

CHAPTER VI

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

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Lining the All-American Canal is expected to cause at least minor irreversible and irretrievable commitments of environmental resources, depending on which alternative is constructed. An irreversible commitment is considered the permanent reduction or loss of a resource.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural resources would be adversely affected to different degrees by the alternatives. The Parallel Canal Alternative would avoid sensitive cultural areas of the Pilot Knob area. However, in the linear strip of land that the new canal would occupy, archeological resources presently known to exist, found during preconstruction surveys, or found during construction, would be professionally recovered, documented, and preserved as appropriate.

The in-place lining alternatives would not irreversibly impact these resources. The disturbance activities would have primary impact on the berms. Major sources of impacts would result from other land disturbance associated with construction, such as temporary housing near construction activities. Construction operations would be arranged so as to avoid areas of known cultural sensitivity. Any

undisturbed land not already known to be sensitive would be surveyed in detail for archeological importance, and the sensitive locations would be avoided.

LAND OWNERSHIP AND USE

Land use would be affected differently by alternatives. The Parallel Canal Alternative would irretrievably occupy approximately 530 acres of land presently in a natural or previously disturbed condition.

The in-place lining alternatives would cause a permanent commitment of additional land for placement of spoil from canal trimming, estimated at 50 acres for the Drop 3 Alternative and 60 acres for the Drop 4 Alternative. This land would be previously disturbed land along the existing canal banks.

SAND AND GRAVEL

Gravel for manufacture of concrete is not plentiful in the project area. Gravel used for the project would reduce the local supply available for future projects that may be considered for the project area. The amount would be approximately 185,000 cubic yards.

HYDROELECTRIC POWER

If the conserved water is not used by the Imperial Irrigation District (IID), Coachella Valley Water District, or Palo Verde Irrigation District, the reduction in flow of the Colorado River would reduce the amount of hydroelectric power generated at Parker and Hoover Dams by approximately

5 million kilowatthours per year. If the conserved water is not used by IID, the reduction in flow of the All-American Canal would reduce the amount of hydroelectric power generated there by approximately 220,000 kilowatthours per year. If the Well Field Alternative were implemented, 10.7 million kilowatthours per year would be consumed.