

8. SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Construction and operation of the Proposed Project or any of the build alternatives would involve a major direct and indirect commitment of nonrenewable energy resources in the form of petroleum products and natural gas. As indicated in Section 3.15, Energy, between 83 - 110 billion Btu's of energy would be required each year for the operation of Warm Springs Extension, depending on the alternative selected. Approximately 70 - 75 percent of this need would be filled through the consumption of nonrenewable energy resources. Construction of the Proposed Project or any of the build alternatives would require the commitment of between 3,300 and 8,300 billion Btu's of energy, almost all of which would come from nonrenewable petroleum resources.

The BART structures proposed for construction would result in a long term commitment of land resources to the BART system. For much of its length, the Proposed Project would follow an existing rail corridor; however, land that could be reserved for other potential uses would be committed to BART at station sites and in Central Park. The displacement of residents and businesses for the construction of the project would also be an irreversible consequence of the project.

The Proposed Project and Design Options 2A and 3 in Central Park would irreversibly change the visual and acoustic environment of an area that is dedicated to public park and open space. The construction of the project would continue the fragmentation of oak woodland, ruderal-grassland and seasonal wetland habitats resulting in adverse impacts to biological resources, which cannot be fully mitigated.

The crossings of the Hayward Fault by the Proposed Project and alternatives would increase the risks of potential harm to people from ground rupture during a major earthquake.

The commitment of these resources to the project would respond to the identified needs for improved transit service in southern Alameda County and would provide increased transportation capacity to service planned growth in areawide employment and population (see Section I, 1, Purpose). Deferral of the project would lead to increased congestion on the existing freeway network, and increased emissions of automobile pollutants.