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## **3.9 Land Use and Recreation**

The primary land use and recreational issues include conversion of existing natural and agricultural land uses to industrial uses for project facilities, and potential impacts to nearby residents and visual impacts to recreational users.

### **3.9.1 Affected Environment**

#### **3.9.1.1 Land Use**

##### **Land Uses**

The proposed plant would be constructed on approximately 47 acres out of 195 acres of Tribal Trust Land owned by the CTUIR, located approximately 4 miles east of Umatilla, in Umatilla County, Oregon (**Figure 1.1-1**). It would be located in the southern one-third of Section 7, Township 5 North (T5N), Range 29 East (R29E). The land would be leased from the CTUIR, which owns and manages land within and adjacent to the site on the east and south. The northern property boundary is a fence line located immediately south of an old railroad grade that parallels the southern bank of the Columbia River. The Port of Umatilla owns the land situated immediately south and southwest of the site. The TRCI is located on state land approximately 1.5 miles west of the site. The Wanaket Wildlife Area borders the site on the east and is just south of Port of Umatilla land on the south and southwest.

The project electrical transmission line, pipelines, and access road would cross Port of Umatilla land, BPA ROWs, grazing lands, irrigated croplands, an interstate highway and other paved and unpaved roads, and other private and public properties.

The Wanaket Wildlife Area encompasses 2,817 acres, lying adjacent to the south shore of the Columbia River, along Lake Wallula. The Wanaket Wildlife Area is bisected from west to east by U.S. Highway 730. The legal description for the Wanaket is T5N, R28E, and portions of Sections 13, 23, 24, and T5N, R29E, and portions of Sections 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21. The area consists primarily of sagebrush-dominated shrub/steppe habitats and emergent wetlands. The Wanaket Wildlife Area was established to compensate for wildlife habitat losses resulting from the construction of the McNary Hydroelectric facility on the Columbia River and was approved as a Columbia River Basin Wildlife Mitigation Project by BPA and the Northwest Power Planning

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Council in 1993. Although the Area is managed for wildlife, waterfowl, and upland bird habitat, limited public access is allowed. Access is typically obtained to conduct hunting, Tribal plant gathering, and Tribal cultural and religious activities. The HID also maintains a ROW through the southwest portion of the Wanaket Wildlife Area to conduct operation and maintenance of the "O" canal and the "OA" lateral. In addition, BPA transmission lines transect the southern half of the Area, through the southwest quarter of Section 13, the northeast quarter of Section 24, and the north half of Section 19 (CTUIR and BPA 2001b).

### **Land Use Policies**

State and local authorizations that are required for various aspects of project construction and operation are listed in **Table 1.3-2**. Usually, before construction of an energy facility can occur in Oregon, the project must be approved by the EFSC by following standards to protect environmental resources under OAR Chapter 345, Division 22, Section 045. The proposed Wanapa Energy Center power plant is exempt from EFSC regulations due to location of the facility on tribal land (i.e., tribal sovereignty). However, certain ancillary facilities (e.g., the natural gas pipeline) *would* be subject to EFSC review. Construction of the natural gas supply/wastewater discharge pipelines would require county conditional use permits under the current zoning regulations.

#### **3.9.1.2 Residential Areas**

Using aerial photography interpretation and ground reconnaissance, structures (residences and outbuildings) were mapped onto a aerial photo base to determine the locations of structures within 0.5 mile of all project components. Structure locations are illustrated on **Figures 3.9-1** and **3.9-2**. The majority of the structures are located in a rural residential area located on both sides of Diagonal Road northeast of Hermiston; the housing development at McNary; residential and commercial developments on both sides of U.S. Highway 395 and Lind Road north of Hermiston, and scattered farmsteads adjacent to the existing Northwest interstate natural gas pipeline. In many locations, residences and farms are located adjacent to county roads where utilities (electrical lines, water lines) parallel the roadways.



**Legend**

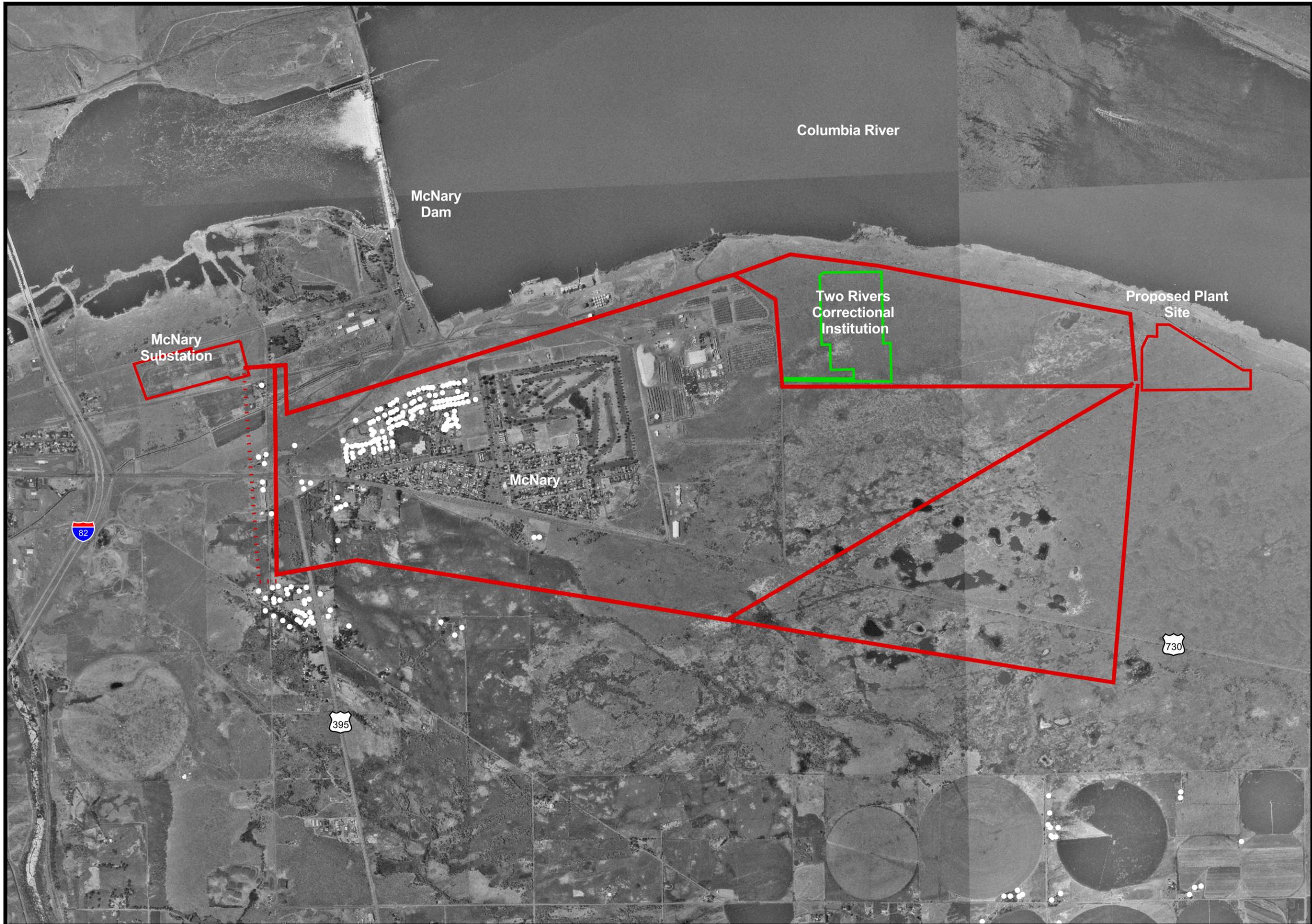
-  Location of structure within 1/4 mile of pipeline route alternatives
-  Gas Pipeline Route Alternatives
-  Plant Discharge Water Pipeline Route Alternatives
-  Potable Water / Sanitary Sewer Lines
-  Water Supply Pipeline



0 2000 4000 Feet

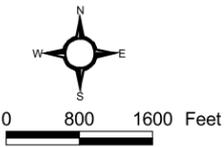
**Wanapa Energy Center EIS**

Figure 3.9-1  
Structures  
Pipeline Route Alternatives



**Legend**

-  Location of structure within 1/4 mile of route alternatives
-  Electrical Transmission Line Route Alternatives
-  Lower Monumental-McNary Transmission Line Relocation



**Wanapa Energy Center EIS**

Figure 3.9-2

Structures  
Plant Site to McNary  
Substation

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### 3.9.1.3 Recreation

The major parks and recreational areas in the study area include the Wanaket Wildlife Area, McNary Beach State Park and Recreation Area, Hat Rock State Park, Cold Springs National Wildlife Refuge, and the Columbia River. These recreational areas and their uses are described below.

The only public access allowed on the Wanaket Wildlife Area is non-motorized access to conduct regulated hunting for waterfowl and upland birds. Part of the Wanaket Wildlife Area is flood-irrigated in the late spring/early summer to supplement naturally occurring wetlands and provide waterfowl brood rearing habitat for 11 waterfowl species. Irrigation also occurs in late summer/early fall periods to provide feeding and resting habitat for mallards, Canada geese, and 18 other waterfowl species using the Area during their migrations. Other habitat is managed for upland bird species (e.g., downy woodpecker, California quail, ringed-neck pheasant, western meadowlark, yellow warbler, swallows, and harrier), seven shorebird species, and for mammals (e.g., mule deer and mink). Hunting is permitted only after a daily drawing (i.e., day-of-hunt) on Wednesdays and weekends, with waterfowl hunting limited to 15 hunting parties (i.e., up to two people) for a total of 30 hunters. Thirty additional hunters are permitted to enter the Wanaket Wildlife Area in the afternoon through a second, upland bird hunt drawing. Big game hunting and the use of rifles or pistols is not permitted on the Area. No fishing is allowed on the Area (CTUIR and BPA 2001b).

McNary Beach Park is a 118-acre day-use park that is located on Lake Wallula at RM 293 on the Columbia River, below a steep bluff. The park is about 1.7 air miles northwest of the site, on Port of Umatilla Road about 3 miles east of Umatilla and 1 mile north of U.S. Highway 730. The park is administered by the USACE, at the McNary Lock and Dam, and features a swimming area, hiking trails, fishing, picnic tables, barbecue grills, drinking water, cold showers, flush toilets, and a pay phone. The park is open from dawn to dusk from Memorial Day to Labor Day weekend (USACE 2003).

Hat Rock State Park is a 735-acre day-use and boating park located on Lake Wallula at RM 298 on the Columbia River, surrounded by river bluffs. The park is located about 2.9 air miles east of the project site, on Hat Rock Road about 8.2 miles east of Umatilla and 0.8 mile north of U.S. Highway 730. This park is administered by the Oregon State Parks Department. It features a two-lane boat launch and handling dock, swimming area, hiking trails, fishing, horseshoe pits, picnic

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tables, fire pits/barbecue grills, ponds with domestic ducks and geese, drinking water, flush and vault toilets, and a pay phone. The park is open year-round during daylight hours. Hat Rock Campground is a private campground located next to the park. The campground has a store, café, full recreational vehicle (RV) hookup sites (including sewer), RV and tent campsites with water and electricity, hot showers, phones, and a dump station (USACE 2003).

The USFWS Cold Springs National Wildlife Refuge is a day-use park that comprises 3,112 acres and is located about 4.6 air miles to the southeast of the project site, 6 miles east/northeast of Hermiston, and 8 miles north/northeast of Stanfield. This refuge was established by President Theodore Roosevelt on February 25, 1909, as a "preserve and breeding ground for native birds." It includes the tree-lined Cold Springs Reservoir with mixed habitats that provide recreational opportunities for fishing, wildlife viewing, photography, hiking, horseback riding, bicycling, non-motorized boating, boats with electric motors, and hunting during the pheasant/quail and waterfowl (geese, ducks, coot, and snipe) seasons. The reservoir serves as the primary water source for irrigation of area croplands and its water levels are regulated by the BOR. As an irrigation reservoir, the water levels change significantly throughout the year, from 1,550 acres of open water in May when the reservoir is full down to 200 acres of open water after the irrigation season in late August. The northern portion of the Refuge (approximately two-thirds) is closed year-round to public access, the northern portion of the reservoir also is closed from October 1 through February 28/29, and the southern part of the Refuge and reservoir (approximately one-third) is open year-round. The Refuge has six designated parking areas and two car-top boat launch sites that are open from March 1 through September 30. The Refuge is only open for daytime recreational use, from 5:00 a.m. until 1.5 hours after sunset (USFWS nd).

Recreational boating, swimming, fishing, and windsurfing occur elsewhere along on the Columbia River (Lake Wallula), about 0.2 mile north of the project site at RM 295 and stretching westward and eastward. However, the project site would be about 80 air miles east of and not seen from the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

The Farm City Pro Rodeo is held annually for 5 days in August, in conjunction with the Umatilla County Fair. This is a nationally recognized professional rodeo, attracting participants and visitors from throughout the U.S.

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## 3.9.2 Environmental Consequences and Mitigation

### 3.9.2.1 Land Use

The power plant site would convert 47 out of 195 acres from grassland-steppe habitat to an industrial facility for the life of the project. Because the power plant site is located on Tribal Trust Land, managed by the CTUIR, it is not zoned. However, the alternative electrical transmission line and pipeline routes cross various types of city and county zoning and comprehensive land use designations. Although the project may require some zoning changes or variances under the applicable city and county regulations, it would not require a zoning change under the state site certificate approval process.

Easements would be obtained from the landowners for the proposed water line, the natural gas pipeline and water discharge line, and the proposed transmission line ROW. The new 17,684-foot (3.35-mile) water pipeline corridor would parallel existing roads from the Port of Umatilla to the Wanapa Energy Center.

The proposed natural gas supply/wastewater discharge pipelines route would be about 52,362 feet (9.92 miles) long. The route would traverse south from the project site until it reached U.S. Highway 730, follow on the north side of U.S. Highway 730 traversing southeast for 0.3 mile, cross U.S. Highway 730 and traverse south until reaching West Progress Road, follow on the north side of West Progress Road and traverse east for 1.4 miles, traverse southward until reaching the Northwest Natural Gas Pipeline ROW, and then follow that ROW southeast until reaching the PGT pipeline. ***This route would cross 3 major active irrigation canals that are managed by Reclamation or local irrigation districts.***

The proposed transmission line ROW would be about 23,450 feet (4.44 miles) long. The route would traverse southwest from the project site, cross U.S. Highway 730, parallel an existing BPA ROW and go west/northwest, and then follow next to another existing BPA ROW north.

**Table 3.9-1** generally summarizes the current types of land use that would be occupied or crossed by each of the project components of the Proposed Action, and thus the types of land use conversions that would occur.

**Table 3.9-1**  
**Types of Land Use Affected/Converted by the Proposed Action**  
**(miles/acres<sup>1</sup>)**

<b>Type of Land Use</b>	<b>Access Road</b>	<b>Water Supply Line<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Natural Gas Supply/Plant Discharge Water Line</b>	<b>Electrical Line</b>
Rural residential			1.9 / <b>11.5</b>	>0.0 / <b>0.4</b>
Irrigated cropland			<b>7.1 / 43</b>	
Irrigated pasture				1.5 / <b>9.0</b>
Grassland-steppe (natural)	0.9 / <b>5.5</b>	1.7 / 10.3	<b>2.1 / 24</b>	2.2 / <b>13.3</b>
Commercial & residential				
Industrial	0.5 / <b>3.0</b>	1.7 / 10.3		0.5 / <b>3.0</b>
Highway			>0.0 / <b>0.4</b>	0.1 / <b>0.6</b>
Railroad			0.1 / <b>0.6</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Acreage based on a 50-foot permanent ROW.

<sup>2</sup> Water supply line ROW would be utilized for potable water and sanitary sewer pipelines.

### 3.9.2.2 Residential Areas

Those most likely to be affected by the project are the residents living near the proposed natural gas supply/wastewater discharge pipeline and the electrical transmission line ROWs. An analysis of these two ROWs showed that 16 residences are located within 200 feet of the pipeline ROW and 8 residences are located within 300 feet of the proposed electrical transmission line. These residents would be most affected by construction noise, disruptions to traffic flow and access, and temporary to long-term visual impacts. To reduce these impacts, facilities would be located a minimum of 200 feet from the nearest residents. Landowners also would be notified at least 5 days before the start of construction on or near their land, unless earlier notification was requested in the easement negotiations. They would be notified of the construction plans and schedules that are to occur on their land. Fences then would be cut before clearing and grading to provide access for equipment. Any fence that required cutting would be braced and secured to prevent the slacking of wires. Temporary gates would be installed across openings to control livestock and to limit public access. At the end of construction, the site would be graded and restored, fences would be replaced,

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and pipeline markers would be installed. When constructing in or near a roadway, one traffic lane would always remain open and private drives would remain accessible.

### **3.9.2.3 Recreation**

No recreational activities would be displaced by the project. Temporary disruptions in access for recreational users might occur during construction, to assure safety while there are open trenches, disturbed lands, staged materials and supplies, and heavy equipment is operating.

Hunters would continue to be allowed to hunt on the Wanaket Wildlife Area, but their recreational experience would be affected by the noise and visual impacts of the facilities during construction and operation of the power plant. As indicated earlier, recreationists on the Columbia River, and possibly the Cold Springs National Wildlife Refuge, would be able to see the four 213-foot-tall exhaust stacks, the turbine building, and possibly other parts of the facility. They would experience a significant change in the aesthetic quality of the area, from a natural grassland-steppe area, characteristic of the bluffs above and along the Columbia River, to an industrial facility. Recreational users of McNary Beach State Park and Recreation Area and Hat Rock State Park should not be affected by the project because of the 150-foot-high bluff that would screen them from the project.

## **3.9.3 *Proposed Action Impact Summary***

### **3.9.3.1 Land Use**

Construction of the project components would occur on Tribal Trust Land and private land varying land uses. The power plant would convert 47 acres of grassland-steppe habitat to an industrial site. The other project components would occur on land used for rural residential, agriculture, grassland- and shrub-steppe, industrial, highway ROW, and railroad ROW. Construction noise and dust would be experienced for less than 1 month at over 16 residences located within 200 feet of the gas supply/water discharge pipeline ROW centerline and also at 8 residences within 300 feet of the electric transmission line ROW centerline.

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### 3.9.3.2 Recreation

Project construction and operation would not displace recreational users in the Wanaket Wildlife Area, McNary Beach State Park and Recreation Area, Hat Rock State Park, Cold Springs National Wildlife Refuge, or Columbia River. However, increased traffic, visual, and noise could affect the recreational experience in the Wanaket Wildlife Area, but not in a manner that would change future use. Recreational users of the McNary Beach State Park and Recreation Area and Hat Rock State Park would not be affected because of visual screening by a bluff.

### 3.9.4 Component Alternatives Impact Summaries

*The primary land use effects from construction and operation of the gas supply and plant discharge water pipelines and transmission lines would be: 1) short-term increases in noise, fugitive dust, and traffic delays associated with pipeline and transmission line construction in the vicinity of residences between the plant site and Stanfield; and 2) the commitment of private and public lands to long-term utility uses. Alternative comparisons of these factors are presented in Tables 3.9-2, 3.9-3, and 3.9-4.*

*None of the alternative gas supply pipelines, electrical transmission lines, or plant discharge water pipeline routes would cross developed recreational areas, recreational trails, or other special management areas with the exception of Cold Springs National Wildlife Refuge. The proposed and alternative plant discharge water pipeline routes (Alternatives 1 through 6) would be located parallel to the Feed Canal where the pipeline crosses the Refuge. The Feed Canal road is not part of the public road system. The underground pipeline would not reduce access, or interfere with current recreational uses of the refuge and reservoir.*

**Table 3.9-2**  
**Natural Gas Supply/Plant Discharge Water Pipeline Route Alternatives Comparison – Land Use**

Resource/Impact Issue	Alternatives							
	No Action	Proposed Action (Figure 2.3-1)	1 (Figure 2.4-1)	2 (Figure 2.4-2)	3 (Figure 2.4-3)	4 (Figure 2.4-4)	5 (Figure 2.4-5)	6 (Figure 2.4-6)
<b>Land Use</b>								
Temporary Disturbance	No impact	Approximately 128 acres would be disturbed during construction.	Approximately 131 acres would be disturbed during construction.	Approximately 133 acres would be disturbed during construction.	Approximately 129 acres would be disturbed during construction.	Approximately 122 acres would be disturbed during construction.	Approximately 97 acres would be disturbed during construction.	Approximately 107 acres would be disturbed during construction.
Long-term land commitment to utility uses	No impact	Approximately 60 acres would be used as the ROW easement.	Approximately 62 acres would be used as the ROW easement.	Approximately 62 acres would be used as the ROW easement.	Approximately 61 acres would be used as the ROW easement.	Approximately 58 acres would be used as the ROW easement.		
Residences/Land Use	No residences would be affected by construction, and existing land uses would continue.	16 residential structures are located within 200 feet of the ROW centerline that would be subject to short-term noise and dust during construction. The majority of these structures are on large land parcels associated with farms. Pipeline ROW is located primarily in irrigated cropland where special efforts would be required to maintain the drainage pattern and soil productivity.	12 residential structures are located within 200 feet of the ROW centerline that would be subject to short-term noise and dust during construction. The majority of these structures are on large land parcels associated with farms. Pipeline ROW is located primarily in irrigated cropland where special efforts would be required to maintain the drainage pattern and soil productivity.	43 residential structures are located within 200 feet of the ROW centerline that would be subject to short-term noise and dust during construction. The majority of these structures are on small rural residential lots, with many small outbuildings and fences on the existing Northwest Pipeline ROW that would have to be cleared and restored. The proposed alignment is located in and adjacent to county roads that could cause traffic delays, and require detours.	12 residential structures are located within 200 feet of the ROW centerline that would be subject to short-term noise and dust during construction. The majority of these structures are on large land parcels associated with farms. Pipeline ROW is located primarily in irrigated cropland where special efforts would be required to maintain the drainage pattern and soil productivity.	14 residential structures are located within 200 feet of the ROW centerline that would be subject to short-term noise and dust during construction. The majority of these structures are on large land parcels associated with farms. Pipeline ROW is located primarily in irrigated cropland where special efforts would be required to maintain the drainage pattern and soil productivity.	16 residential structures are located within 200 feet of the ROW centerline that would be subject to short-term noise and dust during construction. The majority of these structures are on large land parcels associated with farms. Pipeline ROW is located primarily in irrigated cropland where special efforts would be required to maintain the drainage pattern and soil productivity.	12 residential structures are located within 200 feet of the ROW centerline that would be subject to short-term noise and dust during construction. The majority of these structures are on large land parcels associated with farms. Pipeline ROW is located primarily in irrigated cropland where special efforts would be required to maintain the drainage pattern and soil productivity.

**Table 3.9-3**  
**Electric Transmission Line Alternatives Comparison – Land Use**

Resource/Impact Issue	Alternatives				
	No Action	Proposed Action (Figure 2.3-1)	1 (Figure 2.4-7)	2 (Figure 2.4-8)	3 (Figure 2.4-10)
<b>Land Use</b>					
Temporary Disturbance	No impact	Approximately 101 acres would be disturbed during construction.	Approximately 116 acres would be disturbed during construction.	Approximately 92 acres would be disturbed during construction.	Approximately 92 acres would be disturbed during construction.

**Table 3.9-4**  
**Plant Discharge Location Alternatives Comparison – Land Use**

Resource/Impact Issue	No Action	Proposed Action (Figure 2.3-1)	Alternative 1 (Figure 2.4-11)
	Land Use: Residences/ Agricultural productivity/ Recreation	No residences would be affected by construction, and existing land uses would continue.	One residential structure is located within 200 feet of the ROW centerline that would be subject to short-term noise and dust during plant discharge water pipeline construction between the natural gas supply pipeline ROW and Cold Springs Reservoir. The remainder of the surface disturbance for the plant discharge water pipeline is included in the ROW for the gas supply pipeline, which is the same for both alternatives. No change in access to recreational users of Cold Springs Reservoir would occur because the Feed Canal service road is not part of the public road access system.