

Significant Irreversible Changes

8.1 Introduction

Pursuant to Section 15126.2(c) of the State CEQA Guidelines, an EIR must consider any significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the 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 a 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. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

8.2 Analysis of Irreversible Changes

Implementation of the proposed Project would require the use of nonrenewable resources, such as fossil fuels, and nonrenewable construction materials.

The proposed Project would redevelop the site with the same use, modernizing the facilities on the site, allowing for larger vessels, and allowing for an increased numbers of vessels to be serviced at the boat shop. Resources that are committed irreversibly and irretrievably are those that would be used by a project on a long-term or permanent basis. Resources committed to this proposed Project include the use of fossil fuels, and nonrenewable construction materials such as rock, concrete, gravel, and soils.

Fossil fuels and energy would be consumed during construction and operation activities. Fossil fuels in the form of diesel oil and gasoline would be used for construction equipment and vehicles. During operations, diesel oil and gasoline would be used by vessels coming in to the boat shop to be serviced, by on-site equipment used to service the vessels, and by on-road vehicles. Electrical energy and natural gas would be consumed during construction and operation. Use of these energy resources would be irretrievable and irreversible.

1 Nonrecoverable materials and energy would be used during construction and operation
2 activities, but the amounts needed would be accommodated by existing supplies.
3 Although the increase in the amount of materials and energy used would be limited, they
4 would nevertheless be unavailable for other uses.

5 The proposed Project would result in a permanent loss of approximately 0.9 acres of
6 marine habitat. This represents aquatic habitat (i.e., seafloor and water column) that
7 would be filled with the creation of the CDFs and used as part of the proposed Project.
8 Results from sediment testing in the proposed Project area demonstrated that most of the
9 seafloor sediments would not be suitable for unconfined aquatic disposal; therefore,
10 sediments are being beneficially reused, and would be sequestered from the marine
11 environment. Although, while there is an irreversible loss of approximately 0.9 acres of
12 seafloor and water column habitat, the water quality benefits of the proposed Project
13 would improve habitat conditions within Fish Harbor.

14 Therefore, the minimal irreversible commitments of resources would be justified by the
15 improvements to water quality and clean up of legacy contaminants on the land and in
16 Fish Harbor, as well as economic growth resulting from the increased efficiency of the
17 boat repair operation.

18 Other than that discussed above, the only other permanent, adverse change would be
19 from the demolition of potentially significant cultural resources.