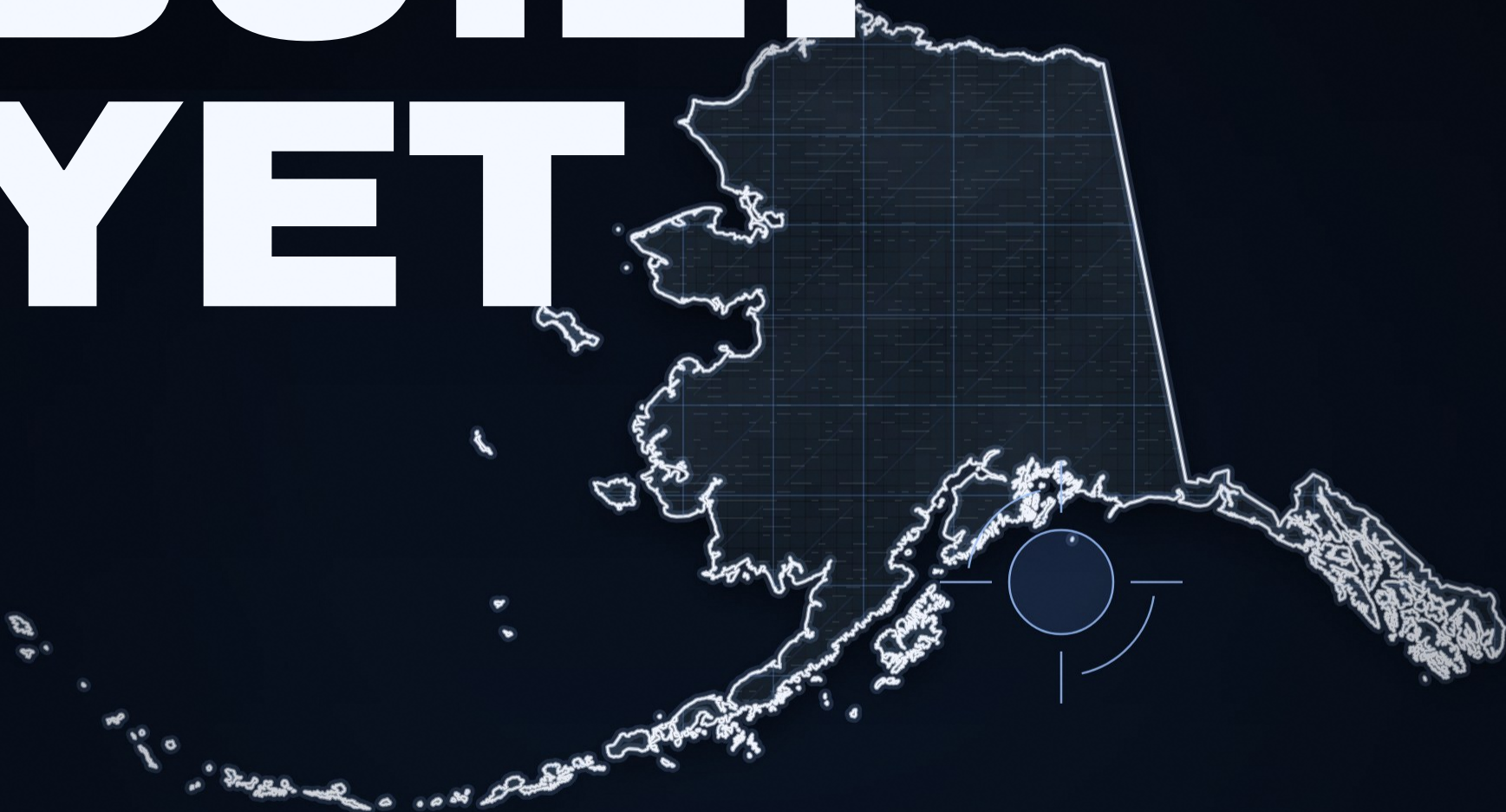


THE NSF JUST FUNDED AN AI TO FIND ALASKA'S CRITICAL MINERALS

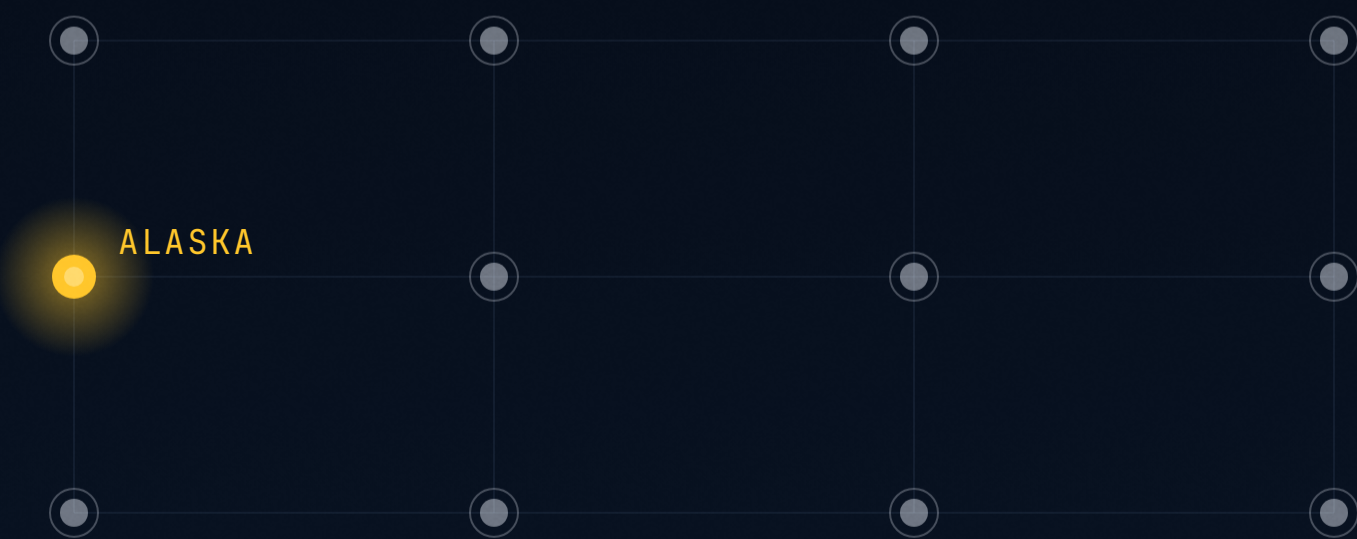
IT ISN'T
BUILT
YET



THE AWARD / 2026-07-14

Alaska just won one of 12 new federal Innovation Engines.

NSF named a University of Alaska Fairbanks coalition its Critical Mineral Accelerator Engine. It opens with **15 million dollars** for the first two years. Far more can follow, only if it delivers.

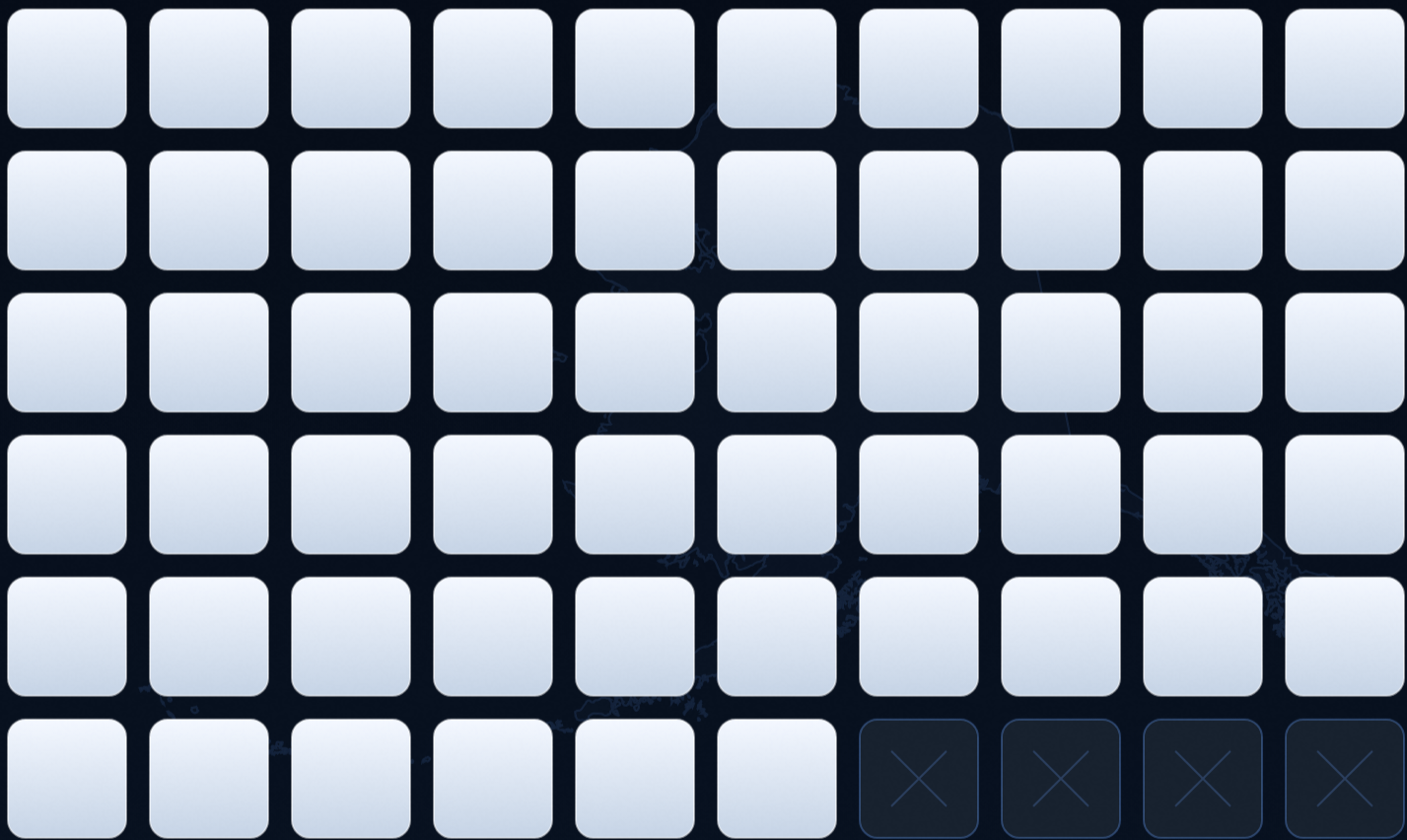


12 ENGINES / 20 STATES / 1 ALASKA

WHY IT IS WORTH A DECADE

56 of the 60 minerals the U.S. calls essential are in this ground.

That is the U.S. Geological Survey count, essential to the nation's economy and its security. Alaska is not short on critical minerals. It is short on knowing exactly where, in a place this big.



56 OF 60 PRESENT • USGS COUNT, VIA UAF • COUNT, NOT LOCATIONS

THE JOB

Read the ground. Find the deposits. Pull the minerals out.

The Engine pairs advanced mining, processing and purification with two newer ideas: artificial intelligence to help locate mineral deposits, and new biological methods to extract them. This is what a prospectivity model would draw, if one existed.



THE ENTIRE PUBLIC DESCRIPTION OF THE AI

"use artificial intelligence to help locate mineral deposits"

- NO NAMED MODEL
- NO DATASET
- NO SOFTWARE
- NO SITE

It is announced and funded in principle. It is not yet specified. That is not a scandal. It is the stage this is at.

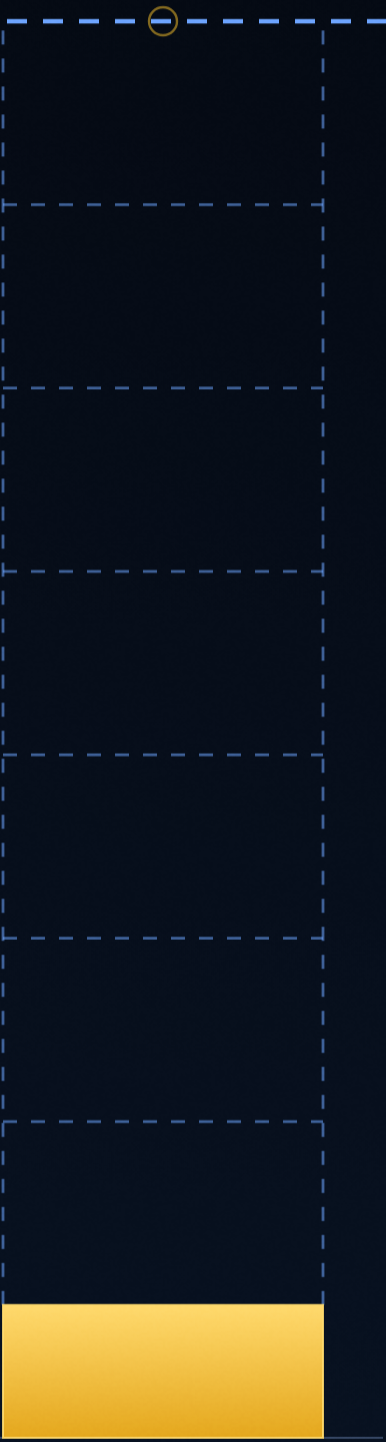
FOLLOW THE MONEY, HONESTLY

It is a ladder, not a check.

up to \$160M
IF MILESTONES MET, OVER TEN YEARS

Only the first two years are funded.
Everything above is a climb the coalition still has to earn.

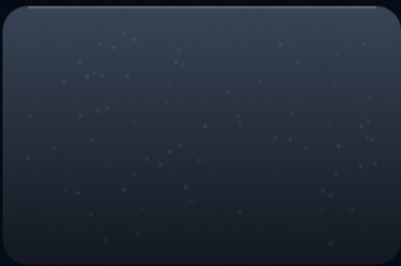
\$15M
COMMITTED, FIRST TWO YEARS
\$500K
ALASKA'S OWN SEED



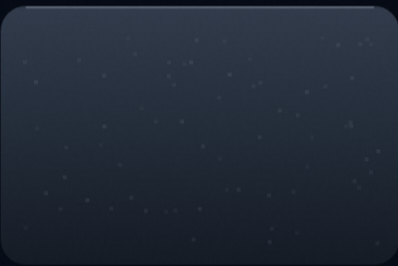
PROGRAM-WIDE, NOT THIS ENGINE. NSF's first \$135M across nine earlier Engines drew more than \$2B in matching commitments.

WHAT THE CLIMB IS FOR

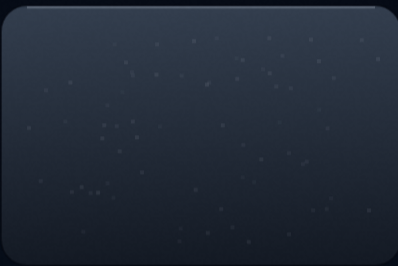
Seven minerals the announcement names.



LITHIUM



COBALT



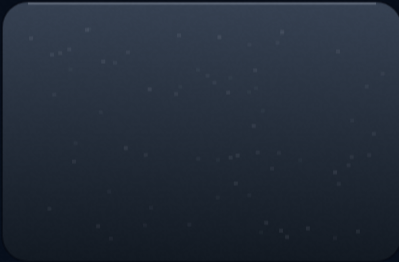
NICKEL



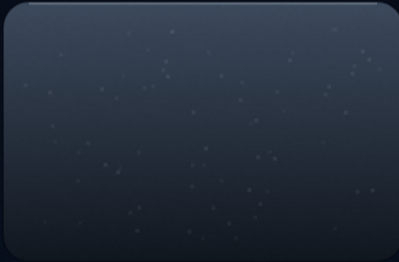
GRAPHITE



GERMANIUM



GALLIUM



RARE EARTHS

Batteries, smartphones, computer chips, medical equipment, power grids, aircraft, defense. The everyday and the strategic run through the same seven materials.

THE ONE NAMED PLACE

One site is named so far. The rest is still a search.

The only location named so far is Alaska Silver's exploration site in western Alaska. NANA Regional Corporation is a partner, not an owner. UAF leads it, with geoscientist Lee Ann Munk as chief executive. The goal, cut U.S. dependence on China for mineral processing.



ALASKA SILVER / WESTERN ALASKA
(ILLUSTRATIVE PLACEMENT)

THE HONEST BOTTOM LINE

A real ten-year bet. An unbuilt centerpiece. Worth the climb?

Follow the milestones, not the headline number.
What would make this bet pay off for Alaska?

