Jobs for the Territory: New Mining Project One Step Closer

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Minister for Primary Industry and Resources, Ken Vowles, said he is a step closer to being able to authorise a new mining project and create jobs in Central Australia after the Australian Government gave environmental approval to Arafura Resources Ltd for its Nolans Project.

“Arafura Resources want to mine and process rare earths, particularly neodymium and praseodymium, at its Nolans Project 135km north-northwest of Alice Springs,” Mr Vowles said.

“Rare earths are in short supply globally, so demand is high and growing. This is a real opportunity to create jobs in Central Australia through the construction, mining and processing phases, and also through the export chain.”

Rare earths are a critical raw material in the manufacture of magnets used in the automotive industry and the delivery of clean energy.

The federal environmental approval follows NT Environmental Protection Authority approval last year.

Arafura Resources Ltd General Manager NT & Sustainability, Brian Fowler, said it was an important milestone.

“This marks the end of our formal environmental approvals,” he said. “We can now engage with potential partners and look at making a final investment decision later this year or early next year.”

Mr Vowles said the next major approval will come from the Department of Primary Industry and Resources.

“Arafura Resources will finalise its Mine Management Plan and my department will make sure it ticks all the boxes,” he said.

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