



## Energy Minerals Law Center

*a nonprofit law firm serving communities impacted by energy mining*

1911 Main Avenue, Suite 238, Durango, Colorado 81301

Phone: (970) 247 9334 Fax: (970) 382 0316

Email: [emlc@frontier.net](mailto:emlc@frontier.net)

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### WESTERN STATE COAL REVIEW EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PREPARED FOR: Western Mining Action Network: No Dirty Energy Summit

PREPARED BY: Brad Bartlett, Managing Attorney

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- Seven of the eleven Western states produce coal (not including the State of North Dakota which produces large amounts of lignite).
- Western coal production accounts for over 50% of the nation's coal production.
- Wyoming is by far the largest coal-producing State in the nation, a position it has held since 1988 and accounts for 72% of Western coal production.
- The largest surface coal mine in the U.S. (and the world) is the Black Thunder mine operated by Thunder Basin Coal Company, LLC. In 2006, the mine produced 92.7 million short tons (mmst) of coal, nearly 20% of Wyoming's total coal production, and higher than 23 other individual coal producing states
- Seventeen of the nations' top twenty producing coal mines in the U.S. (in terms of production) are all found in the West: 10 in Wyoming, 2 in North Dakota, and 2 in Montana and 1 each in New Mexico, Arizona and Colorado.
- The coal produced is largely subbituminous coal, with some bituminous and lignite (from North Dakota). Actively producing coal basins include, but are not limited to, the San Juan Basin in New Mexico, the Black Mesa Basin in Arizona, the Piceance Basin in Colorado, the Uinta Basin in Utah, the Paradox Basin in Colorado and Utah, the Powder River and Green River Basins in Wyoming and the Bighorn Basin in Montana.
- Virtually all of the coal produced from this region is used domestically although, according to the Department of Energy and in an effort to feed growing appetites for coal in China and India, Powder River Basin coal producers have been looking more and more at exporting some of their coal out of Vancouver or facilities on the east coast or the Gulf of Mexico.
- The majority of coal produced in the West is sold on the open market (418,977 mmst) versus captive sales/transactions (107,351 mmst).
- Arizona            1 surface mine (1,425 mmst)

