

# THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF LOUISIANA

This chapter has been prepared under a Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. Bureau of Mines, U.S. Department of the Interior, and the Louisiana Geological Survey for collecting information on all nonfuel minerals.

Louisiana ranked 34th Nationally in total nonfuel mineral value<sup>1</sup> in 1994, climbing from 37th in 1993, according to the U.S. Bureau of Mines (USBM). The estimated value for 1994 was \$328 million, a 41% increase from that of 1993. This followed a 25% decrease in value in 1993 from that of 1992. The State accounted for about 1% of the U.S. total value. The widely fluctuating values occurring during the past 2 years are due, in large part, to changing values for Frasch-process sulfur. All current sulfur production comes from a sulfur mine 27 kilometers (17 miles) off the Louisiana coast. Due to this offshore location, the State does not directly receive tax income or mineral production royalties from the mining operation; instead they are collected by the Federal Government. As a result, according to the Louisiana Geological Survey, sulfur has not been produced in Louisiana since 1991; the State does not identify the sulfur production cited in table 1 of this report as part of the State's nonfuel mineral production. The USBM attributes this offshore sulfur production to Louisiana because it is the State nearest to the sulfur mine. Additionally, the company operating the

mine is based in New Orleans, LA. In addition to reported sulfur production, salt, by value the State's leading nonfuel mineral commodity, and construction sand and gravel accounted for most of the State's increasing value in 1994. During 1993, a significant decrease in sulfur was, in small part, offset by gains in crushed stone, salt, and construction sand and gravel. Compared with that of 1993, the mineral commodity values increased for salt, sulfur, construction sand and gravel, crushed stone, and gypsum. A decrease occurred in gemstones.

Based on USBM estimates of the quantities of minerals produced in the United States during 1994, Louisiana remained the leading State in the Nation in the production of salt, and climbed from second to first in sulfur. Louisiana mines produced significant quantities of common clays and both construction and industrial sand and gravel.

<sup>1</sup>The term value, throughout this document, refers to the monetary value of nonfuel minerals as represented by either mine shipments, mineral commodity sales, or marketable production as is applicable to the individual mineral commodities.

TABLE 1  
NONFUEL RAW MINERAL PRODUCTION IN LOUISIANA<sup>1</sup>

Mineral	1992		1993		1994 <sup>p</sup>	
	Quantity	Value (thousands)	Quantity	Value (thousands)	Quantity	Value (thousands)
Clays thousand metric tons	384	\$3,589	375	\$496	375	\$496
Gemstones	NA	3,960	NA	141	NA	W
Salt thousand metric tons	12,054	112,334	12,374	115,464	14,403	134,881
Sand and gravel:						
Construction do.	11,489	48,698	<sup>e</sup> 11,900	<sup>e</sup> 51,500	12,600	56,000
Industrial do.	471	9,267	465	9,359	W	W
Sulfur (Frasch) do.	1,105	W	740	W	W	W
Combined value of gypsum (crude), lime, stone [crushed limestone, shell, and miscellaneous (1993-94), crushed shell and miscellaneous (1992)], and values indicated by symbol W	XX	131,432	XX	54,649	XX	136,193
Total	XX	309,280	XX	231,609	XX	<sup>2</sup> 327,570

<sup>e</sup>Estimated. <sup>p</sup>Preliminary. NA Not available. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; value included with "Combined value" data. XX Not applicable.

<sup>1</sup>Production as measured by mine shipments, sales, or marketable production (including consumption by producers).

<sup>2</sup>Data do not add to total shown because of independent rounding.