APPENDIX V
FRAMEWORK VISUAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN

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TABLES:

ACRONYMS

Applicant	TransWest Express LLC, also TransWest
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BMP	Best Management Practice
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
COA	Condition of Approval
COM Plan	Construction, Operation, and Maintenance Plan
CSU	Controlled Surface Use
DEIS	Draft Environmental Impact Statement
DEM	digital elevation model
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EMM	Environmental Mitigation Measure
FEIS	Final Environmental Impact Statement
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976
FO	Field Office
GPS	global positioning system
KOP	Key Observation Point
LRMP	Land and Resource Management Plan
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NPS	National Park Service
NSU	No Surface Use
NTP	Notice to Proceed
OHV	off-highway vehicle
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
Plan	Visual Resource Management Plan
POD	Plan of Development
Project	TransWest Express Transmission Project, also TWE Project
RMP	Resource Management Plan
ROD	Record of Decision
ROW	right-of-way
SIO	Scenic Integrity Objective
SMS	Scenery Management System
SRMA	Special Recreation Management Area
TransWest	TransWest Express LLC, also Applicant
TWE Project	TransWest Express Transmission Project, also Project
U.S.C.	United States Code
USFS	United States Forest Service
VMS	Visual Management System
VQO	Visual Quality Objective
VRM	Visual Resource Management
WWEC	West-wide Energy Corridor

V1.0 INTRODUCTION

This framework Visual Resources Management (Plan) describes the framework for the development of the detailed Visual Resources Management Plan to be implemented by TransWest Express LLC (TransWest or Applicant) and its Construction Contractor(s) for the TransWest Express Transmission Project (TWE Project or Project).

This Plan focuses on the implementation of West-wide Energy Corridor (WWEC) Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Best Management Practices (BMPs), Applicant Committed Design Features, State and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Stipulations, United States Forest Service (USFS) Standards and Guidelines, and mitigation measures identified in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) designed to reduce visual impacts of the TWE Project, as applicable. These measures are collectively referred to as Environmental Mitigation Measures (EMMs).

V1.1 Plan Purpose

The focus of this framework Plan is to minimize visual contrasts created by Project construction, operation, and maintenance, and to provide an implementation strategy for EMMs. This Plan is applicable Project-wide and will be updated based on the selected Agency Preferred Alternative and final engineering and design of the Project. TransWest and its Construction Contractor(s) would be responsible for carrying out the methods described in this Plan. This Plan is based on the existing conditions, visual impacts, and mitigation measures identified in the DEIS. Project design features, BMPs, and required stipulations are applicable to the design, construction and operation of the TWE Project, regardless of which alternative is selected in the Record of Decision (ROD).

The goals of this Plan are to minimize visual contrasts created by the TWE Project in compliance or conformance with agency or landowner visual management requirements by:

1. Summarizing areas of visual concern in Project affected areas;

2. Providing guidance during the design, construction and operation of the Project to applicable parties that address visual impacts and impact-reducing measures identified during the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) process; and

3. Providing a framework methodology for the implementation of impact-reducing EMMs.

V1.2 Plan Updates

An updated Plan will be completed with the ROD Plan of Development (POD) which will include visual resource mitigation measures based on the selected Agency Preferred Alternative. For the Final Notice to Proceed (NTP) POD, the Plan will be updated to include any specific locations of visual resource mitigation requirements and any updates as required by the appropriate agencies. The Construction Contractor(s) will be responsible for implementing the final Visual Resources Management Plan.

V1.3 Agency-Specific Laws, Regulations and Standards

The USFS, National Park Service (NPS), and the BLM are responsible for managing scenery on public lands by ensuring that visual and scenic values of public lands are considered before allowing uses that may have negative effects on those values.

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 directs the way public lands are administered by the BLM. The following sections of the FLPMA relate to the management of visual resources on federal lands:

- § 102(a) (8) states that "…the public lands be managed in a manner that will protect the quality of the…scenic…values…"
- § 103(c) identifies "scenic values" as one of the resources for which public land will be managed.
- § 201(a): states that "The Secretary shall prepare and maintain on a continuing basis an inventory of all public lands and their resources and other values (including…scenic values)."
- § 202(c)(1-9): "...in developing land use plans, the BLM shall use…the inventory of the public lands; consider present and potential uses of the public lands, consider the scarcity of the values involved and the availability of alternative means and sites for realizing those values; weigh long-term benefits to the public against short term benefits."
- § 505(a): "Each right-of-way shall contain terms and conditions which will … (ii) minimize damage to the scenic and esthetic values" (BLM 2001).

NEPA, 43 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 4321 *et seq*. also addresses scenic values of public lands:

- § 101(b)(2) "assure for all Americans...esthetically…pleasing surroundings;"
- § 102 (A) Requires agencies to "utilize a systematic, interdisciplinary approach which will insure the integrated use of the natural and social sciences and the environmental design arts in planning and in decision making."

As mandated under the Organic Act (16 U.S.C. §1; NPS 1916), all visual resources and scenic quality within national parks are to be conserved and managed in an unimpaired condition for the enjoyment of future generations. However, the Agency Preferred and the Applicant Proposed alternatives do not cross lands managed by the NPS, although they may be within the viewshed of park lands or primary roads accessing those lands.

National trails were established under the National Trail System Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. §1241-51), designating and protecting national scenic trails, national historic trails, and national recreational trails. National trails are administered by the BLM, NPS, and USFS; these agencies provide coordination and oversight for the entire length of a trail. However, as these trails traverse both public and private lands as well as lands controlled by various agencies, on-site management activities are performed by the jurisdictional agency, the state, or the landowner (NPS 2008).

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) includes language protecting the visual integrity of sites listed or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places: "Examples of adverse effects… …include…introduction of visual, atmospheric, or audible elements that diminish the integrity of the property's significant historic features…" (36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 800.5). Impacts to visual resources protected by the NHPA and associated mitigation measures are discussed in Appendix D - Cultural Resources Protection and Management Plan.

V1.3.1 Bureau of Land Management

The BLM manages land under its jurisdiction according to the goals and policies outlined in their Resource Management Plans (RMPs). Visual Resource Management (VRM) classifications are developed by BLM based on landscape character, scenic quality, sensitivity levels, distance zones, and management direction as outlined in BLM Manual 8400, Handbook H-8410-Visual Resource Management (BLM 1986a). Each of four VRM Classes has an objective that prescribes the amount of change allowed in the characteristic landscape: Class I (no change); Class II (minor change); Class III (moderate change); and Class IV (major change). Compliance with VRM Classes is determined by evaluating project contrasts, estimating project contrast level, and comparing the contrast level with the established VRM Class (see Table V1 below). Contrast is determined using BLM Handbook H-8431-1-Visual Resource Contrast Rating (BLM 1986b). Mitigation measures were prescribed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) where the TWE Project would be non-compliant with the VRM Classes based on contrast ratings. Mitigation measures may also be applied in other areas to reduce TWE Project contrast.

TABLE V1 BLM VISUAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

VRM CLASS	VISUAL OBJECTIVE
Class I	The objective of this class is to preserve the existing 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.
Class II	The objective to this class is to retain the existing 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 features of the characteristic landscape.
Class III	The objective of this class is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape 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 features of the characteristic landscape.
Class IV	The objective of this class is to provide for management activities which require major modification of the existing character of the 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 viewer attention. However, every attempt should be made to minimize the effects of these activities through careful location, minimal disturbance, and repeating the basic elements.

V1.3.2 United States Forest Service

The USFS Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMP) developed for each forest guides all natural resource management activities and establishes management standards and guidelines for scenery within the national forests. The LRMP identifies Scenic Integrity Objectives (SIOs) (management level) in forest management areas established under the most current Scenery Management System (SMS). Visual Quality Objectives (VQOs) were developed under the Visual Management System (VMS), which was superseded by the SMS (USFS 1995). SIOs and VQOs each prescribe the level of visible change allowable within forest boundaries (see Table V2 below). Consistency with SIOs and VQOs is determined by comparison of the objective or integrity level of the applicable VQO or SIO, respectively, with the object or integrity level resulting from the proposed project. Mitigation measures were identified in the DEIS where the TWE Project would be inconsistent with the VQOs or SIOs.

TABLE V2 USFS VISUAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

USFS VISUAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM-VISUAL QUALITY OBJECTIVES (VQO)	
Management Level	Visual Objective
Preservation	This visual quality objective allows ecological changes only. Management activities, except for very low visual-effect recreation facilities, are prohibited.
Retention	This visual quality objective provides for management activities which are not visually evident. Under retention activities may only repeat form, line, color, and texture which are frequently found in the characteristic landscape. Changes in their qualities of size, amount, intensity, direction, pattern, etc., should not be evident.
Partial Retention	Management activities are visually evident but subordinate to the characteristic landscape when managed according to the partial retention visual quality objective. Activities may repeat form, line, color, or texture common to the characteristic landscape but changes in their qualities of size, amount, intensity, direction, pattern, etc., remain visually subordinate to the characteristic landscape.
Modification	Under the modification visual quality objective management activities may visually dominate the original characteristic landscape. However, activities of vegetative and land form alteration must borrow from naturally established form, line, color, or texture so completely and at such a scale that its visual characteristics are those of natural occurrences within the surrounding area or character type.
Maximum Modification	Management activities of vegetative and landform alterations may dominate the characteristic landscape. However, when viewed as background, the visual characteristics must be those of natural occurrences within the surrounding area or character type. When viewed as foreground or middle-ground, they may not appear to completely borrow from naturally established form, line, color, or texture. Alterations may also be out of scale or contain detail which is incongruent with natural occurrences as seen in foreground or middle ground.
USFS SCENERY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM-SCENIC INTEGRITY OBJECTIVES (SIO)	
Management Level	Visual Objective
Very High	Landscapes where the valued landscape character “is” intact with only minute if any deviations. The existing landscape character and sense of place is expressed at the highest possible level.
High	Landscapes where the valued landscape character “appears” intact. Deviations may be present, but must repeat the form, line, color, texture and pattern common to the landscape character so completely and at such scale that they are not evident.
Moderate	Landscapes where the valued landscape character “appears slightly altered”. Noticeable deviations must remain visually subordinate to the landscape being viewed.
Low	Landscapes where the valued landscape character “appears moderately altered”. Deviations begin to dominate the valued landscape character being viewed but they borrow valued attributes such as size, shape, edge effect and pattern of natural openings, vegetative type changes or architectural styles outside the landscape being viewed. They should not only appear as valued character outside of the area being viewed but compatible or complimentary to the character within.
Very Low	Landscapes where the valued landscape character “appears heavily altered”. Deviations may strongly dominate the valued landscape character. They may not borrow from valued landscape attributes such as size, shape, edge effect and pattern of natural openings, vegetative type changes or architectural styles within or outside the landscape being viewed. However deviations must be shaped and blended with the natural terrain (landforms) so that elements such as unnatural edges, roads, landings, and structures do not dominate the composition.

V1.3.3 National Park Service

The NPS does not have an established methodology for addressing visual management on lands they manage. Visual resource issues are typically detailed in park General Management Plans and mission statements, and the measurement of visual impacts are typically based on project contrasts with the existing visual condition. The NPS may desire specific mitigation measures for the Project where it crosses NPS lands (e.g., Lake Mead National Recreation Area or Dinosaur National Monument).

V1.3.4 Other Agencies and Private Landowners

No state or local visual resource management laws, ordinances, regulations or standards have been identified during the NEPA process according to the DEIS. This section will summarize relevant requirements applicable to other agencies or private landowners.

V1.4 Timeline

The implementation of mitigation measures will occur during design, construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Project.

V1.5 Responsible Parties

TransWest will have the overall responsibility of directing and monitoring the visual mitigation efforts for the TWE Project. TransWest will be responsible to ensure its Construction Contractors will implement these measures.

V2.0 EXISTING VISUAL RESOURCES

Sensitive visual resources were identified in the DEIS, and will be summarized in the final Plan based on the selected Agency Preferred Alternative identified in the ROD.

V2.1 Sensitive Viewpoints

This section will summarize sensitive viewers and Key Observation Points (KOPs) such as residential areas, parks, overlooks, trails, roads, etc., applicable to the selected Agency Preferred Alternative. Areas of High and Moderate impacts and levels of sensitivity, based on the NEPA analysis, will be summarized.

V2.2 Sensitive Landscapes

This section will summarize final locations of scenic areas based on landscape scenery applicable to the selected Agency Preferred Alternative. Areas of Class A and Class B scenery will be identified based on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). Areas of High and Moderate impacts, based on the NEPA analysis will be summarized.

V2.3 Agency Visual Management Objectives

This section will detail applicable agency management classifications and objectives (BLM VRM and USFS SIO/VQOs), as well as local laws, ordinances, regulations and standards applicable to the selected Agency Preferred Alternative.

V2.4 Private Landowner Concerns

This section will detail areas of concern for private landowners where additional mitigation measures would be implemented for the Project.

V3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION MEASURES

The following sections include EMMs related to visual resources and strategies for implementation of each EMM. The suites of WWEC Corridor BMPs, Applicant Committed Design Features, State and BLM Stipulations Applicable to Transmission Lines, USFS Standards and Guidelines, and DEIS Identified Mitigation Measures all identify measures to reduce impacts on visual resources, and are applicable at various stages of the Project - planning, design, construction, operations and maintenance, and decommissioning of the Project. Many EMMs; however, apply to project corridor planning, where the EMM addresses avoidance of restrictive visual management classes (e.g., VRM Class II, High SIO). The identified EMMs have not been finalized at this time and may be updated, changed, or eliminated in future revisions of this Plan.

Visual resource EMMs are often directly related to other resource EMMs. The implementation of other resource EMMs are covered in other plans developed for the POD. Implementation strategies for visual resource EMMs will overlap with the following plans:

- Appendix A: Access Road Siting and Management Plan
- Appendix D: Cultural Resources Protection and Management Plan
- Appendix Q: Reclamation Plan
- Appendix R: ROW Preparation and Vegetation Management Plan

V3.1 WWEC Corridor Best Management Practices

Table V3 below outlines BMPs obtained from the ROD for the WWEC to reduce impacts to visual resources. These BMPs do not include visual resource-specific potential mitigation measures that are recommended in the WWEC Final Programmatic EIS. They include subtopics and the project phase (planning, construction, operation and decommissioning phases) during which each BMP would be implemented. The BMPs address specific environmental impacts to localized conditions and would be prescribed on a case-by-case basis. Typically, the applicability of selective BMPs to a given action is determined in the course of the environmental analysis and during the engineering and design phase of the project.

Most of the WWEC Corridor BMPs, such as those addressing avoidance of VRM Class I and II areas, are applicable during the planning phase of the project. Others apply during construction and operation of the Project.

TABLE V3 WEST-WIDE ENERGY CORRIDOR FINAL PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

PDEIS BMP NO.	WWEC IOP NO.	PHASE(S)[1]	WWEC IOP DESCRIPTION
VIS-1	1	P	Applicants shall identify and consider visual resource management (VRM) and scenery management (SMS) issues early in the design process to facilitate integration of VRM and scenery treatments into the overall site development program and construction documents. Visual/scenery management considerations, environmental analyses, mitigation planning, and design shall reference and be in accordance with the land management agency visual/scenery management policies and procedures applicable to the jurisdiction the project lies within. Applicants shall coordinate between multiple agencies on visual/scenery sensitive issues when projects transition from one jurisdiction to another, especially when transitions occur within a shared viewshed.
VIS-2	2	P	Applicants shall prepare a VRM or scenery management plan. The applicant's planning team shall include an appropriately trained specialist, such as a landscape architect with demonstrated VRM and/or SMS experience. The VRM/SMS specialist shall coordinate with the BLM/USFS on the availability of the appropriate visual or scenic inventory data, VRM management class delineations, Scenic Integrity Objectives (SIOs), and federal agency expectations for preparing project plans and mitigation strategies to comply with resource management plan (RMP) or land resource and management plan (LRMP) direction related to scenery and/or visual resources. Applicants shall confirm that a current Visual Resource Inventory and/or Scenic Class inventory is available and that the RMP or LRMP VRM classifications or SIOs have been designated in the current land management plan. Project plans shall abide by the VRM class designations and SIOs and consider sensitivities defined within the visual or scenic resource Inventory. If visual or scenic management objectives are absent, then the proper inventory and classification process shall be followed to develop them in accordance with the BLM VRM manual and handbooks or USFS SMS process, depending on the agency. When the VRM management classes or SIOs are absent, then the project alternatives must reflect a range of management options related to scenery and visual resources that reflect the values identified in the visual/scenic inventory. Responsibility for developing an inventory or VRM management classes (or in the case of the USFS, Scenic Classes and SIOs) will remain with the respective agency, but how to accomplish these tasks will be determined by the Field Office Manager or Forest Supervisor, who will consider the applicant's role and financial participation in completing the work.
VIS-3	3	P	Visual and scenic mitigation planning/design and analysis shall be performed through integrated field assessment, applied global positioning system (GPS) technology, field photo documentation, use of computer-aided design and development software, 3-D modeling GIS software, and visual simulation software, as appropriate. Proposed activities, projects, and site development plans shall be analyzed and further developed using these technologies to meet visual and scenic objectives for the project area and surrounding areas sufficient to provide the full context of the viewshed. Visual simulations shall be prepared according to BLM Handbook H-8432-1, or other agency requirements, to create spatially accurate depictions of the appearance of proposed facilities, as reflected in the 3-D design models. Simulations shall depict proposed project appearance from sensitive/scenic locations as well as more typical viewing locations. Transmission towers, roads, compressor stations, valves, and other aboveground infrastructure should be integrated esthetically with the surrounding landscape in order to minimize contrast with the natural environment.
VIS-4	4	P	Applicants shall develop adequate terrain mapping on a landscape/viewshed scale for site planning/design, visual impact analysis, visual impact mitigation planning/design, and for full assessment and mitigation of cumulative visual impacts through applied, state-of-the-art design practices using the cited software systems. The landscape/ viewshed scale mapping shall be geo-referenced and at the same Digital Elevation Model (DEM) resolution and contour interval within the margin of error suitable for engineered site design. This level of mapping shall enable proper placement of proposed developments into the digital viewshed context. Final plans shall be field verified for compliance.

PDEIS BMP NO.	WWEC IOP NO.	PHASE(S)[1]	WWEC IOP DESCRIPTION
VIS-5	5	P	The full range of visual and scenic BMPs shall be considered, and plans shall incorporate all pertinent BMPs. Visual and scenic resource monitoring and compliance strategies shall be included as a part of the project mitigation plans.
VIS-6	6	P	Compliance with VRM/SMS objectives shall be determined through the use of the BLM Contrast Rating procedures defined in BLM Handbook H-8431-1 Visual Contrast Rating, or the USFS SMS Handbook 701. Mitigation of visual impacts shall abide by the requirements of these handbooks.
VIS-7	1	C	A pre-construction meeting with BLM/USFS landscape architects or other designated visual/scenic resource specialist shall be held before construction begins to coordinate on the VRM/SMS mitigation strategy and confirm the compliance-checking schedule and procedures. Applicants shall integrate interim/final reclamation VRM/SMS mitigation elements early in the construction, which may include treatments such as thinning and feathering vegetation along project edges, enhanced contour grading, salvaging landscape materials from within construction areas, special revegetation requirements, etc. Applicants shall coordinate with BLM/USFS in advance to have BLM/USFS landscape architects or other designated visual/scenic resource specialists onsite during construction to work with implementing BMPs.
VIS-8	1	O	Terms and conditions for VRM/SMS mitigation compliance shall be maintained and monitored for compliance with visual objectives, with adaptive management adjustments and modifications as necessary and approved by the BLM/USFS landscape architect or other designated visual/scenic resource specialist.

[1] Phase definitions: P-Planning, C-Construction, O-Operation, D-Decommission

V3.2 Applicant Committed Design Features

TransWest has committed to implementing design features as part of the TWE Project to reduce impacts to visual resources. Table V4 outlines the Applicant committed EMMs or design features proposed by TransWest. TransWest will continue to review EMMs in connection with the environmental and engineering studies for the alternatives and prepare updated tables identifying generic and selective BMPs for the Project. Note that the Construction, Operation, and Maintenance (COM) Plan will be a part of the NTP POD.

TABLE V4 APPLICANT COMMITTED DESIGN FEATURES

DEIS NO.	PHASE(S)[1]	DESIGN FEATURE DESCRIPTION
TWE-12	P, C, O	Except for repairs necessary to make roads passable, no widening or upgrading of existing access roads will be undertaken in the area of construction and operation, where soils or vegetation are sensitive to disturbance. In designated areas, structures will be placed to avoid sensitive features such as, but not limited to, riparian areas, water courses and cultural sites, or to allow conductors to clearly span the features within limits of standard structure design. This will minimize the amount of disturbance to the sensitive feature or reduce visual contrast.
TWE-14	P, C	The Construction, Operation and Maintenance (COM) Plan will show the location of borrow sites, from which material will be obtained. Borrow pits will be stripped of topsoil to a depth of approximately six inches. Stripped topsoil will be stockpiled and, upon completion of borrow excavation, spread to a uniform depth of six inches over areas of borrow pits from which removed. Before replacing topsoil, excavated surfaces will be reasonably smooth and uniformly sloped. The sides of borrow pits will be brought to stable slopes with slope intersection shaped to carry the natural contour of adjacent undisturbed terrain into the pit to give a natural appearance. When necessary, borrow pits will be drained by open ditches to prevent accumulation of standing water.
TWE-44	P, C, O	Non-specular conductors will be used to reduce potential visual impacts.
TWE-46	P, C, O	The Applicant will comply with federal permitting agency stipulations regarding visual resources.

[1] Phase definitions: P-Planning, C-Construction, O-Operation, D-Decommission

V3.3 BLM Stipulations Applicable to Transmission Lines

The BLM has identified stipulations within their management areas as detailed in the respective RMPs, and are shown in Table V5 below. No Surface Use (NSU) and Controlled Surface Use (CSU) visual resources stipulations are identified for each BLM field office. These stipulations typically apply to activities within VRM Class I and Class II designations.

TABLE V5 BLM FIELD OFFICE USE RESTRICTIONS RELATED TO VISUAL RESOURCES

AREA OF RESTRICTION	DESCRIPTION	CONSTRAINT TYPE	BUFFER/AVOIDANCE AREA
	Rawlins Field Office		
VRM Class I and II areas	Surface disturbance will be prohibited within important scenic areas (Class I and II Visual Resource Management Areas).	NSU	No buffer
Upper Platte SRMA	Surface disturbing activities on public lands within one-quarter mile on either side of the river will be intensively managed to maintain the quality of the visual resource off-highway vehicle (OHV) use is limited to designated roads or vehicle routes. Open to oil and gas leasing with an NSO stipulation. Existing oil and gas leases will be intensively managed. Surface disturbing and disruptive activities will be restricted to maintain the quality of the visual resource.	CSU	0.25 mile
	Rock Springs Field Office		
VRM Class I and II areas within Rock Springs FO	Surface disturbance will be prohibited within important scenic areas (Class I and II Visual Resource Management Areas).	NSU	No buffer
	Grand Junction Field Office		
VRM Class I and II within Grand Junction FO	Class I and II visual resource management areas (Juanita Arch, The Goblins, Ruby Canyon, Dolores River corridor, Gunnison River corridor, Mount Garfield cliffs, Bang's Canyon cliffs, Sinbad Valley cliffs, Granite Creek cliffs, Unaweep Canyon cliffs, Hunter/Garvey Canyons cliffs, Vega Reservoir viewshed) and black ridge corridor are NSO and unsuitable for utilities.	NSU	No buffer
VRM Class III areas with outstanding scenic and landscape values within Grand Junction FO	Special design and reclamation measures may be required to protect the outstanding scenic and natural landscape values of located specific areas.	CSU	No Buffer
	White River Field Office		
VRM Class II and III areas within White River FO	Measures may be required to protect scenic and natural landscape values. These design and measures may include transplanting trees and shrubs, mulching and fertilizing disturbed areas, use of low profile permanent facilities, and painting to minimize visual contrasts. Surface disturbing activities may be moved up to 200 meters to avoid sensitive areas or to reduce the visual effects of the proposal. These measures would be applied to the following VRM Class II and III areas: Canyon Pintado National Historic District; Highways 13, 40, 64, and 139 corridors; Viewsheds in the Blue Mountain/Moosehead GRA; White River Corridor; Douglas and Baxter Pass divide; Cathedral Bluffs; and VRM Class II areas around Meeker. These measures may also be applied to other areas on a case by case basis.	CSU	No buffer
	Moab Field Office		
VRM Class II areas within Moab FO	Within VRM II areas (rims of Canyon Rims SRMA, Wilson Arch, the Kane Creek Corridor, and the Gemini Bridges area), surface-disturbing activities must meet the objectives of VRM II class objectives. The level of	CSU	No buffer

AREA OF RESTRICTION	DESCRIPTION	CONSTRAINT TYPE	BUFFER/AVOIDANCE AREA
	change to the landscape should be low; management activities may be seen, but should not attract attention of the casual observer. Any change to the landscape must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape. Surface-disturbing activities that are determined to be compatible and consistent with the protection or enhancement of the resource values are exempted. Recognized utility corridors are exempted only for utility projects which would be managed according to VRM III objectives.		
	Price Field Office		
VRM Class II areas within Price FO	Within VRM II areas, surface disturbing activities would comply with BLM Manual Handbook 8431-1 to retain the existing character of the landscape. Recognized utility corridors are exempt. Temporary exceedance may be allowed during initial development phases.	CSU	No buffer
	Richfield Field Office		
Existing ROWs	To avoid potential conflicts with the construction, operation, maintenance, and termination of facilities and improvements located on existing ROWs on public land, apply the following: Where a ROW grant specifically identifies an area and/or width, the VRM class within the specified area/width would be VRM Class IV. Where no width is specified, the VRM class within the interior boundaries of the area disturbed when the facility or improvement was initially constructed would be VRM Class IV.	CSU	No buffer
All VRM classes	All ROWs must comply with the applicable VRM classification objectives.	CSU	No buffer
	Salt Lake Field Office		
Ridge tops, narrow drainages	ROWs, whether within or outside a corridor, will avoid lands where an above-ground ROW would be an obvious visual or physical intrusion such as ridge tops or narrow drainages.	CSU	No buffer
VRM Class II and III areas within Salt Lake FO	ROWs, whether within or outside a corridor, will avoid lands within VRM Class II and III areas.	CSU	No buffer
	Fillmore Field Office		
Interstate Highway 15 ROW corridor	All ROWs must comply with the applicable Visual Resource Management Class guidelines. New rights of way shall be limited to below the surface of the ground uses only.	CSU	No buffer
Highway 50, 6, and 257 ROW corridor	All land disturbed by new ROW except authorized new access roads shall be rehabilitated to as close to natural conditions as possible, All ROWs must comply with the applicable Visual Resource Management Class guidelines. Roads that are needed for construction of a new ROW shall be temporary and fully rehabilitated. The road or highway within the ROW corridor shall be used to the maximum extent possible for construction and maintenance of new ROWs.	CSU	No buffer
VRM II areas	VRM Class II areas [within the Warm Springs Resource Area] are ROW avoidance areas.		
	Saint George Field Office		
VRM Class I and II areas	VRM Class I and II areas are ROW avoidance areas (subject to designated corridors). New ROWs will be granted in these areas only when feasible alternative routes or designated corridors are not available.	CSU	No buffer

V3.3.1 Additional BLM Stipulations Identified During NEPA Process

This section will detail any additional Conditions of Approval (COA) identified by the BLM for each field office.

V3.4 USFS Standards and Guidelines

USFS Standards and Guidelines are typically associated with the Management Areas for each of the forests. Each Management Area identifies the VQO or SIO for each of the Management Areas. See Section 2.3 for USFS SIOs and VQOs crossed by the TWE Project. Table V6 below summarizes specific standards, guidelines, and use restriction related to visual resources.

TABLE V6 NATIONAL FOREST VISUAL RESOURCE STANDARDS, GUIDELINES AND USE RESTRICTIONS

MANAGEMENT AREA/AREA OF RESTRICTION	RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION	
Manti-La Sal National Forest			
General Direction	Special-Use Management (Non- Recreation) (J01) (III-37)	2) Encourage burying utility and lines, except when: A. Visual quality objectives of the area can be met using an overhead line. B. Burial is not feasible due to soil erosion or geologic hazard or unfavorable geologic conditions. C. Greater long-term site disturbance would result. D. It is not technically feasible, or economically reasonable.	
AREA OF RESTRICTION	DESCRIPTION	CONSTRAINT TYPE	BUFFER/AVOIDANCE AREA
Uinta National Forest			
8.2 Utility Corridor/Communication Sites	Features in these areas may include various non-recreation special uses such as utility corridors or communication sites allocated for long-term site investment. Vegetation management should be limited to activities consistent with installation and maintenance of the utility line or communication site and mitigation against potential erosion and visual quality impacts. Recreation use is limited to incidental dispersed use, such as a trail crossing through the area. Public access restrictions may be imposed within energy transmission, utility, and communication corridors and sites for health, safety, or resource considerations, or to be compatible with management direction for surrounding areas. CSU for all leasing. See other management areas for surrounding area stipulations.	CSU	No buffer

V3.4.1 Additional USFS Stipulations Identified During NEPA Process

This section will detail any additional COAs identified by the USFS for each forest.

V3.5 DEIS Identified Mitigation Measures

Selective mitigation measures address specific environmental impacts or localized conditions and are prescribed on a case by case basis. Selective mitigation measures being developed through the NEPA process are or will be included in the DEIS, FEIS, and ROD. Mitigation measures currently identified in the DEIS, and implementation strategies, are detailed in the following section. For purposes of review and discussion with agencies specific to visual resources, the mitigation measures described in the DEIS are detailed below. Once the measures are finalized, they will be incorporated into this Plan. Table V7 of this Plan will tabulate the final route segments by milepost and indicate the location of sensitive resources (VRM Classes, SIO Classes, road crossing, etc.) and application locations of selective mitigation measures where they can be identified relative to the Project centerline. Selective mitigation measures identified in this Plan will also be shown on detailed map sheets. The maps will show the selected Agency Preferred Alternative alignment on which detailed final design will be based.

The following section discusses mitigation measures identified in the DEIS. These mitigation measures have not been finalized at this time and may be updated, changed, or eliminated in future revisions of this Plan.

VR-1: Remove pinyon-juniper trees only as necessary for construction and maintenance of transmission towers and access roads. Feather the edges of any clearings. Pinyon-juniper trees in the right-of-way (ROW) that are outside of the tower and road construction zone are left in place. Leave other trees in the ROW that would not present a safety or engineering hazard or otherwise interfere with operations. Where feasible, top rather than remove trees that exceed the allowable height. Openings in vegetation for facilities, structures, and roads should mimic, to the extent possible, the size, shape, and characteristics of naturally occurring openings. Effectiveness: This mitigation would substantially reduce impacts in immediate foreground, foreground-middleground, and background viewing situations.

VR-2: Use BLM environmental colors (Standard Environmental Colors, Color Chart CC-001, 2008) for surface coatings of permanent buildings, fences, gates, and tanks at terminal sites. Color selection is based on site-specific assessment at each site. Paint grouped structures the same color to reduce visual complexity and color contrast. Effectiveness: This mitigation would substantially reduce impacts of the terminal sites.

VR-3: Locate structures, roads, and other project elements as far back from road, trail, and river crossings (linear KOPs) as possible, and, where feasible, employ terrain and vegetation to screen views from crossings. Effectiveness: This mitigation would substantially reduce visual contrasts by decreasing the apparent size and extent of structures.

VR-4: In areas with no existing transmission lines move the transmission line (reference line) away from the immediate foreground of stationary (non-linear) KOPs to a distance of 0.5 mile or more. Where feasible, approach and cross linear KOPs such as roads and trails at right angles. Effectiveness: This mitigation would reduce visual contrasts from strong to moderate and moderate to weak.

VR-5: Materials and surface treatments of structures and land disturbances should repeat and/or blend with the existing form, line, color, and texture of the landscape and have little or no reflectivity (non-specular). Effectiveness: This mitigation would substantially reduce visual contrasts.

VR-6: Where paralleling an existing transmission line, where possible, place the structures to match the locations of structures in the existing line. Effectiveness: This mitigation would reduce line and form structure contrasts by blending structures with existing structures.

VR-7: Where possible, position roads at the toe of a slope, at the edge of vegetation openings, and perpendicular with the line of sight. Effectiveness: This mitigation would substantially reduce visual contrasts by blending roads and associated grading into the landscape.

VR-8: Minimize lighting at terminal and construction facilities to the extent permitted by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and down-shield lights to reduce night glare and light pollution. Effectiveness: This mitigation would substantially reduce night-time visual contrasts by diminishing the effects of lighting on the night landscape.

VR-9: Where possible in tree-covered moderate to steep terrain, perform construction operations for towers and conductors with helicopters to reduce the need for access roads and laydown clearings. Effectiveness: This mitigation would substantially reduce visual contrasts by eliminating the need for terrain modification, grading and drainage disturbances and tree removal.

V4.0 MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

Prior to beginning construction, TransWest will assemble an environmental compliance and inspection team to oversee all aspects of construction of the Project. The team will ensure full compliance with BMPs, stipulations, standards and mitigation measures contained in the NTP POD. Supplemental field support for visual resources will be available as needed to provide monitoring and compliance support where necessary. These visual resource analysts will be available to assist in the application and interpretation of visual mitigation measures. Visual support staff would also be available to consult with BLM, USFS or other agency staff or stakeholders.

V5.0 REFERENCES

Bureau of Land Management (BLM). 1986a. Manual H-8410-1 - Visual Resource Inventory. Bureau of Land Management, Washington, D.C.

_____. 1986b. Manual H-8431. Visual Resource Contrast Rating. Bureau of Land Management, Washington, D.C.

_____. 2001. Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (90 Stat. 2743; 43 United States Code §1601, *et seq*.).

National Park Service (NPS). 2008. National Trail System Act of 1968 (16 United States Code §1241-51).

United States Forest Service (USFS). 1995. Agriculture Handbook Number 701 - Landscape Aesthetics, a Handbook for Scenery Management.