

## COLORADO

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*This paper provides information regarding the importance of coal-fired electricity and coal production to Colorado.*

### COAL-FIRED ELECTRICITY

- There are **eleven (11) coal-fired power plants** (23 individual coal-fired electric generating units) located in Colorado. Together, these plants represent some 5,100 megawatts (MW) of electric generating capacity.<sup>i</sup> Colorado's largest coal-fired power plants are owned by Xcel Energy, Tri-State Generation and Transmission, Salt River Project, Platte River Authority, and Colorado Springs Utilities.<sup>ii</sup>
- Coal-fired electricity is estimated to support **26,000 jobs** in Colorado and is responsible for **\$6.2 billion** in economic output.<sup>iii</sup>
- During the first four months of 2016 (latest data available), coal ranked **first** among electricity sources for Colorado.<sup>iv</sup> Coal provided 52% of Colorado's electricity, renewables 25%, and natural gas 23%.<sup>v</sup> In 2014, five of the ten largest power plants in Colorado were coal-fired.<sup>vi</sup>
- Colorado's coal-fired power plants will have invested **\$2.5 billion** in air pollution control technologies by 2020.<sup>vii</sup> Colorado power plants have reduced emissions of major air pollutants by 70% since 1995.<sup>viii</sup>
- **Eleven (11) coal-fired electric generating units** (totaling 1,170 MW) in Colorado have shut down or will be shutting down due to EPA policies.<sup>ix</sup>

### COAL PRODUCTION

- Colorado produced **18.7 million tons** of coal in 2015, making the state one of the largest coal producing states.<sup>x</sup> (Colorado produced 32 million tons of coal in 2008.<sup>xi</sup>) Most of Colorado's coal production is located in the western part of the state. Approximately 60% of Colorado's coal production is shipped to other states for electricity generation.<sup>xii</sup>

- In 2015, there were **2,800 coal mining jobs** in Colorado.<sup>xiii</sup> A total of **18,000 jobs** are supported by Colorado coal mining.<sup>xiv</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> SNL Energy data.

<sup>ii</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>iii</sup> Estimates of the total jobs and economic output attributable to coal-based generation were derived from electric generation and electric utility sales revenue data published by EIA, and state-specific economic multipliers for the electric power industry developed by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis. Direct jobs include workers in the generation, transmission, and distribution segments of the electric power industry. Indirect jobs include jobs in supporting industries, including coal mining, coal transportation, and jobs in other industries and communities that benefit from the purchases, wages, and taxes paid by the coal-fired power sector.

<sup>iv</sup> EIA, *Electric Power Monthly*, June 2016.

<sup>v</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>vi</sup> EIA, *State Electricity Profiles*, Colorado, Table 2, Ten Largest Plants by Generation Capacity, 2014.

<sup>vii</sup> Energy Ventures Analysis, *Capital Investments in Emission Control Retrofits in the U.S. Coal-fired Generating Fleet through the Years, 2016 Update*, January 26, 2016.

<sup>viii</sup> EPA Air Markets Program Division Database Query (July 14, 2016). The U.S. coal-fired electric generating fleet has reduced its emissions of conventional air pollutants by 92% per kWh since 1970. Nationwide, owners of coal-fired power plants had invested \$111 billion through 2015 to achieve these emission reductions, and they are projected to invest an additional \$16 billion through 2020.

<sup>ix</sup> ACCCE, *Coal Unit Retirements as of June 13, 2016*. Retirements are based on public announcements by the coal unit owners.

<sup>x</sup> EIA, *Quarterly Coal Report, October – December 2015*, released April 2016.

<sup>xi</sup> EIA, *Coal Data Browser*. <http://www.eia.gov/beta/coal/data/browser/>

<sup>xii</sup> EIA, *Annual Coal Distribution Report 2014*, released April 2016, Table OS-5. Of the 19.8 million tons of coal produced in Colorado in 2014, 8.4 million tons were used within Colorado, while 11.4 million tons were shipped to 21 other states.

<sup>xiii</sup> Colorado Mining Association, *2015 Colorado Coal Report*.

<sup>xiv</sup> *Ibid.*