

**1997 Revision of the Land and Resource Management Plan  
Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests  
and  
Pawnee National Grassland (ARP)**

October 2006

**Amendment No. 9**

Forest Plan: The Scenery Management System (SMS) replaces the Visual Management System (VMS).

Page Code

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Visual Quality Objectives Map

Superseded

Standard 154, 155, 156

Guideline 157

Standard 168

Scenic Integrity Objectives Map

**Description**

This amendment is based on the environmental assessment conducted for the Forest Plan amendment to change from VMS to SMS and the Forest Plan amendment decision notice and finding of no significant impact. This amendment changes the Forest Plan by changing VMS terminology to SMS terminology, providing a crosswalk from Visual Quality Objectives (VQO) to Scenic Integrity Objectives (SIO) and replacing the visual quality objective map to reflect scenic integrity objectives. The attached map reflects the new SMS classification. Project level validation, assessment and decision making would occur with application of SMS. Forest Plan standards and guidelines are changed to reflect SMS terminology.

Changes to the language in the Forest Plan from VMS terminology to the SMS terminology include the following specific changes:

- Any reference to “VMS” is changed to “SMS”,
- Any reference to “visual quality objective” is changed to “scenic integrity objective”,
- Standards 154, 155, 156, and 168 and guideline 157 are changed to reflect the SMS terminology as follows.

***Standard 154*** – Prohibit management activities that are inconsistent with the scenic integrity objective unless a decision is made to change from the scenic integrity objective. A decision to change from the scenic integrity objective will be documented in a project level NEPA decision document.

***Standard 155*** – The scenic classes, which are a measure of the relative importance or value of landscape to people, are usually accepted as the base for scenic integrity objectives unless special documented circumstances warrant a change.

***Standard 156*** – A High scenic integrity objective will be met within the foreground for all National Scenic and Recreation Trails.

**Standard 168** – Require burial of electrical utility lines of 33 kilovolts or less and telephone lines unless on or more of the following applies:

- a) Scenic integrity objective of the area can be met using an overhead line.
- b) Burial is not feasible due to geological hazard or unfavorable geologic conditions.
- c) Greater long-term site disturbance would result.
- d) It is not technically feasible.

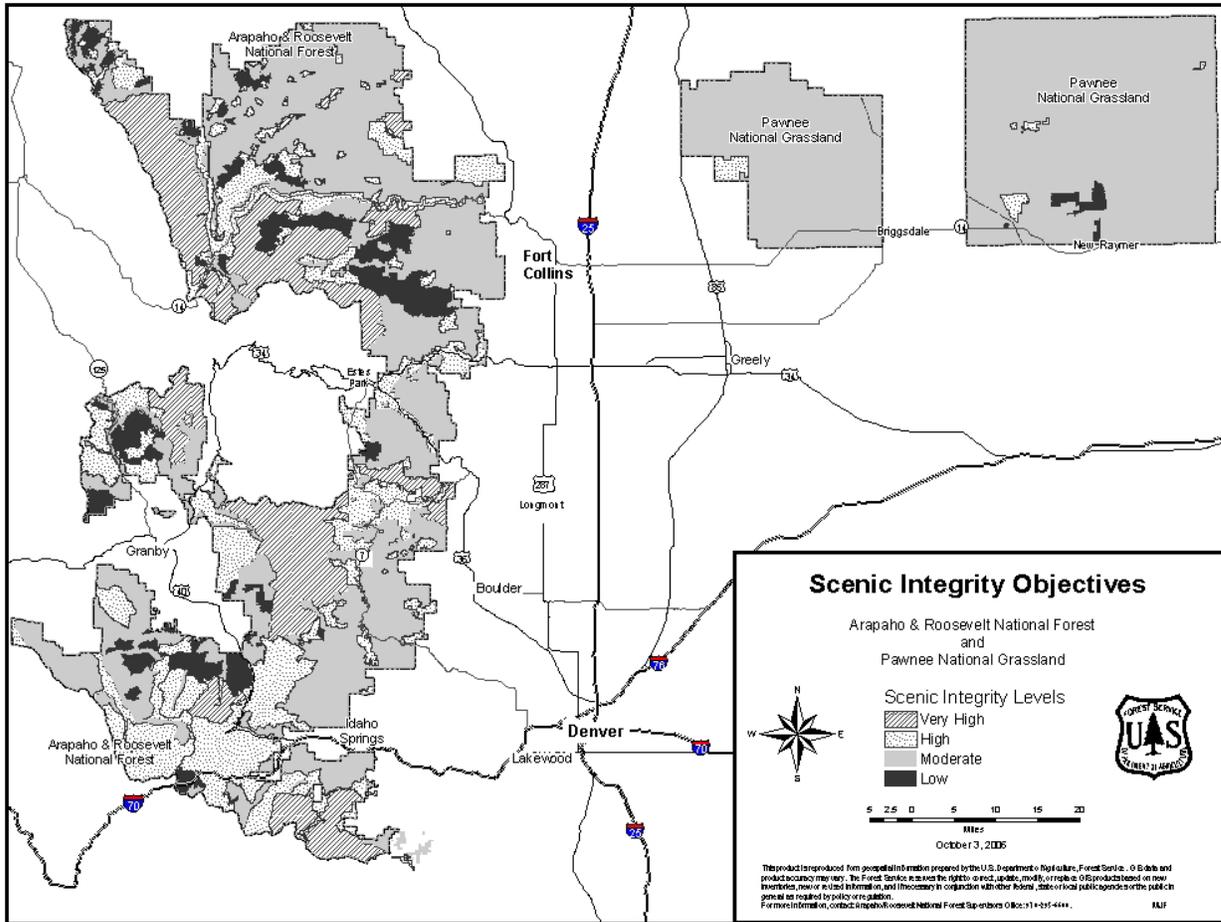
**Guideline 157** – Design and implement management activities to meet the adopted scenic integrity objective for the area as shown on the SIO map enclosed with this document.

The amendment would change the visual quality objectives to scenic integrity objectives through the following crosswalk.

Current Visual Quality Levels*	Proposed Scenic Integrity Levels**
<p><b>Preservation</b> – There are no management activities in areas with this VQO; it is applied to classified Wilderness, Wild Rivers and any administratively designated natural area where only ecological change is allowed. Such minor, localized features such as trails and campsites are allowed.</p>	<p><b>Very High</b> – Refers to 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.</p>
<p><b>Retention</b> – Management activities are not evident; they blend well with the natural landscape and are barely discernible. Timber harvest and roading may occur in areas with a VQO of retention, but they must be designed to appear natural and unnoticeable. This VQO is generally applied to areas in the foreground of sensitive viewing areas.</p>	<p><b>High</b> – Refers to 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.</p>
<p><b>Partial Retention</b> – Alterations to the natural landscape may be apparent, but they are visually subordinate to natural features. Management activities such as timber harvest and roading may occur, but must be designed so they blend into the natural landscape.</p>	<p><b>Moderate</b> – Refers to landscapes where the valued landscape character “appears slightly altered.” Noticeable deviations must remain visually subordinate to the landscape character being viewed.</p>
<p><b>Modification</b> – Management activities may be visually dominant. They must be harmonious with features of the natural landscape, in their size, form, and linear characteristics. Recreation developments, timber harvest units, and roads are examples of elements that may be found in a landscape that meets this VQO. Alterations to the landscape may not be in glaring contrast to natural forms.</p>	<p><b>Low</b> – Refers to landscapes where the valued landscape character “appears moderately altered.” Deviations begin to dominate the 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 the landscape being viewed but compatible or complimentary to the character within.</p>
<p><b>Maximum Modification</b> – Human activity may dominate the characteristic landscape, but should appear as a natural occurrence when viewed as background.</p>	<p><b>Very Low</b> – Refers to landscapes where the valued landscape character “appears heavily altered.” Deviations may strongly dominate the landscape character. They may not borrow from valued attributes such as size, shape, edge effect and pattern on 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.</p>

\* 1997 Revision of the Land and Resource Management Plan, Glossary, November 1997

\*\* Definitions from Landscape Aesthetics: A Handbook for Scenery Management, December 1995



Reason for Amendment

This amendment is needed to gain consistency with Forest Service policy to replace the use of the Visual Management System, currently described in the Forest Plan for managing scenic resources with the Scenery Management System.

/s/ Jacqueline L. Parks

October 6, 2006

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JACQUELINE L. PARKS  
 Acting Forest Supervisor  
 Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests  
 and Pawnee National Grassland

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