

## Chapter 5

# Significant Irreversible Changes

### 5.1 Introduction

Pursuant to Section 15126.2(c) of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must consider any significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by a proposed project should it be implemented. Section 15126.2(c) states:

*Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts, and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highway improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irrecoverable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.*

### 5.2 Analysis of Irreversible Changes

Resources that are committed irreversibly and irretrievably are those that would be used by a project on a long-term or permanent basis. Fossil fuels and other forms of energy would be consumed during the Phase 1 (Continued Operation) of the Proposed Project. Ocean-going vessel fuels, diesel, and gasoline would continue to be used for ships, tugboats, facility operations, and on-road vehicles (trucks and employee automobiles). Electrical energy and natural gas would be consumed during operation.

Non-recoverable materials and energy would be used during the Phase 1 (Continue Operation) and Phase 2 (Nonoperational Restoration Period) activities, but the amounts needed would be accommodated by existing supplies. Although the amounts of materials and energy used would be limited, they would nevertheless be unavailable for other uses. The minimal irreversible changes associated with the Proposed Project likely would be justified by the recycling activity, which the Proposed Project would provide. The irreversible changes associated with the proposed Project are considered justified under CEQA.

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