recommended Best Practices

The Permitting Council is required to issue [annual recommendations on best practices](#) for improving the federal permitting process for FAST-41 covered projects.²² For FY 2026, the Permitting Council timely issued the following best practice recommendations:

- Develop or enhance innovative IT solutions to improve the efficiency and predictability of the environmental review and authorization process.
- Participate in an interagency effort to inform development or enhancement of performance measures regarding the efficiency and timeliness of environmental review and authorization activities.
- Identify, understand and address causes of delay in the environmental review and authorization process.

Recommended Performance Schedules

The Executive Director must consult with members of the Permitting Council to develop recommended performance schedules (RPSs) for each sector and category of FAST-41 covered projects.²³ In FY 2026, the Permitting Council plans to issue RPSs for the mining and broadband sectors, as well as review and revise RPSs issued in FY 2024.

A More Effective Permitting Dashboard

In support of administration efforts to leverage technology to improve permitting, the Permitting Council will continue to take steps towards a reimagined Permitting Dashboard that uses cutting-edge technological capabilities to streamline and automate workflows, enhance data integrity and analytics and improve user experience.

²² 42 U.S.C. § 4370m-1(c)(2)(B).

²³ 42 U.S.C. § 4730m-1(c)(1)(C).

Appendix: Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAR	After action review
AI	Artificial intelligence
ARC	Annual Report to Congress
BEAD	Broadband Equity Access and Deployment Program
CE	Categorical exclusion
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CPP	Coordinated Project Plan
EO	Executive order
ERIF	Environmental Review Improvement Fund
ESAPTT	Environmental Screening and Permitting Tracking Tool
Executive Director	Permitting Council Executive Director
FAST-41	Title 41 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act
FY	Fiscal Year
ISR	In-situ recovery
IT	Information technology
LNG	Liquified natural gas
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NTIA	U.S. National Telecommunications and Information Administration
Permitting Council	The 16-Member Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council
Permitting Council staff	The employees and contractors of the agency that support the Executive Director in the execution of statutory roles and responsibilities
RPS	Recommended Performance Schedule
SR	State Road
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture