

4.11 Growth-Inducing Effects

Significance Criteria

NEPA requires that an EIS analyze both the indirect and growth-inducing effects of a proposed action (40 CFR Section 1502.16[b], 40 CFR Section 1508[b]). As defined, indirect effects are:

“Caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. Indirect effects may include growth-inducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth, and related effects on ... natural systems.”

The significance of growth-inducing effects of a proposed action or alternatives is determined to a large extent by whether or not an action would cause a significant increase in local population and trigger further development, for example, by increasing employment, providing utilities or other support facilities that allow or encourage people to move to an area. Growth inducement could result from an action that establishes substantial new permanent employment opportunities or that removes obstacles to growth (e.g., providing or expanding wastewater treatment or water supply to allow more construction in the area served).

4.11.1 Potential Growth-Inducing Effects Related to the Action

As discussed in Section 1.0 of the EIS, the proposed action would convey 17,370 acres of land now owned by the Nation to the Federal Government to be held in trust status. There is no proposed change in the use of lands or ground disturbing activities associated with the proposed action or other trust alternatives. There are no developments planned or projects dependent upon the trust action which would increase population or trigger additional residential or commercial growth in the area.

Indirect effects of the proposed action and alternatives are discussed in the previous sections. Specific growth-inducing effects which are reasonably foreseeable and more likely attributable to, or caused by, the proposed action are discussed here. Generally, the potential growth-inducing effects of the proposed action fall into the category of socioeconomics, which includes increased visitation to the Turning Stone Resort & Casino, higher employment due to increased visitation, and potential population growth of Nation members on Nation lands.

Section 1.2 discusses the Purpose and Need for the proposed action as expressed by the Nation. One of the central elements of the action is to preserve an adequate tribal land base that “*facilitates the creation of a homeland for those Nation members located elsewhere in New York State or throughout the U.S.*” To the extent that the proposed action or alternatives would cause or stimulate a significant in-migration of Nation members to a “secure homeland,” there could be a growth-inducing effect.

The Nation's ongoing housing program is described on Page 4-311. The Nation anticipates that a small number of members (82) could move back into the area during the next five years to take advantage of the ongoing housing program, regardless of the trust action. The Nation has not, at this time, factored or anticipated growth in the Nation's population residing within the area beyond what the current housing program expects. In other words, the Nation has not planned for a larger, more expanded housing or building program because of the trust action beyond the 82 members. This projected increase amounts to less than a one percent increase in the number of Nation members currently residing within the Nation's homeland. Therefore, growth-inducing effects of the proposed action would be less than significant.

Under the scenarios whereby the Nation pays property taxes (**Property Taxes Paid**) or does not pay property taxes and operates and functions under a dispute with regard to taxation/jurisdiction (**Property Taxes Paid – Dispute Continues**), the growth that is projected by the Nation with regard to existing plans, programs and operations would continue. Under Alternatives E **Property Taxes Not Paid – Foreclosure** and Alternative G **Casino Closes and All Enterprises Close** scenarios, the Nation would retain ownership of little or none of their lands. This would affect the ability of the Nation to continue implementation of their ongoing members housing program and as a result, growth that is projected by the Nation with regard to existing plans, programs and operations would not continue. Therefore, the cumulative effect associated with Alternatives E and G is that there would be less growth than currently projected.

Under the Alternative G **Casino Closes and All Enterprises Close** scenario, it is expected that as many as 5,860 jobs would be lost. This would be due to a loss of jobs sustained by Nation enterprises, Nation government jobs, and the loss of jobs at associated non-Nation businesses. Moreover, the expected decrease in employment under No Action is anticipated to decrease the population of Madison and Oneida Counties (see Section 4.7 Socioeconomics) as a result of out-migration from the two counties. The loss of these jobs would have a significant adverse effect on the Nation, non-Nation employees and their families, businesses dependent on the Nation's enterprises, as well as the regional economy.

4.11.2 Potential Growth-Inducing Effects Related to Ongoing and Planned Nation Activities

As discussed elsewhere in this document, the Nation's ongoing and reasonably foreseeable plans for the Turning Stone Resort & Casino, other enterprises and Nation programs, including housing, are part of ongoing programs and current plans that are separate from the federal action to convey lands into trust. However, since some of the Nation's actions could be influenced by excluding lands from conveyance into trust, they are discussed in this section. Additionally, with lands in trust and secured from alienation or foreclosure, the projected growth in visitors and employment associated with the Nation's enterprises

is more likely. This includes related employment and economic growth of both the Nation and non-Nation communities in the Study Area. With the casino in trust, it is anticipated that a more secure business environment would exist in the surrounding area, facilitating future economic investments by the Nation and outside businesses that may be drawn to Oneida and Madison County.

4.11.2.1 Nation Housing Program

The Nation is expected to add some housing at the Village of the White Pines Member Housing complex and elsewhere to meet the housing needs of the 66 Nation members on the waiting list for housing units. This housing is already underway and is not related to the federal trust action. It is estimated that 64 percent of those Nation members who are on the waiting list for new housing live locally. Additionally, it is estimated that approximately 34 percent live outside the area which would result in the construction of approximately 24 new housing units for Nation members who could migrate into the Study Area. As discussed in Section 4.7, this could result in 82 Nation members migrating into the Study Area from outside the region. This small increase in population and immigration to Nation lands is expected to be less than significant.

4.11.2.2 Nation Enterprises

As reported in Section 4.7, it is anticipated that 260 jobs would be created as a result of the Nation's current plans, programs and continued growth in customers of its business operations. It has been estimated that 5.3 percent of the total permanent jobs would be new jobs – jobs created in the economy rather than shifts from one job to another with no replacement in the labor force. Spending by the Nation and its projected new employees is anticipated to generate an additional 49 new jobs in the area.

As part of ongoing activities planned by the Nation and previously described in Section 4.1, which primarily includes improvements/expansions to the Turning Stone Resort & Casino it is anticipated that there would be minimal recruitment from outside the Madison-Oneida area to fill future jobs created by implementation of these Nation activities. In particular, the majority of new hires already employed by the Nation live locally and the majority of new positions projected in Section 4.7 are not expected to be high salary positions. Thus, the expected increase in employment by the Nation that is projected to occur in the future is anticipated to increase the population of Madison and Oneida Counties by 80 and 181 residents, respectively, as a result of migration into the area. Consequently, it is expected that the creation of new jobs would result in little to no increase in demand for new housing. The development of any new housing (non-Nation), if necessary, within Madison or Oneida Counties associated with new jobs would be subject to approval by the local community in conformance with land use plans and zoning ordinances. The local community would determine the consistency of any proposed housing development with the goals and policies of their master or comprehensive plan.

Thus, ongoing and currently planned future activities (casino-resort and other enterprise related) envisioned by the Nation are not expected to induce significant residential growth.

4.11.3 Activities by Others

Securing the future of the Turning Stone Resort & Casino would create an economic climate favorable to further investment by the Nation in their existing enterprises and outside investment by others in the two-county area. This environment would result in additional jobs, revenue and spending in the area, as discussed in Section 4.7

Socioeconomics. Commercial growth within the Study Area would be expected to be generally consistent with recent trends and occur over a wide geographic area, supporting existing businesses, as well as new businesses. This growth generally has been at a low level, with the two-county area experiencing a loss of major businesses and associated local jobs. One potential project includes the proposed Verona Greens development in the Town of Verona that was previously discussed in Section 4.1. Non-Nation commercial development would be subject to approval of local communities in conformance with local land use plans and ordinances that were developed to guide and control growth.

Therefore, it is expected that effects attributable to induced growth would be less than significant.