

- c. Area H: Vehicles restricted to designated roads only. Dismounted soldiers permitted off road.

Guidelines:

1. BLM administered lands within the designated training areas, not withdrawn for exclusive use by the Military, will be open to and shared with the public except when OMD and the BLM agree that the security of OMD resources or public and/or OMD personnel safety will be at risk as a result of the intermingling of military and civilian activities.
2. Restricted access to public lands during military operations will be temporary and procedures for establishing location and duration of closures will be established in the terms and conditions of the use authorization agreement between the BLM and the OMD
3. All military activity will be consistent with direction provided by the following Documents and references cited therein:
 - a. Environmental Assessment: Fielding the Bradley Fighting Vehicle and Cavalry Fighting Vehicle and Other Proposed Federal Actions at the Central Oregon Training Site by the Oregon National Guard (OMD, 1995).
 - b. Biak Training Center Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan and Environmental Assessment ("INRMP", OMD, 2001).
 - c. Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan for the Oregon Army National Guard ("ICRMP", OMD, 2002).
4. Amendments to existing or new NEPA decisions that support authorization of military activities will not require amendment to the RMP unless they modify specific objectives or allowable uses.
5. When necessary to meet training needs the BLM may authorize exemptions from travel management restrictions for military operations consistent with administrative access guidelines included in Transportation and Utilities.
6. The use of extended training areas (G, H) may be used as needed for maneuvers when ground and vegetation conditions meet or exceed established baseline conditions.
7. Military training use will be designed to minimize use conflicts with livestock grazing, recreation, and wildlife while still meeting the objectives for military training.
8. Baseline conditions will be established by an interdisciplinary process and will include consultation with interested and affected government agencies.
9. Use of small areas of concentration which have been treated by providing gravel cover, barriers, road improvement/maintenance or other engineering works to reduce general area resource damage is encouraged.
10. Meeting objectives for public uses of BLM administered lands will be a secondary objective when selecting types and locations of improvements
11. OMD will provide the BLM with a quarterly training summary of unit(s) that will be using any of the designated training area 30 days prior to use of the area. This summary will include but not be limited to: the designated area to be used, the training unit identification, and unit contact.
12. Military use will be reviewed by BLM and OMD staff on a yearly basis.

Visual Resources

Objective VR - 1: Manage all BLM administered lands in the planning area to meet the following Visual Resource Management Classes:

- VRM Class 1 areas – Preserve the existing character of landscapes. Manage VRM Class 1 lands to preserve the existing character of the landscape. Natural, ecological changes dominate; the level of change provided by management actions should be very low and not attract attention. (See also Wilderness Study Area section)
- VRM Class 2 areas – Retain the existing character of landscapes. Manage landscapes

seen from high use travel routes, recreation destinations, special management areas, or that provide a visual backdrop to communities for low levels of change to the characteristic landscape. In these areas, management activities may be seen but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, texture, and scale found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

- VRM Class 3 areas – Partially retain the existing character of the landscape. Manage VRM Class 3 lands for moderate levels of change to the characteristic landscape. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, texture, and scale found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.
- VRM Class 4 areas – Allow major modifications of existing character of landscapes. Manage VRM Class 4 lands for moderate levels of change to the characteristic landscape. Management activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of viewer attention. Every attempt will be made to minimize the effect of management actions through careful location, minimal disturbance, and repeating the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.
- VRM Class 5 areas – Areas in need of rehabilitation from a visual resource standpoint.

Rationale:

Section 102(8) of FLPMA declares that public land will be managed to protect the quality of scenic values and, where appropriate, to preserve and protect certain public land in its natural condition. NEPA, Section 101(b), requires Federal agencies to “assure for all Americans...esthetically pleasing surroundings.” Section 102 of NEPA requires agencies to “utilize a systematic, interdisciplinary approach, which will ensure the integrated use of...environmental design in the planning and decision making process.” The rapid development of rural lands in Central Oregon increases the value of and concern over the scenic resources that BLM administered lands possess.

VRM Process: Objectives for managing visual resources on BLM administered lands are established through the RMP process by defining visual resource management (VRM) classes. The establishment of visual resource management classes on public land is based on an evaluation of the landscape’s scenic qualities (mapped as Variety Classes), public sensitivity about scenic qualities of certain areas (mapped as Sensitivity Levels), and the visibility of affected land from Key Observation Points (KOPs) such as major travel corridors (mapped as Distance Zones). VRM classes represent the relative value of visual resources, with Class 1 and 2 being the most valued, Class 3 representing a moderate value, and Class 4 being of least value. Areas can also be identified through the RMP process as Class 5, where the natural character of the landscape has been disturbed to a point where rehabilitation is needed to bring it up to one of the four other classifications. This classification also applies to areas where there is potential to increase an area’s visual quality; Class 5 is often used as an interim classification until objectives of another VRM Class can be reached. Key Observation Points are identified to establish these distance zones and levels of visual sensitivity (See Appendix H for a description of the establishment of VRM classes and KOPs in the planning area).

Allocations/Allowable Uses:

1. Specific VRM classifications for lands within the planning area are shown on RMP Map 10. The following list identifies general areas that are included in each VRM Class in the RMP area:
 - a. VRM Class 1 – 32,928 acres:
 - Badlands WSA
 - Steelhead Falls WSA
 - Horse Ridge RNA/ACEC/ISA

- b. VRM Class 2 - 37,590 acres:
 - Areas visible from Prineville Reservoir (foreground views)
 - Smith Rock block
 - Horse Ridge and Dry River Canyon
 - Portions of West Butte area
 - Dry Canyon in Cline Buttes
 - Deschutes River corridor
 - Crooked River corridor
 - Ochoco Reservoir parcel
 - Cline Buttes slopes visible from the Redmond area
 - Wagon Roads ACEC
 - Powell Butte RNA
 - Redmond Caves parcel
 - State Highway 31/Outback Scenic Byway
 - Little Deschutes River Parcel
- c. VRM Class 3 - 88,179 acres:
 - Skeleton Fire area
 - West Butte area
 - Areas visible from Prineville Reservoir (background views)
 - Smith Canyon area
 - Immediate foreground view of State Highway 20, 26, 27, 126, Powell Butte Highway,
 - Juniper Canyon Road, Reservoir Road, except where superseded by other VRM Class designations
- d. VRM Class 4 - 246,163 acres:
 - Remainder of planning area
- e. VRM Class 5 - 8 acres:
 - Crooked River Canyon area north of Chimney Rock Wild and Scenic River segment

Guidelines:

General

- 1. Work with State and local governments to manage visual resources and interpretive opportunities along roads and highways including the Hwy 31/Outback Scenic Byway.
- 2. Project specific analysis may require an increase or decrease in VRM Class depending on existence of new Key Observation Points or project specific determination of seen areas.

All Activities

- 3. All surface disturbing activities under permit or lease or done by BLM will require visual resource analysis using BLM's contrast rating methodology. Visual design considerations will be incorporated into all surface-disturbing projects regardless of size or potential impact. Projects will be designed to resolve and minimize potential impacts and meet or exceed the visual resource management class objectives. Project specific analysis will be done based on the following:
 - a. Provide this input at the earliest stage of project or permit planning, so as to minimize costly redesign or mitigation at later phases of project design and development. BLM will request project specific visual resource information from project proponents, including design plans, construction drawings, concept plans, etc. prior to starting work on permit approval or environmental assessments or environmental impact statements.
 - b. Project specific analysis of visual resource impacts will include an evaluation

of new Key Observation Points, including new recreation facilities, trails, and community areas. A project specific determination of seen areas, distance zones and appropriate VRM Class will be done using the VRM mapping in the RMP as a baseline.

- c. Emphasize monitoring during project construction to assure visual resource mitigation measures are met.
4. Landscapes containing negative visual elements, including, but not limited to, braided or extremely dense road networks, garbage piles, unstable cut or fill slopes, open pits, or numerous damaged trees/stumps, will be rehabilitated as funding allows.
5. Identify and rehabilitate negative visual elements on public lands within the immediate foreground (0 to 1/4 mile) corridor of travel routes through special areas (ACECs, RNAs, Wild and Scenic River Corridors, WSAs) and along designated scenic or backcountry byways, trails, and major travel routes through the planning area.

Facilities

6. Parking facilities, structures, structural range improvements, and recreational facilities will normally be placed where they are not visible from key observations points (KOPs). Emphasis will be placed on providing signs to direct recreational visitors to parking areas and facilities instead. Where it is not possible to screen recreational facilities or other structures, or where public safety issues require these facilities to be visible, they will be designed to blend with the elements found in the natural landscape and remain subordinate to the overall strength of the landscape being viewed.
7. New heliports, gravel pits, gravel stockpile locations, clay pits, and borrow areas will be located out of foreground view from KOPs. If a site is not available outside of the immediate (0 to 1/4 mile) foreground view of KOPs, then appropriate mitigation will be determined (e.g., screening, project design, berms, etc.) prior to permits being issued.
8. Improve entry signage to BLM administered lands in the planning area, considering the use of native rock foundations, BLM logo signs, and wording that identifies the name of each specific area, etc. A priority will be made on using these higher sign standards first on WSAs, ACECs and developed sites.
9. All transmission line towers, conductors, and communication antennas will utilize non-reflective surfaces or be painted to minimize visual impacts.

Rights-of-Way

10. New roads, ROWs and other surface disturbing projects will be designed to meet the Visual Resource Management Class of the affected area. Routes likely to be popular with recreational visitors will be designed and maintained to enhance the area's scenic qualities. Road improvements or new road construction in VRM Class I or II areas will use non-reflective surfaces such as Corten Steel guard rails to minimize contrast with the surrounding landscape. Materials will be specified before ROW permits are issued.
11. New roads or utility ROWs will be constructed when new routes will enhance, improve, or protect an area's scenic qualities better than improvement of existing roads or expanding or co-located ROWs.

Vegetation

12. Vegetation manipulation such as brush removal, juniper thinning, reseeding and prescribed burning will be designed to meet or exceed VRM Classes. Vegetation manipulation projects may include the following design concepts to enhance visual quality:
 - a. Treatment objectives in old growth juniper woodlands/savanna will include enhancing foreground visual characteristics of the old-growth juniper woodlands/ savanna and the overall scenic quality of the area. Juniper

- woodland characteristics that are expected to generate high visual appeal include:
- i. “Healthy” woodlands with large and old trees of various densities and structure
 - ii. Understories of diverse native shrub, grasses and forbs
 - iii. A low occurrence of noxious weeds and other non-native species
 - iv. High visual diversity with regard to vegetative and geologic features of the characteristic landscape.
- b. Where possible and appropriate, background and vista views will be enhanced by treatments such as thinning, pruning, or clearing corridors through foreground juniper woodlands, emphasizing removal of younger, smaller trees.
 - c. Treatments in old growth juniper woodlands will emphasize treating the “best” old-growth juniper woodlands within major travel corridors, along backcountry byways, and near recreation and residential/urban areas. Primary objectives will be to maintain old woodland health and longevity and to improve or highlight scenic values.
 - d. Cutting or pruning to produce small openings in dense stands to clear vistas or expose other natural features of interest.
 - e. Stand management to clear dead and down trees or promote different ages, sizes, densities, species composition, and vertical layers for increased visual diversity.
 - f. Rehabilitation of sites with noxious weeds, exotic annuals, and other disturbed/unbalanced vegetative communities to transition toward a more natural vegetative landscape.
 - g. Enhancement of visually interesting meadows, riparian areas, and old-growth trees.
 - h. Treatments to improve wildlife viewing, education, and interpretation opportunities.
 - i. All other standard operating procedures for reducing visual effects from mechanical vegetative treatments and prescribed burning will be implemented. Examples of mitigating measures for reducing visual effects could include: closing, scarifying and seeding roads, smoothing berms, chipping or removal of juniper thinning slash instead of piling, cutting stumps at ground level, low intensity prescribed burning to reduce scorch height, and concealing higher intensity juniper treatments with vegetative and topographic screening, leaving individual and groups of trees, and unit edge feathering.
 - j. Vegetation treatments designed solely for long-term ecosystem health may entail short term impacts to visual quality (up to 5 years). However, these treatments would be designed and implemented in a way that reduces impacts to visual quality and maintains VRM Class standards to the maximum degree.

Recreation

Management direction for recreation is provided with planning area-wide direction and with management guidance specific to the High Desert Special Recreation sub-units. These geographic areas are described following the Planning Area direction. One existing Special Recreation Management Area – the Millican Valley OHV area was incorporated into the High Desert Special Recreation Management Area. It includes three subunits of the High Desert SRMA, Millican Plateau, North Millican, and South Millican. These are grouped together in the objectives and guidelines.

Planning Area Wide Direction

Objective R - 1: Provide and maintain a wide range of recreation opportunities and resource management objectives within the planning area and urban interface setting.