

## **3.26 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources**

All of the build alternatives and, to a lesser degree, the planned improvements associated with the No Build Alternative, would require a commitment of natural, physical, human, and fiscal resources for implementation. This section discusses, in general terms, the irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources of the build alternatives.

### **3.26.1 Environmental Consequences**

#### **3.26.1.1 No Build Alternative**

##### **Direct and Indirect Impacts**

The land devoted to the existing highway would remain dedicated to use for transportation. A limited amount of undeveloped land would be committed to new highway development for the purpose of the curve realignment at Milepost 45 and potentially for the construction of the three new bridges. The impacts associated with the construction of these activities are addressed in Section 3.27, Cumulative Impacts.

#### **3.26.1.2 Issues Applicable to the Build Alternatives**

##### **Direct and Indirect Impacts**

The land for the construction of the highway build alternatives would be a conversion from existing land uses to a dedicated transportation facility. Undeveloped lands used for the highway would no longer be available for other uses. Each of the build alternatives require the use of undeveloped, pristine land that would be irreversibly modified. However, should a greater need arise for use of the land and should the highway system no longer be needed, the land could be converted back to other uses; however, that is not anticipated to be likely. Land use impacts are discussed in greater detail in Section 3.2, Land Use Plans and Policies. The irretrievable uses of other resources (e.g., the conversion of wetlands or use of energy) are discussed in their respective sections.

Building the alternatives would commit construction materials that could have been used for other projects to the building of the Sterling Highway alternatives. Construction of the alternatives would cause financial resources that could have been used elsewhere to be irreversibly committed to this project. Table 3.26-1 identifies the major construction materials and financial resources that it would take to construct the various project alternatives based on the preliminary engineering completed for the project. In general, the alternatives are anticipated to use similar quantities of materials. These types of construction materials are usually readily available and not likely to become scarce.

**Table 3.26-1. Irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources, major construction elements**

|  | <b>Build Alternative</b> |                |                     |                             |
|--|--------------------------|----------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
|  | <b>Cooper Creek</b>      | <b>G South</b> | <b>Juneau Creek</b> | <b>Juneau Creek Variant</b> |
| Borrow/Aggregate (yds <sup>3</sup> )       | 682,000                  | 780,800        | 671,000             | 1,053,000                   |
| Riprap (yds <sup>3</sup> )                 | 14,000                   | 14,000         | 11,000              | 11,000                      |
| Asphalt/Concrete (tons)                    | 57,000                   | 57,800         | 55,900              | 54,270                      |
| Guardrail – steel (linear feet)            | 22,500                   | 30,000         | 34,000              | 34,000                      |
| Financial resources <sup>a</sup> (million) | \$291                    | \$304          | \$250               | \$257                       |

<sup>a</sup> This cost represents the total construction cost. See Section 3.5, Economic Environment, for other costs associated with the build alternatives.

The commitment of these resources is based on the concept that residents in the project area, Borough, and State would benefit by the improved quality of the transportation system. These benefits would consist of a more efficient and safe transportation system with improved accessibility for local traffic and other traffic bound for recreation destinations in the area.