



NORTH DAKOTA STATE AND LOCAL INTELLIGENCE CENTER

CI/KR Ticker

May 13, 2022

Included In This Summary

Click on the *section header* to go directly to that location in the summary.

To sign up for future NDSLIC products, click [here](#)

NORTH DAKOTA AND REGIONAL

- (U) ND Company Scrubs Plans for Trans-State Natural Gas Pipeline**
- (U) ND National Guard Using Helicopters to Stabilize Bourbanis Dam**
- (U) MCFI to Build Modular Data Center for Clean Computing Infrastructure Company in ND**
- (U) Ceremony Marks Completion of North Dakota Power Plant Sale**

NATIONAL

- (U) Hyundai Plans U.S. EV Plant, in Talks with Georgia**
- (U) White House Launches Plan to Safeguard U.S. Infrastructure Against Quantum Computers of the Future**
- (U) Biden Administration Announces \$3.16 Billion to Boost Domestic Battery Manufacturing and Supply Chains**
- (U) U.S. Agricultural Machinery Maker AGCO Hit by Ransomware Attack**

INTERNATIONAL

- (U) Ukraine's Electricity System Close to Collapse**
- (U) South African Coal Miners Turn to Trucks as Rail Service Deteriorates**
- (U) China Cuts Down Investment Pledges for Africa Amid Mounting Debt Fears**
- (U) Australia Allocates \$141.9m for Rail Freight Infrastructure**

NORTH DAKOTA AND REGIONAL

(U) ND Company Scrubs Plans for Trans-State Natural Gas Pipeline

(U) Despite millions of dollars in promised subsidies, a unit of North Dakota's only Fortune 500 company says it won't pursue plans to build a natural gas pipeline from western North Dakota's oil patch to the eastern part of the state. WBI Energy, a subsidiary of Bismarck-based MDU Resources Group, said the project is not viable due to regulatory uncertainty, limited in-state demand and rising construction, labor and land-acquisition costs. In a letter to North Dakota Pipeline Authority Director Justin Kringstad, the company said materials and construction costs have risen up to 50% in just the past nine months. "The recent and potential future inflationary pressure presents a significant challenge to a large-scale pipeline project from western to eastern North Dakota," the company said. "This challenge is further compounded by the fact that the actual construction of a major pipeline project, if it were to proceed, would occur four to five years in the future, following an uncertain siting/regulatory process."

Source: (U) <https://www.usnews.com/nd-company-scrubs-plans-for-trans-state-natural-gas-pipeline>

(U) ND National Guard Using Helicopters to Stabilize Bourbanis Dam

(U) The Pembina County Water Resource District continues mitigation efforts in conjunction with the ND National Guard to stabilize erosion on Bourbanis Dam. Two Blackhawk helicopters and National Guard personnel placed nearly 160 one-ton sandbags in the areas of most concern. This effort will continue throughout the day on Wednesday. Crews will remain in place overnight to monitor Bourbanis Dam for any changes. The remaining Tongue River dams are performing as designed. ND Highway 5 will remain closed to allow for the staging of necessary supplies and equipment for this effort. Levels at Renwick Dam near Cavalier have dropped; however, there is still potential for high flows from Bourbanis Dam resulting in a rise in the levels at Renwick Dam. The City of Pembina reports they are currently stable.

Source: (U) <https://www.valleynewslive.com/nd-national-guard-using-helicopters-stabilize-dam>

(U) MCFI to Build Modular Data Center for Clean Computing Infrastructure Company in ND

(U) Mission Critical Facilities International (MCFI), a leader in global data center and telecom infrastructure solutions, announced that it has agreed to build and deploy its GENIUS Modular Data Center, a purpose-built, 500kW modular cloud data center for a digital flare mitigation facility located in North Dakota. MCFI's GENIUS Modular Data Center provides an economical and energy-efficient solution to GPU cloud computing. MCFI will design, manufacture and deliver its GENIUS Modular Data Center solution in 23 weeks, even with today's supply chain challenges. The data center campus, which is now open and serving customers, will reside in a 58' x 12' outdoor enclosure housing 160 Nvidia GPU servers in 20 racks at a planned 25kW per rack. The data center solution also includes an Intrusion Prevention System (IPS), UPS backup and an innovative closed-loop, liquid cooling system.

Source: (U) <https://www.prnewswire.com/mcfi-to-build-modular-data-center-for-infrastructure-company>

(U) Ceremony Marks Completion of North Dakota Power Plant Sale

(U) A Bismarck company that sells wholesale electricity announced Monday that it has purchased North Dakota's largest coal-fired power plant from a Minnesota company that had intended to close the facility if no buyer could be found. Rainbow Energy Center LLC announced last year that it had reached an agreement to acquire the Coal Creek Station in west-central North Dakota from Great River Energy based in Maple Grove, Minnesota. North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum attended the ceremony Monday in Underwood, near Coal Creek Station, to mark the completion of the sale. "This is truly a landmark day and a huge win for the 650 workers here at Coal Creek and Falkirk Mine, for the residents of McLean County, for the entire state of North Dakota and for U.S. energy security and electrical grid reliability," Burgum said.

Source: (U) <https://apnews.com/business-minnesota-bismarck-north-dakota>

NATIONAL

(U) Hyundai Plans U.S. EV Plant, in Talks with Georgia

(U) Hyundai Motor Co. plans to build a new electric-vehicle manufacturing plant in the United States and has held discussions with officials in Georgia, near existing plants for the Hyundai and Kia brands, people with knowledge of its plans told Reuters. Hyundai Motor confirmed an imminent plan for a new EV plant but declined to comment on any details, including site negotiations. "We are excited to announce a new EV plant plan in the United States soon, but we do not have details to share at this stage," Hyundai said in a statement to Reuters when asked about its investment plans. The announcement of an investment deal by Hyundai would come at a time when the administration of President Joe Biden has been pushing for more investment in EVs and related suppliers to create jobs and drive a clean-energy agenda.

Source: (U) <https://www.reuters.com/hyundai-plans-us-ev-plant-talks-with-georgia>

(U) White House Launches Plan to Safeguard U.S. Infrastructure Against Quantum Computers of the Future

(U) The Biden administration announced plans to sign a new policy directive to help jumpstart what will likely be a long and complex process to secure the United States' information technology infrastructure against in-the-making quantum supercomputers. Though a fully operational quantum-driven computing machine is yet to exist, a number of nations and major companies are hustling to bring one completely into fruition. Once functioning, such an advanced system is anticipated to break much of the cryptography that currently protects modern digital communication on the internet. The new national security memorandum (NSM), detailed by the White House on Wednesday, outlines the administration's initial plan to confront these risks that future quantum technologies pose to America's economic and public safety — with help from federal agencies, academia and the private sector "One of the primary purposes of the NSM is to move the country — the whole country, not just the government but the whole country — as quickly as possible to quantum-resistant cryptography," a senior administration official said.

Source: (U) <https://www.fedscoop.com/white-house-plan-to-safeguard-infrastructure>

(U) Biden Administration Announces \$3.16 Billion to Boost Domestic Battery Manufacturing and Supply Chains

(U) The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) today announced \$3.1 billion in funding from President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to make more batteries and components in America, bolster domestic supply chains, create good-paying jobs, and help lower costs for families. The infrastructure investments will support the creation of new, retrofitted, and expanded commercial facilities as well as manufacturing demonstrations and battery recycling. DOE is also announcing a separate \$60 million to support second-life applications for batteries once used to power EVs, as well as new processes for recycling materials back into the battery supply chain. Both funding opportunities are key components of the Administration's whole-of-government supply chain strategy to strengthen America's energy independence to reduce our reliance on competing nations and support the President's goal to have electric vehicles make up half of all vehicles sales in America by 2030.

Source: (U) <https://www.energy.gov/biden-admin-announces-316-billion-law-boost-domestic>

(U) U.S. Agricultural Machinery Maker AGCO Hit by Ransomware Attack

(U) AGCO, a leading U.S. based agricultural machinery producer, has announced it was hit by a ransomware attack impacting some of its production facilities. AGCO is still investigating the extent of the attack, but it is anticipated that its business operations will be adversely affected for several days and potentially longer to fully resume all services depending upon how quickly the Company is able to repair its systems. AGCO is a giant in the field, having a revenue of over \$9 billion, employing 21,000 people, and owning brands like Fendt, Massey Ferguson, Challenger, Gleaner, and Valtra. The company will provide updates as the situation progresses.

Source: (U) <https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/us-ag-machinery-maker-agco-hit-by-ransomware-attack/>

INTERNATIONAL

(U) Ukraine's Electricity System Close to Collapse

(U) Ukraine's electricity grid is close to financial collapse. Ukrainians are not paying — cannot pay — electricity bills. This amounts to an estimated \$300m monthly deficit, which could push the power sector into default within weeks without urgent foreign assistance or a technical grid update to allow Ukraine to sell electricity to Europe. Ukraine's power plants will also soon lack the funds to continue operating. According to Maxim Timchenko, chief executive of DTEK, Ukraine's largest private power company, the power system is mostly operating normally but power companies face a 70-75% drop in revenue sector-wide. Private firms are expected to weather this storm slightly better because industrial consumers will probably resume payment, but for public sector power generation companies the crisis is immediate. The Ukrainian government is considering lumping power generators together into a "single-buyer" pool to be called the Ukrainian Energy Emergency Response and Recovery Facility. This is one of several (much questioned) efforts by the Ukrainian government to address wartime issues through nationalization or centralization.

Source: (U) <https://cepa.org/ukraines-electricity-system-close-to-collapse/>

(U) South African Coal Miners Turn to Trucks as Rail Service Deteriorates

(U) Mining companies in South Africa have resorted to trucking coal to ports to meet a surge in European demand since the war in Ukraine started, bypassing the deteriorating rail infrastructure they blame for billions of dollars in lost revenue. Poor maintenance, a lack of spare parts for trains, copper cable theft and vandalism have disrupted state logistics firm Transnet's freight rail services, causing coal and iron ore exports to fall in recent years. Trucking coal costs about four times more than rail, according to miner Menar. It has started using trucks but said the high coal prices mean miners can absorb the cost, for now. "The industry at large are on their knees, so they are resorting to drastic measures," said Clifford Hallatt, chief operating officer at Canyon Coal, a joint venture between Menar and commodity trader Mercuria.

Source: (U) <https://www.reuters.com/south-african-coal-miners-turn-trucks-rail-service-deteriorates>

(U) China Cuts Down Investment Pledges for Africa Amid Mounting Debt Fears

(U) While infrastructure projects are one of the main priority areas in China-Africa cooperation, Beijing has cut down on its investment pledges for the continent for the first time in December 2021, according to new reports. Most Chinese lending has now been curtailed due to the increasing debt fears especially in the post-COVID-19 era, a byproduct of the Chinese "debt trap" policy. Chinese lenders have grown more cautious as some nations have reached the limit of their borrowing capacity as the prospect of default looms large. China has focused on financing impoverished, low income, or economically troubled nations. As of 2020, it owed roughly \$170 billion to low-and-middle-income countries. This loan is heavily tied to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and foreign infrastructure investments including roadways, trains, ports, and airports in more than 100 countries.

Source: (U) <https://www.aninews.in/china-cuts-down-investment-pledges-for-africa-amid-mounting-debt>

(U) Australia Allocates \$141.9m for Rail Freight Infrastructure

(U) Western Australia has secured \$141.9m in government funding for its regional rail freight network. The financing includes \$113.5m from Commonwealth as well as \$40m from the State for four projects. It has been made under the first package of the Agricultural Supply Chain Improvement (ASCI) program. An amount of \$15.6m will be used for four rail siding extensions for CBH grain bins at Moora, Brookton, and Cranbrook as well as Broomehill. Around 400,000 tons of grain per annum are expected to be carried through this section. The upgrade will help improve operational efficiency and reduce freight cost savings for all grain growers delivering to bins on selected line sections. This rail freight service is also expected to be beneficial for the new Western Australian Kaolin clay mine, located near Wickepin, which aims to boost production in the coming years.

Source: (U) <https://www.railway-technology.com/news/western-australia-rail-freight-infrastructure/>

THIS SECTION INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

The CI/KR Ticker is a non-commercial publication intended to educate and inform. Further reproduction or redistribution is subject to original copyright restrictions. NDSLIC provides no warranty of ownership of the copyright, or accuracy with respect to the original source material. If you have any items that you would like to see added to the CI/KR Ticker, you can contact the NDSLIC at ndslic@nd.gov or 701-328-8172.