
5.0 IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

The proposed Project will require the irreversible and irretrievable commitment of certain human, material, environmental, and financial resources as described below. The commitment of these resources will be offset by the benefits that will result from implementation of the Project.

Human and financial resources have already been expended by the Applicant, the State of New York (i.e., various state agencies), Chautauqua County, and the towns of Arkwright and Pomfret for the planning and review of the Project. The expenditure of between \$4 and \$8 million dollars and human resources of over 25 person years (not including the equipment manufacture) will continue to be required throughout the permitting and construction phases of the Project (e.g., for environmental reviews and permitting, site plan approval, and building and construction inspections). The Applicant has entered into an escrow agreement with the Town of Arkwright to cover the third-party costs incurred by the town in its capacity as Lead Agency in the SEQRA review of the Project. Therefore, limited local investment of governmental economic resources will be required to complete the review of the Project, and these resources would be regained exponentially in economic benefits to local government should the proposed Project be approved and implemented. Financial and human resources will also be committed to the operation of the Project in the amount of \$3 to \$5 million and 10 to 15 directly employed local personnel, respectively.

The Project also represents a commitment of land for the life of the Project. Specifically, approximately 5,950 acres of land will be under agreement for development of the Project; however, a small percentage of that number will be committed for the actual Project footprint. While the majority of the land under agreement can continue with existing land uses once the Project is operational, the actual locations of the wind turbine towers, access roads, permanent met towers, staging areas, interconnection electrical lines, the substation, the O&M facility, and the POI switchyard would not be available for alternative purposes for the life of the Project. However, because the turbines/towers will be removed at the end of their useful life, and the land may be reclaimed for alternative uses at some future date in accordance with the decommissioning plan described in Section 1.8, the commitment of this land to the Project would be neither irreversible nor irretrievable. It is possible that, after the end of their useful life (approximately 20 years or more), the wind turbines can be replaced with newer, more powerful and even more efficient wind turbines. This is a common occurrence in places like California where first-generation turbines have been replaced with modern multi-megawatt wind turbines. Such activities fall outside the scope of this review and would prolong the use of land for a finite period of time only.

During the life of the Project, surface drainage patterns may be altered due to the addition of impervious surfaces associated with the Project. The Applicant will attempt to restore the ground surface to pre-existing grade to the best of its ability through the Project post-

construction restoration plan. Temporary loss of habitat could result in a relocation of plants and animals that could be different than their pre-existing location and concentration. Any impacts to wildlife will be minimized to the fullest extent and will be monitored and mitigated as appropriate based on post-construction monitoring and agency requirements.

Various types of construction materials and building supplies will be committed to the Project. The use of these materials, such as gravel, concrete, steel, etc., represents a long-term commitment of these resources, which would not be available for other projects. Some of these materials may be reusable and recycled after Project decommissioning at the end of the Project's useful life. However, many of the concrete foundations will not be recycled, but will be left in place below 3 feet. Experience with other, older wind power projects demonstrates that older wind turbines are used for their scrap value in steel, copper, and aluminum, etc. when the projects are re-fitted with newer wind turbines or when turbines are decommissioned.

Energy resources also would be irretrievably committed to the Project, during both the construction and operation of the Project. Fuel, lubricants, and electricity will be required during site preparation and turbine construction activities for the operation of various types of construction equipment and vehicles, and for the transportation of workers and materials to the Project Site associated with operation and maintenance activities. However, the primary energy source necessary to operate the facility is free and the supply is endless—the wind. Additionally, the conventional energy resources used to construct and operate the Project would be minor compared to the clean, renewable energy generated by the Project and made available to the people of New York State.