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The Washington Independent reported on the history of the Mountain Pass rare earth mine, and the need to diversify our resource away from reliance on China. In an interview, a reporter asked us what is the missing link in the supply chain.

*Yaron Vorona, executive director of the Institute for the Analysis of Global Security's Technology and Rare Earth Metals Center, cited an April 2010 Government Accountability Office report that says it could take 15 years to develop a U.S. rare earth industry.*

*Vorona says the U.S. has a lack of scientific knowledge about REEs because most scientists went to China to continue their work on the minerals decades ago. "If the mines that are being planned were all to come online tomorrow that would be fantastic, but there would be nobody to run them," Vorona said, noting that China has 100,000 rare earth scientists.*

*He also said that chemical separation of REEs is often very difficult to perfect. "It's a very long and involved process," he says. "That's one of the biggest risks. It can take dozens, hundreds of steps to separate the rare earths."*

Vorona notes that the Chinese rare earth society has hundreds of thousands of members, and China employs thousands of rare earth scientists.

The full article here:

<http://washingtonindependent.com/101462/california-mine-represents-hope-and-peril-for-u-s-rare-earth-industry>