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.

In 1996, Louisiana remained 31st in the Nation in total nonfuel mineral production value,[1] according to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). The estimated value for 1996 was $428 million, about a 1% decrease from that of 1995. This followed nearly a 23% increase from 1994 to 1995 (based on final 1995 data). The State accounted for more than 1% of the U.S. total nonfuel mineral production value.

Louisiana's leading nonfuel mineral is salt, accounting for about 44% of the State's nonfuel mineral value in 1996. When included as part of Louisiana's mineral production, sulfur is the State's second-leading mineral commodity. All current sulfur production comes from a mine 27 kilometers off the Louisiana coast. Because of the mine's location, the State does not receive severance tax income or mineral production royalties; instead, they are collected by the Federal Government. Consequently, the State and the Louisiana Geological Survey (LGS) do not consider the sulfur production cited in table 1 under "Combined value" as being part of Louisiana's nonfuel mineral production. This has been the case since 1991. The USGS attributes this offshore sulfur production to Louisiana because it is the State nearest to the sulfur mine and Freeport Sulphur Co., the company that operates the mine, is based in New Orleans.

In 1996, decreased sulfur production value more than offset increases in other nonfuel mineral commodities, resulting in the net drop for the State. The increased values of salt, sulfur, and crushed stone accounted for most of the State's substantial rise in value in 1995. Compared with 1995, the mineral commodity values that increased in 1996 were those of salt, crushed stone, construction sand and gravel, and lime. Common clays, crude gypsum, and gemstones each showed small decreases.

Based on USGS estimates of the quantities produced in the 50 States during 1996, Louisiana remained the leading State in the Nation in salt and sulfur production. Additionally, significant quantities of construction and industrial sand and gravel and common clays were produced in the State.

The following narrative information was provided by the LGS.[2] Recent cracks in the salt domes of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve facility at Weeks Island led U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) officials to initiate the removal of the contained oil. A Houston-based company, Sofregaz, has been awarded the contract by the DOE to produce the brine that will be needed to fill the crude oil storage cavern once the oil is transferred out. Sofregaz wants to drill a 1,370-meter well into a Morton Salt Co. dome to produce enough brine water to fill the empty cavern that will be created. Fresh water for salt cavern development would be obtained from the Intercoastal Waterway and transported to the injection well by a proposed, 51-centimeter above-ground pipe.

On November 20, 1980, the Jefferson Island underground rock salt mine was permanently lost to water from overlying Lake Peigner. In February 1996, the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources issued a permit to a Houston company, Equitable Storage Inc., to stockpile gas in the cavern beneath Lake Peigner. The work on the storage facility was completed.

K M Iron of Japan, HBI of Japan, and C.S. Industries Inc. have announced their intention to build new iron production plants in the State and are applying for 10-year industrial tax exemptions. These three facilities will total $600 million in capital investment.

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[1]The terms "nonfuel mineral production" and related "values" encompass variations in meaning, depending on 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 1996 USGS mineral production data published in this chapter are estimates as of February 1997. Construction sand and gravel and crushed stone estimates are updated periodically. To obtain the most current information, please contact the appropriate USGS mineral commodity specialist. Call MINES FaxBack at (703) 648-4999 from a fax machine with a touch-tone handset and request Document # 1000 for a telephone listing of all mineral commodity specialists, or call USGS information at (703) 648-4000 for the specialist's name and number. This telephone listing may also be retrieved over the Internet at: http://minerals.er.usgs.gov/minerals/contacts/comdir.html

[2]Syed M. Haque, Physical Scientist at the LGS, authored the text of Louisiana minerals industry information submitted by the LGS. He may be contacted at the same address and fax number as Mr. Marsalis, telephone: (504) 388-3482.

TABLE 1
NONFUEL RAW MINERAL PRODUCTION IN LOUISIANA 1/ 2/

(Thousand metric tons and thousand dollars unless otherwise specified)

Mineral	1994		1995		1996 p/	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
Clays	371	3,280	384	548	395	530
Gemstones	NA	155	NA	175	NA	W
Salt	13,500	140,000	14,700	177,000	15,000	189,000
Sand and gravel:						
Construction	12,300	49,600	11,300	50,200	11,600	51,600
Industrial	454	9,320	572	10,500	572	10,500
Stone (crushed) 3/	707	7,710	2,540	26,700	3,100	31,300
Combined value of gypsum (crude), lime, stone (crushed shell and miscellaneous), sulfur (frasch), and value indicated by symbol W	XX	144,000	XX	169,000	XX	145,000
Total	XX	354,000	XX	434,000	XX	428,000

p/ Preliminary. NA Not available. W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; value included with "Combined value" data. XX Not applicable.
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/ Excludes certain stones; kind and value included with "Combined value" data.

TABLE 2
LOUISIANA: CRUSHED STONE 1/ SOLD OR USED BY PRODUCERS
IN 1995, BY USE 2/

Use	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value (thousands)	Unit value
Construction aggregates: 3/	119	$1,070	$8.98
Special: Asphalt fillers or extenders	W	W	4.56
Unspecified: 4/			
Actual	W	W	10.79
Estimated	449	4,940	11.01
Total	2540	26,700	10.50

W Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; included in "Total."
1/ Includes sandstone; excludes miscellaneous stone and shell from State total to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.
2/ Data are rounded to three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.
3/ Includes concrete aggregate (coarse), bituminous aggregate (coarse), and stone sand (bituminous mix or seal).
4/ Includes production reported without a breakdown by end use and estimates for nonrespondents.

TABLE 3
LOUISIANA: CRUSHED STONE SOLD OR USED, BY KIND 1/ 2/

Kind	1994				1995			
	Number of quarries	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value (thousands)	Unit value	Number of quarries	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value (thousands)	Unit value
Sandstone	6	707	$7,710	$10.91	16	2,540	$26,700	$10.51

1/ Data are rounded to three significant digits.
2/ Excludes miscellaneous stone and shell from State total to avoid disclosing company proprietary data.

TABLE 4
LOUISIANA: CONSTRUCTION SAND AND GRAVEL SOLD OR USED IN 1995,
BY MAJOR USE CATEGORY 1/

Use	Quantity (thousand metric tons)	Value (thousands)	Value per ton
Concrete aggregate (including concrete sand) 2/	2,540	$13,000	$5.13
Asphaltic concrete aggregates and other bituminous mixtures	640	2,950	4.62
Road base and coverings	449	1,770	3.94
Fill	1,060	1,980	1.86
Unspecified: 3/			
Actual	4,080	18,600	4.55
Estimated	2,570	11,900	4.63
Total or average	11,300	50,200	4.43

1/ Data are rounded to three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.
2/ Includes plaster and gunite sands.
3/ Includes production reported without a breakdown by end use and estimates for nonrespondents.

TABLE 5
LOUISIANA: CONSTRUCTION SAND AND GRAVEL SOLD OR USED IN 1995,
BY USE AND DISTRICT 1/

(Thousand metric tons and thousand dollars)

Use	District 1		District 2		District 3	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
Concrete aggregate and concrete products 2/	700	4,150	401	2,990	1,440	5,880
Asphaltic concrete aggregates and road base materials 3/	133	539	533	1,330	1,480	4,830
Unspecified: 4/						
Actual	189	1,080	1,420	6,480	2,480	11,000
Estimated	77	372	916	4,310	1,570	7,200
Total	1,100	6,150	3,270	15,100	6,970	28,900

1/ Data are rounded to three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.
2/ Includes plaster and gunite sands.
3/ Includes fill.
4/ Includes production reported without a breakdown by end use and estimates for nonrespondents.