

# *SMaRT Center Weekly Digest*

## *July 1, 2022*

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## News

### [Chinese posed as local Texans online to target rare earth producer](#)

China conducted a sophisticated disinformation campaign against a company building a rare earth minerals facility in Texas for the Pentagon, according to the Pentagon and a cybersecurity firm. The cybersecurity company, Mandiant, disclosed the campaign on Tuesday. It said Chinese actors used social media in a bid to discredit Lynas Rare Earths Ltd., an Australian company, and other rare earth mining firms to undermine the critical supply chain for the elements. The Pentagon has signed an agreement with Lynas, the world's largest rare earth mining and processing company, to build a Texas plant.

### [DoD Statement: Reports of Disinformation Campaign Against Rare Earth Processing Facilities](#)

The Department of Defense is aware of the recent disinformation campaign, first reported by Mandiant, against Lynas Rare Earth Ltd., a rare earth element firm seeking to establish production capacity in the United States and partner nations, as well as other rare earth mining companies. The department has engaged the relevant interagency stakeholders and partner nations to assist in reviewing the matter.

### [American Rare Earths returns high-grade rare earth assays from Halleck Creek in Wyoming](#)

Assay results from 280 samples taken from four core holes demonstrate consistent rare earth mineralisation associated with clinopyroxene quartz monzonite (CQM) rocks of the Red Mountain Pluton (RMP). Total Rare Earth Oxides (TREO) mineralisation was observed of up to 11,981 parts per million (ppm), with extremely low uranium and thorium levels, which is seldom the case for rare earth exploration.

[New 3D model will help guide exploration for rare earth element deposits in alkaline igneous systems](#)

Scientists from the University of Exeter and the British Geological Survey (BGS), alongside a team of institutions across Europe, have developed a new 3D geological model designed to guide exploration for rare earth elements (REE), which are critical for development of renewable energy and transport. The model targets alkaline igneous systems, which host many of the world's REE deposits.

[California approves lithium tax despite industry's warnings](#)

California on Thursday approved a plan to tax the electric vehicle battery metal lithium to generate revenue for environmental remediation projects despite industry concerns that it will harm the sector and delay shipments to automakers. The tax is structured as a flat-rate per tonne and will go into effect in January. The tax will be reviewed every year, and state officials have agreed to study potentially switching to a percentage-based tax. The largest American state sits atop giant lithium reserves in its Salton Sea region, east of Los Angeles, an area heavily damaged in the 20th century by years of heavy pesticide use from farming. Funds generated from the tax are earmarked in part to cleanup of the area.