

3.0 PAST, PRESENT, AND REASONABLY FORESEEABLE DEVELOPMENT

This section presents a brief description of the industries evaluated in this study. Past and present and RFD coal and coal-related industries (e.g., railroads and power plants) are described below for both the Wyoming and Montana PRB study areas. Non-coal-related industries (e.g., oil and gas, etc.) only are described for the Wyoming PRB study area. Due to the concurrent development of the Miles City Resource Management Plan, only coal mine development and coal-related activities are included in this study for the Montana PRB study area.

A summary of the data sources that were used to define the past and present conditions and RFD scenarios is presented for each industry following the past and present and RFD descriptions. Where information relative to project-specific, impact-causing parameters was unavailable, industry-specific assumptions have been developed to assist in defining existing conditions (Task 1) and to facilitate preparation of the cumulative impact analyses (Task 3) of the PRB Coal Review. These industry-specific assumptions are summarized at the end of each of the following sections.

The impact-causing parameters have been tabulated in the supporting database for the Task 2 report. A summary of the impact-causing parameters associated with each Wyoming coal mine subregion under both the lower and upper production scenarios is presented in **Tables A-2** and **A-3**, respectively, in Appendix A. Impact-causing parameters associated with the Montana coal mine subregions under the lower and upper production scenarios are summarized in **Tables A-4** and **A-5**. **Tables A-7** and **A-8** summarize by subwatershed the impact-causing parameters associated with all past and present and RFD actions (including coal mining activity) in Wyoming. As discussed in Section 2.0, GIS data were used to facilitate the resource-specific disturbance acreage estimates for the Task 1D Report for the PRB Coal Review, Current Environmental Conditions (ENSR 2005). **Table A-1** summarizes the GIS-derived coal mine-related disturbance for the Wyoming PRB study area; **Table A-6** summarizes by subwatershed the GIS-derived disturbance acreages associated with all past and present actions.

3.1 Coal

3.1.1 Past and Present Development

3.1.1.1 Wyoming

The first coal mine in the Wyoming PRB was developed near Glenrock, in Converse County, in 1883 (Foulke et al. 2002). During the 1970s and early 1980s, the PRB emerged as a major coal production region. As a result, federal coal leasing became a high profile activity since the PRB's coal is over 90 percent federally owned. In 1982, the BLM temporarily halted further coal leasing; however, mining continued on existing leases. When leasing resumed, many of the mines were depleting their original reserves, so there was a need for maintenance leasing to provide reserves to enable existing mines to meet the expanding demand. The Powder River Regional Coal Team (PRRCT) decertified the region in 1990, allowing BLM to use the lease by application (LBA) process to meet this need.