

APPENDIX D: VISUAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

FOREST SERVICE VISUAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Variety Classes

Variety classes are based on the premise that the more variety there is in the landscape, the higher the scenic quality is. The three variety classes are as follows:

Class A (distinctive) areas are areas in which features (landforms, vegetation, water, color) are not common in the character type or are unusual or outstanding.

Class B (common) areas are those in which features contain variety in form, line, color, and texture but are fairly common within the character type and are not unusual or outstanding.

Class C (minimal) areas are those in which features are common to the character type and contain little variety.

Quality Objectives

Quality objectives determine the visual management of the landscape. Each objective determines the extent to which the basic elements of the landscape will be modified or altered. The five possible objectives are as follows:

Preservation (P) is applied to special areas such as wilderness or primitive areas or to some management units that are unique but for which special classification is not justified. The only management activities allowed in "P" areas are low visual impact recreation facilities.

The retention (R) objective allows for activities that repeat form, line, color, and texture but are not evident within the landscape.

The partial retention (PR) objective allows for activities that repeat form, line, color, and texture but remain visually subordinate to the characteristic landscape.

The modification (M) objective allows for activities that visually dominate the landscape, but they must repeat or be compatible with the natural characteristics of the landscape.

The maximum modification (MM) objective allows management activities to dominate the landscape, but they must repeat visual character-

istics when viewed as background. When viewed as foreground or middleground, they may appear not to borrow completely from the natural characteristics. Alterations may appear to be out of scale or may contain in harmonious details when viewed as foreground or middleground.

More detailed information on the Forest Service's visual management system appears in a publication available from the Government Printing Office, Washington (USDA, FS 1979a).

BLM VISUAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Scenic quality classes are defined by a system rating seven key factors: landform, vegetation, water, color, influence of adjacent scenery, scarcity, and cultural modification. There are three scenic quality classes.

Class A areas are those that combine the most outstanding characteristics of each rating factor.

Class B areas are areas in which there is a combination of some outstanding features and some which are fairly common to the physiographic region.

Class C areas are those in which the features are fairly common to the physiographic region.

Management classes determine the amount of modification allowed to the basic elements of the landscape. There are five classes.

Class I: Very limited management activity is allowed. Created contrasts must not attract attention. This classification applies to wilderness areas, wild and scenic rivers, etc.

Class II: Changes in any of the basic elements caused by management activity should not be evident in the characteristic landscape. Contrasts are seen but must not attract attention.

Class III: Contrasts to the basic elements caused by a management activity are evident but should remain subordinate to the existing landscape.

Class IV: Any contrast attracts attention and is a dominant feature of the landscape in terms of scale, but it should repeat the form, line, color, and texture of the characteristic landscape.

Class V: The Class V classification is applied to areas where the natural character of the landscape has been disturbed to a point where

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rehabilitation is needed to bring it up to one of the four other classifications. The classification also applies to areas where there is potential to

increase the landscape's visual quality. It is often used as an interim classification until objectives of another class can be reached.