

Appendix B

Recreation and Visual Resources

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Class Descriptions

Recreation opportunities can be expressed in terms of three main components: activities, settings, and experiences. For management and conceptual convenience, possible mixes of these components have been arranged along a spectrum, or continuum. This Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) provides a framework for stratifying and defining classes of outdoor recreation opportunity environments.

Primitive

Activity: Camping, hiking, enjoying scenery or natural features, photography, hunting (big game, small game, upland birds, waterfowl), swimming, diving (skin and scuba), fishing, canoeing, sailing, and river running (non-motorized craft).

Setting: The area is characterized by an essentially unmodified natural environment of fairly large size. Concentration of users is very low and evidence of other users is minimal. The area is managed to be essentially free from evidence of man-induced restrictions and controls. Only facilities essential for resource protection are used. No facilities for comfort or convenience of the user are provided. Spacing of groups is informal and dispersed to minimize contacts between groups. Motorized use within the area is not permitted.

Experience Opportunity: There are opportunities for isolation from the sights and sounds of man, to feel a part of the natural environment, to have a high degree of challenge and risk, and to use outdoor skills.

Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized

Activity: Camping, hiking, enjoying scenery or natural features, photography, hunting (big game, small game, upland birds, waterfowl), swimming, diving (skin and scuba), fishing, canoeing, sailing, and river running (non-motorized craft).

Setting: The area is characterized by a predominantly unmodified natural environment of moderate to large size. Concentration of users is low, but there is evidence of other area users. On-site controls and restrictions may be present, but are subtle. Facilities are provided only for the protection of resource values and the safety of users. Spacing of groups may be formalized to disperse use and limit contacts between groups. Motorized use is not permitted.

Experience Opportunity: There are some opportunities for isolation from the sights and sounds of man, but this is not as important for this classification as it is for primitive opportunities. Opportunities are available to have a high degree of interaction with the natural environment, to have moderate challenge and risk, and to use outdoor skills.

Rural

Activity: Camping, hiking, enjoying scenery or natural features, photography, swimming, diving (skin and scuba), fishing, canoeing, sailing, and river running (motorized craft), power boating, picnicking, rock collecting, wood gathering, auto touring, water skiing and other water sports, interpretive services use, rustic resorts and organized camps, competitive games, spectator sports, bicycling, jogging, outdoor concerts, and modern resorts.

Setting: The area is characterized by a substantially modified natural environment. Resource modification and utilization practices are obvious. Sights and sounds of man are readily evident, and the concentration of users is often moderate to high. A considerable number of facilities are designed for use by a large number of people. Facilities are often provided for specific activities. Developed sites, roads, and trails are designed for moderate to high use. Facilities for intensive motorized use are available.

Experience Opportunity: Opportunities to experience affiliation with individuals and groups are prevalent as is the convenience of the sites and opportunities. These factors are generally more important than the natural setting. Opportunities for wildland challenges, risk taking, and testing of outdoor skills are unimportant, except in specific activities involving challenge and risk.

Urban

Activity: Camping, hiking, enjoying scenery or natural features, nature study, photography, swimming, diving (skin and scuba), fishing, canoeing, sailing, and river running (non-motorized craft), power boating, picnicking, rock collecting, wood gathering, auto touring, water skiing and other water sports, interpretive services use, rustic resorts and organized camps, competitive games, spectator sports, bicycling, jogging, outdoor concerts, and modern resorts.

Setting: The area is characterized by a substantially modified natural environment. Resource modification and utilization practices are obvious. Sights and sounds of man are readily evident, and the concentration of users is often moderate to high. A considerable number of facilities are designed for use by a large number of people. Facilities are often provided for specific activities. Developed sites, roads, and trails are designed for moderate to high use. Facilities for intensive motorized use are available.

Experience Opportunity: Opportunities to experience affiliation with individuals and groups are prevalent as is the convenience of sites and opportunities. Experiences of the natural environment and the use of outdoor skills are largely unimportant.

Visual Resources Management (VRM)

The visual resource inventory process contained in BLM Handbook H-8410-1 provides BLM managers with guidance for determining visual values. The inventory consists of scenic quality evaluation, sensitivity level analysis, and delineation of distance zones. Based on these three factors, BLM-administered lands are placed into one of four visual resource inventory classes. These inventory classes represent the relative value of the visual resource. Classes I and II are the most valued, Class III represents a moderate value, and Class IV has the least value. Management objectives have been assigned to each Class. An area may be inventoried as VRM Class III but the decision may be made to manage it as a VRM Class IV or vice versa. Cultural modifications may detract from the scenery, or complement, or improve the overall scenic quality of an area. Cultural modifications in the land form/water and vegetation values and addition of structures will be considered when examining proposed resource management actions.

The VRM inventory and management classes were designed to address larger tracts of land than that of Meadowood Farm. Visual Resource Management objectives discussed in the Planning Analysis and Environmental Assessment PA/EA will pertain only to the level and type of disturbance to visual resources that can be expected to occur under the alternatives and only to the specific tract and not to the general setting in which the tract is located.

The following VRM class definitions from BLM Handbook H-8410-1 have been amended for purposes of developing and implementing the Meadowood Farm PA/EA. Amendments incorporate the visual resource values provided by existing cultural features significant to the character of the Meadowood Farm landscape.

VRM Class I Objective

The objective of this class is to preserve the existing natural and cultural character of the landscape. This class provides for natural ecological changes; however, it does not preclude very limited management activity. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be very low and must not attract attention away from the existing landscape character.

VRM Class II Objective

The objective of this class is to retain the existing natural and cultural character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural and/or cultural features of the characteristic landscape.

VRM Class III Objective

The objective of this class is to partially retain the existing natural and cultural character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural and/or cultural features of the characteristic landscape.

VRM Class IV Objective

The objective of this class is to provide for management activities which require major modification of the existing character of the natural and cultural landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high. These management activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of the casual observer's attention. However, every attempt should be made to minimize the impact of these activities through careful location, minimal disturbance, and repetition of the basic elements.