



California
**Department of
Conservation**

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California's Minerals

The state of California hosts a rich variety of minerals and rocks. Many are considered resources, while others represent hazards to human health or the environment.

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Mineral Resources

The California Geological Survey provides objective geologic expertise and information about California's diverse non-fuel mineral resources, producing maps, reports, and other data products to assist government agencies, mining companies, consultants, and the public in recognizing, developing, and protecting important mineral resources. Non-fuel mineral resources fall into three categories: metals, industrial minerals, and construction aggregate.

- Metals include gold, silver, iron and copper.
- Industrial minerals include boron compounds, rare-earth elements, clays, limestone, gypsum, salt and dimension stone.
- Construction aggregate includes sand and gravel, and crushed stone.



Official Geological Symbols of California

California State Mineral (Gold)



CGS MENU



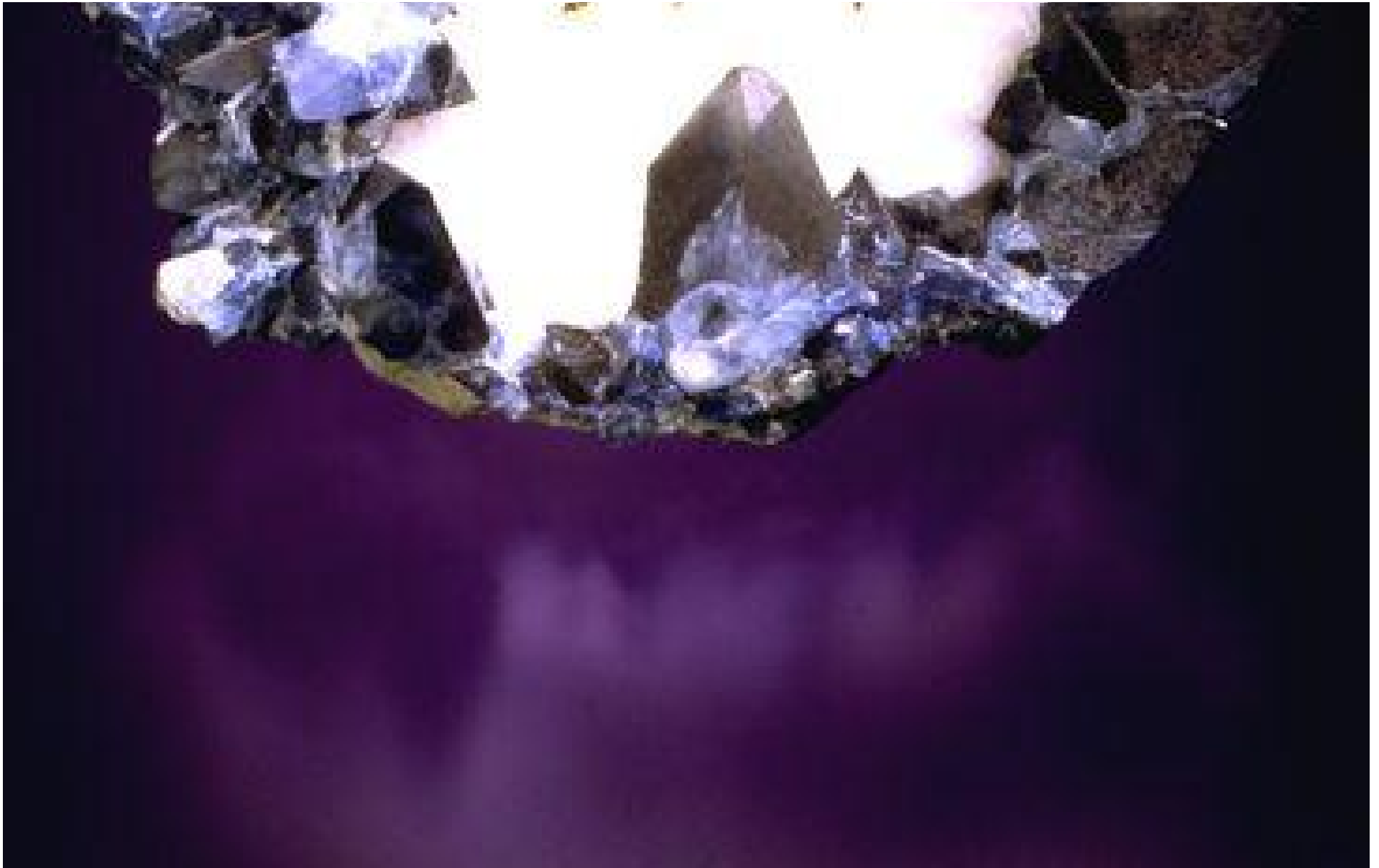


State legislation signed on April 23, 1965 designated native **gold** as California's official state mineral. At the signing ceremony Governor Edmund G. Brown Sr. said, "Selection of gold as our state mineral is acknowledgement of **the intimate part it [gold] has played in the history of our people** and of the fact that mining is a major California economic activity."

In recognition of the California Gold Discovery to Statehood Sesquicentennial (1998-2000) CGS produced the "**Map of California Historic Gold Mines**" as a poster at the scale of 1:1,500,000. The map shows the location of 13,500 historic California gold mines.

California State Gem (Benitoite)





On October 1, 1985 [benitoite](#) was designated as the official state gem. Named in 1907 after the river, county, and nearby mountain range where it was found. "Benito" is a Spanish form of benedictus, meaning blessed. Crystals can occur in a rich blue color as striking and flawless as the finest sapphires.

California State Rock (Serpentinite)



Serpentinite, or serpentine rock, is the metamorphosed remains of magnesium-rich igneous rocks, most commonly peridotite, from the earth's mantle. Serpentinite is apple-green to black and is often mottled with light and dark colored areas. Its surfaces often have a shiny

earth's mantle. Serpentine is apple-green to black and is often mottled with light and dark colored areas. Its surfaces often have a shiny or wax-like appearance and a slightly soapy feel. Serpentine is usually fine-grained and compact but may be granular, platy, or fibrous in appearance. Serpentine may contain [naturally-occurring asbestos](#), a mineral hazard.

Mineral Hazards

The primary mineral hazards of concern in California are radon, mercury, and naturally-occurring asbestos. [Visit our Mineral Hazards pages for more information.](#)

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