

Alas, Ukrainian Rare Earths: But “There’s No There There”?

written by Jack Lifton | February 22, 2025

Gertrude Stein, a writer and original influencer who lived in Paris from 1903 until she died in 1946 and nurtured the careers of such notables as Ernest Hemingway and Pablo Picasso, famously said of her 1881 birthplace, Oakland, California, in 1937 that **“there’s no there there.”**

This aphorism has entered the English language as a description of something that cannot live up to its perceived or remembered properties.

There are no proven resources of rare earth elements, atomic numbers 57 (lanthanum) to 70 (lutetium), in Ukraine’s sovereign territory.

This means that no accessible, mineable, extractible with known technologies, or high enough grade **discoveries** of rare earths (as defined above) have been made in Ukraine to justify the high expense of moving such a “discovery” to the internationally defined status of a **“deposit”** which could be mined economically.

It must be noted that rare earths are rarely found as primary deposits; those in which rare earths are the pre-dominant values found and sought. Only two come to mind: Australia’s Mt. Weld (Lynas) and California’s Mountain Pass (MP Materials). The majority of the world’s light “magnet” rare earths today are produced in China as byproducts of iron ore mining. Deposits of ionic adsorption clays, the world’s current source of higher atomic numbered (“heavy”) rare earths, are extremely low grade (typically 500 parts per **million**) but are “mined” due to their exceptional ease of extraction and concentration (technically

but not economically due to environmental remediation necessary post extraction).

No such economically mineable deposits of either type occur in Ukraine.

The extreme ignorance of most commentators highlights the ridiculous nature of Ukrainian rare earths. Even the Wall Street Journal's "experts," among many, many of their peers, cannot seem to understand that rare earths are a sharply defined subset of the chemical elements and do not include such elements as lithium, titanium, and graphite—only the latter of which is not found in abundance in the United States!

If HEALTH, SAFETY, ECONOMICS, and ENVIRONMENT are essential to those who use rare earths, then the best places in the world to mine them are Australia, Canada, and THE UNITED STATES!

America's current governing class, obedient media, and expert crowd do not impress when it comes to understanding how to best find, develop, and utilize natural resources of non-fuel minerals, such as rare earths.

Maybe they should leave mining, refining, and fabricating end-user forms of the critical elements for technology to the miners, refiners, and fabricators whose livelihoods depend on the best, most robust, safest, and lowest cost methods to obtain them.

Critical mineral security is as simple as developing mining and refining in Canada, Australia, and AMERICA.

Ukraine and Greenland are not options.