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## U.S. Demand Jumps for Rare Earth, Battery-Grade Mineral Refining

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## Expansions Lead U.S. to \$18 Billion in Capital Cargo Port Projects

U.S. cargo ports are crucial to a strong domestic supply chain, as they enable the flow of goods and commodities set for export, as well as distribution across the country. Industrial Info is tracking \$18 billion worth o [...]

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## Fuel Pellet Sector Means Big Business for U.S. Alternative Fuels Industry

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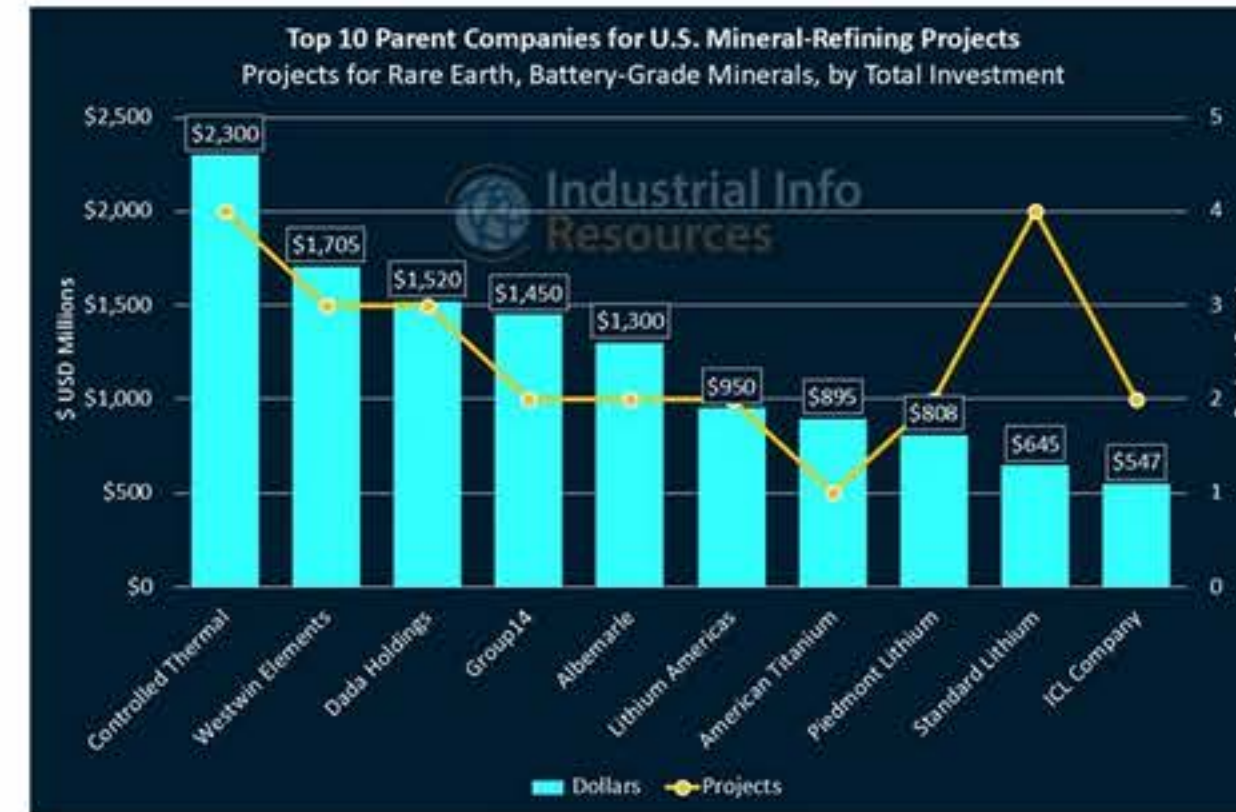
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Published By **Industrial Info Resources**

## U.S. Demand Jumps for Rare Earth, Battery-Grade Mineral Refining

American Resources Corporation (NASDAQ:AREC) (Fishers, Indiana) is expanding a U.S.-based project to meet the surging demand for rare earth oxides. This project joins a host of other developments geared toward the refining of domestically sourced materials used in batteries, operating systems and other capacities across multiple industries. Industrial Info is tracking more than \$20 billion worth of active and proposed projects across the U.S. for the primary smelting and refining of rare earth and other battery-grade materials.



ReElement, an American Resources subsidiary, is developing a commercial-scale pilot plant in Noblesville, Indiana, to purify and isolate rare earth and critical elements from coal to produce rare earth concentrates. Following its completion, currently estimated for mid-2027, the plant could see an expansion to increase its output. Subscribers to Industrial Info's Global Market Intelligence (GMI) Metals & Minerals Project Database can read detailed reports on the initial project and its proposed expansion.

"While the site was not originally intended to be commercial, growing customer demand, especially following recent global trade shifts, has made it an essential part of our operations as we continue developing our larger Marion (Indiana) facility," said Mark Jensen, the chief executive officer of ReElement, in a press release. Jensen and other executives cited two recent executive orders by U.S. President Donald Trump that they say will bolster the rare earth minerals sector: to expand domestic mineral production and to investigate risks associated with U.S. reliance on imported refined critical minerals.

In February, ReElement started construction on a \$100 million refinery in Marion, to source purified rare earth elements from end-of-life magnets, and to source lithium-ion battery input material from end-of-life batteries and manufacturing waste. The subsidiary already is considering an expansion upon its completion, as well as a post-treatment facility to recover metal salts, such as recycled lithium carbonate, nickel sulfate and cobalt sulfate, from black mass. Subscribers can read detailed reports on the refinery and its proposed expansion and post-treatment facility.

The magnets providing material for the Marion facility are created from rare earth elements, such as neodymium and samarium. For more information on how and where these magnets are used, see April 25, 2024, article - U.S. Rare Earth Magnet Projects Support New Technologies.

Later this year, Group14 Technologies Incorporated (Woodinville, Washington) expects to finish construction on its \$1 billion BAM-2 Plant in Moses Lake, Washington, which will comprise a pair of commercial manufacturing modules. Each module is designed to produce 2,000 tons per year of Group14's SCC55 battery, which the company says is enough to power at least 100,000 electric vehicles.

Group14 also is considering the addition of a silane gas unit at the facility, which would produce 7,200 tons per year of silane for local silicon battery plants. Subscribers can read detailed reports on the BAM-2 Plant and its proposed silane gas unit.

Other projects set to wrap later this year include Sinova Global's (Edmonton, Alberta) \$150 million silicon metal refinery in Tiptonville, Tennessee, to manufacture silicon anode batteries, solar cells, semiconductors and aluminum. It is located near a port on the Mississippi River, which will ease the delivery of product from the company's Horse Creek Quarry in Golden, British Columbia, which it is reopening to produce 400,000 tons per year of quartz (or silica) sand. Subscribers can read detailed reports on the silicon metal refinery and quarry.

"Quartz from this deposit requires very limited processing relative to material from other quartz operations," Sinova says on its site. "With high-purity silica and correspondingly low levels of impurities such as boron, iron, phosphorous and aluminum, the Sinova operation creates minimal by-products and requires less energy to process."

Subscribers to Industrial Info's GMI Project and Plant databases can [click here](#) for a full list of detailed reports for projects mentioned in this article, and [click here](#) for a full list of related plant profiles.

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## Fuel Pellet Sector Means Big Business for U.S. Alternative Fuels Industry

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), wood-based biomass such as fuel pellets accounted for only 0.8% of power generated in the U.S. in 2023. However, that number belies the big business of fuel pellet production in the U.S. Industrial Info is tracking more than \$2 billion worth of active capital and maintenance projects involving fuel pellet production in the U.S. As most fuel pellets are intended for export abroad, heavily wooded areas and access to a means of shipping the pellets are desirable for siting plants.

One of the world's largest fuel-pellet producers, *Enviva Incorporated* (Bethesda, Maryland), is putting the finishing touches on what will be its largest production facility in Epes, Alabama. Construction kicked off in the summer of 2022, and upon completion, which is expected soon, the facility will be able to process a mix of softwood and mill residuals into 700,000 metric tons of pellets annually. Production eventually could be increased to more than 1 million tons per year. The Epes plant will ship pellets via barge on the Tombigbee River to a deepwater terminal in Pascagoula, Mississippi, for export to Europe and Asia. Subscribers to Industrial Info's Global Market Intelligence (GMI) Alternative Fuels Project Database can [click here](#) for more details.

*Drax Group* (Selby, England) is not only involved in fuel pellet production, but also biomass-fired power generation itself in a portfolio of renewable energy assets in England and Scotland, which includes the U.K.'s largest power station in Selby, North Yorkshire. Drax's Selby plant generates about 5% of the U.K.'s power needs from fuel pellets. The group is targeting 8 million tons of production capacity by 2030, which entails adding 3 million tons of new fuel pellet production to its portfolio. Some of that increase will come from the U.S., where Drax is underway with a grassroots pellet plant in Washington and is planning an expansion at an Alabama plant.

Drax is underway with a grassroots pellet production plant in Longview, Washington, that will process wood waste feedstock into 450,000 metric tons per year of wood pellets. With the West Coast location, Drax is aiming for the Asian pellet market. Drax is in the late planning stage for the expansion of its plant in Aliceville, Alabama. The work includes adding new pelletizers and other upgrades that will lift the plant's production from 250,000 metric tons per year to 380,000 metric tons per year. Work is expected to begin later this year and be completed in 2027. Subscribers can learn more by viewing the reports on the [Washington](#) and [Alabama](#) projects.

In February 2024, a wood pellet plant in Seymour, Missouri, owned by *Fiber Energy Products* (Mountain View, Arkansas) caught fire—an obvious disaster for a plant whose primary purpose is making fuel to incinerate. The facility was subsequently bought by *Lignetics Incorporated* (Louisville, Colorado), which toward the end of this year plans to begin rebuilding the 127,000-ton-per-year plant. The work is expected to last about a year, when the plant will begin ramping up to meet or exceed its former production. Subscribers can [click here](#) to learn more about the project.

At another idled plant, this one a former particleboard facility in Adel, Georgia, *Spectrum Energy Georgia LLC* (Adel) plans to this year begin work on what could become one of the largest fuel pellet plants in the world. Phase I will include equipment to process all forms of biomass, including sawmill residues, pulpwood, top wood and more, into 600,000 metric tons of pellets per year. The icing on the cake comes several months after Phase I's completion, when an expansion project will start to more than double capacity to 1.32 million tons per year. The project's final completion remains some ways off, in early 2028, and the project must weather citizens concerned about the amount the forest clearance the plant would require. Subscribers can learn more by viewing the reports on the [Phase I](#) and [Phase II](#) of construction.

In addition to several other capital projects in the sector, Industrial Info is tracking more than 100 planned maintenance events at U.S. wood pellet plants, including more than 45 remaining this year that are valued at a collective \$26 million. Subscribers can learn more by viewing the related [project reports](#).

Subscribers to Industrial Info's GMI Database can [click here](#) to view reports for all of the projects discussed in this article and [click here](#) for the related plant profiles.



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Industrial Info is tracking more than \$2.4 trillion in active chemical processing projects across the world, including more than \$250 billion worth in the U.S. and Canada.

This podcast will review the status of future capital and maintenance investments globally and how the geopolitical and inflationary costs continue to challenge progress for many projects. Additionally, this podcast will provide an outlook on the \$800 billion in future spending planned to begin over the next five years as part of decarbonization agendas.

Topics to be discussed in this podcast include:

- Energy transition investments (decarbonization)
- Petrochemical demand and planned capacity additions
- Regional outlook for key global markets
- Maintenance spending outlook

We hope you are able to join us for this timely and informative podcast! [Click here](#) for more details and to RSVP.