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SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES

9.1 Introduction

Pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15126.2(c), an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must consider any significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by a proposed project should it be implemented. Section 15126.2(c) reads as follows:

> *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 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.*

9.2 Analysis of Irreversible Changes

Resources that are committed irreversibly and irretrievably are those that would be used by a project on a long-term or permanent basis. The proposed Project would develop portions of Pier 400 that are currently undeveloped for use as a crude oil marine terminal and one tank farm site. In addition, the Project would develop two sites on Terminal Island for tank farms, and would install pipelines to transfer crude oil from Pier 400 facilities to Terminal Island, and ultimately to the Ultramar/Valero Refinery and other Plains pipeline systems nearby.

The proposed Project would require the use of nonrenewable resources, such as metal alloys, and aggregate resources, for the physical construction components of the Project consisting of a marine terminal, tank farms, and connecting pipelines. However, the proposed Project does not represent uncommon construction that uses an extraordinary amount of raw materials.

Fossil fuels and energy would be consumed during construction and operation activities. Fossil fuels in the forms of diesel oil and gasoline would be used for construction equipment and vehicles. During operations, diesel oil and gasoline would be used by vehicles and commercial shipping vessels. Electrical energy and natural gas would be consumed during construction and operation. Usage of these energy resources would be irretrievable and irreversible.

Material resources committed to the proposed Project other than fossil fuels include: capital, labor, and construction materials such as rock, steel, concrete, and timber. Construction materials would be irretrievably committed for the life of the Project.

Non-recoverable materials and energy would be used during Project construction and operational activities, but the amounts needed would be easily accommodated by existing supplies. Although the increase in the amount of materials and energy used would be insignificant, they would nevertheless be unavailable for other uses.

CEQA Section 15126.2(c) requires that an EIR evaluate the irretrievable commitments of resources to assure that current consumption is justified. The irretrievable commitment of resources required by the proposed Project is justified by the purpose and need of the Project, which is to construct and operate a crude oil terminal that maximizes the use of existing deep-draft waterways and available shoreline; construct sufficient berthing and infrastructure capacity to accommodate a portion of the foreseeable crude oil volumes expected to enter the Port of Los Angeles, including the efficient offloading of very large crude carriers (VLCCs); and provide the terminal accessory buildings and structures to support the anticipated crude oil handling requirements. In addition, the proposed Project would provide an economic benefit to the Los Angeles basin and would provide additional needed crude oil receiving capacity to the region.