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DIVISION OF MINERALS
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Legislative History of the Commission on Mineral Resources, Division of Minerals

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March 27, 2024

Executive Summary:

The Nevada Division of Minerals is part of the Commission on Mineral Resources. The Commission is made up of seven governor-appointed members who are each chosen for their knowledge of a specific facet of the Nevada mineral industry. The roots of the Division and Commission can be traced back to 1943, when the Nevada Legislature in its 41st Session SB89 established the Mining Advisory Board. Then as now, its members, who are trained, experienced, and qualified in the operation of the mining industry of the state and completely conversant with its problems, are appointed by the governor. The purpose of this board was to:

1. Study ways and means of furthering the mining industry of the state;
2. Further explore and develop the oil and gas industry;
3. Report results of such studies to the governor; in addition, report its recommendations for legislation deemed necessary to further the mining industry of the state; and
4. Call upon the Nevada Bureau of Mines and its analytical laboratory in furthering the objectives and purpose of the legislative act.

In 1953, AB 124 passed, which was an Act defining and prohibiting the waste of oil and gas in the State of Nevada; creating the Nevada oil and gas conservation commission. In 1955, the legislature amended AB124 and developed NRS 522.

Due to lack of funding and permanent staff of the Advisory Mining board in 1977, the Legislature determined that a better representation of the minerals industry was needed. It then combined the Oil and Gas Commission with the Mining Advisory Board to create the Oil, Gas, and Mining Board to serve in an advisory capacity to the newly created Division of Mineral Resources within the Department of Conservation of Natural Resources (DCNR). The addition of Minerals into DCNR was done at the same time that DEP was moved from Human Services to

DCNR. The Act also established a departmental level energy agency with Division of Colorado River Resources, and a Division of water planning.

In 1983, AB 335 changed the regulatory authority for energy and minerals and the Division of Minerals left DCNR and created the Department of Minerals, supervised by the Commission on Mineral Resources, with all the authority and duties of which remain the same today.

Sweeping departmental changes occurred in 1993 and the Department was changed to the Division of Minerals within the newly created Department of Business and Industry. This only lasted for six years when the Legislature, in recognition of the importance of the mining, oil and gas, and geothermal industry to Nevada, moved the Division for the last time and it became a standalone non-cabinet executive branch agency consisting of the Commission on Mineral Resources and the Division of Minerals.

Detailed History:

1943, SB 89	
Institution/ Agency Administrative Changes	An Act establishing an advisory mining board for the State of Nevada; providing for the qualification and appointment of members thereof; defining the objects and purposes of said board; providing an appropriation therefor; and other matters relating thereto.
Commission on Mineral Resources	This was the initial creation of an advisory mining board for the State of Nevada consisting of seven (7) members, bona fide residents of the state who are trained, experienced, and qualified in the operation of the mining industry of the state and completely conversant with its problems. Members were governor appointed. The precursor of the Commission on Mineral Resources.
Division of Minerals	Did not exist and was not created.
Main objectives and Purpose	The board shall have for its objects and purposes: (a) To study ways and means of furthering the mining industry of the state, particularly in regard to small operations and in prospecting. (b) To study ways and means of further exploring and developing the oil and gas industry of the state. (c) To report the results of such studies to the governor of the state and to our senators and representatives in Congress in all instances where the board deems such action appropriate. The board shall, in addition, report its recommendations for legislation deemed necessary to further the mining industry of the state. (d) To call upon the state bureau of mines and the state analytical laboratory for their assistance and to cooperate with them in furthering the objects and purposes of this act.
Funding	Unfunded except for $5,000 obligated to the Advisory Mining Board for business approved by the chair.

Link to Bill	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Statutes/41st1943/Stats194302.html#Stats194302page253
Oil Industry Status of 1940s	Early wildcat exploration, no production
Minerals Industry Status of 1940s	From 1940-1942, mineral production activities were in full swing for all metals. Placer gold mining activity reached a new all-time high in 1940, with the Manhattan district leading production. Another 105 placer operations were active utilizing dragline excavators, small-scale hand methods, or placer drift mines as their main mining methods. In late 1940, equipped with a dragline excavator and utilizing a 14-cubic-yard bucket, the world's largest dragline dredge was installed at Dayton. Many new mercury and tungsten mines sprung up including the Bottle Creek District that produced 6,000 flasks of mercury in 1940, compared to only 800 in 1939. As for tungsten, a new plant was constructed for the retreatment of old tailings in Pershing County, and in Golconda, another chemical plant was targeted to go online in 1941. All activity came to a screeching halt in October of 1942, when most gold mines were forced to close pursuant to Order L-208 of the War Production Board. Gold production in 1943 plummeted. The only gold produced from the state at this time was the byproduct from copper mining, and placer gold from the Manhattan district, which was allowed to continue using their gold dredge due to the potential of losing the dredge in the flood prone, narrow canyon. The forced closure of the mines resulted in the collapse, flooding, and pillaging of equipment. The financial loss would prevent many mines from resuming operations after the order was cancelled. The newly discovered gold mine in the Potosi district had an adjacent tungsten ore body, and this kept Getchell Mines, Inc. in business for the duration of the closure order. Several mines went into production to accommodate high wartime demand for manganese and magnesium metals. Manganese mines were constructed in Clark, White Pine, Lander, and Pershing Counties. Demand for magnesium resulted in the large-scale mining of brucite and magnesite located in the town of Gabbs, which still produces magnesium compounds today. Post-war production was mixed. Gold was slow to rebound after Order L-208 was rescinded in mid-1945. Silver and gold reached the lowest production levels since 1899, and 1895, respectively. Demand for copper, lead, and zinc was strong, which negated the expiration of the "Premium Price Plan" implemented during 1942.
Geothermal Industry Status of 1940s	No Geothermal activity.

1953, SB 5	
Institution/ Agency Administrative Changes	An Act defining and prohibiting the waste of oil and gas in the State of Nevada; creating the Nevada oil and gas conservation commission; placing the administration and enforcement of this act as a responsibility of the Nevada oil and gas conservation commission; defining powers and duties of the Nevada oil and gas conservation commission with respect to the conservation of oil and gas; providing for the enforcement of this act and the rules, regulations and orders of the Nevada oil and gas conservation commission; providing for the filing and hearing of complaints concerning the waste of oil and gas, and for oaths, subpoenas, suits and appeals; providing for a tax on oil and gas produced in this state for the purpose of administering this act; providing penalties for violations thereof, and other matters properly relating thereto.
Commission on Mineral Resource	Created the Nevada Oil and Gas Conservation Commission to be composed of the governor, the state engineer and the director of the Nevada Bureau of Mines.
Division of Minerals	Did not exist and was not created.
Main objectives and Purpose	1. Prohibit the waste of oil and gas in the State of Nevada. 2. Create the Nevada Oil and Gas Conservation Commission. 3. Providing for a tax on oil and gas produced in this state for the purpose of administering the act. 4. Providing penalties for violations thereof.
Funding	Created the Oil and Gas Conservation Fund by collection of fees to administer the provision of the act.
Link to Bill	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Statutes/46th1953/Stats195302.html#Stats195302page236
Oil Industry Status of 1950s	The year 1954 marked the beginning of oil production in Nevada. The “No. 1 Eagle” well began producing 275 barrels per day; it marked the discovery of the Eagle Springs oil field and caused much excitement and the leasing of millions of acres of land. Eight more wells were spudded the following year.
Minerals Industry Status of 1950s	Base metals were the largest production value in Nevada in the 1950s. The 1954 Multiple Minerals Development Act, or the Multiple Use Law permitted the development of leasing act minerals (oil, gas, oil shale, coal, geothermal resources, potash, sodium, native asphalt, semisolid bitumen, bituminous rock, phosphate, chlorides, sulfates, certain carbonates, borates, silicates or nitrates of potassium or sodium and related products, sulfur, and brine deposits) and non-leasing act minerals on the same public domain lands for the first time since 1920. Up until this point, most mineral deposits that were sought after were not found in leasable mineral localities; however, as the demand for uranium increased due to increased military and peaceful atomic energy applications, so did exploration and discovery of secondary uranium deposits in sedimentary beds which were also source rocks for oil and gas creating the

	need for the promulgation of this Act. In 1958, Public Law 85-877 was put in place which modified the annual assessment work required to hold a mining claim.
Geothermal Industry Status of 1950s	Drilling for geothermal resources occurred within the state for the first time in 1959.

1955, AB 122	
Institution/Agency Administrative Changes	AN ACT authorizing and directing the governor of the State of Nevada to execute on behalf of the State of Nevada the interstate compact to conserve oil and gas, dated February 16, 1935.
Commission on Mineral Resource	No change to Oil and Gas Conservation Commission.
Division of Minerals	Did not exist and was not created.
Main objectives and Purpose	Nevada joined the Interstate Compact to Conserve Oil and Gas.
Funding	No change to Oil and Gas Conservation Fund.
Link to Bill	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Statutes/47th1955/Stats195501.html#Stats195501_CH42
Oil Industry Status of 1950s	Early Production was ongoing.
Minerals Industry Status of 1950s	See SB 5 above.
Geothermal Industry Status of 1950s	See SB 5 above.

1955, AB 124	
Institution/Agency Administrative Changes	AN ACT to amend the 1953 SB 5.
Commission on Mineral Resource	No change to Oil and Gas Conservation Commission.
Division of Minerals	Did not exist and was not created.
Main objectives and Purpose	Updated definition of words and terms.
Funding	No change to Oil and Gas Conservation Fund.
Link to Bill	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Statutes/47th1955/Stats195501.html#Stats195501page55

Oil Industry Status of 1950s	Early production was ongoing.
Minerals Industry Status of 1950s	See SB5 above.
Geothermal Industry Status of 1950s	See SB 5 above.

1957, SB 191	
Institution/Agency Administrative Changes	AN ACT to amend Title 18 of NRS relating to the state executive Department by creating a new chapter establishing the state department of conservation and natural resources; providing for the appointment, qualifications, compensation, powers and duties of the director of such department; providing for the creation of divisions within the department and the appointment and powers and duties of the executive beads of such divisions, and other mutters properly relating thereto
Commission on Mineral Resource	The Division of Oil and Gas Conservation shall be administered by the director in cooperation with the Nevada Oil and Gas Conservation Commission in connection with carrying out the intent and purposes of chapter 522 of NRS and any other laws relating to the conservation of oil and gas.
Division of Minerals	Created the Division of Oil and Gas under DCNR.
Main objectives and Purpose	Creates the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to include: 1. The Division of Water Resources, 2. The Division of State Lands, 3. The Division of Forestry, and 4. The Division of Oil and Gas Conservation, and abolished the Office of the Surveyor General.
Funding	Division of Oil and Gas Conservation to be funded by general funds and no change to Oil and Gas Conservation funding.
Link to Bill	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Statutes/48th1957/Stats195704.html#Stats195704page646
Oil Industry Status of 1950s	Early Production was ongoing.
Minerals Industry Status of 1950s	See SB 5 above.
Geothermal Industry Status of 1950s	Drilling for geothermal resources occurred within the state for the first time in 1959.

1977, SB153	
Institution/Agency Administrative Changes	AN ACT relating to governmental agencies; reorganizing certain of those which deal with energy and the use and conservation of natural resources; and providing other matters properly relating thereto. This ACT created: 1. The division of environmental protection consists of the administrator and any other necessary personnel. 2. The division of water planning consists of the administrator and any other necessary personnel. 3. The division of mineral resources consists of the administrator and any other necessary personnel.
Commission on Mineral Resource	Created in the Division the Oil, Gas and Mining Board consisting of seven members appointed by the governor. The members of the board shall be appointed as follows: (a) Four members shall represent the mining industry; (b) One member shall represent the oil and gas industry; and (c) Two members shall represent the general public. Except for the initial terms, the appointments shall be for terms of 4 years. Any vacancy shall be filled by the governor for the unexpired term. Members of the board receive no compensation but are entitled to receive the travel expenses and subsistence allowances provided by law. The members of the board shall select a chairman from among their number. The oil, gas and mining board shall serve in an advisory capacity to the administrator on mineral resource matters.
Division of Minerals	Removed the Division of Oil and Gas and created the Division of Minerals.
Main objectives and Purpose	Created the Division of Minerals and assigned the following goals and purpose of the division: 1. Study means of furthering the mining industry of the state, including large and small mining operations and prospecting activities. 2. Study means of further exploring and developing the oil and gas industry of the state. 3. Review and evaluate the policies of the Federal Government as they affect the mining and oil and gas industries of the state, including mining and mineral leasing activities on public lands. 4. Administer the oil and gas conservation laws. SEC. 111. The division may request assistance from the bureau of mines and geology of the State of Nevada, the state analytical laboratory and the state engineer and cooperate with them in carrying out the purposes of this chapter.
Funding	Division of Minerals to be funded by general funds and no change to Oil and Gas Conservation funding.
Link to Bill	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Statutes/59th/Stats197705.html#Stats197705_CH529

Oil Industry Status of 1970s	The early part of the decade saw a large increase in U.S. oil and gas exploration, which was also observed in Nevada. Nevada's second oil field, Trap Spring, located in Nye County, was discovered; the field's first year of oil production exceeded 500,000 barrels.
Minerals Industry Status of 1970s	The early and mid-1970s were, in general, good for base metals, as they continued to dominate production values in the state. Increasing environmental concerns surrounding mercury, and associated falling commodity prices, resulted in the closure of almost all mercury mines in the state. Secondary production of mercury from the Carlin Mine and primary production from the McDermitt mine contributed 99% of the nation's mercury by 1976. Tungsten prices rose, causing a new wave of exploration activity in the state that had not been seen in about 15 years, and tungsten production, beginning in 1976, was reported from the Tempiute district in Lincoln County. However, Nevada's only producing lead-zinc mine near Pioche (the Pan American) closed in 1976, a year before copper would plummet due to increasing extraction costs, foreign competition, and lower demand. In 1978, the McGill Smelter shut down, and by 1980, most copper mines had closed. Exploration for gold would continue in Nevada, picking up speed through the decade. The discovery of Carlin-type deposits, coupled with the 1972 government release of gold price control, put gold exploration into high gear. Exploration would radiate out from the proximity of the Carlin mine into the Independence Mountains in Elko County, Alligator Ridge in White Pine County, and Pinson and Preble Gold in Humboldt County, among others. By the end of the decade, gold production and value had significantly increased to a level not seen since the 1940s. Barite is primarily used in oil and gas well drilling, so with increased exploration for oil comes increased barite demand. It was at this point that huge Nevada barite deposits took center stage on the mineral scene, reaching record levels of production in the late 1970s and moving industrial mineral production ahead of metals for the first time in Nevada's history -- though, it was to be short lived.
Geothermal Industry Status of 1970s	Geothermal resources in Nevada saw a significant amount of activity during the 1970s. Fossil fuel prices were on the rise, which catalyzed exploration for alternative sources for electricity generation. The first geothermal development in the state was put into operation in 1979. This first operation was at Brady's Hot Springs, which is easily visible from I-80 east of Fallon. However, at this time, geothermal energy was not used for generating electricity; instead, the hot water was used in a food-processing plant to dry onions.

1983, AB 335	
Institution/Agency Administrative Changes	AN ACT relating to minerals; changing the regulatory authority for natural resources; creating the commission on mineral resources and providing for its organization, powers and duties; abolishing the oil, gas and mining board; creating

	the Department of Minerals and providing for its organization, powers and duties; abolishing the division of mineral resources of the state department of conservation and natural resources; abolishing the department of energy; creating the office of community services; creating and increasing fees; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.
Commission on Mineral Resource	Created the Commission as it stands today. The governor shall appoint: (a) Two persons who are familiar with large-scale mining; (b) One person who is familiar with the production of oil and gas; (c) One person who is familiar with exploration for and development of minerals; (d) One person who is familiar with the situations unique to small-scale mining and prospecting; (e) One person who is familiar with the development of geothermal resources; and (f) One member to represent the general public. The members of the commission shall serve terms of 4 years, except when appointed to fill unexpired terms.
Division of Minerals	Moved the Division of Minerals from DCNR to its own Department.
Main objectives and Purpose	Due to the importance of mining's role in Nevada, the Legislature removed the Division of Minerals from DCNR and placed them as their own Department with the advisory oversite of the Commission on Mineral Resources. 1. Benefit and promote the welfare of all the people of the State of Nevada. 2. Promote the efficient, orderly and economical conduct of the various activities for the encouragement, advancement and protection of mining and the production of geothermal energy, oil, gas and coal in this state. 3. Support, assist and encourage large and small mining interests, through the principles of private enterprise and individual initiative, in the discovery and development of the state's mineral resources. 4. Preserve an equitable and workable system of discovery and acquisition of mineral deposits and interests in and on the public lands, while retaining and defending the historic right of all citizens to free access to and across public lands for all lawful pursuits and purposes. 5. Achieve an equitable and reasonable balance between mineral and other legitimate interests in the realistic utilization of the public land and its surface and subsurface resources. 6. Study means and carry out programs to assist the operators of small mines in the acquisition of or access to milling and smelting facilities to process ores or concentrates into a marketable product.
Funding	Oil and Gas Conservation funding & Mining Claim filing fees, NRS 517.
Link to Bill	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Statutes/62nd/Stats198309.html#Stats198309_CH627

Oil Industry Status of 1980s	Exploration for oil continued to increase resulting in the discoveries of the Bacon Flat, Blackburn, and Grant Canyon oils fields in 1981, 1982, and 1983, respectively. At the close of the decade, oil production in Nevada came from eight fields located in Nye and Eureka counties. Over 700,000 barrels of oil were produced in 1983 with the main oil boom in Nevada starting in 1984 and lasting to 1994. The peak production at this time was in 1990 when over 4 million barrels were produced in that year alone.
Minerals Industry Status of 1980s	During the 1980s, Nevada grabbed the crown for the leading gold producing state in the nation and has maintained that status to this day. Gold and silver were the premier commodities of the decade. By 1986, exploration activities for precious metals were taking place in every county, and when compared to other states, twice the number of claims were staked in Nevada. Many new discoveries were made and put into production, some of which would prove to be the largest deposits discovered to date in Nevada. Twelve new operations alone came online in 1987, placing Nevada as the leading silver producer in the nation, which had not happened since the Comstock era. Ten more operations opened in 1988, followed by five more in 1989. In 1989 alone, there were 20 new discoveries. Low demand and high foreign competition kept base metal production very low, resulting in the closure of most tungsten operations the failure of the Hall molybdenum mine, which was in production for less than one year, and the final closure of the McGill Smelter in 1983. Nevada remained one of the top mercury producers, though production only came from the McDermitt mine and as byproduct production from large gold mines. The close of the decade saw resumed activity for base metals with the reopening of the Hall molybdenum mine in Nye County, and production of cathode copper from the Yerington mine. Nevada's population increased drastically, especially in Clark County, during the last half of the decade, and with it so did the production of aggregates and other industrial minerals associated with construction, like gypsum and limestone. Limestone is used to produce cement and lime, much of which was used in gold processing, so demand was from two major economic booms taking place in Nevada during the 1980s.
Geothermal Industry Status of 1980s	Electrical generation from geothermal resources started in Nevada in 1984. Over the course of the decade, Nevada saw nine geothermal plants come online. Nevada started the decade with zero geothermal power capacity and ended the decade with 130.8 megawatts of geothermal power capacity from the new plants.

1985, SB 354	
Institution/Agency Administrative Changes	AN ACT relating to geothermal resources; clarifying the powers and duties of the state engineer and the director of the department of minerals; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Commission on Mineral Resource	No change to Commission.
Division of Minerals	Added the Geothermal program to the Department of Minerals.
Main objectives and Purpose	534A.031: Exploration and subsurface information obtained as a result of a geothermal project must be filed with the department of minerals within 30 days after it is accumulated. 534A.070: The executive director of the department of minerals shall approve or reject an application for a permit to drill an exploratory well within 10 days after he receives the application in proper form. Such a permit must not be effective for more than 2 years but may be extended by the executive director.
Funding	Oil, gas, and geothermal permitting, mining claim filing fees, NRS 517.
Link to Bill	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Statutes/63rd/Stats198506.html#Stats198506_CH448
Oil Industry Status of 1980s	See 1983 AB 335.
Minerals Industry Status of 1980s	See 1983 AB 335.
Geothermal Industry Status of 1980s	See 1983 AB 335.

1985, AB 11	
Institution/Agency Administrative Changes	AN act relating to mining and related activities; requiring the Department of Minerals to standardize all forms for claims and the maps of the counties; repealing obsolete provisions; lengthening the hours of work permitted in mines and related facilities; standardizing the requirements for filing claims; revising the requirements for the size and character of monuments; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.
Commission on Mineral Resource	No change to Commission.
Division of Minerals	Added the management of mining claim forms to the Department of Minerals.
Main objectives and Purpose	Made various administrative changed under NRS 517.
Funding	Oil, gas, and geothermal permitting, mining claim filing fees, NRS 517.
Link to Bill	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Statutes/63rd/Stats198507.html#Stats198507_CH489
Oil Industry Status of 1980s	See 1983 AB 335.
Minerals Industry Status of 1980s	See 1983 AB 335.

Geothermal Industry Status of 1980s	See 1983 AB 335.

1987, SB 302	
Institution/Agency Administrative Changes	AN ACT relating to mines; imposing an additional fee for the filing of a claim to be used to discover dangerous conditions resulting from past mining practices; providing for the establishment of a program to discover those dangerous conditions; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.
Commission on Mineral Resource	No change to the Commission.
Division of Minerals	Major change to the Department of Minerals with the addition of new Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) program and associated staff.
Main objectives and Purpose	Created the AML program and established administrative code for discovering dangerous conditions that result from mining practices which took place at a mine that is no longer operating, identifying, if feasible, the owner or other persons responsible for the condition, and to rank the conditions found in descending order of danger, as well as implemented a mining claim filing fee at the county recorders for funding the AML program.
Funding	Oil, gas, and geothermal permitting, mining claim filing fees, NRS 517.
Link to Bill	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Statutes/64th/Stats198708.html#Stats198708page1867
Oil Industry Status of 1980s	See 1983 AB 335.
Minerals Industry Status of 1980s	See 1983 AB 335.
Geothermal Industry Status of 1980s	See 1983 AB 335.

1993, AB 782	
Institution/Agency Administrative Changes	AN ACT relating to state government; providing for the reorganization of the executive department of state government; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.
Commission on Mineral Resource	No change to the Commission, continues to act as advisory to the Division of Minerals within the Department of Business and Industry.
Division of Minerals	Change from Department to Division under Business and Industry.
Main objectives and Purpose	Sweeping departmental changes occurred in 1993 with the creation of the Department of Business and Industry. The department consists of a director and the following:

	(a) Consumer affairs division. (b) Division of financial institutions. (c) Housing division. (d) Manufactured housing division. * (e) Real estate division. (f) State fire marshal division. * (g) Division of unclaimed property. * (g) Division of agriculture. * (h) Division of minerals. * (i) Division of insurance. (j) Division of industrial relations. (k) Office of labor commissioner. (l) Commission on postsecondary education. * (m) Taxicab authority. Divisions that are denoted with an * are no longer a part of B&I.
Funding	Oil, gas, and geothermal permitting, mining claim filing fees, NRS 517.
Link to Bill	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Statutes/67th/Stats199307.html#Stats199307_CH466
Oil Industry Status of 1990s	Nevada's oil fields saw a general decline in the 1990s. As prices declined, so did exploration and the value of oil. Decreased oil exploration was the reason for decreased barite production in the state as well. The Tomera oil field was discovered in 1990, and the Ghost Ranch oil field in 1996. A significant decline in production occurred in 1993 due to the loss of production from the Grant Canyon oil field. At the close of the decade, oil production came from 99 wells within 13 of Nevada's 15 oil fields.
Minerals Industry Status of 1990s	Through the 1990s, Nevada led the nation in gold, silver, and barite production, was one of the top two producers for lithium and diatomite, and the only producer of magnesite. Nevada ranked 2nd in the world for gold production for much of the decade, with the highest amount of gold ever produced in a single year in 1998 at nearly 9 million ounces. Other major commodities produced by Nevada during this time included: specialty clays, aggregates, geothermal energy, lime, gypsum, cement, and silica sand. On average, 50% of annual gold production came from the Carlin Trend. A decline in gold prices due to weakened Asian economies and the Central Banks selling off gold for paper money resulted in a 1999 decrease in production. The first part of the decade was met with a few challenges, especially for mineral exploration. Weakening gold prices cut financing for companies, especially junior explorationists. With such a heavy flood of exploration from the previous decade, the "low hanging fruit" had been picked and exploration shifted targets towards harder-to-find, concealed deposits. There was a growing concern about access to federal lands due to increased state regulations regarding mining, increasing amounts of land being withdrawn from mineral entry, and the potential for the reform of the 1872 mining law. Also, in 1993, the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation

	Act (maintenance fee statute), established the requirement of an annual assessment fee to be paid to the BLM to maintain rights to unpatented mining claims, mill sites, or tunnel sites. Annual assessment work was no longer sufficient to hold rights associated with unpatented mining claims, mill sites, or tunnel sites unless an individual qualified as a small miner (having 10 or fewer claims or sites). As a result, many mining claims were dropped and exploration activities moved to foreign countries where investment climates were more favorable. By the end of the decade exploration had gained momentum again as gold prices increased. Mining claim filings became increasingly steady, more development of extensions to known deposits emerged, and exploration was documented in many known mining districts. Several new mines came online, and dozens of new discoveries were made. Copper production increased for a short time during the middle of the decade with the Robinson and MacArthur mines coming back online. But over supply of copper to the market, mainly due to increased production in Chile, caused copper prices to fall and the Robinson mine shut down again. Aggregates and industrial minerals again saw increases throughout the decade, setting new production records almost every year. As the Nevada population and tourism industry was growing, so did the demand for aggregates utilized in the construction of homes, schools, streets, businesses, hotels, casinos, airports, and highways. Toward the end of the decade, aggregates and industrial minerals started to see more post mine-life plans; for example, aggregate pits would be converted to landfills and gypsum mines to housing developments.
Geothermal Industry Status of 1990s	Geothermal activity resumed, but due to low fossil fuel prices, development was on slow. Electrical capacity was increased to 211.5 megawatts from 12 plants.

1999, AB 450	
Institution/Agency Administrative Changes	AN ACT relating to the Division of Minerals of the Department of Business and Industry; requiring the Commission on Mineral Resources to adopt regulations establishing the amount of certain fees imposed for the support of the division and for certain programs of the division; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.
Commission on Mineral Resource	No change to Commission, still acts as advisory to the Division of Minerals within Business and Industry.
Division of Minerals	No change to the Department.
Main objectives and Purpose	Increased the mining claim filing fee at the county recorder offices for general operations of the Division from $1.50 to $6.00 maximum. Increased the mining

	claim filing fee at the county recorder offices for the AML program from $1.00 to a $4.00 maximum.
Funding	Oil, gas, and geothermal permitting, mining claim filing fees, NRS 517.
Link to Bill	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/statutes/70th/Stats199906.html#Stats199906_CH177
Oil Industry Status of 1990s	See 1993 AB 782.
Minerals Industry Status of 1990s	See 1993 AB 782.
Geothermal Industry Status of 1990s	See 1993 AB 782.

1999, AB 103	
Institution/Agency Administrative Changes	AN ACT relating to state government; reestablishing the state Department of Agriculture; requiring the Commission on Mineral Resources to establish fees for the production of certain oil and gas and for filing certain documents and issuing certain permits to drill wells; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.
Commission on Mineral Resource	No change to the role of the Commission, but it now oversees the Division as its own stand-alone agency no longer under Business and Industry.
Division of Minerals	Moved the Division from Business and Industry to the Division of Minerals under the Commission on Mineral Resources.
Main objectives and Purpose	April 20, 1999, Assembly Committee on Ways and Means meeting minutes. "Testifying in support of A.B. 103, Assemblyman John Marvel, Assembly District 34 representative, explained the intent of the bill was to correct the problems that had resulted from the consolidation of the former Department of Agriculture and the former Department of Minerals under the auspices of the Department of Business and Industry. Because of the importance of the two industries to the state of Nevada, Mr. Marvel felt both the Division of Agriculture and the Division of Minerals should have either departmental or commission status. He contended the transition of those two entities from B&I would improve communication between the Governor and the industry heads, as well as improve the leverage agriculture and mineral officials would have to articulate their needs to federal agencies in Washington D.C."
Funding	Oil, gas, and geothermal permitting, mining claim filing fees, NRS 517.
Link to Bill	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/statutes/70th/Stats199923.html#Stats199923page3617

Oil Industry Status of 1990s	See 1993 AB 782.
Minerals Industry Status of 1990s	See 1993 AB 782.
Geothermal Industry Status of 1990s	See 1993 AB 782.

2005, SB 421	
Institution/Agency Administrative Changes	AN ACT relating to meetings of public bodies; requiring all public bodies subject to the Open Meeting Law to make and retain an audio recording or transcript of each meeting, whether or not the meeting is public or closed; providing certain exceptions; requiring the Board of the Public Employees' Benefits Program to post minutes of its meetings on its Internet website under certain circumstances; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.
Commission on Mineral Resource	No change to makeup of the Commission, but some changes to rules associated with the Open Meeting Law.
Division of Minerals	No change to Division
Main objectives and Purpose	Changes to the Open Meeting Law for the Commission.
Funding	Oil, gas, and geothermal permitting, mining claim filing fees, NRS 517.
Link to Bill	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Statutes/73rd/Stats200515.html#Stats200515_CH373
Oil Industry Status of 2000s	Oil exploration and production continued to decline, except for a slight increase in 2008 and 2009. As of 2005, there were 60 actively producing wells in the state operating within 10 oil fields. In 2005, new discoveries in Utah generated some excitement, resulting in some exploration drilling in Nevada.
Minerals Industry Status of 2000s	With two exceptions, the overall trend for mineral and energy production continually increased throughout the decade as gold prices recovered from the 1999 fall. Nevada led the nation in gold and barite production, and was the only state to produce magnesite, lithium, and some specialty clays. Nevada continued to be among the top producing states for diatomite and gypsum, though copper production decreased throughout the decade. Other commodities produced include aggregates, silver, geothermal energy, molybdenum, perlite, silica, salt, semiprecious gemstones, and mercury as a byproduct of gold and silver processing. Nevada fell from the 2nd leading gold producer (compared to other countries) at the beginning of the decade, to the 3rd leading producer by the end. Of the total amount of Nevada gold produced, an average of 50% came from the Carlin Trend. The number of active gold mines stayed below 25.

	Owing to a dip in gold prices towards the beginning of the decade, exploration fell to a level not seen in over 20 years. The active claim count fell to less than 100,000. Starting in 2001, gold prices began to increase resulting in a marked increase in exploration. Most exploration focused on high-grade vein targets. New discoveries were reported on the Carlin Trend and a trickle of mines came online. The 2008 economic recession caused a significant decline in exploration, due to the difficulty in obtaining financing towards the end of the 2000s. Exploration started to employ more geophysical methods such as seismic, electrical, magnetic, and gravity surveys. By 2005, certain commodities prices significantly increased, due to increasing global populations and living standards. This resulted in increased exploration efforts in Nevada, especially for molybdenum, copper, uranium, tungsten, iron, and zinc. Production from the Robinson and Phoenix mines resumed during the middle of the decade, contributing mainly to copper production numbers; these mines are still in production today. Some molybdenum production was also reported from the Ashdown mine. Aggregate production had been on the rise for almost three decades until the economic recession of 2008. The minerals industry is not the only industry to experience boom and bust cycles, and the recession caused a significant decrease in construction and this decline in demand was strongly felt by the aggregate and gypsum producers.
Geothermal Industry Status of 2000s	Geothermal exploration and development expanded due to government programs and incentives. At the end of the decade, electrical power capacity had increased to 437 megawatts from 19 plants.

2011, SB 493	
Institution/Agency Administrative Changes	AN ACT relating to mining; creating the Mining Oversight and Accountability Commission and establishing its membership, powers and duties; revising provisions governing the calculation of net proceeds from certain mining operations conducted in this State; repealing a fee imposed on certain filings regarding mining claims; making an appropriation; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.
Commission on Mineral Resource	No change to makeup of Commission, but changes to rules association of reporting to the Mining Oversight and Accountability Commission.
Division of Minerals	No change to Division.
Main objectives and Purpose	Legislative Counsel's Digest: Existing law does not provide for a single administrative body to oversee the activities of the various state agencies that have responsibility for the taxation,

	operation, safety and environmental regulation of mines and mining in this State. Section 5 of this bill creates the Mining Oversight and Accountability Commission, consisting of seven members appointed by the Governor. Two of the members must be recommended by the Majority Leader of the Senate and two by the Speaker of the Assembly. In the first biennium, one member must be recommended by the Minority Leader of the Senate. In the next biennium, one member must be recommended by the Minority Leader of the Assembly. The authority of the Minority Leader of the Senate and the Minority Leader of the Assembly to make those recommendations alternates each biennium thereafter. Section 7 of this bill requires the Commission to provide oversight of compliance with Nevada law relating to the activities of each state agency with respect to the taxation, operation, safety and environmental regulation of mines and mining in this State. Section 7 also identifies particular state entities that are subject to the supervision of the Commission with respect to their activities related to mines and mining: (1) the Nevada Tax Commission and the Department of Taxation in the taxation of the net proceeds of minerals; (2) the Division of Industrial Relations of the Department of Business and Industry concerning the safe and healthful working conditions at mines; (3) the Commission on Mineral Resources and the Division of Minerals of the Commission; (4) the Bureau of Mines and Geology of the State of Nevada; and (5) the Division of Environmental Protection of the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources in its activities concerning the reclamation of land used in mining. Sections 8 and 13-16 of this bill establish certain reports and other information that those entities are required to provide to the Commission. Section 11 of this bill authorizes the Commission to request the Legislative Commission to direct the Legislative Auditor to provide for a special audit or investigation of the activities of any state agency, board, bureau, commission or political subdivision in connection with the taxation, operation, safety and environmental regulation of mines and mining in this State. Section 12 of this bill provides that certain regulations of the Nevada Tax Commission, Administrator of the Division of Industrial Relations, Commission on Mineral Resources and the State Environmental Commission concerning mines and mining are not effective unless they are reviewed by the Mining Oversight and Accountability Commission before being approved by the Legislative Commission. Sections 12.5 and 12.7 of this bill revise provisions governing the calculation of net proceeds from certain mining operations conducted in this State.
Funding	Oil, gas, and geothermal permitting, mining claim filing fees, NRS 517. Received AML specific funding from federal partners.
Link to Bill	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Statutes/76th2011/Stats201122.html#Stats201122_CH449
Oil Industry Status of 2010s	Oil production and exploration fluctuated throughout the decade coinciding with fluctuations in oil prices, with barite production numbers in tow. Nevada did see

	the first hydraulically fractured oil well completed in 2013, followed by the completion of two more the following year. Those wells were plugged in 2017. At the end of 2019, oil was being produced from 57 active wells within seven oil fields in Nevada.
Minerals Industry Status of 2010s	From 2010 to 2012, Nevada saw significant increases in mineral production, especially for gold, which was then followed by a decrease of similar magnitude in 2015. Production values increased again during 2016 and 2017, then remained at a similar value in 2018. Decreases were seen again in 2019. Fluctuations were direct reflections of increasing and decreasing gold prices due to many economic variables. Nevada still leads the nation in gold and barite production and is the only state to produce magnesite and certain varieties of specialty clays. Other important commodities produced include copper, silver, aggregate, geothermal energy, diatomite, gypsum, limestone, lithium, and silica sand. The number of active gold-producing mines fell from 20 in 2010 to 15 in 2019. Also, the percentage of gold coming from the Carlin Trend has decreased from 41% in 2010 to 29% in 2019. Copper production has fluctuated throughout the decade, exhibiting at least three separate trends where output has decreased. Most increases follow copper prices, as would be expected, except for 2015 and 2016, where quite an opposite trend can be observed. Exploration activity steadily decreased through 2015, but has steadily increased since then. This activity strongly correlates with increases in the number of mining claim filings and drill projects per year, and with recent alternative energy initiatives, such as the push to produce more electric cars (copper, lithium), and the minerals deemed critical as defined by Executive Order 13817. Exploration during the first half of the decade largely focused on gold, but interest has somewhat waned since 2015. The industry has recently become abuzz over lithium and critical minerals. Copper, silver, zinc, lithium, barite, vanadium, fluorspar, and graphite have received significant attention during the last part of the decade. Increases in the production of aggregates and other associated nonmetals were noted, coinciding with growing populations, large urban expansions, and major construction projects like the USA Parkway industrial area outside of Reno, industrial parks northeast of Las Vegas, and highways such as the I-11 bypass near Boulder City. Considerations for post-mine life plans are more commonly becoming part of approved mining plans and include later conversion of the mines to recreation areas, landfills, or housing developments.

Geothermal Industry Status of 2010s	Geothermal activity in the state also fluctuated a bit through the decade. There were 75 geothermal projects reported in 2012. The number of megawatt hours generated steadily increased throughout the decade. In 2019, there were 27 geothermal plants with a total electric capacity of 768.8 megawatts.

2013, SB 405	
Institution/Agency Administrative Changes	AN ACT relating to governmental administration; requiring the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau to develop biennial recommendations for the elimination of the requirement to submit certain obsolete and redundant reports to the Legislature; repealing provisions which require the submission of a report to the Director and certain other persons; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.
Commission on Mineral Resource	Removed the requirement of NRS 513.093 subsection 4. "Shall submit a biennial report to the Governor and the Legislature through the Commission concerning the work of the Division, with recommendations that the Administrator may deem necessary. The report must set forth the facts relating to the condition of mining and of exploration for and production of oil and gas in the State."
Division of Minerals	No change to Division.
Main objectives and Purpose	Legislative Counsel's Digest: Existing law requires various state and local officers and agencies to submit reports to the Legislative and Executive Departments of the State Government. Sections 2-38 and 39 of this bill eliminate the requirement for the submission of certain obsolete and redundant reports. In addition, section 1 of this bill requires the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau to review existing law and develop recommendations for the elimination or revision of any other provisions that require submission of obsolete and redundant reports. Section 1 further requires: (1) the recommendations to be presented biennially to the Legislative Commission; and (2) the Legislative Commission, as it deems appropriate, to request the preparation of a bill draft to facilitate the recommendations. During this session, the Legislature passed Assembly Bill No. 350, which requires the Legislative Commission to review certain requirements in existing law for submitting reports to the Legislature and to determine whether such requirements should be repealed, revised or continued. Section 38.5 of this bill amends A.B. 350 to require the Legislative Commission to consider, in addition to other criteria, the recommendations made by the Director pursuant to section

	1 of this bill regarding the elimination or revision of requirements in existing law for submitting reports to the Legislature.
Funding	Oil, gas, and geothermal permitting, mining claim filing fees, NRS 517. Received AML specific funding from federal partners.
Link to Bill	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Statutes/77th2013/Stats201310.html#Stats201310_CH337
Oil Industry Status of 2010s	See 2011 SB 493.
Minerals Industry Status of 2010s	See 2011 SB 493.
Geothermal Industry Status of 2010s	See 2011 SB 493.

2015, SB 44	
Institution/Agency Administrative Changes	AN ACT relating to minerals; revising provisions relating to certain fees for permits to drill and operate oil and natural gas wells; making various other changes to provisions relating to oil and natural gas; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.
Commission on Mineral Resource	No change to the Commission.
Division of Minerals	Added the ability to regulate and permit hydraulic fracturing to the Oil and Gas Program within the Division of Minerals.
Main objectives and Purpose	Added the ability to regulate and permit hydraulic fracturing to the Oil and Gas Program within the Division of Minerals.
Funding	Oil, gas, and geothermal permitting, mining claim filing fees, NRS 517. Received AML specific funding from federal partners.
Link to Bill	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Statutes/79th2017/Stats201719.html#Stats201719_CH507
Oil Industry Status of 2010s	See 2011 SB 493.
Minerals Industry Status of 2010s	See 2011 SB 493.
Geothermal Industry Status of 2010s	See 2011 SB 493.

2017, AB 52

Institution/Agency Administrative Changes	AN ACT relating to water; defining certain terms relating to dissolved mineral resources; setting forth certain provisions relating to the drilling and operation of a dissolved mineral resource exploration well; establishing certain requirements for an application to drill a dissolved mineral resource exploration well; providing that certain losses of water by a dissolved mineral resource exploration project are not subject to certain appropriation procedures; requiring the Commission on Mineral Resources to establish a fee for the issuance of a permit to drill a dissolved mineral resource exploration well; requiring the Commission, in coordination with the Division of Water Resources and the Division of Environmental Protection of the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, to adopt certain regulations; providing a penalty; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.
Commission on Mineral Resource	No change to the Commission.
Division of Minerals	Added the Dissolved Mineral Resource (DMRE) Program to the Division.
Main objectives and Purpose	Legislative Counsel's Digest: This bill establishes provisions governing exploration for dissolved mineral resources. Section 1.4 of this bill provides that the provisions of this bill apply only to the exploration for dissolved mineral resources and not the ownership of such resources. Sections 3, 12 and 14 of this bill define the terms "dissolved mineral resource," "dissolved mineral resource exploration borehole" and "dissolved mineral resource exploration well." Sections 16 and 17 of this bill provide for the issuance by the Administrator of the Division of Minerals of the Commission on Mineral Resources of a permit to drill a dissolved mineral resource exploration well. Section 18 of this bill provides that the reasonable loss of water of not more than 5 acre-feet during the testing and sampling of water pumped within a dissolved mineral resource exploration project is not subject to the appropriation procedures of chapters 533 and 534 of NRS, but a dissolved mineral resource exploration project that pumps more than 5 acre-feet of water is required to follow such procedures. Section 18 also defines the term "dissolved mineral resource exploration project." Section 19 of this bill requires the Commission on Mineral Resources to establish a fee of not more than $1,500 for the issuance of a permit to drill a dissolved mineral resource exploration well. Section 20 of this bill requires the Commission, in coordination with the Division of Water Resources and the Division of Environmental Protection of the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, to adopt regulations to carry out a program for regulating the drilling or operation of dissolved mineral resource exploration boreholes and dissolved mineral resource exploration wells. Section 21 of this bill provides that a person who violates any provision of this bill or any regulations adopted pursuant thereto or an order of the Division of Minerals is subject to a penalty.

Funding	Oil, gas, geothermal, and dissolved mineral permitting, mining claim filing fees, NRS 517. Received AML specific funding from federal partners.
Link to Bill	https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Statutes/79th2017/Stats201719.html#Stats201719_CH507
Oil Industry Status of 2010s	See 2011 SB 493.
Minerals Industry Status of 2010s	See 2011 SB 493.
Geothermal Industry Status of 2010s	See 2011 SB 493.

The mineral industries summary by decade was compiled by Lucia Patterson. For more history, production statistics or any other mineral related information in Nevada, please visit the NDOM Open Data Site https://data-ndom.opendata.arcgis.com/ and explore the Nevada Mining and Land Withdrawal History Experience.