

3.12 ENERGY

A. Setting

California's major sources of energy are petroleum (i.e., gasoline and oil), electricity, and natural gas. The majority of the county's electricity is provided by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) (Sonoma County 2006), which draws on a variety of energy sources to feed its regional power grids. The Geysers Geothermal Power Plants in Sonoma and Lake Counties generate geothermal energy that also supports the PG&E power supply. Sonoma County has no petroleum or natural gas production facilities.

B. Regulatory Framework

The goals, objectives, and policies of the Sonoma County General Plan and other County energy policies are not applicable to the proposed project.

C. Potential Impacts and Mitigations

CRITERIA USED FOR DETERMINING IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE

A project will typically have a significant impact if it meets any of the following criteria:

- Generates demand for energy services that results in the need for new or physically altered facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives; or
- Generates demand for energy services that exceeds the ability of the service provider to provide without substantially decreasing its ability to serve the existing population.

PROJECT IMPACTS

ARM Plan PEIR Findings

The ARM Plan PEIR analyzed potential impacts of energy use in Section 8.10, Energy and Natural Resources. The PEIR noted that instream gravel removal can result in resource consumption and depletion of resources from instream gravel removal. Because the ARM Plan's operation standards balance the degradation and aggradation of instream resources, the PEIR identified this impact as less than significant.

Project Impacts

This section evaluates the potential for the project to generate demand for energy services. The discussion of sand and gravel as a renewable resource is described in Section 4.3, Irreversible Environmental Changes of the Project as Proposed, in Chapter 4, Topical Issues and Impact Summaries.

Impact 3.12-1 The project would not generate demand for energy services that would result in the need for new or physically altered facilities or exceed the ability of the service provider to provide without substantially decreasing its ability to serve the existing population.

Energy use at the study area would consist of gasoline and diesel fuel to power heavy machinery and vehicles during five months of mining and reclamation operations per year, including implementation of the REP. The project will require the use of diesel fuel and gasoline over the life of the project; however, the use of fuels would not significantly affect energy services. For example, project demand for these sources would not require the construction of new or expansion of existing production facilities. In addition, project demands would not be expected to exceed the ability of existing service providers to meet the demand of its existing populations. The project would therefore have a less than significant impact on energy resources, and no mitigation is required.

Mitigation Measures

None