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## Appendix C. Visual Resource Inventory Methodology

The BLM Visual Resource Inventory Manual H—8410-1 and the BLM Visual Resource Management Course Manual were sources used for the BMDO Visual Resource Inventory. In addition, BLM Technical Note 407 was used as a reference document, with some adaptation to the process. Technical Note 407 provides direction to generate layers solely through the use of GIS, but Otak uses a combination of GIS and field evaluation to generate the maps and data.

### Inventory

Preliminary units were drawn prior to conducting field work using high-quality aerial photographs and terrain models available on Google Earth® and Google Maps.® Additional tools used for this process include the Surface Management Status topographic maps and a 25m Digital Elevation Model (DEM) provided by the BLM. These maps, aerials, and data clearly show the topographic and visual features of the landscape which enabled the inventory team to divide the area into preliminary SQRUs. These units were then adjusted as necessary after consulting with BLM staff and verified in the field to provide an accurate boundary.

These maps were used in the field for navigational purposes, for ground-truthing the SQRU boundaries, and for recording notes and IOP locations.

Two teams conducted fieldwork: The Mt. Lewis Team inventoried the Mt. Lewis Field Office in the northern portion of the BMDO and the Tonopah Team inventoried the Tonopah Field Office in the southern portion. Fieldwork for the VRI was conducted October 13–23, 2010, a total of 11 days). In addition, Otak teams inventoried the Crater Flat SQRU on August 9, 2010 for the Southern Nevada District Office VRI; the Little Smoky Valley SQRU on September 16, 2010 for the Ely District Office VRI; and the Dry Lake Hills SQRU on September 17, 2010 for the Ely District Office VRI. Each SQRU was accessed by vehicle. The inventory team

drove through each SQRU, stopping on multiple occasions to evaluate scenic quality. Notes and photographs were taken at each IOP to document the landscape character (as discussed in Section 2 – Scenic Quality Evaluation). A total of 415 stops were made throughout the BMDO. The photographs, latitude/longitude, and heading for each IOP were recorded using a Ricoh Caplio 500SE 8 MP GPS camera. The IOPs were also drawn onto the Surface Management Status topographic maps for tracking purposes to ensure that each SQRU was thoroughly documented. A photograph log was used to document the number of photos per SQRU.

All SQRUs were named in the field based on a significant feature, drainage, or area. Numbers were added later when all the SQRUs were finalized to ensure that the reader could easily find specific units.

### GIS

All VRI GIS data was created in ArcView 9.3. The SQRUs drawn on the Surface Management Status topographic maps were made into a digital vector version by heads-up digitizing. Raster images were used as the background data and include: digital copies of the Surface Management Status topographic maps provided by the BMDO as well as Digital Raster Graphics (DRGS) and aerial imagery {National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP)} downloaded from the USDA Geospatial Data Gateway. Topology was validated by using the following ET GeoWizard functions: Clean Polygons, Clean Gaps, and Eliminate.

### Visual Resource Inventory Classes

The process for determining the Visual Resource Inventory Classes is defined within the metadata of the geodatabase.

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