CHAPTER 4

Short-Term Use and Long-Term Productivity/Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources
Chapter 4. Short-Term Use and Long-Term Productivity/
Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

This chapter addresses two issues that broaden the assessment and disclosure of environmental impacts and benefits of proposed projects. The issues are the trade-offs between short-term construction impacts of the Build Alternative versus the long-term economic productivity of the proposed project, and the identification of any irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources for the proposed project.

4.1 SHORT-TERM USE AND LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

NEPA requires an assessment of how short-term impacts to resources from construction of the Build Alternative would compare to or affect the maintenance and enhancement of long-term economic productivity in the project area. Following are descriptions of the five resource areas for which the Build Alternative could result in short-term impacts during construction but would improve long-term economic productivity in the project area. While other resource areas may create short-term impacts, there is no change in long-term productivity.

4.1.1 Transportation

Motorists could expect short-term impacts of travel delays due to construction activities and congestion related to hauling by heavy equipment.

However, completion of the Build Alternative would make the area’s transportation system economically more productive and more efficient by providing the following benefits:

- The Build Alternative and specifically the Bypass would accommodate the increased volume of traffic that is projected due to anticipated growth in the project area.
- Through traffic would be diverted to the Bypass, reducing traffic and congestion on Oregon 99W.
Congestion in downtown Newberg and Dundee would be reduced, and these areas would become safer for pedestrians and bicycles.

Access to most property would be easier and safer, with reduced wait times at intersections, less side street cut-through traffic, and shorter lines at traffic signals.

4.1.2 Land Use

Construction of the Build Alternative would temporarily impact businesses and residents due to congestion and travel delays, and could result in the temporary loss of agricultural land for construction staging. However, the Bypass is included in state plans, local comprehensive plans, and transportation system plans (TSPs) that identify transportation facilities needed to serve planned land use development. On a long-term basis, the proposed project helps Newberg, Dundee, and Dayton to meet the transportation needs and supports the economic development, land use, and transportation goals stated in their comprehensive plans and TSPs.

4.1.3 Socioeconomics

Short-term socioeconomic impacts during construction of the Build Alternative would include the following:

- Temporary loss of income and employment in some local businesses due to traffic congestion; however, there would be increased income in some businesses and creation of jobs during the construction of the Bypass.
- Limited or more difficult access to some businesses during construction.
- Temporary loss of neighborhood character and livability.
- Increased response times for emergency service providers in some project areas.

However, the proposed project would support and improve the long-term economic productivity of the project area and region. Building the Bypass, which is identified in local comprehensive plans and TSPs, would enhance the economic development of the region by reducing congestion and travel times to area businesses, and lowering trucking costs. With less congestion on Oregon 99W, there would be reduced travel times for local and regional freight traffic. With reduced congestion and more efficient travel times, the proposed project would lead to a long-term improvement in the project area’s local economy.

4.1.4 Visual Resources

Construction of the Build Alternative would create short-term visual impacts. Construction equipment, staging areas, and construction activities would obstruct views and create an unattractive landscape. However, the Build Alternative’s proposed visual resource mitigation and enhancements would give long-term benefits to the communities in the project area. Proposed planting of trees, shrubs, and grasses, which would have a positive impact on visual character, increase the overall attractiveness of the project area and could be beneficial when attracting new businesses to the area.

4.1.5 Energy

The short-term use of energy resources for construction of the Build Alternative and the long-term use for vehicle operations should be weighed against the long-term impact on energy supplies. The proposed project would use some non-renewable energy resources (e.g., petroleum). Therefore, the short-term use of energy resources for construction and
the long-term use for vehicle operations are consistent with the long-term development and productivity of the region.

4.2 IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

The construction of a large project such as the Bypass requires the commitment of natural, human, and economic resources. The following section discusses the resources that would be needed for construction of the Build Alternative that are irreversible and/or irretrievable.

4.2.1 Land Use

The Build Alternative would require about 446 to 461 acres of land to be purchased for right-of-way to construct the proposed project. This land is considered an irreversible commitment and would not be available for other land uses since the land would be used for transportation purposes for the foreseeable future.

4.2.2 Energy

The construction of the proposed project would require natural resources such as fossil fuels (i.e., petroleum) and construction materials such as concrete, asphalt, and steel. These would require energy to manufacture. Energy used during construction and in the manufacture of construction materials is irretrievable. However, fossil fuels are not in short supply at this time, and the use of these resources would not have an adverse effect on their continued availability.

The commitment of energy resources to the proposed project is offset by the benefits derived from improving traffic flow through the greater Newberg, Dundee, and Dayton areas. These benefits include improved accessibility, savings in travel time, and improved safety for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians, as well as traffic improvements to support planned land development.