

# USGS COALITION

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## Senators Receive USGS Coalition Leadership Award

WASHINGTON, D.C.—In honor of their long standing support for the scientific programs and personnel of the United States Geological Survey (USGS), Senators Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Mark Udall (D-CO), and Dean Heller (R-NV) received the 2014 USGS Coalition’s Leadership Award. The quartet was honored during the Coalition’s annual reception, where USGS personnel and their partners shared information about the vital research the agency conducts. USGS research contributes to improved public safety, wise environmental management, and the general prosperity of the nation.

“We are pleased to recognize Senators Murkowski, Wyden, Udall, and Heller for their efforts to champion the scientific programs of the United States Geological Survey. Their bipartisan work on the *Critical Minerals Policy Act of 2013* has helped increase awareness of the important role the USGS plays in assessing domestic and global mineral resources,” said Kasey White, treasurer for the USGS Coalition and Director for Geoscience Policy at the Geological Society of America. “The Senators clearly understand that we all benefit every day from USGS science. The agency’s research and information contribute to economic growth, improve public health and safety, and enhance our ability to smartly manage our biological, hydrological and geological resources.”

The Senators are the lead sponsors of the *Critical Minerals Policy Act of 2013*. Fifteen other Senators are now cosponsors of the legislation, which would help to build the U.S. critical minerals supply chain and reduce reliance on foreign suppliers. Critical minerals are used in the manufacture of smart phones, wind turbines, electric car batteries, and other high tech innovations.

The award winners all serve on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Senator Murkowski is the Ranking Member of the Committee. Senator Wyden is the former chair of the committee.

“It’s an honor to receive a leadership award from the USGS Coalition for our work on the Critical Minerals Policy Act,” said Senator Lisa Murkowski. “I welcome the growing consensus that our mineral policies, from forecasting to permitting, need to be updated for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I’m elated by the many willing partners – from both sides of the aisle, from many different agencies, and from many different industries – who are contributing to the effort. And I

am confident that we will strengthen our nation's economy, competitiveness, and security if we keep working hard to pass this bipartisan bill.”

“I have been proud to lead the effort to support the development of rare earth minerals to strengthen our national security and support job creation. I am honored to accept this award and to champion this important bipartisan legislation,” Senator Mark Udall said. “This is a common-sense and bipartisan idea, and I look forward to continuing to work with the U.S. Geological Survey Coalition to pass this legislation.”

“The USGS serves as an essential piece to the Department of Interior. The work and research conducted by the USGS is incredibly important in protecting citizens across the country, especially in Nevada,” said Senator Dean Heller. “Without the dedicated workers at the USGS, there would be no warning for natural disasters like wildfires, protection from poor-water quality, or availability of important information from natural-resource research. With 85 percent of Nevada being owned by the federal government, the USGS plays a very significant role in my home state. I am thankful for all the USGS does, and I look forward to working with it in the future.”

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The USGS Coalition is an alliance of over 70 organizations united by a commitment to the continued vitality of the United States Geological Survey and its ability to provide critical data and services to the nation. The Coalition supports increased federal investment in USGS programs that underpin responsible natural resource stewardship, improve resilience to natural and human-induced hazards, and contribute to the long-term health, security, and prosperity of the nation. More information at: [www.usgscoalition.org](http://www.usgscoalition.org).