

Chapter 5

Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes Which Would be Involved in the Proposed Project Should it be Implemented

5.1 Introduction

In accordance with Section 15126.2 (c), an EIR must analyze the extent to which the proposed project's primary and secondary effects will commit nonrenewable resources to uses that future generations will probably be unable to reverse. Such irreversible commitments of resources must be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified. CEQA uses the example of constructing a road that provides public access to an area which has been historically inaccessible. Other examples might be the conversion of prime ag-land to non-agricultural uses or destruction of some natural habitat. This section of CEQA states that irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

5.2 Consumption of Natural Resources

Implementation of the CSU Stanislaus Physical Master Plan Update would result in the short-term commitment of non-renewable and/or slowly renewable energy resources, human resources, and natural resources such as lumber and other forest products, sand and gravel, asphalt, steel, copper, lead, other metals, and water due to construction activities.

As the CSU Stanislaus Physical Master Plan Update is implemented, residential, educational and non-educational development would require further commitment of energy resources in the form of natural gas and electricity generated by coal, hydroelectrical power and nuclear energy. Increased motor vehicular travel in the Project Area would be accompanied by increased consumption of petroleum products. An increased commitment of social services and public maintenance services, e.g., waste disposal and treatment, would also be required.

Consumption of these resources is inevitable as a result of population growth and the societies need to educate its population at the University level. The use of modern construction techniques, coupled with normal market forces, are expected to minimize the adverse impacts of resource consumption.

The new buildings at the campus provided pursuant to the Master Plan can be expected to have a life span of approximately 50 to 70 years. Resources consumed during buildout of the Master Plan, (such as fuel, building materials, water, etc.) will be used in quantities proportional to similar development in Central California. While title 24 (Part 6 of the California Building Standards Code) energy conservation standards are mandatory and will be applied to the construction and operation of all campus facilities, the University is

committed to exceeding these standards by at least 15%. Students, visitors, faculty, and employees will consume motor fuel and water; however, these activities are part of normal operations and are not considered a wasteful use of resources. The nonrenewable resources consumed for this project are comparable to the use of resources for other major universities and colleges throughout the region and the country.

5.3 Secondary Impacts

There are no secondary resource impacts expected to result from growth and development within the CSU Stanislaus campus. Plans or policies will not result in the extension of infrastructure (sewer, water or roads) into areas not previously committed to campus development.