

7.0 Irreversible/irretrievable Commitment of Resources

An irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources refers to impacts on or losses to resources that cannot be recovered or reversed. Examples include permanent conversion of wetlands and playas, or loss of cultural resources, soils, wildlife, agricultural, and socioeconomic conditions. The losses are permanent. Irreversible is a term that describes the loss of future options. It applies primarily to the effects of use of nonrenewable resources, such as minerals or cultural resources, or to those factors, such as soil productivity, that are renewable only over long periods of time. Irretrievable is a term that applies to the loss of production, harvest, or use of natural resources. For example, some or all of the timber production from an area is lost irretrievably while an area is serving as a winter sports site. The production lost is irretrievable, but the action is not irreversible. If the use changes, it is possible to resume timber production. The monetary investment by Overland Pass is not considered to be an irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources. If this project was not built, the investment that would have otherwise been spent on these projects could be spent elsewhere.

The proposed project would require an irretrievable commitment of natural resources from direct consumption of fossil fuels and construction materials. In addition, the purpose of the project is to irreversibly and irretrievably use natural gas resources. Additional resource commitments are shown on **Table 7-1**.

Table 7-1 Summary of Irreversible, Irretrievable Commitment of Resources by the Proposed Action

Resource	Irreversible Impacts	Irretrievable Impacts	Explanation
Water Quality and Quantity	No	No	Water obtained from water sources for hydrostatic testing would be tested and discharged to the source water body or to stable upland areas.
Soils and Vegetation	No	Yes	Soil lost to increased erosion and vegetation production lost to conversion of land uses would be irretrievable losses. There would be an irreversible commitment of resources on land associated with the ROW and aboveground facilities. No irreversible or irretrievable special status plant species impacts are anticipated.
Agricultural	No	Yes	Irretrievable impacts could include the loss of agricultural crop production for the season during construction in impacted areas. No irreversible impacts are expected.
Wildlife (terrestrial and aquatic)	Yes	Yes	Removal or disturbance of habitat could create irreversible and irretrievable impacts. Aquatic habitat could be irreversibly affected at the Hams and Blacks Fork (RP 18.9) crossings and the Green River crossing.
Cultural Resources	Yes	Yes	Removal or disturbance of previously unidentified cultural resources would result in irretrievable and irreversible loss of data.
Land Use	Yes	No	Public access patterns would be maintained. Land use required for the operation of the pipeline would be an irreversible impact.
Social and Economic	No	Yes	There would be increased use of local contractors during construction of the pipeline. Non-local workforce would impact infrastructure resources. This represents irretrievable loss of workers and infrastructure during the construction phase.
Air Quality	No	No	Project emissions would not exceed federal or state air quality standards. Air quality would return to existing conditions after completion of the project.
Transportation	No	No	Short-term obstruction or temporary disruption to local roads would occur during construction along new pipeline segments. There would be no long-term impacts to transportation.