

### **3.17 Relationship Between Short-term Uses of the Human Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-term Productivity**

As described in Chapter 3.0, Introduction, short-term is defined as the 24-year operational life of the project and the 10-year reclamation/closure period; long-term is defined as the future following reclamation (i.e., beyond 34 years). This section identifies the tradeoffs between the short-term impacts to environmental resources during operation and reclamation versus the long-term impacts to resource productivity that would extend beyond the end of reclamation.

The short-term use of resources during the construction, operation, and reclamation of the proposed project would result in beneficial impacts in the form of additional local employment and generation of revenue, and recovery of copper oxide ores from material currently mined as waste rock.

The proposed project would result in various short-term impacts, such as the temporary loss of soil and vegetation productivity and the associated loss of wildlife habitat, possible wildlife avoidance and displacement, a temporary reduction in the livestock grazing area and an associated loss of AUMs, temporary increases in fugitive dust, a temporary reduction in dispersed recreation opportunities, and potential social and economic impacts to the local infrastructure. These impacts are expected to end upon completion of reclamation and would be minimized through implementation of applicant-committed environmental protection measures.

The short-term visual impacts would last a few years beyond mine closure and gradually would be reduced as vegetation becomes more established. The scale and extent of the facilities would continue to alter the local landscape and views in the long-term.

Impacts to long-term productivity (i.e., following project reclamation) primarily would depend on the effectiveness of the proposed reclamation of the disturbance areas. Successful reclamation would provide for post-mining wildlife and livestock grazing by establishing self-sustaining plant communities. Revegetation also is expected to stabilize disturbed surfaces and control erosion.

There would be a long-term loss in soil and vegetation productivity and associated terrestrial wildlife habitat and livestock forage, an associated loss of AUMs, and potential long-term impacts to dispersed recreation on public lands until successful reclamation is achieved.