CHAPTER 9
Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

NEPA Section 102(2)(c)(v) and 40 CFR 1502.16 requires that an EIS include a discussion of the irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources which may occur should the project be implemented. Similarly, the CEQA Guidelines require a discussion of the significant irreversible environmental changes which would be involved in the project should it be implemented. Significant irreversible environmental changes under CEQA are identified as potentially significant and unavoidable impacts in **Chapter 3** of this EIR/EIS.

Irreversible commitments of resources are those which cause either direct or indirect use of natural resources such that the resources cannot be restored or returned to their original condition. For example, the extirpation of a species from an area is an irreversible commitment. Construction activities of the proposed facilities would result in an irretrievable and irreversible commitment of natural resources though direct consumption of fossil fuels and use of materials. The proposed project activities would require connections to existing power sources, which would increase the short-term use of electricity and refined petroleum products during the operation of construction equipment (primarily gas, diesel, and motor oil). However, the energy consumption for construction would not result in long-term depletion of non-renewable energy resources and would not permanently increase reliance on energy resources that are not renewable. Construction activities would not reduce or interrupt existing electrical or natural gas services such that existing supplies would be constrained.

Depending upon the project components, the Action Alternatives (Basic System, Partially Connected System, and Fully Connected System) would result in progressively greater irreversible and irretrievable commitment of energy and material resources during project construction, operation, and maintenance, in the following forms:

- Energy expended in the form of electricity, gasoline, diesel fuel, and oil for equipment and transportation vehicles, and during operation of distribution facilities.
- Construction materials; and
- Labor;

The use of the nonrenewable resources is expected to account for a minimal portion of the region's resources and would not affect the availability of these resources for other needs within the region. Additional information on is available in **Sections 3.11, Public Services and Utilities; 3.6, Land Use**; and **3.5, Biological Resources**.