

A. IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)'s implementing procedures under Title 40, Part 1502 of the CFR, this Environmental Assessment (EA) includes an analysis of the relationship between short-term uses of the environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity, and of any irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources that would occur if the Proposed Project is constructed. An irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources results in the permanent loss for future or alternate use of a resource that cannot be replaced or recovered.

Construction of the Proposed Project would require the irreversible and irretrievable commitment of building materials, including construction materials such as concrete, steel, and aggregate. The Proposed Project would also consume energy in the form of fossil fuels and electricity during the construction and operation of the facility. These materials are available and their use for the Proposed Project would not have adverse impacts on their continued availability for other purposes. In addition to materials, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) would require funding and human labor to design, build, and operate the Proposed Project.

As described in previous chapters, MDOT and Amtrak have worked to avoid or minimize impacts to resources. MDOT and Amtrak endeavor to minimize the use of irretrievable resources and to conserve and reuse resources whenever possible.

B. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHORT-TERM USES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Short-term effects on the environment typically result from construction impacts. Long-term effects relate to the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity, including consistency of a project with local and regional economic, social, planning, and sustainability objectives. This section compares the short-term uses of the environment with the long-term productivity of the Proposed Project.

SHORT-TERM USES

Construction of the Proposed Project would have greater short-term effects on the environment than the No Action Alternative; however, these effects would be temporary and non-significant, as discussed in greater detail in Chapter 17, "Construction Effects." MDOT and Amtrak will endeavor to reduce any construction-related environmental impacts through the implementation of best management practices.

Susquehanna River Rail Bridge Project

LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

The Proposed Project would result in the long-term improvement of connectivity for the intercity rail, commuter rail, and freight rail systems that cross the Susquehanna River along the Northeast Corridor (NEC).

SHORT-TERM USES VERSUS LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Based on the information presented above, the localized short-term impacts that would result from construction of the Proposed Project would be temporary, and would facilitate the overall enhancement of rail connectivity along the NEC. *