

5.0 IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

The proposed Project will result in the irreversible and irretrievable commitment of certain resources as described below. However, on the whole, the commitment of these resources will be justified by the many benefits that would result from implementation of the Project. Human and financial resources continue to be expended by SLW, the State of New York (i.e., various state agencies), Jefferson County, and the Towns of Cape Vincent and Lyme for the planning and review of the Project. This expenditure of human resources and money will continue to be required throughout the permitting and construction phases of the Project. The Applicant has entered into an agreement with the Town of Cape Vincent to compensate them for third-party costs incurred by the Town in its role as Lead Agency in the SEQRA review of the Project. Consequently, limited investment of local governmental economic resources will be required to complete review of the Project. Also any expended local resources will be regained exponentially in economic benefits to local government should the proposed Project be approved and implemented.

The Project will also require a commitment of land for the life of the Project. Specifically, a total of 59.5 acres developed for wind turbine tower locations, access roads, transmission lines and substations will not be available for alternative purposes for the life of the Project. However, because the turbines/towers can be removed, the land used for the Project can be reclaimed for alternative use at some future date. Therefore, the commitment of this land to the Project is neither irreversible nor irretrievable. It is possible that at the end of the expected life of the Project, approximately 20 years, the wind turbines can be repowered with newer, more powerful and efficient wind turbines. Repowering would fall outside the scope of this review and would in any case only extend the use of land for a finite period of time.

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., will represent a long-term commitment of these resources, which would not be available for other projects. Energy resources will be irretrievably committed to the construction and operation of the Project. Fuel and electricity will be required during the manufacture and transportation of materials and components, during site preparation and turbine installation activities, and for the transportation of workers and materials to the Project site. Despite this, the energy resources expended to construct and operate the Project will be offset and represent a minuscule fraction of the clean, renewable energy generated by the Project.

During the life of the Project, surface drainage patterns may be altered because of the added impervious surfaces associated with the Project. The Applicant will minimize such alterations

by implementing BMPs as described in Section 3.1.3.1 and an environmental monitoring and compliance plan, and will attempt to restore the ground surface to pre-existing grade to the best of their ability through the implementation of Project restoration plan. As most of the Project site is agriculture, implementation agricultural protection measures in accordance with New York State Agriculture and Market guidelines as described in Section 3.5.3.2 will also avoid or minimize this alteration. Temporary loss of habitat can result in a redistribution of plants and animals that can be different than their pre-existing location and concentration. Wildlife takes or kills will be minimized by appropriate location of Project facilities, but some are still expected and will be offset by proposed Project mitigation.