

3.18 IRREVERSIBLE OR IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

The proposed project would require a commitment of natural, physical, and human resources. In all of these categories, an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources would occur.

Construction of the proposed project would consume energy and building materials. In general, natural and propane gas and diesel fuel would be consumed directly by construction equipment and to generate electrical power and heat. Construction materials such as steel, cement, and aggregate would also be expended (see Section 3.8). These physical resources are generally in sufficient supply, and their commitment to the project would not have an adverse effect on their availability.

Operation of the proposed project would consume approximately 42.5 MMBtu natural gas annually for the life of the project (projected at 30 years) (see Section 3.8, Energy and Natural Resources). This is an irretrievable commitment of nonrenewable natural gas resources. Electrical energy would be consumed during the startup of the proposed project. Bonneville would provide approximately 21 MW during startup and testing, with a projected annual consumption or power demand of approximately 146,300 MWh/yr during operation (see Section 3.8). Electrical energy generated during operation would be supplied to the BP Cherry Point Refinery and power generated in excess of the refinery's needs would be exported to Bonneville's FCRTS under an interconnection agreement with Bonneville. Interconnection with the FCRTS is essential to deliver power from generation facilities to loads both within and outside the Pacific Northwest. Finally, petroleum products would continue to be consumed during operation; however, quantities would be significantly less than during construction.

Some biological resources would be irreversibly and irretrievably lost with the construction of the proposed project. Approximately 35 acres of wetlands would be filled with approximately 5 acres restored as part of a restoration effort. The permanent loss of approximately 30 acres would be mitigated with the establishment of a 110-acre wetland mitigation area north of the cogeneration facility. In addition, wildlife habitat would be lost within the project area. However, mitigation measures are proposed to minimize the loss wildlife resources.

In terms of human resources, trade and non-skilled laborers would be used in the preparation, fabrication, and construction of the project. During the beginning phase of construction, approximately 45 skilled and non-skilled laborers would be required. That number would increase during the second year of construction up to 670 laborers. During the latter half of the second year of construction, approximately 460 laborers would be needed to complete construction activities. Approximately 30 new and permanent job positions would be needed to help run the proposed project. Labor is generally not considered to be a resource in short supply, and commitment to the project would not have an adverse effect on the continued availability of these resources.

The local and regional economic and employment benefits are factors counterbalancing the commitment of the above-described resources.