

# THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF PUERTO RICO AND THE ADMINISTERED ISLANDS

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

In 2000, the estimated value<sup>1</sup> of nonfuel mineral production for Puerto Rico<sup>2</sup> was \$159 million, based upon preliminary U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) data. If ranked in comparison with the 50 States, Puerto Rico would rank 42d in total nonfuel mineral production value. Portland cement, by value, was the Commonwealth's leading nonfuel mineral commodity. Crushed stone for many years has been the

<sup>1</sup>The terms "nonfuel mineral production" and related "values" encompass variations in meaning, depending upon the minerals or mineral products. Production may be measured by mine shipments, mineral commodity sales, or marketable production (including consumption by producers) as is applicable to the individual mineral commodity.

All 2000 USGS mineral production data published in this chapter are preliminary estimates as of July 2001 and are expected to change. For some mineral commodities, such as construction sand and gravel, crushed stone, and portland cement, estimates are updated periodically. To obtain the most current information, please contact the appropriate USGS mineral commodity specialist. A telephone listing of the specialists may be retrieved over the Internet at URL <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/contacts/comdir.html>, by using MINES FaxBack at (703) 648-4999 from a fax machine with a touch-tone handset (request Document #1000 for a telephone listing of all mineral commodity specialists), or by calling USGS information at (703) 648-4000 for the specialist's name and number. All Mineral Industry Surveys—mineral commodity, State, and country—also may be retrieved over the Internet at URL <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals>; facsimile copies may be obtained from MINES FaxBack.

<sup>2</sup>While a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was officially made between the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, MOUs were not established with the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, U.S. Caribbean and Pacific Island Possessions, or the U.S. Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Nevertheless, data on nonfuel mineral production were reported to the USGS for the island of Guam of the Pacific Island Possessions. These data appear in table 1.

second leading mineral and most likely continues as such, but the USGS has no comprehensive data owing to a low response rate to its crushed stone canvasses. Therefore, no preliminary estimate has been made for 2000. Construction sand and gravel was produced in Puerto Rico, but production data are not available. The collection and compilation of production data for construction sand and gravel were discontinued in 1973 by the U.S. Bureau of Mines (the Federal Government agency then responsible for collecting domestic raw nonfuel mineral production data) because of a low rate of response to surveys by the industry (Sikich and Alonso, 1993). The data for dimension stone, as well as for industrial sand and gravel, were withheld to protect company proprietary data.

Metals have not been mined in Puerto Rico since the Juncos iron mine closed in 1953; prospects for resuming metal mining in the near future do not appear to be likely. However, metal occurrences are common on the island, and the possibility of developing a metal deposit should not be completely discounted (Sikich and Alonso, 1993).

Of the U.S. Administered Islands, Guam is the only one from which nonfuel mineral production has been reported, and this has been limited to crushed stone. Owing to a low response rate, no preliminary data are available for 2000.

## Reference Cited

Sikich, S.W., and Alonso, R.M., 1993, The mineral industries of Puerto Rico, Northern Marianas, Island Possessions, and Trust Territory: U.S. Bureau of Mines Minerals Yearbook 1992, v. II, p. 467-470.

TABLE 1  
NONFUEL RAW MINERAL PRODUCTION IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO AND ISLANDS ADMINISTERED  
BY THE UNITED STATES 1/ 2/

(Thousand metric tons and thousand dollars unless otherwise specified)

Mineral	1998		1999		2000 p/	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
<b>Puerto Rico:</b>						
Cement, portland <span style="float: right;">metric tons</span>	1,590 <sup>3/</sup>	W	W	W	1,600	W
Clays, common	W	W	159	W	139	W
Lime	37	4,800	27	3,770	25	3,500
Salt	45	1,500	45	1,500	45	1,500
Stone, crushed	12,700	58,600	13,200	56,800	NA	NA
Combined values of sand and gravel (industrial), stone (dimension marble), and values indicated by symbol W	XX	156,000	XX	178,000	XX	154,000
Total	XX	221,000	XX	240,000	XX	159,000
<b>Administered Islands:</b>						
Guam, stone, crushed	1,850	14,100	1,740	11,800	NA	NA
Combined values of American Samoa {stone [crushed (1998-99)]} and Virgin Islands {stone [crushed limestone and traprock, (1998-99)]}	XX	(4/)	XX	(4/)	NA	NA
Total	XX	14,100	XX	11,800	XX	NA

p/ Preliminary. NA Not available. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; value included with "Combined values" data. XX Not applicable.

-- Zero.

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

2/ Data are rounded to three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

3/ Unit of measure changed to thousand metric tons on December 7, 2004.

4/ Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.