

Chapter 4

Irreversible or Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

The irreversible commitment of resources is the use of non-renewable resources including fossil fuels, manufactured structural materials, and land converted to long term business and industrial use. The proposed site and facilities and the energy required to build and operate the facilities represent irreversible commitments of resources.

Irretrievable commitments of resources cause the lost production or use of renewable resources such as timber, rangeland, or wildlife habitat. For this project, irretrievable commitments of resources include crop losses because of facility construction; and surface disturbance (the Patawa Creek crossing) that may require several years to recover to former wildlife habitat values. Because of the problems associated with noxious weed invasion, some disturbed sites may represent irreversible commitments of resources because they will never recover to their former vegetation cover and composition.