Why stockpile critical minerals?

A critical mineral stockpile is an emergency buffer that helps keep U.S. national security technologies running when a crisis or contingency cuts off normal supplies.

WHAT MAKES THE BUFFER USEFUL

Hold material that industry can use.

The right form matters as much as the quantity. If a manufacturer needs refined material but the reserve holds ore, the buffer works only if a processor can supply the usable input in time. GAO: defense supply chains

COVERAGE

Start with three to five years.

Compare three years with five for each priority material under adverse conditions. Estimate the shortfall after dependable deliveries, then subtract usable opening stock once. U.S. consumption is not a substitute for annual defense demand.

If replacement supply will take longer than five years, show the extra coverage, its cost and what would make it unnecessary. The range is a proposal, not an inventory claim.

FUNDING

Price the reserve itself.

There is no preset ceiling. Price purchases, conversion services, freight, testing, storage, rotation and replenishment. Count existing inventory only where its form, access and timing match the need.

Production ownership is a separate investment. Compare it with buying or contracting for an equivalent usable supply. Show the five- and ten-year costs, the break-even year and the downside if a facility opens late.

WHAT EVIDENCE CAN SHOW

Country shares depend on the production stage.

Mining, refining and manufacturing can take place in different countries. A share of global output does not confer ownership or guarantee access. The register names the stage, source and year.

WHAT REMAINS UNKNOWN

No verified portfolio price or coverage total.

Public market data alone cannot establish defense demand for every material. Missing requirements stay visible. Earlier draft costs are scenarios, not appropriations or an amount ready to request.

Access: Existing authorities govern who can request, approve and release government material. A market warning does not authorize release. StockpileAtlas is not a request channel. GAO: National Defense Stockpile