

Nonfuel Mineral Production in Idaho — 1994

The U.S. Bureau of Mines' estimated nonfuel production for Idaho in 1994, along with data from 1993, is shown in Table 1. More detailed information on specific commodities has been compiled by the Idaho Geological Survey and is shown in Table 2. The substantial increase in total value of \$68,790 over 1993 is in part due to the higher price of molybdenum (produced at the Thompson Creek mine). According to the USBM, Idaho is the only state to produce antimony and vanadium and is first in garnet production, third in phosphate rock, silver, and lead, fourth in pumice, sixth in feldspar, and eighth in zinc. Idaho ranked fourth of the six states that mine molybdenum and tenth of the thirteen states that produce gold and is one of only five states that mine zeolites. The USBM ranked Idaho

32nd of the 50 states in total nonfuel mineral value.

In Table 2, the value of phosphate is based on finished phosphate products (elemental phosphorous and phosphoric acid) rather than on raw ore, as in Table 1. The difference between the finished product and the raw ore amounts to a fourfold increase in phosphate value. By reporting the finished product value, Idaho's nonfuel mineral production more than doubles that shown by the USBM (\$861 million vs. \$343 million). Once again, the value of construction sand and gravel (\$53 million; Table 1) exceeded that for gold (\$39 million) and silver (\$22 million, Table 2), an indication of Idaho's rapid commercial and residential growth over the past few years.

Table 1. Nonfuel Raw Mineral Production¹ in Idaho, 1993-1994

Mineral	1993		1994 ^p	
	Quantity	Value*	Quantity	Value*
Gemstones	NA	\$ 566	NA	\$ 119
Gold ² (kilograms)	W	W	5,600 ³	65,000 ³
Molybdenum (metric tons)	-0-	-0-	5,550	30,600
Phosphate rock (thousand metric tons)	4,355	78,432	W	W
Pumice (metric tons)	43,438	327	W	W
Sand and gravel:				
Construction (thousand metric tons)	13,600 ^e	44,900 ^e	15,500	52,700
Industrial (thousand metric tons)	W	W	W	W
Silver ² (metric tons)	190	26,232	162	22,400
Stone, crushed (thousand metric tons)	4,602	20,770	4,000 ^e	18,400 ^e
Combined value of antimony, cement, clays (common), copper, feldspar, garnet (abrasive), lead, lime, perlite (1992), stone (dimension), vanadium ore, zinc, and values indicated by symbol W	XX	102,983	XX	154,000
Total	XX	\$274,210	XX	\$343,000^f

Source: U.S. Bureau of Mines.

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

²/Recoverable content of ores, etc. ³/Placer conversing discontinued beginning 1994. ⁴/Data do not add to total shown because of independent rounding. ^p/Preliminary. * / value in thousands of dollars. NA/Not Available. ^e/Estimated. W/Withheld to avoid disclosing company proprietary data; value included with "Combined value" data. XX/Not applicable.

Table 2. Value of Nonfuel Mineral Production in Idaho, 1989-1994
(value in thousands of dollars)

Commodity	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
Gold	\$ 37,602	\$ 45,649	\$ 39,107	\$ 35,241	\$ 40,919	\$ 39,343
Moly	53,890	44,634	13,419	28,841	-0-	28,990
Pb+Zn+Cu	41,830	67,947	18,400	18,000	15,670	12,446
Silver	77,651	68,418	43,807	32,131	26,231	22,762
Phosphate	488,236	464,280	585,695	546,842	568,152	630,000
Other	77,533	83,011	97,518	112,194	126,653	127,171
Total	\$776,742	\$773,939	\$797,946	\$773,249	\$777,625	\$860,712

Production, except that for phosphate, is based on figures provided by the U.S. Bureau of Mines (USBM) for 1989-1993. The value of phosphate for 1991-1993 was tabulated by the Idaho Mining Association (IMA) and is estimated for 1989, 1990, and 1994. The IMA estimate is the average value of phosphoric acid and elemental phosphorous produced from raw phosphate ore (about \$105/ton), which is much greater than the value of the raw ore (\$25/ton) that is reported by the USBM. Annual totals include this revised phosphate value and are therefore significantly higher than USBM totals. *Other* includes antimony, cement, clay, garnet, lime, stone (dimension and crushed), vanadium, pumice, gemstones, and sand and gravel. For 1994, the Idaho Geological Survey has computed the value for all commodities using some USBM data.

Mining highlights in 1994 included the reopening of the Thompson Creek mine under new ownership just in time to catch a windfall price increase in molybdenum from \$2.60 to over \$15 a pound. In the Coeur d'Alene mining district, only the Lucky Friday (Hecla Mining Company) and Sunshine mines operated. Both were involved with recent discoveries. Hecla was developing reserves below the Gold Hunter mine, and Sunshine was exploring the West Chance vein. FMC Gold began work on its open-pit heap leach Beartrack mine in Lemhi County. At year's end, Hecla started production from the Grouse Creek gold mine. Other operating gold mines included Kinross Gold Corp.'s DeLamar mine, Pegasus Gold Corp.'s Blackpine mine, U.S. Antimony's Yellow-jacket mine, and CSC Mining's Rescue mine.

Gold continued to be the commodity of interest for exploration in Idaho. Major programs included USMX's work at the Dewey mine at Thunder Moun-

tain, Ican Minerals ongoing evaluation of the Idaho Almaden mine near Weiser, Newmont's Musgrove Creek venture in Lemhi County, and Ramrod's Atlanta project in Elmore County. Besides gold, Formation Capitol was very active at the Blackpine copper-cobalt mine in Lemhi County.

According to the Idaho Department of Employment, 2,400 people worked in the state's mining industry in 1994, with 1,100 of these in metal mining. Another 1,400 were employed in the stone, clay, glass, and concrete products industries and an additional 4,000 people in chemicals and allied products (many in phosphate).