

Scenery Management System



Lakes Region in the Western Uintas Management Area

7. Scenery Management System

The WCNF has used the Scenery Management System (SMS) *Landscape Aesthetics A Handbook for Scenery Management; 1995 Agriculture Handbook # 701* (USDA Forest Service. 1995b.) since the late 1990's as a management tool to describe, allocate and provide direction for arranging, planning, and designing landscape attributes relative to the appearance of places and expanses in outdoor settings. SMS is one of four management direction elements with maps and descriptions in this Revised Forest Plan, the others being Management Prescription Categories (MPC), Winter Recreation Classes and summer Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS). SMS is a guideline intended to assist managers and help the public understand the scenic resource management framework for project level decisions and larger area analyses. The system is applied in combination with other management direction such as desired future conditions, standards, guidelines, goals, and objectives to define expectations about management of a particular area of the forest.

The Tables below provide descriptions of the five Landscape Character Themes (LCT) with landscape character descriptions and Scenic Integrity Objects (SIO) applied to the Wasatch-Cache National Forest. These allocations were applied using SMS framework and criteria in conjunction with adjustments for local management direction. SMS maps of alternatives can be found in the Map Packets.

Table 12. Conversion Table for Management Prescription Categories converted to Landscape Character Themes with Scenic Integrity Objectives applied for the Wasatch-Cache National Forest.

Scenery Conversion Table		
Management Prescription Categories	Landscape Character Theme	Scenic Integrity Objective
1.0 – 1.5 Wilderness	Natural Evolving	Very High
2.1-2.3 Wild, Scenic, and Recreational Rivers 2.4 Research Natural Areas 2.6 Undeveloped 2.7 Special Interest Area	Natural Appearing	High
2.5 Forest Service Scenic Byway Highway 89 – Logan Canyon, Highway 150 – Mirror Lake Highway 39 – Mouth of Ogden Canyon - Monte Cristo Segment, Highway 190 – Big Cottonwood Canyon, Highway 210 – Little Cottonwood Canyon	Developed Natural Appearing	High
3.1 Aquatic Habitat	Natural Appearing	High

Scenery Conversion Table		
Management Prescription Categories	Landscape Character Theme	Scenic Integrity Objective
3.1a Aquatic Habitat Emphasis	Natural Appearing	High
3.1w Watershed Emphasis	Natural Appearing	High
3.2 Terrestrial Habitat	Natural Appearing	Moderate
3.2d Terrestrial Habitat - developed	Natural Appearing	Moderate
3.2u Terrestrial Habitat - undeveloped	Natural Appearing	High
4.1 Backcountry non-motorized	Natural Appearing	High
4.2 Recreation non-motorized	Natural Appearing	High
4.3 Backcountry Motorized	Natural Appearing	High
4.4 Recreation Motorized	Natural Appearing	High
4.5 Developed Recreation Areas Along Scenic Byway Corridors within ½ mile of road. Includes campgrounds, Trailheads, overlooks and so forth.	Developed Natural Appearing	High
4.5 Developed Recreation Area Ski areas –Snowbird, Solitude, Brighton, Snowbasin and Alta	Resort Natural Setting	High
4.5 Developed Recreation Area Pineview Reservoir	Water Recreation Rural Appearing	High
5.1 Forested Vegetation Multiple resource objectives	Natural Appearing	Moderate
5.2 Forest Vegetation Timber growth and yield	Natural Appearing	Low
6.1 Rangeland Vegetation ... Multiple resource objectives	Natural Appearing	High
6.1 Rangeland Vegetation Livestock forage production	Natural Appearing	High
8.0 Concentrated Development Areas Communication sites	Natural Appearing	Moderate

Scenery Conversion Table		
Management Prescription Categories	Landscape Character Theme	Scenic Integrity Objective
8.1 Mineral Development Emphasis	Natural Appearing	Moderate
Utility Corridor (Not mapped as a Management Prescription)	Natural Appearing	Low
Utility Corridor (Not mapped as a Management Prescription)	Developed Natural Appearing	Low

Table 13. Landscape Character Themes with Landscape Character Description and Scenic Integrity Objectives definitions for the Wasatch-Cache National Forest.

Wasatch-Cache National Forest Landscape Character Theme with Landscape Character Description and Scenic Integrity Objective Definition Table		
Landscape Character Theme	Landscape Character Description	
<i>Natural Evolving</i>	The natural evolving landscape character originates primarily from natural disturbances and succession of plants, with subtle changes due to indirect human activities. The existing landscape character generally continues to change gradually over time through natural processes. Notes: 1. Fire use or large-scale forest mortality due to insects and disease may be responsible for dramatic changes to the landscape character of an area, but <i>in</i> each of these cases <i>they</i> would be considered a natural process. 2. Change in the natural evolving landscape character from active range allotments of sheep and/or cattle. The landscape should appear natural to most recreation users other than the presence of cattle and/or sheep (Sight, sound, smell).	
	SIO	Landscape Integrity Description
	Very High	The valued landscape character "is" intact with only subtle if any deviations. The Natural Evolving landscape character and sense of place is expressed at the highest possible level.
	Landscape Elements	Landscape Integrity Attributes
	Land Form	No cultural modification.
	Vegetation	Change in Vegetation mosaics from Wildland Fire. No vegetation management activities.

Wasatch-Cache National Forest Landscape Character Theme with Landscape Character Description and Scenic Integrity Objective Definition Table			
Landscape Character Theme	Landscape Character Description		
		Water Form	Natural lakes, pond and water courses.
		Cultural Features	Active range allotments of sheep and /or cattle. Trails and rustic signing within immediate foreground (0 to 300 feet). See ROS class Wilderness/Primitive and Wilderness/Semi Primitive.
<i>Natural Appearing</i>	The existing landscape character has been influenced by both direct and indirect human activities, but appears natural to the majority of viewers. Natural elements such as native trees, shrubs, grasses, forbs, rock outcrops and streams or lakes dominate the views. While there is evidence of human influence from historic use, campgrounds, small organization camps, rustic structures and management activity, it is part of the <i>valued built environment in the</i> landscape to the majority of viewers.		
	SIO	Landscape Integrity Description	
	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.	
		Landscape Elements	Landscape Integrity Attributes
		Land Form	Dams with vegetated faces. Roads where the geometry of road in cuts and fills would not be evident, but would appear to be part of the landscape.
<i>Natural Appearing</i>		Vegetation	Mechanical treatment and fire use mimics natural appearing openings, lines, edges and form found in the surrounding landscape. Fuel breaks are mitigated to mimic natural appearing lines, forms and edges found in the existing landscape. Manage vegetation for properly functioning condition at landscape scale (see Revised Forest Plan Vegetation Landscape Structure and Pattern Types for Properly Functioning Condition Table).
		Water Form	Reservoirs that have minimum water levels maintained for conservation pools and canals that mimic natural appearing lines, forms and edges found in the existing landscape. Stock ponds that mimic natural appearing lines, forms and edges found in the existing landscape.

Wasatch-Cache National Forest Landscape Character Theme with Landscape Character Description and Scenic Integrity Objective Definition Table			
Landscape Character Theme	Landscape Character Description		
Natural Appearing		Cultural Features	Campgrounds, group sites, organization camps, picnic areas, recreation cabins, and organizational sites follow architectural themes and harmonize with the surrounding landscape. Historic sites are maintained or enhanced to propagate their inherent values. Roadway guardrails integrate into the surrounding landscape. Bridges complement the surrounding landscape. Fences are subordinate to the landscape by use of color and blending with the historical cultural context of the communities. Parking lots, trailheads, restrooms are present. Architecture is thematic and borrows from the form, line, color and texture of the surrounding landscape. Parking lots, roads, and other amenities appear to be part of the natural appearing landscape by eliminating the geometry of the built feature upon the landscape. For example, road cuts do not slice through the landscape, but are shaped, contoured and constructed so that the landscape is only interrupted by the track of road.
	SIO	Landscape Integrity Description	
	Moderate	Noticeable deviations remain visually subordinate to the valued landscape character being viewed.	
		Landscape Element	Landscape Integrity Attributes
		Land Form	Dams, road cuts and fills with slope rounding and contouring with minimal vegetation of grasses etc.
		Vegetation	Mechanical treatments and fire use are subordinate to the surrounding landscape by repeating the form, line and edge found in the surrounding landscape. Fuel breaks are mitigated to mimic natural appearing lines, forms and edges found in the existing landscape.
		Water Form	Stock ponds, reservoirs, canals.
		Cultural Features	Electronic Sites harmonize with the surrounding landscape. Oil fields repeat the form and line of adjacent landscapes and are compatible in color and texture. Mineral development sites are of such a scale that they are subordinate to, and borrow the form, line, color and texture from the surrounding landscape.

Wasatch-Cache National Forest Landscape Character Theme with Landscape Character Description and Scenic Integrity Objective Definition Table			
Landscape Character Theme	Landscape Character Description		
	SIO	Landscape Integrity Description	
	Low	Deviations dominate the landscape character being viewed. However, activities borrow from the form, line, color, texture and scale found in the landscape character being viewed that are compatible with the surroundings.	
		Landscape Elements	Landscape Integrity Attributes
		Land form	Should be contoured to fit the form, line, color and texture of the surrounding landscape.
		Vegetation	Openings in vegetation dominate, but pull from the forms, lines and texture of the surrounding landscape.
		Water Form	No water forms under this management.
		Cultural Features	Utility towers' and poles' scale are dominant, but the color integrates into the surrounding landscape.
Landscape Character Theme	Landscape Character Description		
<i>Developed Natural Appearing</i>	This landscape character theme is characteristic of National, National Forest and State scenic byways with developed recreation facilities, concentrated use areas and undeveloped recreation impacts within the foreground of the viewshed (1/2 mile). In these areas, the roadway, recreation amenities, and development are anticipated features in the landscape. For users these amenities are part of the valued natural appearing landscape. Users of these amenities are attracted to the natural appearing landscape, but desire a moderate to easy interaction with the landscape through the use of these amenities. This landscape character is adjacent to Natural Evolving, and Natural Appearing landscape character themes and should draw from, complement and harmonize with these themes.		
	SIO	Landscape Integrity Description	
	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 Developed Natural Appearing landscape character so completely, and at such scale, that they are not dominant.	
		Landscape Elements	Landscape Integrity Attributes
		Land Form	Dams with vegetated faces. Roads and trails where the geometry of travel way in cuts and fills would not be evident, but would appear to be part of the landscape.

Wasatch-Cache National Forest Landscape Character Theme with Landscape Character Description and Scenic Integrity Objective Definition Table			
Landscape Character Theme	Landscape Character Description		
<i>Developed Natural Appearing</i>		Vegetation	Mechanical treatment mimics natural appearing lines, forms and edges found in the landscape. Fire use mimics natural appearing lines, forms and edges found in the landscape. Fuel breaks are mitigated to mimic natural appearing lines, forms and edges found in the landscape. Parking lots with more than 20 spaces should have a minimum of 10% of the interior parking area landscaped. Interior landscape area should be of such a size that the vegetation could sustain itself without irrigation. Landscape areas should be dispersed throughout the parking area to effectively break up the expanse of the parking lot. Manage vegetation for properly functioning condition at landscape scale (see Revised Forest Plan Vegetation Landscape Structure and Pattern Types for Properly Functioning Condition Table).
		Water Form	Reservoirs that have minimum water levels maintained for conservation pools and canals that mimic natural appearing lines, forms and edges found in the landscape.

Wasatch-Cache National Forest Landscape Character Theme with Landscape Character Description and Scenic Integrity Objective Definition Table			
Landscape Character Theme	Landscape Character Description		
		Cultural Features	Campgrounds, group sites, organization camps, picnic areas, recreation cabins, interpretive structures and organizational sites follow architectural themes and harmonize with the surrounding landscape. Historic sites are maintained or enhanced to propagate their inherent values. Roadway guardrails integrate into the surrounding landscape. Bridges complement the surrounding landscape. Fences are subordinate to the landscape by use of color and blending with the historical cultural context of the communities. Parking lots, trailheads, restrooms are present. Architecture is thematic and borrows from the form, line, color and texture of the surrounding landscape. Parking lots, roads, and other amenities appear to be part of the natural appearing landscape by eliminating the geometry of the built feature upon the landscape. For example road cuts do not slice through the landscape, but are shaped, contoured and constructed so that the landscape is only interrupted by the track of road.
<i>Resort Natural Setting</i>	This landscape character theme is characteristic of developed recreation facilities such as ski resorts and recreation resort communities. In these areas, recreation amenities are the main attraction for people and why they come to an area. Facilities are designed and constructed to harmonize with the natural setting. While the form of the base areas facilities dominate the foreground views, it declines as it transitions into the mountain and becomes subordinate in the middleground and background views. Likewise, recreational opportunities provided in base areas rely more heavily on constructed facilities, while those higher on the mountain become increasingly oriented toward the natural setting. This landscape character is adjacent to Natural Evolving, Natural Appearing and Developed Natural Appearing landscape character themes and should draw from, complement and harmonize with these themes.		
<i>Resort Natural Setting</i>	SIO	Landscape Integrity Description	
	High	Landscapes where the valued landscape character "appears" intact. Recreation amenities are designed and maintained so that they complement and harmonize with the natural appearing landscape.	
		Landscape Elements	Landscape Integrity Attributes

Wasatch-Cache National Forest Landscape Character Theme with Landscape Character Description and Scenic Integrity Objective Definition Table			
Landscape Character Theme	Landscape Character Description		
		Land Form	Parking lots, roads, and travel ways appear to be part of the natural setting by eliminating the geometry of the built feature upon the landscape and bringing the contour of the existing landscape into the built structure. For example, road cuts do not slice through the landscape, but are shaped, contoured and constructed so that the landscape is only interrupted by the track of road.
		Vegetation	Ski runs and play areas draw from the forms, lines, colors and textures found in the surrounding landscape. Parking lots with more than 20 spaces should have minimum of 10% of the interior parking area landscaped. Interior landscape area should be of such a size that the vegetation could sustain itself without irrigation. Landscape areas should be dispersed throughout the parking area to effectively break up the expanse of the parking lot. Manage vegetation for properly functioning condition at landscape scale (see Revised Forest Plan Vegetation Landscape Structure and Pattern Types for Properly Functioning Condition Table).
		Water Form	Detention and retention basin for water run off, landscaped ponds and pools.
		Cultural Features	Parking lots follow contours of the land and are visually broken to reduce their dominance. Ski trails are subordinate to adjacent LCT landscapes by repeating openings found in the surrounding landscape. Trams and ski lifts blend with vegetation or lines and colors found in the resort scene. Architecture harmonizes with the surrounding landscape visually and is in context with other structures found in the resort.
Water Recreation Rural Appearing	This theme is characteristic of Pineview Reservoir recreation complex. The scenic qualities of Ogden Valley attract visitors, and maintaining rural character is important to many landowners in this area. In these areas recreation amenities are the main attraction for people and why they come to an area. The cultural setting of farms, fields, pastures, influences development on the private lands. Housing, businesses, roads and other developments dominate some views.		
	SIO	Landscape Integrity Description	

Wasatch-Cache National Forest Landscape Character Theme with Landscape Character Description and Scenic Integrity Objective Definition Table			
Landscape Character Theme	Landscape Character Description		
	High	Landscapes where the valued landscape character "appears" intact. Recreation amenities are designed and maintained so that they complement and harmonize with the valued landscape character.	
		Landscape Elements	Landscape Integrity Attributes
		Land Form	Parking lots, roads, and travel ways appear to be part of the Rural setting by repeating the geometry of both the built and natural environment on the landscape. Contouring of cuts and fills of travel ways would be rounded where retaining walls that incorporate rural type materials are not used. Beach areas, boat ramps, and trails are present.
		Vegetation	Trees, shrubs and ground cover should be native species with minimal use of non-natives. Parking lots with more than 20 spaces should have minimum of 10% of the interior parking area landscaped. Interior landscape area should be of such a size that the vegetation could sustain itself without irrigation. Landscape areas should be dispersed throughout the parking area to effectively break up the expanse of the parking lot.
		Water Form	Reservoirs, ponds.
		Cultural Features	Campgrounds, group sites, picnic areas, interpretive structures and marinas follow architectural themes and harmonize with the surrounding landscape.

Wasatch-Cache National Forest Landscape Character Theme with Landscape Character Description and Scenic Integrity Objective Definition Table																			
Landscape Character Theme	Landscape Character Description																		
Natural 1985 Forest Plan	The natural landscape character originates primarily from natural disturbances and succession of plants, with subtle changes due to indirect human activities. The existing landscape character generally continues to change gradually over time through natural processes. Each degree of change in integrity describes a different degree of acceptable alteration of the natural landscape. The degree of visual alteration is measured in terms of visual contrast with the surrounding natural landscape. This LCT represents the existing 1985 Forest Plan direction which used Visual Quality Objectives (VQO) as developed under the Visual Management System. In AH 701 a cross walk for terminology and component changes from the Visual Management System to SMS is provided. The following is an application of those changes: <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Visual Management System</th><th>Scenery Management System</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>VQO – Preservation</td><td>Very High Scenic Integrity Objective</td></tr> <tr> <td>VQO – Retention</td><td>High Scenic Integrity Objective</td></tr> <tr> <td>VQO – Partial Retention</td><td>Moderate Scenic Integrity Objective</td></tr> <tr> <td>VQO – Modification</td><td>Low Scenic Integrity Objective</td></tr> </tbody> </table> (Note: Natural LCT was only applied to alternative 4, existing 1985 Forest Plan) <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>SIO</th><th>Landscape Integrity Description</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Very High</td><td>The viewed landscape character "is" intact with only subtle if any deviations. Allows for ecological change only. Management activities, except for very low visual impact recreation facilities, are prohibited.</td></tr> <tr> <td>High</td><td>Landscapes where the viewed 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. For example, clearings created by timber harvest must be similar in size and shape to natural openings in the landscape being viewed so that, when ground cover has become established, the clearing looks completely natural.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Moderate</td><td>Noticeable deviations in the viewed landscape, must remain visually subordinate to the landscape character being viewed. For example, clearings created by timber harvest are evident, but the natural character of the landscape is still the primary influence of the view.</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Visual Management System	Scenery Management System	VQO – Preservation	Very High Scenic Integrity Objective	VQO – Retention	High Scenic Integrity Objective	VQO – Partial Retention	Moderate Scenic Integrity Objective	VQO – Modification	Low Scenic Integrity Objective	SIO	Landscape Integrity Description	Very High	The viewed landscape character "is" intact with only subtle if any deviations. Allows for ecological change only. Management activities, except for very low visual impact recreation facilities, are prohibited.	High	Landscapes where the viewed 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. For example, clearings created by timber harvest must be similar in size and shape to natural openings in the landscape being viewed so that, when ground cover has become established, the clearing looks completely natural.	Moderate	Noticeable deviations in the viewed landscape, must remain visually subordinate to the landscape character being viewed. For example, clearings created by timber harvest are evident, but the natural character of the landscape is still the primary influence of the view.
Visual Management System	Scenery Management System																		
VQO – Preservation	Very High Scenic Integrity Objective																		
VQO – Retention	High Scenic Integrity Objective																		
VQO – Partial Retention	Moderate Scenic Integrity Objective																		
VQO – Modification	Low Scenic Integrity Objective																		
SIO	Landscape Integrity Description																		
Very High	The viewed landscape character "is" intact with only subtle if any deviations. Allows for ecological change only. Management activities, except for very low visual impact recreation facilities, are prohibited.																		
High	Landscapes where the viewed 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. For example, clearings created by timber harvest must be similar in size and shape to natural openings in the landscape being viewed so that, when ground cover has become established, the clearing looks completely natural.																		
Moderate	Noticeable deviations in the viewed landscape, must remain visually subordinate to the landscape character being viewed. For example, clearings created by timber harvest are evident, but the natural character of the landscape is still the primary influence of the view.																		

Wasatch-Cache National Forest Landscape Character Theme with Landscape Character Description and Scenic Integrity Objective Definition Table		
Landscape Character Theme	Landscape Character Description	
	Low	Deviations dominate the landscape character being viewed. However, activities, structures, and roads borrow from the form, line, color, texture and scale found in the landscape character being viewed that they are compatible with the surroundings.