

R.E.R. OPEN HOUSE



Shown above (l-r); Senator John Barrasso, Upton Mayor Nicholas Trandahl, General Atomics CEO Neal Blue, Rare Element Resources CEO Brent Berg, Representatives Don Burkhart Jr, Chip Neiman, and Allen Slagle present the ceremonial groundbreaking for Upton's rare earths demonstration plant during the Open House held in Upton on Monday, October 9. Construction is scheduled to commence at the end of 2023 and is expected to take approximately seven months.

By Reporter Brittany Trandahl

The "Best Town on Earth" was the place to be on Monday afternoon, as dignitaries from across the State of Wyoming filled the Upton Community Center to engage with the CEOs and employees of Rare Element Resources (RER) and General Atomics as those companies prepare to start construction of the rare earths processing plant to be located in the Upton Logistics Center. It was standing room only at the event, with every table filled and the walls lined with attendees. Joining local stakeholders, local boards and organizations, community members, and RER and General Atomics staff were U.S. Senator John Barrasso, Wyoming State Treasurer Curt Meier, Wyoming Secretary of State Chuck Gray, Wyoming Representatives Chip Neiman, Allen Slagle, and Don Burkhart, Jr, and representatives from the Governor's Office and the Offices of U.S. Senator Lummis and U.S. Representative Hageman.

Informative and engaging booths were set up throughout the community center, and RER President and CEO Brent Berg guided attendees through

RER's Bear Lodge Project with his presentation. Aside from Berg, other speakers at the event included Senator Barrasso, RER Director Paul Hickey, General Atomics CEO Neal Blue, and Upton Mayor Nick Trandahl.

Joe's Food Center catered delicious food and refreshments for the event.

The demonstration processing plant will start construction soon, with construction anticipated to be complete in the first half of 2024, primarily using Wyoming-based contractors to get the job done. The demonstration plant will have a staff of about 15 employees with a future commercial processing plant potentially being constructed in Upton employing exponentially more people. The rare earths processing plant is a massive opportunity for expansion in the "Best Town on Earth", with the potential to bring other industries into the Upton Logistics Center. Waste generated by the demonstration processing plant will be shipped by rail from Upton to a buyer in Texas.

The rare earth minerals themselves will be mined from one of the most abundant rare

earths deposits in North America, located just north of Upton in the Bearlodge Mountains. These rare minerals are used in a variety of technologies, from communications, to medical, to energy, to military and defense, and are crucial in the 21st century as the United States attempts to break free from China's monopoly on the rare earths market.



Senator Barrasso gave a rousing speech during the event. Focusing on the importance of America establishing its own rare earth industries, centered in the state of Wyoming and the significance of its presence and support in Upton.