

Chapter 19: Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

This chapter discusses natural and man-made resources that would be expended during construction or operation of the Proposed Project and thereby would become unavailable for future use. Typically, for a linear transportation project such as the Proposed Project, irreversibly and irretrievably committed resources include land, energy, construction materials, and human effort (i.e., time and labor). Some of these resources generally are irreversible and irretrievable for the life of the project, such as land and building materials (even if they may eventually become available again). Other resources are irretrievable beyond the project lifespan, such as energy and human effort.

Natural and man-made resources would be expended in the construction and operation of the Proposed Project. These natural resources include the use of land and energy. Man-made resources include the effort required to develop, construct, and operate the Proposed Project; building materials; financial funding; and motor vehicle use. These resources are considered irretrievably committed because it is highly unlikely that they would be used for some other purpose.

The use of land is the most basic of irretrievably committed resources, as the development of the Proposed Project requires the commitment of land for new physical elements such as parking lots. However, the Proposed Project is using land already used for urban development and transportation purposes so would not be further committing land resources.

The Proposed Project would result in irreversible clearing and grading of vegetation within the LIRR ROW as well as modification to topography along the ROW and at grade crossings. The loss of vegetation is considered an irreversible commitment of resources as it is unlikely that replacement vegetation would be included in the ROW due to safety concerns. Soil or rock used to modify the grade of the ROW or grade crossings would be irretrievably committed for the lifetime of the Proposed Project.

The actual building materials used in the construction of the Proposed Project (wood, steel, concrete, glass, etc.) and energy, in the form of gas and electricity, consumed during the construction and operation of the Proposed Project would also be irretrievably committed to the Proposed Project.

None of these irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources is considered significant. *