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Texas Land Commissioner Buckingham Advances Texas's First Rare Earth Mining District After Announcing New Mineral Lease

By Editor (<https://www.gilmermirror.com/author/editor/>) | September 22, 2026 | 0  (<https://www.gilmermirror.com/2026/09/22/texas-land-commissioner-buckingham-advances-texass-first-rare-earth-mining-district-after-announcing-new-mineral-lease/#respond>)

AUSTIN, Texas— Today, **Texas Land Commissioner Dawn Buckingham, M.D.**, announced that the Texas General Land Office (GLO) has entered into two new hard mineral leases for rare earth minerals with El Paso Minerals Corp. (EPM) covering more than 1,000 acres in Hudspeth County. The agreements build upon the nationally significant Round Top project and mark a major step toward establishing Texas' first dedicated rare

earth mining district.

“Round Top Mountain has already put Texas on the map for domestic rare earth and critical mineral development, with USA Rare Earth serving as the founding partner in advancing this vision. These new leases with El Paso Minerals Corp. build on that momentum and demonstrate what the responsible development of Texas state land can accomplish,” said Commissioner Buckingham. “Texas has the land, the resources, and the workforce to lead America into a new era of critical mineral production. For too long, communist China has controlled resources essential to our economy and national security. We are changing that right here in the Lone Star State.”



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Click the image to watch a special video from Commissioner Buckingham about advancing Texas's First Rare Earth Mining District

“The Sierra Blanca district represents a much larger critical mineral opportunity than is widely recognized. Decades of academic research by UTEP and UT Austin’s Bureau of Economic Geology have documented heavy rare earth and critical mineral potential across the district,” said Cesar Gonzalez, CEO of El Paso Minerals. “Our existing private leases, together with these new GLO leases, give El Paso Minerals the largest land position in the district, which we believe has the potential to supply a meaningful percentage of U.S. heavy rare earth demand and eventually eliminate America’s dependence on China. We are now preparing to drill our primary target and are excited to be working with Commissioner Buckingham and the Texas GLO to advance this opportunity in West Texas.”

“We appreciate Commissioner Buckingham’s leadership and her continued commitment to advancing critical minerals supply chain,” said Alex Moyes, Senior Vice President, Mining and Separation, USA Rare Earth.

“Her support for responsible resource development and policies that encourage investment have helped

position Texas and USA Rare Earth as a leader in critical minerals and rare earth development. We are grateful for her partnership and for her commitment to strengthening American and Allies supply chains, OK

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creating jobs, and advancing long-term economic growth while helping secure the resources essential to our

nation's future."

These new leases with EPM generated more than half a million dollars in immediate revenue for the Permanent School Fund, Texas' public education endowment, with additional royalties expected as development progresses.

This partnership expands the critical mineral development already underway at Round Top Mountain, located on GLO-managed state land approximately 90 miles east of El Paso. The Round Top project has attracted substantial federal and private investment and emerged as one of the nation's most closely watched critical mineral developments.

Together, these projects will form the foundation of Texas' first dedicated rare earth mining district, a first-of-its-kind hub designed to support the extraction and processing of rare earth elements and other critical minerals. These resources are essential to national defense, advanced manufacturing, and energy technologies. Yet for decades, the United States has depended heavily on foreign adversaries for their supply.

In June, Commissioner Buckingham praised the finalization of agreements unlocking up to \$1.6 billion to accelerate USA Rare Earth's development of the Round Top deposit and its domestic mine-to-magnet supply chain. This integrated system is designed to keep America's mineral resources under American control—from the ground to the finished product.

Commissioner Buckingham has made the responsible development of domestic critical minerals a priority for the GLO. Establishing a rare earth mining district in West Texas represents a significant opportunity to secure American supply chains, reduce dependence on hostile foreign nations, strengthen national security, and create new economic opportunities for Texans.

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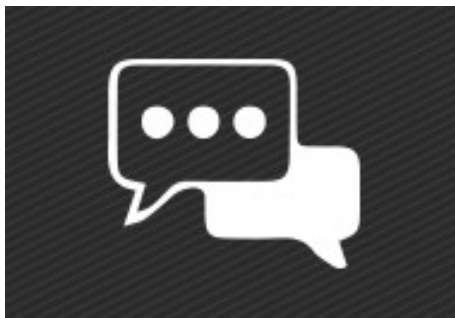
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