

4.8 Irreversible or Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

The commitment of a resource is irreversible when the primary and secondary impacts of an alternative would limit future options for that resource. An irretrievable commitment is the use or consumption of resources neither renewable nor recoverable for use by future generations. The National Environmental Policy Act requires the identification of irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources.

The DOE Proposed Action and Preferred Alternative does not involve the construction of new facilities, operational processes, or waste generation that typically would require a commitment of resources. The implementation of either shutdown alternative would result in the loss of L-Lake, exposure of contaminated sediments, and remobilization of these sediments. Although the loss of L-Lake is technically reversible under the Proposed Action to Shut Down and Maintain the River Water System, the commitment of the natural resources asso-

ciated with L-Lake would be unavoidable. Table 4-74 details these commitments of various resources.

DOE anticipates no long-term resource commitments (electricity consumption, materials, etc.). However, the No-Action Alternative would consume small amounts of energy. Operating the River Water System with a 5,000-gallon-per-minute (0.32-cubic-meter-per-second) pump requires approximately 3,600 megawatt hours of electricity annually. The shutdown alternatives would consume a small amount of energy to perform the layup activities. The Preferred Alternative would consume a fraction of the amount required under No Action to perform the surveillance and maintenance activities necessary to ensure restart capability. For the range of layup and restart options, the annual energy consumption would range from 680 to 2,500 megawatt hours.