Lower Joseph Creek Restoration Project
Scenery Resources

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Introduction

Scenic quality is an important amenity in our lives. People's interests and expectations regarding ecosystems help establish desired aesthetic conditions for the varied landscapes. Scenery provides the setting for all activities experienced by forest visitors. Each recreational setting is comprised of scenic attributes that are derived by the environmental context of topography, geology, and climate. These underlying factors are expressed and highlighted by the scenic attributes that they support. Scenery, just as any other resource, must be cared for and managed for future generations. The activities proposed by the Lower Joseph Creek Restoration Project (LJCRP) potentially affect the current and future condition of these valued scenic resources. Managing scenery resources involves the process of analyzing effects, implementing scenic character goals and applying scenic conservation design features to achieve the WWNF Forest Plan desired conditions and direction for scenery resources.

The landscape character goal for the LJCRP area is to maintain a naturally appearing to slightly altered landscape character that expresses predominately natural processes in the scenic viewsheds and travel routes. A transitional approach to move the high density stands towards a lower density, on open mosaic pattern and resilient composition, becoming more fire resilient and ecologically sustainable in time is desirable for the landscape character. Enhancement of large tree viewing opportunities from travel routes, viewpoints, and recreation destinations is desirable. There is opportunity to increase landscape variety by creating and maintaining a series of specific plant stages that leave a diversity of different age classes and a variety of natural appearing open spaces. From a scenery enhancement approach, ecologically sound landscapes can also be aesthetically pleasing as well as sustainable, being reflective of the inherent natural disturbance regimes that are in scale to the appropriate vegetative type, whether it is the natural role of fire, insects and/or disease. When the amount of disturbance exceeds the natural ecosystem parameters, the risk of unnatural catastrophic level disturbances increases and can cause a dramatic change to the existing scenery and landscape character.

The primary purpose of this report is to disclose the effects of the alternatives to scenery resources.

Affected Environment

Existing Condition

Existing Landscape Character

Local residents, recreation users and tourists all value the scenery within the LJCRP area. The landscape character is predominately a naturally appearing to slightly altered forested environment viewed in the foreground, middle-ground and background of the viewsheds. In the project area the landscape variety ranges from the common landscape character type typical of the Wallowa Mountains to unique habitats located throughout the landscape and spectacular scenery viewed from the Joseph Creek Wild River. The small character type of the Wallowas is unique because it is completely surrounded by another landscape type, the Blue Mountains type. (USDA 1982).

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[1] This report used the Puderbaugh Vegetation Management Project report (September 20, 2012) as a template, incorporating content for the Lower Joseph Creek Restoration Project area. The Puderbaugh report was completed by Barbara L. Jackson, Okanogan-Wenatchee Forest L.A, and Donna M. Mattson, Wallowa-Whitman Forest L.A,.

The LJCRP is located east of Oregon Highway 3, west of Forest Road 46, with the NFS boundary with Nez Perce lands on the northern end, and private lands on the southern end. Several road corridors travel through the project area. The LJCRP is visible from the Joseph Canyon Overlook (on highway 3), but is not visible from towns or private residences.

The landform is seen as a rolling moderately to steeply dissected mountain range located in numerous stream lined valleys. The vegetation patterns are classified into three primary potential vegetation groups (PVGs): dry upland forest, moist upland forest, and grasslands/shrublands. The PVGs are sites with similar characteristics and responses to disturbance; they provide a foundation for deriving the natural (historic) range of variability (RV) for vegetation. The vegetation and disturbance specialist reports provide more information on the characteristics of these PVGs and their HRV.

Dominant scenic features of the LJCRP area include open ponderosa pine forests, large, open pine, and larch forests with fall color, grassy forest floors, canyon lands with timbered stringers and basalt rims, basalt and granite rock outcrops, deciduous riparian trees and shrubs, and rustic wooden "ruins" and old homesteads. The table below summarizes some of the valued landscape attributes, and special features of the LJCRP area. Ecologically sound landscapes can be aesthetically pleasing as well as sustainable, being reflective of the inherent natural disturbance regimes (including the natural role of fire, insects and pathogens). Landscape conditions that depart from natural ranges of variation can cause uncharacteristic disturbance severity, which can lead to a dramatic change to the existing scenery.

Vegetation is the primary component that would be affected by management practices considered for the LJCRP. The existing and desired vegetation conditions are described in the "Vegetation and disturbance regimes" section of this Chapter. Landscape variety could be increased by creating a more natural distribution of forest structural and age classes, including natural appearing open spaces.

The current landscape character is predominately a naturally appearing to slightly altered forested environment viewed in the foreground, middleground and background of viewsheds. The landscape variety ranges from the common landscape character type typical of the Wallowa Mountains to unique habitats located throughout the landscape and spectacular scenery viewed along the Lower Joseph Creek Wild River.

Restoration objectives to move the landscape toward a more natural range of variability in vegetation structure, composition, and disturbance regimes is consistent with desired conditions for scenic character. Enhancement of large tree viewing opportunities from travel routes, viewpoints, and recreation destinations is also desirable.

In general, vegetative patterns vary from areas of highly textured to coarsely textured mosaic openings in the forest canopy to more open grassy meadow areas. The most dominant species are Ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir or Grand fir with understory shrubs and grasses along lower elevations and Ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, Engelmann Spruce and Lodgepole pine at the middle to higher elevations. Fall color of western larch, and huckleberry are highly scenic. Joseph Creek and riparian areas add distinct variety in vegetation, fall colors and presence of water. The LJCRP also has outcrops of basalt, and sparsely vegetated scablands. Fire suppression activities, grazing, vegetation management and road building have been a dominant influence on the existing landscape character of the LJCRP area. In addition, past high severity fires have created some areas of homogenous, young forest stands on the eastern side of the project area.

Valued landscape attributes of the LJCRP area

Vegetation type	Valued Landscape Attributes	Special and Distinctive Features
Dry Forest	Ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir, western larch, mallowleaf ninebark, common snowberry	Open park like stands of ponderosa pine and larch, with an understory of grasses. Basalt rock outcrops. Open park-like stands of pine allow filtered light to reach the grassy forest floor to create a unique, open but sheltered experience. This openness provides deep visual penetration into the forest, allowing views of other attributes such as rock outcrops, water features, and framed vistas.
Grasslands	Bunchgrass grasslands, sedge turf, heath or dwarf-shrubland, boulder field, and sparsely covered forb communities.	Cliffs, talus, steep verticality, rugged peaks, snow fields. The eastside plateau grasslands are contrasted by adjacent pine forests. The grasslands allow the contours of the landform to be expressed providing rounded curves and bends to be a part of the scene. Canyon grasslands are often punctuated by basalt rims and incised by steep drainages. Stringers of timber create dark contrasting lines vertical to the slope, defining the small draws. Riparian vegetation also provides color and shape variation. Slopes are often very steep lending a severity to the landscape.
Moist Forest	Douglas-fir, ponderosa pine, grand fir, western larch and western white pine Engelmann spruce, lodgepole pine and subalpine fir, Rocky Mountain maple, serviceberry, and a large variety of other shrub species.	Deep shade, and heavy vegetation. This component is so diverse that much can be done in the way of management, so long as the design of those management activities is careful to avoid non-natural linear or geometric patterns, or hard un-feathered lines.
Riparian herblands and shrublands	Black cottonwood quaking aspen, white alder, and willows.	Linear stringers of deciduous trees and shrubs amidst grass slopes. The eastside riparian shrublands are very brushy, providing variety in form as well as fall color. These habitats are often surrounded by grassy midslope and/or coniferous forest, which provide visual diversity in color and form. The deciduous vegetation provides a ribbon of fall color amidst the surrounding coniferous forest or grasslands.

Landscape Scenic Viewsheds

The LJCRP area has been divided into 4 separate landscape areas for assessing scenic effects, including:

1. Oregon State Highway 3, Joseph Canyon Overlook
2. Joseph Canyon Wild and Scenic River Corridor
3. Table Mountain
4. Forest Road 46, Cold Spring Ridge/Forest Road 4680

Oregon State Highway 3, Joseph Canyon Overlook

Joseph Viewpoint located on State Highway 3, is designated as a Level 1 (critical) viewshed within the WWNF and over 76,000 visitors stop at the site annually.

Joseph Canyon Wild and Scenic River Corridor

Joseph Creek is classified as a Wild River from one mile downstream from Cougar Creek (Joseph Creek Ranch) to the WWNF boundary, for a total of 8.6 miles. Joseph Creek's outstandingly remarkable values

include scenery, recreation, geology, fish, wildlife and history. The spectacular natural setting, ruggedness, inaccessibility and steep topography of Joseph Creek and the surrounding environs of Joseph Canyon create a lasting impression on those who view it. The river corridor provides a spectacular example of the steep, rimrock-exposed canyons found in northeast Oregon.

Access to Joseph Canyon and Joseph Creek is limited due to remoteness, steep and rugged terrain and climatic conditions. Hiking, horsepacking, birdwatching, wildlife viewing, fishing and big game hunting can be enjoyed in a solitary manner. The canyon contains examples of northeast Oregon geology, with Columbia River basalt canyons exposed by downcutting of rivers. The 2,000 foot deep canyon is virtually unmodified and its spectacular details, such as steep sideslopes, basalt layers and dikes, can be easily viewed from the canyon rim. Joseph Creek is an important wild steelhead and wild rainbow trout fishery. Wildlife includes bighorn sheep, deer, elk, bear, river otter and cougar. The area plays a vital role in Nez Perce Tribal history. Most important is the proximity of the river corridor to the winter gathering place for Chief Joseph and his band at the mouth of Joseph Creek.

Table Mountain
Table Mountain accessed by Forest Service Road 4650, provides scenic viewpoints south and west across grassy hillsides and forested stringers into Joseph Canyon and the Joseph Creek Wild and Scenic River, and has been identified as an important place to view scenery by local residents.

Forest Road 46, Cold Spring Ridge/Forest Road 4680
Red Hill Lookout is located on Forest Road 46 and straddles the hydrologic divide between Upper and Lower Joseph Creek Watershed, and about 2,300 people visit the viewpoint each year.
Cold Spring Ridge forms the northeastern boundary of the project area, within the Hells Canyon National recreation area (HCNRA) between the Cook Ridge and Wildhorse Inventoried Roadless areas.

Scenic Attractiveness

"Scenic attractiveness is the primary indicator of the intrinsic scenic beauty of a landscape and of the positive response it evokes in people." Based on commonly held perceptions of the beauty of landform, vegetation pattern, composition, surface water characteristics, and land use patterns and cultural features, the scenery is rated on a three point scale:

- Class A – Distinctive, where landform, vegetation patterns, water characteristics and cultural features combine to provide unusual, unique or outstanding scenic quality.
- Class B – Typical, where landform, vegetation patterns, water characteristics and cultural features combine to provide ordinary or common scenic quality.
- Class C – Indistinctive, where the landscape does not have characteristics that add to the variety, unity, vividness, mystery, intactness, order, harmony or uniqueness of the scenery.

The LJCRP has areas of Class A and Class B scenic attractiveness. The scenic attractiveness rating is applied to the process of evaluating the value of the area's scenery resource.

Sense of Place

Sense of place is addressed to display how the area is perceived by the public, and to display the physical setting in which the project area lies. The Wallowa-Whitman NF uses the Sense of Place definition in Appendix J : Sense of Place: *"The identity of a place created by people's social meanings and attachments, including valued scenery and recreation settings, cultural and spiritual values, economic, social and biophysical characteristics.*" Managers using the concept of sense of place must define a specific framework for the definition and use of sense of place. The sense of place for the LJCRP area is the "big backyard" with a variety of year round seasonal recreation activities that occur including from developed and dispersed camping, hunting, sight-seeing, driving for pleasure, huckleberry picking, mountain biking, equestrian riding, snowmobile riding, cross country skiing, and other dispersed use.

The Forest Service has developed the Recreation NICHE process for recreation facilities analysis. This process was developed to define the particular recreation niche the forest could provide for the public. The Forest defined spatial units that had particular characteristics which could support a defined set of recreational experiences. The WWNF conducted a recreation facilities analysis which characterized the forest and defined spaces in terms of use and sense of place.

The project area lies primarily within the Wallowa Mountains. The characterization of this area is as follows:

W-W Niche Statement

A Forest's recreational program niche is reflective of its "defining or unique characteristics and abilities". For the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, this niche spans 2.3 million acres from the central Blue and Wallowa Mountains in northeast Oregon across the Snake River into the Seven Devils Mountains in western Idaho. These diverse landscapes distinguish the Forest's 3 main areas, Hells Canyon, the Wallowa Mountains, and the Blue Mountains. Visitors and local residents return to the Forest each year to enjoy a unique blend of: outstanding rugged scenery, backcountry and wilderness exploration; a variety of wild and scenic rivers and mountain lakes; and Native American and pioneer history.

Wallowa Mountains – Home of the Eagle Cap Wilderness, this setting is classically pristine with high alpine areas and powerful landscapes. Several Wild and Scenic rivers and high elevation lakes serve as destinations.

Lower Joseph Creek Restoration Project Area - The LJCRP area is generally east of highway 3, and west of Cold Spring Ridge; portions of the project area are within the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area.

Existing Scenic Integrity

Every landscape changes over time, in turn, the landscape vegetative character continues to change whether it is actively managed or allowed to naturally evolve. In the LJCRP area, there has been a change in historic vegetative species and vegetative patterns as described in the vegetation and disturbance specialist's reports for this project. The changes are mainly attributed to past timber sales and fire exclusion. In a majority of the area, the resulting patterns are becoming less sustainable in the long term due to high risk of future fire potential and existing disease outbreaks that contribute to trees dying and a degraded forested setting environment for the recreation settings and designated travel route viewsheds located in the area. There is a higher risk of wildfire as described in the disturbance specialist's report for this project. The species of vegetation and spatial distribution of plant communities that have been affected by or resulted from fire suppression activities are evident to visitors; however, they are not widely understood to be the result of human intervention in the fire regimes. These effects of different vegetation communities and understory vegetation are relatively subtle from a visual standpoint and not strongly linked with the more common perception regarding fire, such as black and silver snags, brown needles and black charred trunks. For purpose of scenic analysis, subsequent references to the "effects of fire" refer to the obvious visual evidence that occurs as a direct result of fire rather than the subtle effects of different species of vegetation and spatial distribution of plant communities that are often in advanced succession. Vegetation patterns have changed from historic composition and pattern by fire suppression, timber harvest, and grazing over the last one hundred years.

Scenic integrity is the amount of human caused deviation in form, line, color, and texture of a landscape. Scenic integrity serves as a frame of reference for measuring scenic integrity levels based on the valued attributes of the existing landscape character being viewed. The degrees of integrity vary from VERY HIGH to VERY LOW. Scenic Integrity is measured on the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest through Visual Quality Objective levels defined by the USFS Visual Management System's Chapter 1 USDA Handbook # 462.
The following table displays the proportion of the LJCRP area in each scenic integrity level found within the project area, the conditions associated with each level, and the general management effects allowed.

The proportion of the LJCRP area in each of four scenic integrity classes found in the LJCRP

Scenic integrity level	Visual quality objective	Condition and allowed management effects	Acres	% of project area
Very high	Preservation	Unaltered. Allows ecological changes only	2,371	2
High	Retention	Appears unaltered. Management activities are not visually evident.	7,494	8
Moderate	Partial retention	Slightly altered. Management activities remain visually subordinate to the characteristic landscape.	52,996	54
Low	Modification	Moderately altered. Management activities may dominate landscape, but must borrow from naturally established form, line, color, or texture.	35,717	36
		Total	98,578	100

The existing scenic integrity of the LJCRP meets the visual quality objective of the Forest Plan and has a range of scenic integrity levels from very high to low. Within the project area there are evidences of past activities. Partial removal treatments can be seen in partial retention areas, stumps are apparent. Along with the evidences of treatments are the indirect effects of additional variety in color and texture as deciduous shrubs and larch species have begun to take hold. Areas of retention visual quality objective are intact. The scenic integrity levels meet the Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines for a natural appearing foreground and middleground from the designated travel routes and viewsheds and areas of natural appearing to slightly altered in some middleground and background areas.

Existing Scenic Stability

A new scenery indicator has been developed for use within the USFS Scenery Management System (applied in this analysis according to procedures described in the 9/20/06 Draft Appendix J of the SMS Handbook #701). Scenic stability is the degree to which the desired scenic character can be sustained through time and ecological progression. For the LJCRP area, the existing scenic stability analysis focuses on the single major scenery attribute of vegetation. Scenic stability is thus assessed through field observation and vegetation and disturbance analyses of the departure between existing and desired conditions. Ecosystem changes to other minor scenery attributes such as landform, rock outcrops, and winter snowfall are not as critical to the LJCRP area's scenic character as its vegetation, since these changes are relatively stable over time regardless of fire behavior and human activities.

Evaluating scenic stability is done by considering conditions necessary to sustain desired scenic character of stands within the natural and historic range of the landscape. Appropriate stand density, species composition, and fuel loads are necessary for stands to maintain the inherent characteristics through their lifecycle. When trends such as increasing stand density, encroachment of less resilient species, increasing fuel loads, and high levels of mortality exist, the expected consequences are change in the scenic character that are beyond the historic scale. Examples of these consequences are large canopy openings from intense wildfires, large stands of dead and dying timber, and loss of distinctive characteristic such as open, large tree character pine stands, lodgepole stand mosaics and multi-layered mixed species stands. Gradual trends over time have altered the species composition, stand structure, and age classes of the forest vegetation. Stands of large mature ponderosa pine that provide an open forest are diminished due to encroaching mixed conifer species, and past harvest practices that removed pine to release shade tolerant species.

Scenic stability levels are defined as follows:

Very High Stability—All dominant and minor scenery attributes of the valued scenic character are present and are likely to be sustained.

High Stability—All dominant scenery attributes of the valued scenic character are present and are likely to be sustained. However, there may be scenery attribute conditions and ecosystem stressors that present a low risk to the sustainability of the dominant scenery attributes.

Moderate Stability—Most dominant scenery attributes of the valued scenic character are present and are likely to be sustained. A few may have been lost or are in serious decline.

Low Stability—Some dominant scenery attributes of the valued scenic character are present and are likely to be sustained. Known scenery attribute conditions and ecosystem stressors may seriously threaten or have already eliminated the others.

Very Low Stability—Most dominant scenery attributes of the valued scenic character are seriously threatened or absent due to their conditions and ecosystem stressors and are not likely to be sustained. The few that remain may be moderately threatened but are likely to be sustained.

No Stability—All dominant scenery attributes of the valued scenic character are absent or seriously threatened by their conditions and ecosystem stressors. None are likely to be sustained, except relatively permanent attributes such as landforms.

Fire Severity

The greatest hazard to scenery resources in this area are large stand replacement fires that would burn much more intensely due to the stocking levels, species compositions, ladder fuels and canopy closure that have developed over time, and large epidemics of insect or disease. Fire severity can be classified into three classes: replacement, moderate (mixed), and low. A fire with a replacement severity generally means that more than 75% of the dominant overstory vegetation is killed by the fire. Moderate or mixed severity fires are generally low-severity fires replacing less than 25% of the dominant overstory vegetation, but can include mixed-severity fires that replace up to 75% of the overstory. Low severity fires generally kill less than 25% of the dominant overstory. The table below summarizes the existing and desired probability of fires occurring in each fire severity class for dry and moist forest PVGs the LJCRP area. Grasslands of the LJCRP area generally burned historically with replacement severity, and still do, although high levels of domestic livestock grazing in some areas have reduced fire extent and frequency relative to historical levels. Existing and desired fire severity is described in detail the disturbance specialist report for this project.

Fire severity class	Existing Probability (% of all fires)	Desired Severity Probability (% of all fires)	Average Interval (years)
Dry upland forest (DUF)			
Replacement	5	5 – 14	115 – 125
Moderate/Mixed	49	13 – 21	50 – 75
Low	46	64 – 82	8 - 25
Moist upland forest (MUF)			
Replacement	3	14 – 35	125 – 200
Moderate/Mixed	47	21 – 47	75 – 150
Low	52	18 – 64	25 – 50

In dry upland forests, existing fire regimes are more dominated by mixed severity fires than is characteristic of this type (13-21% of fires are characteristically mixed severity, compared to 49% today). Dry forest fire regimes in the LJCRP area are less dominated by low severity fires than is characteristic of this type (64-82% of fires are characteristically low severity). Low severity fires that generally dominated dry forest fire regimes created the landscapes that are highly valued – open, park like stands of large ponderosa pine and western larch. Dry forest areas with higher levels of mixed severity than the RV are of moderate to low scenic stability since, when these places burn, they will include up to 25% in patches that are completely killed, including large trees of high scenic attractiveness and value.

In moist upland forests of the LJCRP area, fire suppression has reduced the number of replacement severity fires compared to the RV (14-35% of fires are characteristically of replacement severity, compared to 3% today). This condition also has moderate to low scenic stability. Naturally, replacement fires in moist forests served to create horizontal forest heterogeneity. Fire suppression has caused forest densification and increased horizontal homogeneity; hence, when a stand replacement fire escapes fire suppression, they are generally larger and more severe.

Grasslands of the LJCRP area generally burned historically with replacement severity, and still do, although high levels of domestic livestock grazing in some areas have reduced fire extent and frequency relative to historical levels.

Overview of Issues Addressed

Issue Indicators

The three indicators used to measure the effects to scenery resources are landscape character, scenic integrity and scenic stability. These three indicators evaluate the intensity and duration of effects as well as the degree to which the alternatives would affect the stability of scenery attributes over the long term.

- Landscape Character is the naturally established landscape pattern in a geographic area that that makes each landscape identifiable or unique. It includes both the visual and cultural values and consists of the combination of physical, biological and cultural attributes that are valued by constituents. (SMS Handbook)

- Scenic Integrity is the degree to which the scenery is free from visible disturbances that detract from the natural and socially valued appearance, including disturbances due to human activities or extreme natural events inconsistent with the historic range of variability. (SMS Handbook)

- Scenic Stability is the degree to which the Desired Scenic Character can be sustained through time and ecological progression. (SMS- App. J)

Desired Condition

FOREST PLAN DIRECTION

Regulatory Framework

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) states that it is the "continuing responsibility of the Federal Government to use all practicable means to assure for all Americans, aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings." NEPA also requires "A systematic and interdisciplinary approach which would insure the integrated use of the natural and social sciences and the environmental design arts into planning and decision-making which may have an impact on man's environment." To accomplish this, numerous Federal laws require all Federal land management agencies to consider scenery and aesthetic resources in land management planning, resource planning, project design, implementation, and monitoring.

Several USDA handbooks have been developed to establish a framework for management of visual resources, including, but not limited to:

- National Forest Landscape Management Volume 2, Chapter 1 the Visual Management System (Agriculture Handbook 462, USDA Forest Service 1974)
- Landscape Aesthetics, A Handbook for Scenery Management (Agriculture Handbook 701, USDA Forest Service 1995).

This evaluation applies current National Forest Scenery Management methodology in conjunction with existing Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Plan direction. The past land management plans were developed under the old Visual Management System (VMS) in 1974. The concept of that system was basically a visual resource snapshot in static time framework and was used mostly as a mitigation tool for forest management. A 1995 update called the Scenery Management System (SMS) was developed as a dynamic framework for scenery management. The framework describes scenery as a dynamic evolving concept and integrated into ecosystem management. Ecosystems provide the environmental context for this scenery management system. In 1995 the Forest Service adopted a new method of scenery management, called Landscape Aesthetics. The method is described in detail in *Forest Service Landscape Aesthetics, A Handbook for Scenery Management* 1995. This method includes new terminology for scenery management, but corresponds to, and incorporates the terms and direction found in the Forest Plan. In Landscape Aesthetics, Scenic Integrity corresponds to VQOs. Scenic Integrity is a measure of the degree to which a landscape is visually perceived to be "complete". This includes scenery sustainability concepts described in SMS Handbook Appendix J. It relies on field studies and photography from inventoried sensitive viewpoints and other views of the project area, as well as coordination with project interdisciplinary team (ID Team) members, and consideration of public preferences for scenic quality. Cumulative scenic quality was within the geographic scope of travel route viewsheds and other viewpoints within and adjacent to the project.

Integration of this scenery analysis assures the LJCRP is consistent with scenery-related Wallowa-Whitman National Forest direction, the Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) for the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area (HCNRA), the Joseph Creek Wild and Scenic River Management Plan, USFS policies, and applicable elements of the USFS Visual Management and Scenery Management systems. Refer to Appendix B of the Scenery Management System Handbook #701 for a complete list of references requiring Forest Service management of scenery and aesthetics. The following paragraphs explain the integration of the two terms for Visual Quality objectives and Scenic Integrity Objectives.

In areas designated to Retention VQO, all foreground landscapes shall have the visitor perception of natural appearing and will have HIGH scenic integrity. *HIGH scenic integrity 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. (USDA FS, 1995, Landscape Aesthetics, p 2-4).*

In Partial Retention VQO areas the visitor will perceive a natural appearing to slightly altered landscape viewed in foreground and middleground areas (Okanogan Forest Plan, 4-65 to 4-66) and will have MODERATE scenic integrity. *MODERATE scenic integrity refers to landscapes where the valued Landscape Character "appears slightly altered". Noticeable deviations must remain visually subordinate to the Landscape Character being viewed. (USDA FS,4 1995, Landscape Aesthetics, p 2-4).*

In areas allocated to Modification VQO, human activities would be visually evident, but should blend into the landscape by utilizing naturally established form, line, color and texture of the natural landscape. Modification areas would have LOW scenic integrity. *LOW scenic integrity refers to 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 the landscape being viewed but compatible or complimentary to the character within. (USDA FS, 1995, Landscape Aesthetics, p 2-4).*

Foreground is based on landscape visibility and is defined as views up to ½ mile distance zone, middleground is ½ mile to 4 miles distance zone and background is 4 miles to the horizon from the travelway and use areas. Additional information and descriptions regarding Visual Quality Objectives (VQO's) may be found in the Forest Service Scenery Management System (USDA Forest Service, 1995) and the Visual Management System (USDA Forest Service 1974) National Forest Landscape Management Handbooks.

The project area is seen as immediate foreground (views up to 300 feet distance), foreground (views up to ½ mile distance) and middleground (views up to 4 miles distance) from several viewsheds and viewpoints. The LJCRP is divided into three main landscape areas for scenic analysis based on landscape visibility and sensitivity levels for the scenic travel routes. The LJCRP area has been divided into 4 separate landscape areas for assessing scenic effects, including:

1. Oregon State Highway 3, Joseph Canyon Overlook
2. Joseph Canyon Wild and Scenic River Corridor
3. Table Mountain
4. Forest Road 46, Cold Spring Ridge/Forest Road 4680

Relationship with Other Plans:

Two management plans apply to the LJCRP in addition to the Forest Plan: the Hells Canyon Comprehensive Management Plan, and the Joseph Creek Wild and Scenic River Management Plan. These different designations are compatible. If there are discrepancies, *the more restrictive provision shall apply.*

The following table displays scenery-related Wallowa-Whitman National Forest direction, the Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) for the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area (HCNRA), the Joseph Creek Wild and Scenic River Management Plan.

Table displaying the Visual Quality Objectives allocated for the Lower Joseph Creek Restoration Project Area			
Viewshed	**Wallowa-Whitman Forest Plan VQO for Foreground (FG) and Middleground (MG) 1990**	**Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) for the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area (HCNRA) 1989**	**Joseph Creek Wild and Scenic River Management Plan (1993)**
Oregon State Highway 3, Joseph Canyon Overlook	Retention – FG, MG Partial Retention – FG, MG, BG		
Joseph Canyon Wild and Scenic River Corridor,	Preservation – FG Retention –MG Partial Retention – MG Modification – FG, MG, BG		Preservation – FG Retention – MG, BG
Table Mountain	Partial Retention – FG, MG, BG Modification – FG, MG, BG		
Forest Road 46, Cold Spring Ridge/Forest Road 4680	Partial Retention – FG, MG, BG Modification – FG, MG, BG	Partial Retention – FG, MG Modification – FG, MG	

The following narratives are more descriptive goals, standards and guidelines for each of the management plans:

Wallowa-Whitman National Forest LRMP (1990)

Goal: Landscape Management: To manage all National Forest lands to obtain the highest possible visual quality, commensurate with other appropriate public uses, cost and benefits.

Standards and Guidelines

1. VQO's. Meet visual quality objective through management techniques described in National Forest Landscape Management, Volumes 1 and 2, and the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest Visual Management Plan.
2. Retention Foreground. In retention foregrounds the area regenerated per decade should not exceed 7 percent or be less than 3 percent of the suitable forest land within the viewshed. Maximum seen area disturbed at any one time should not exceed 10 percent within any viewshed. Limit regeneration unit size to that which meets retention and desired character including consideration of future entries and regrowth. The approximate range of sizes necessary to accomplish this is ½ to 2 acres in the immediate foreground (less than 500 feet) and 3 to 5 acres in the foreground greater than 500 feet from the road or trail. Units against road or trail edges should be shelterwoods or selection cuts rather than clearcuts. Target tree size is 36 inches where biologically feasible.

3. Partial Retention Foreground and Retention Middleground. In partial retention foreground and retention middleground, the area regenerated per decade should not exceed 9 percent or be less than 5 percent of the suitable forest land within and viewshed. The maximum seen area disturbed at any one time should not exceed 14 percent of any viewshed. Limit regeneration unit size to that which meets partial retention and desired character including consideration of future entries and regrowth. The approximate range of sizes necessary to accomplish this is ½ to 2 acres in the immediate foreground (less than 500 feet) and 3 to 5 acres in the foreground greater than 500 feet from the road or trail. Target size tree in foreground is 26 inches where biologically feasible.
4. Partial Retention Middleground. In partial retention middleground, the area regenerated per decade should range between 8 and 10 percent. Limit maximum regeneration unit size to 10 acres. Maximum area disturbed at any one time should not exceed 20 percent.
5. Created Openings. Consider a created opening to no longer be an opening, visually, when trees reach 20 feet in height. Rotation periods will be sufficient to grow large tree character in viewshed foregrounds.
6. Resolving Conflicts. Where conflicts develop between visual quality objectives and timber or range management objectives, these conflicts will be resolved in favor of meeting the visual objectives. Where conflicts occur between old-growth objectives and visual objectives, old –growth will have priority.
7. Viewshed Plans – Plans will be prepared for all Level 1 viewsheds that will refine boundaries, establish protect design criteria, and identify opportunities for scenic enhancement, and set entry priorities and timing.

Management Area Specific Standards and Guidelines
Management Area 7 (Wild and Scenic Rivers)
Meet the visual quality objectives of preservation along wild river segments, retention along scenic segments, and partial retention along recreational river segments. Joseph Creek is designated a Wild River.

Forestwide Standards and Guidelines for scenic quality apply to all other management areas in the LJCRP area that are not in the HCNRA.

The Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) for the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area (HCNRA) 1989

Goal: Manage forest resources in a manner that maintains and enhances the positive natural and cultural elements in landscapes that is consistent with the historical landscape character, to provide an overall desired scenic impression.

Goal: Manage forest resources in a manner that ensures the sustainability of the biophysical environment thus maintaining the landscape character beyond the planning period.

The Hells Canyon National Recreation Area Plan 1989 has designated the following Management Areas and Visual Quality Objectives (VQO's) for the project area by prescription.

- **Management Area 9 – Dispersed Recreation/Native Vegetation:** Activities will be managed to provide ample opportunities for dispersed recreation and to enhance native vegetation. These areas will eventually be almost entirely occupied by native plant species. Range will be managed to maintain satisfactory range condition which will be achieved and maintained primarily by nonstructural means. These areas will provide a mix of primitive, semi-primitive non-motorized and semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities. ***Range of Partial Retention and Modification VQO's for all distance zones.***

- **Management Area 10 – Forage Emphasis:** This area lies within the grasslands interwoven with timbered stringers in the HCNRA. The grassland portions of these areas will be managed to provide maximum forage production with rangeland maintained in satisfactory condition (desired ecological status) and structural improvements being rustic in nature. Timbered portions will provide old-growth habitat at approximately current levels. These areas provide both semi-primitive motorized and semi-primitive nonmotorized opportunities. ***Range of Partial Retention and Modification VQO's for all distance zones.***

- **Management Area 11 – Dispersed Recreation/Timber Management:** These areas combine dispersed recreation with timber management on the more productive sites within the HCNRA. The management objective is to provide a variety of tree species, a diversity of healthy timber stands, and ample dispersed recreation opportunities. These areas provide both semi-primitive motorized and semi-primitive nonmotorized opportunities. Timber volume removal from the HCNRA is classified as unregulated and does not contribute to the WWNF allowable sale quantity (Public LURS, USDA 1994**).** ***Range of Partial Retention and Modification VQO's for all distance zones.***

The following would replace existing CMP management objectives (page 30) and supplement Forest Plan management direction (pages 4-42 through 4-44):

Standards and Guidelines (Appendix C pages C-86, C-18 – C19))

WSR-O3: Perpetuate forested stands within wild and scenic rivers in "scenic" and "recreational" designations to protect and enhance the river's outstandingly remarkable values and to ensure compatibility with the primary objectives of the HCNRA Act. (Public LURs)

Sce-O1: Manage to meet landscape character goals that conserve and preserve valued landscape character attributes and elements of scenic attractiveness through the planning period.

Sce-O2: Use constituent information surveys to gather information from constituents to define desired landscape character at various levels of landscape scale. Use survey information to determine social values and consider in conjunction with other resource data to determine appropriate management strategies throughout the planning period.

Sce-O3: In developing management strategies, through the planning period, integrate social values and bio/physical considerations to maintain or improve a sustainable desired landscape character. Utilize mitigation measures and design techniques to reduce effects (short term and long term, direct and indirect) to landscape aesthetics.

Sce-O4: Inventory areas and site-specific locations where alterations deviate from desired landscape character. Evaluate and prioritize efforts to restore and/or rehabilitate.

Sce-S1: Manage vegetation to achieve ecological integrity levels that sustain desired landscape character and in manner compatible with scenic integrity levels. Refer to Table C-3a and C-3b: Recreation Management Direction by alternative for scenic integrity objectives.

Sce-G2: Consider the acceptable level of alteration when implementing site-specific projects and management strategies, using the rating aspects of scenic impact to landscape character described in Table C-4: Criteria for Rating Human-caused Impacts to Landscape Character. (In environmental consequences section)

Sce-G4: Consider the acceptable level of alteration when implementing management strategies; using the following scenic integrity objectives:

Very high	Less than 1% impact
High	Less than 5% impact
Moderate High	Less than 10% impact
Moderate Low	Less than 15% impact
Low	Less than 20% impact
Unacceptably Low	20% impact or more

The Joseph Creek Wild and Scenic River Management Plan (1993)

Joseph Creek was designated Wild and Scenic in 1988 for the following outstandingly remarkable (OR) values: scenic, recreational, geological, fish and water uality, and cultural values. Site specific assessment resulted in one additional OR value of "wildlife" and the cultural OR was clarified as "cultural (historic)". All outstandingly remarkable (OR) values must be protected and enhanced, If conflicts arise between OR values which cannot be

resolved within the direction of the Act or management plan, then they shall be resolved according to the following priorities: 1) fish and water quality, 2) cultural (historic) resources, 3) scenic, 4) wildlife, 5) recreation, 6) geology.

Landscape Management standards and guidelines from the Joseph Creek Wild and Scenic River Management Plan are listed below:

50. **Landscape Management. (Scenic Outstandingly Remarkable Value)**

Desired Future Condition: The Visual Quality Objective (VQO) within the river corridor is Preservation. The area is characterized as a natural appearing landscape (essentially unmodified environment) with ecological changes only. Management activities that could affect the Preservation VQO are prohibited except for prescribed burning to decrease non-native grasses and to improve bighorn sheep habitat and big game winter range. The variety of grasses, forbs, shrubs, and trees will be more representative of the natural community at the time of Euro-American settlement. No recreation facilities will be developed except for primitive signing, trail reconstruction, minor relocation, and trail maintenance.

51. Maintain the existing VQO of Preservation in the river corridor.

52. Maintain a VQO of foreground preservation and middleground and background Retention outside the river corridor as viewed from the river and/or the Joseph Creek or Swamp Creek trails within the river corridor. A VQO of Preservation, allows ecological changes only. In a VQO of Retention, management activities must not be visually evident.

53. Adopt the "Highway 3 Viewshed Corridor Plan" by Stryker Associates, February 1991, as additional guidelines for managing the visual resource outside the river corridor. If conflicts arise between the Highway 3 Viewshed Corridor Plan and the minimum VQOs, as previously mentioned, the more restrictive guidelines will apply.

54. Visual management will be according to the Forest Plan, National Forest Landscape Management Handbook Vol. 2 Chapter 1, The Visual Management System USDA #462, The Timber Chapter Vol 2. Chapter 5, Recreation Chapter Vol. 2 Chapter 8, and Forest Service Manual 2354 and 2380 (FSM 2354 & 2380). Conflicts between any of these documents will be resolved by deferring to the most restrictive unless stated otherwise.

55. Outside the river corridor locate utility corridors so that they will not be visible from the river and/or the Joseph Creek or Swamp Creek trails within the river corridor.

56. Work with private landowner to help protect and enhance the scenery on the private inholdings in the river corridor and to discourage any additional structures.

Monitoring includes:

6. Landscape Management and Geology - Annually, monitor the visual quality of the area against values described in the DFCs and to ensure the protection and enhancement of the Scenic and Geologic OR Values. This would include a meeting a Preservation VQO with ecological changes only (except for prescribe burning) and ensuring that no mining activities nor recreational dredging would be take place.

   a. Key indicators include: Projects or activities which alter landform, vegetation, water, color or character of the viewshed as seen from the river corridor, Joseph and Swamp Creek Trails, and Joseph Canyon Overlook; and the extent and amount of developments as indicated by buildings, structures, and other physical improvements.

   b. Management standards are: No additional adverse impacts. No damage to geologic resources. No mining activities nor recreational dredging would have occurred. All activities seen from the river, Joseph and Swamp Creek Trails, and Joseph Canyon Overlook would meet a Preservation VQO inside the river corridor (except the prescribe burning activities to improve big horn sheep habitat, big game winter range, and reduce non-native grasses) and would meet a Retention VQO outside the river corridor. If standards not met, identify cause of change on the National Forest and correct it. On private land, work with the landowner to try to mitigate activity, work with county to change zoning, and as a last resort consider acquiring scenic easements.

   c. Sampling procedure: Annually, field monitor the area for visual changes on private land. Note the number and type of projects, houses, structures or improvements as seen from the river corridor, Joseph Creek and Swamp Creek Trails, and Joseph Canyon Overlook. Analyze individual projects on a case-by-case basis to ensure protection of viewshed and geology. Inspect National Forest lands annually, for evidence of mining activity. Conduct a VQM inventory every 5 years to ensure projects are consistent with DFCs and OR Values.

Desired Landscape Character

The desired landscape character is to promote a sustainable landscape character specific to each ecotype of the forest. All naturally established existing landscape patterns throughout the forest are to be maintained with changes that will not degrade the existing character. Areas where unnatural landscape character exists from past management practices can be improved through rehabilitation or enhancement to promote landscape character that is scenically and ecologically attractive. The goal of scenery management is to promote landscape character that is naturally appearing and will be scenically sustainable in time by reducing some risk of large scale disturbances, through wildfire or insect and disease infestations that are out of scale for the vegetative character type.

Environmental Consequences

Methodology

The scenery effects analyses used for this report are those found in the Scenery Management Handbook #701, Appendix J. Scenery management is based on the classic aesthetic factors of form, line, color and texture, as well as the principles of sense of place. "Scenic integrity measures the amount of natural or socially valued appearance in a landscape along with the amount of visual disturbance that contrasts with and detracts from the appearance (the

valued scenic character) existing at the time of measurement." "Scenic stability is an indicator of the ecological sustainability of the scenic character's valued attributes."(App J Scenery Management)

Methods of Measuring Effects

- Amount of changes seen on the landscape; shape, size and arrangement of restoration, activity fuels treatments, and prescribed fire units in a given viewshed and from fixed viewpoints.
- Consistency with Forest Plan standards and guidelines; the resulting scenic integrity level in the short term and long term (based on how well the vegetative and prescribed fire treatments meet the established Retention VQO).

Incomplete and Unavailable Information

Information necessary for evaluating scenery effects is sufficient.

Spatial and Temporal Context for Effects Analysis

The effects to the scenery resources can be short term and long term. Short term is usually less than 5 years, and long term is 5 years to 50 years. Effects that are eliminated by the natural course of a single growing season are not considered effects because they are a so short lived. Most treatments have long term effects while the logging activities such as cable yarding, skidding and slash burning are usually short term effects lasting less than 5 years. The project analysis area is the area from which the proposed treatments can be visibly discerned. The analysis is done within the project boundary.

The Scenery Management Handbook #701 and the supplemental Appendix J is the source for scenery resource analysis.

Connected Actions, Past, Present, and Foreseeable Activities Relevant to Cumulative Effects Analysis

Important Interactions

Thinning trees and associated activities of road construction, temporarily opening closed roads, logging systems, and activity fuels treatments can affect the scenic resource by altering the naturally established form, line, color, and texture in a given viewshed. The natural landscape character and the existing scenic integrity level (condition) can be affected. Scenic impacts of the change depend on the interactions of the following:

1. Access to stands by existing roads and skid trails.
2. Harvest methods and silvicultural methods.
3. Slash disposal methods.
4. Shape, size, and arrangement of treatment units.
5. Topographical relationship of treatment units to viewer's position and duration of view.
6. Existing landscape character and scenic integrity, the ability of the viewshed to absorb change.
7. Landscape visibility and location in relation to proposed treatment.

Visual absorption capability (VAC) indicates the relative ability of any landscape to accept human alteration without loss of landscape character or scenic integrity level. (USDA FS, 1995, Landscape Aesthetics, C-1). The ability of a particular viewshed to absorb change is based on several factors including, but not limited to, soil color, texture of vegetation, slope, and degree of visual screening provided by landform, rockform, vegetative cover and percentage of existing alteration to the viewshed. For example, even-aged dense and uniform stands of trees will not absorb change as easily as an existing uneven-aged stand of trees with multiple small openings that give the landscape a mosaic textured pattern. Other factors used in VAC analysis include viewer's perception of expectations, viewer's position in the landscape, and duration of view, distance, and proposed activity in terms of scale, size, shape, and distribution. Using VAC it is possible to rate the project on how easy or difficult it is to blend the activity into the surrounding landscape. VAC is rated in terms of high, medium, or low; high being the easiest to accomplish, low being the most difficult. In general, the LJCRP has a medium to high VAC rating due to an existing road system, existing mosaic texture vegetative patterns in areas, and the diverse landform with rolling dissected valleys breaking up the continuous ridgelines.

Scenic effects within the LJCRP area are quantified and interpreted based on how the alternatives change the existing landscape character and scenic integrity level. Landscape character refers to the naturally established landscape patterns that make each landscape identifiable or unique. Scenic integrity is the state of naturalness, or conversely, the state of disturbance created by human activities or alteration. The frame of reference for measuring scenic integrity levels is the valued attributes of the existing landscape character being viewed. The degree of scenic altered condition depends on the amount of changes seen from The Hells Canyon National Scenic Byway - Wallowa Mountain Loop Forest Road 39, Imnaha Wild and Scenic River Corridor (Forest Road 3955 and Forest Road 3960), Dry Creek Forest Road 3962 and McGraw Forest Road 3965 to Hells Canyon Overlook and PO Saddle, and Upper Imnaha Forest Roads 3925 and 3950. Altered scenic condition in the landscape will be the greatest when most of the trees are removed in a given unit or area. Consequently, the least change would occur when the existing trees are not removed. The character of the landscape would be least affected when most of the existing trees are left intact. Landscape character changes will occur similarly to the scenic integrity. The focus will be on the vegetative element of the landscape character.

For purposes of analysis, the following criteria are developed to rate the consequences of the alternatives from high landscape character and scenic condition to moderate landscape character and scenic condition to low landscape character and scenic condition. In the project area, where the Retention visual quality objective is designated, high landscape character and scenic condition is desired, the Modification visual quality objective would fall in the moderate landscape character and scenic condition. The following table describes the scenic integrity rating criteria and landscape character associated with each.

Table xx Description of High, Moderate and Low Landscape Character

VISUAL DESCRIPTION OF THE GENERAL APPEARANCE OF VERY HIGH, HIGH, MODERATE, LOW AND VERY LOW LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND SCENIC CONDITION	
VERY HIGH Landscape Character and Scenic Condition (Desired for visually sensitive foreground and middleground areas) Preservation Scenic Quality Objectives (VQO's)	Mosaic landscape patterns, less uniformity. High diversity of structures and variety of spaces. Light treatment to the landscape. No skyline corridors, visible roads, nor mechanical disturbances. Only natural processes of change are allowed. Open spaces with variety of patterns. Areas of dense, mosaic, and clumpy arrangement of textural patterns. Interesting landscapes. **Unaltered.**
HIGH Landscape Character and Scenic Condition (Desired for all visually sensitive foreground and middleground areas) Retention Scenic Quality Objectives (VQO's)	Mosaic landscape patterns, less uniformity. High diversity of structures and variety of spaces. Light treatment to the landscape. Minimal skyline corridors, visible roads, and little mechanical disturbances. Alterations emulate natural appearing patterns. Open spaces with variety of patterns. Areas of dense, mosaic, and clumpy arrangement of textural patterns. Interesting landscapes. **Appears Unaltered.**
MODERATE Landscape Character and Scenic Condition (Desired in foreground and middleground areas) Partial Retention Scenic Quality Objective (VQO)	Combination of mosaic and uniform landscape patterns. Some diversity of structure. Moderate variety of spaces and treatment to the landscape. A variety of natural to slightly altered scenic conditions. A variation of natural pattern and interest in the landscape. Some textural patterns and mosaic landscape character are retained. **Appears Slightly Altered.**
LOW Landscape Character and Scenic Condition (Preferred in other landscapes) Modification Scenic Quality Objective (VQO)	Combination of some mosaic and more uniform landscape patterns. Some diversity of structure. Some variety of spaces. Moderate to higher treatment to the landscape. A variety of natural to slightly altered to altered conditions. A variation of natural pattern and interest in the landscape. Some textural patterns are retained. **Appears Moderately Altered.**
VERY LOW Landscape Character and Scenic Condition (Not desirable in any landscape) Maximum Modification Scenic Quality Objective (VQO)	Uniform landscape patterns. Low diversity of structures, little variety of spaces, sameness. Heavy treatment to the landscape. Roads, skyline corridors, and mechanical disturbances dominate scenic conditions. Alterations do not appear natural, heavily altered conditions. Natural patterns are destroyed. Uninteresting,

	barren and sparse landscapes. **Appears Heavily Altered.**

The concept of treating different areas with various degrees of leave tree combinations, with the natural existing character provides diversity and variety in the landscape. Scenically, the treatment in the landscape would emulate and blend with nature. The success of the treatment depends on the number of trees left in a mosaic pattern. The structure or size of trees left is critical. In general, larger trees provide a strong vertical structure, creating stronger contrast and emphasizing the character of the area. A variety of openings interwoven throughout the landscape with the mosaic arrangement of leave trees would increase spatial diversity and identity of the area. Scenic quality is highest when a variety of trees are retained.

Effects Common to all Action Alternatives

Vegetation removal, management activities and associated transportation changes (temporary roads) would have a direct effect on the landscape character and scenic integrity (condition). There are two primary aspects that affect scenic quality, 1) vegetation treatment proposed and implementation of the vegetation treatment (logging systems) and 2) fuels treatments consisting of prescribed fire, underburning and implementation of surface fuel treatments.

Landscape character changes would occur similarly to the scenic integrity. Landscape character is the naturally established landscape pattern that makes each landscape identifiable or unique. For this analysis, focus will be on the vegetative element of the landscape character and the visual effects that would result from proposed thinning, reducing tree density, and visual effects of fuels underburning, pile burning and prescribed fire. The dissected landform of the LJCRP area has several stream lined valleys that rise to the surrounding ridgelines. This variety in landform provides the opportunity to spatially blend in treatment.

Scenic integrity is measured as the amount of human caused deviation in form, line, color, and texture of a landscape; it serves as a frame of reference for measuring scenic integrity levels based on the valued attributes of the existing landscape character being viewed. In the project area, scenic integrity effects would be seen as the result of changes to landscape character caused by implementation of the vegetation management activities and amount of ground disturbance or vegetation removal in foreground areas of identified travel corridors, and middleground or background views of the area from travel routes. Examples of scenic integrity effects include actions such as new skid trails, new or reconstructed roads, fresh tree stumps and slash, blackened tree boles, disturbance to the ground resulting from mechanical activity of cutting trees, and changes to the textured landscape pattern. Overall, the reduction of fuels and thinning to enhance large tree growth would benefit long term scenic quality by providing a more stable, sustainable forest which is typical of the Wallowa vegetative character types.

Important design measures to reduce the unavoidable visual effects in sensitive areas include:

- using special markings to provide variable spacing of leave trees
- leaving vegetative texture along the identified travel routes
- rehabilitating ground disturbed areas where they would be seen in foreground
- cutting stumps low to the ground in seen areas of foreground
- single tree removal of large Ponderosa pine in the Imnaha Wild and Scenic River corridor (no landings)
- locating landings outside of seen areas along the identified travel routes, and/or leaving vegetative screening

The following is a summary of general effects common to the project area:

Landscape Character and Scenic Integrity Positive Elements

1. No regeneration harvests would occur in the project area. Single tree selection would make up the vast majority of forest restoration treatments. Group selection treatments would make up less than 13% of treatment acres, and would create small openings less than 4 acres to support the regeneration of favored shade intolerant tree species such as ponderosa pine and western larch.
2. Enhancement of landscape character would be done by thinning and reducing dense stands of trees, providing variety in spatial distribution of plant communities and moving towards more variety in age classes. Large diameter trees would be retained within the range of variability for the potential vegetation group, and would stand out as more dominant after removing small trees around them; views into the forest

would be more open. Retention of seral tree species such as ponderosa pine and western larch would be favored.

3. The proposed management activities begin the transition of moving the forest setting on a landscape scale towards the sustainable landscape character by reducing natural fuels and reintroducing the natural role of fire.
4. Utilizing existing landings, roads, fire lines and natural fuel breaks as proposed would reduce further visual impacts associated with implementation. In these areas, visual impacts are contained in areas already impacted rather than introducing new impacts.
5. Thinning treatment methods create texture changes to the existing dense to mosaic textured landscape and would blend in well.
6. On the landscape scale, by using prescribed fire in a timely manner and in phased treatments, it is expected to reduce the future risk of a potential high intensity wildfire that would affect scenic quality and stability.
7. Road maintenance would bring existing roads to a minimum maintenance standard. Numerous closed roads would be temporarily opened for commercial material access and removal and re-closed after harvest operations are complete. There would not be any new roads that would result in introducing new linear corridors in the landscape.

Landscape Character and Scenic Integrity Potential Negative Elements

1. Stumps would be more evident in some areas of foreground of travel routes and dispersed sites. Coarse woody debris (slash) would be seen along travel routes before under burning, hand or machine piling, and pile burning. This would create a short term negative visual effect until the material is burned, decomposes or is softened by early successional grasses and forbs. The proposed under burning and pile burning may not entirely reduce the slash.
2. Prescribed fire has the potential to create larger forms (openings) in the landscape than intended, possibly burn out of the area intended, and/or to burn trees that are desired to be retained for scenic quality or other resource objectives.

The effects of specific prescriptions are described in this section. All forest restoration treatment types would use the "individuals, clumps, and openings" approach which mimics stand tree patterns that would have been found historically.

Single Tree Selection, Group Selection, Intermediate treatment

Variable density thinning opens up the stands and provides greater viewing distances into the stand which is preferable. The appearance of the stands would be improved by retaining large trees, especially ponderosa pine and western larch. There would be a variation in tree spacing that retain a variety of density patterns and species compositions similar to historical conditions. The reduction of tree stocking levels would improve the resilience of the stands by reducing stress and ladder fuels, which reduces the risk of high insect and disease outbreaks, and stand replacement wildfire. These are benefits that contribute to the improvement of scenic stability when carried out at a landscape scale. Group selection would differ from single tree selection in that it would create ½ to 4 acre naturally-shaped openings to initiate new cohort of seral species (ponderosa pine and western larch). Intermediate treatment is similar to single tree selection except that is emphasizes isolating mistletoe infections and creating conditions that reduce intensification of infection.

This treatment would create stumps, slash and soil disturbance that would be visible from foreground views. These effects would be minor within the first one to two years. As regrowth of shrubs and grasses occur these effects would be significantly reduced. Single tree selection would not create openings that are visible from middleground or background distances. Small openings from group selection treatments would be consistent in size and shape with historic patterns, and could be visible from middleground or background distances. The effects of this prescription would not reduce the scenic integrity of the units.

Savanna

This treatment type would reestablish grassland/forest edges and historic grasslands that have conifer encroachment. This would enhance scenic quality by restoring open savannas toward historic conditions, and promoting the reestablishment of native understory grasses and forbs.

Wildlife Connectivity Corridors
In wildlife connectivity corridors, restoration treatments would retain at least 40% canopy closure in dry forests, and 50% in moist forests. Effects would be similar to those of single tree selection, described above.

Planned and Unplanned Fire
Fire is used to reduce litter and ladder fuels, and restore natural ecological processes. Planned ad unplanned fire will be used on up to 90,000 acres, with dry forest being the highest priority. Although the scale is a large landscape scale, direct effects to scenery are usually minimal and short lived. A growing season reduces the effects to the remaining scorched tree trunks, and dead saplings. This treatment most successfully conserves scenery resources when thorough site preparation is done prior to underburning. Fire, at low intensity is a natural occurrence in this area, and its effects do not degrade the scenic quality. This treatment can greatly improve a stands resiliency to large stand replacement fire which can affect the scenic quality.

Future prescribed burns, known as maintenance burns may be required in order to maintain the effectiveness of the proposed restoration treatments. These maintenance burns would be scheduled every 10 to 15 years, based on the average fire return interval in the LJCRP area. These maintenance treatments would protect the investment of an effective fuels treatment and increase the number of years before the area would need to be entered again for more extensive understory treatments.

Stand Improvement
This treatment reduces stocking levels within young, post disturbance stands to promote growth of desirable species and increase spatial heterogeneity toward the range of variability. Direct effects to scenery would be minimal and short term. The effects to scenery are limited to the foreground view effects of stumps, and slash. This treatment can improve stand resiliency to stand replacement fire, which can affect the scenic quality.

Activity created fuels treatments
Upon completion of commercial harvest activities, non-commercial material would be felled by hand crews and piled and jackpot burned to further remove ladder fuels. Low intensity prescribed burning would occur after these treatments in areas that support fire tolerant ecosystems and drier biophysical environments.

The effects of this treatment is similar to the underburning of natural fuels, however the scorching and soil exposure is usually more intense. This treatment removes the small saplings and non-crop trees to increase the conditions for fire resistant trees to dominate these stands. Removing these trees improves the large tree character and opens view into the remaining stands. These effects are consistent with low intensity fire.

Danger Tree Removal
Danger trees would be felled and removed along all haul routes used for timber sale activity. Removing large trees would create new stumps in foreground areas of recreation sites and scenic roads, but the scale would be small and maintain scenic quality.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Direct Effects
A no action alternative (alternative 1) would have no short term effects to scenic integrity, or scenic stability. Existing scenery integrity and scenic stability would remain the same.

Indirect Effects
The indirect long term effects related to the existing conditions and trends could be substantial. The overstocked stands are under greater and greater stress which is likely to lead to insect and disease epidemics. Fuel loads within the stands increase the hazards of stand replacement fire. All of these conditions will continue to degrade the scenic stability. In the event of a stand replacement fire the scenic integrity would likely be greatly reduced by uncharacteristic fire.

The no action alternative (alternative 1) would maintain the existing Landscape Character, and range of Low to Very High Scenic Integrity (condition). In the short term, the landscape would remain as a mosaic pattern of natural appearing to slightly altered and altered landscape character and scenic condition as it currently exists. The vegetative component of the landscape would continue to grow through the pattern of natural succession with a high risk of future disturbance, primarily wildfire. Forest succession that has resulted from fire suppression shapes forest landscapes, the highly textured tree density patterns would continue to dominate the landscape character where they exist. Scenic quality of landscape character and scenic condition would have very low human intervention with nature taking its course. Disturbance to the existing landscape that would occur through mechanical disturbance related to activities of tree removal and prescribed burning would not occur. The opportunity to enhance scenic quality, improve the forested setting and enhancement of large tree character would not be done. A transitional approach to treating the landscape by moving the landscape character towards a more sustainable forest setting that is more resilient to fire; disease and/or bug infestations would not be done. Consequently, the risk of large-scale disturbance patterns, which are out of their natural disturbance regime, would remain as existing.

The high fuel loadings have the potential to result in a sudden change to the landscape character that could result from a wildfire that would be seen as a burned off area, or the landscape would continue to be affected by diseased tree and associated tree mortality. The current insect and disease infestations would continue to affect the landscape character visually from a healthy green canopy to one that is predominately brown, the insect and disease would spread out of the areas that are currently affected. In the case of wildfire, the landscape character could dramatically change from a forested green setting to an area dominated by the visual evidence of wildfire. Fire intensity patterns would probably range from low to moderate to high viewed in the foreground and middleground from the travel routes. The visual effects of a large scale wildfire would change the landscape character from a highly green textured pattern to a black, brown, and green interwoven landscape pattern. Wildfire visual characteristics would be dominant and evident for 5 to 10 years or more; snags would be created as a result of wildfire. The snags would be dominant for at least 5 years, and then begin to fall and create a jackstraw effect viewed along the travel corridors and would appear visually out of character for a natural appearing landscape. In general, natural forest disturbances that result in extensive areas of dead or dying trees are perceived negatively. There would be some risk to losing the highly valued larger ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir if a wildfire were to occur. A sustainable green scenic forest may not be maintained over time because of this high disturbance risk related to high fuel loadings and potential for catastrophic wildfire.

Compliance with Forest Plan and Other Relevant Laws, Regulations, Policies and Plans

Alternative 1 would be compliant with the Visual Quality Objectives that are Forest Plan Standards.

Summary of Effects

The no action alternative (alternative 1) would not address the vegetation conditions that are the beyond the historic range of variability. Alternative 1 would not reduce the risk uncharacteristic wildfire that could cause undue effects to scenery, nor will it move the stands toward the desired condition.

Landscape Scenic Viewsheds and Analysis

The LJCRP area has been divided into four separate landscape areas for assessing scenic effects. These landscape areas are:

1. Oregon State Highway 3, Joseph Canyon Overlook
2. Joseph Canyon Wild and Scenic River Corridor
3. Table Mountain
4. Forest Road 46, Cold Spring Ridge/Forest Road 4680

Design Features and Mitigation Measures Common to All Action Alternatives for All Viewsheds

The following design criteria are developed to meet the intent of high to moderate scenic integrity objectives for the viewsheds. Vegetative treatments would meet the established VQO of Preservation, Retention or Partial Retention

as viewed from use areas and travelways. The mitigation measures that will minimize the effects of logging activities include:

- Locate new landings out of seen areas or leave vegetative screen from Concern level 1 roads (OR Highway 3; FS Roads 4602090, 4602120, 4602080).
- New temporary roads and landings may be evident but must remain subordinate to the shape and pattern of the natural appearing forest canopy.
- Foreground clearings (not to exceed 2 acres) should not be used frequently but can be used in specific circumstances to treat insect or disease infestations, or to open views to scenic attributes such as a rock formations, large ponderosa pine or components, or views to distant mountain peaks.
- Skid patterns, slash, soil exposure and stumps should be visually minor or unnoticed 4" maximum height of stumps).
- Cut stumps at a height less than 4" in immediate foreground (300').
- Slash pile locations would not be located within the immediate foreground, (300') of Oregon Highway 3.
- Limit naturally shaped openings to be a maximum of 5 to 10 acres in size with blended edges.
- Develop marking guidelines to minimize the amount of paint seen from areas of scenic concern. Paint of backside (uphill) of leave trees or paint take trees along immediate foreground of Oregon Highway 3, and where necessary, also FS Roads 46, 4602090, 4602120, and 4602080.
- Pruning tree limbs at variable heights (6' to 20') to expose large diameter trees along the Forest Road 3965 for shaded fuel break provide more variety in the foreground.

Environmental Consequences

Alternative 2

Alternative 2 would treat 22 percent of the project area (39% of forested acres) to improve species composition, stand density, and reduce ladder fuels and canopy closure. These treatments would improve scenic stability from low (dry forest PVG) or moderate (moist forest PVG) to high where "all dominant scenery attributes of the valued scenic character are present and are likely to be sustained" (pg19, App. J). The appearance of the stands would be improved by making them appear healthier. This treatment would create stumps, and slash and soil disturbance would be visible from foreground views. These effects would be minor within the first one to two years. As regrowth of shrubs and grasses occur these effects would be significantly reduced. This treatment would not create openings that area visible from middleground or background distances. The effects of this prescription would not reduce the scenic integrity of the viewshed as they are expected to be negligible within 2-3 years.

These prescriptions would improve the scenic character by moving stands toward the historic range of variability. More open stands of species compositions that are more fire resistant will improve the scenic stability.

Alternative 2 would reduce the high amount of open road densities by closing some open roads and decommissioning some already closed roads. Road maintenance would bring existing roads to a minimum maintenance standard. Numerous closed roads would be temporarily opened for commercial material access and removal and re-closed after harvest operations are complete.

Also see effects common to all action alternatives.

Oregon State Highway 3, Joseph Canyon Overlook

Direct Effects

The immediate foreground (up to 300' distance zone) and FG (up to ½ mile distance zone) of the Oregon Highway 3 travel route is highly sensitive for any new visual impacts, maintaining large trees along the travel route, and the foreground, middleground, and background visible from the Joseph Creek Overlook. Alternative 2 would increase visibility into stands along the eastside of Oregon Highway 3 in limited cases through single tree selection, savanna

treatments, and stand improvement by removing trees in the foreground, enhancing large tree character, opening up the mid canopy, and creating greater foreground diversity. The landscape slopes down from highway 3 to the east, so visibility of treatment units would be limited to the immediate foreground, if at all. The commercial thinning treatments would leave the pine and larch species that have the desired large tree character, and greater fire resiliency. This effort would improve the scenic character and the scenic stability of the area. Landscape character changes would be seen as thinned out stands of trees and a more open forested canopy character. Alternative 2 would improve species composition, stand density, and reduce ladder fuels and canopy closure.

One unit (#193) is partially in the background view of Highway 3 (50 acres within the visual quality objective of retention). Restoration treatments include low intensity single tree selection and intermediate treatment, and would not change the density class of the stands. These treatments would not be visibly evident from the Joseph Canyon Overlook.

No roads would be decommissioned in foreground, middle ground, or background visible from Oregon Highway 3 or the Joseph Canyon Overlook.

Joseph Canyon Wild and Scenic River Corridor

Direct Effects

The Joseph Creek Wild and Scenic River (WSR) corridor is highly sensitive for any new visual impacts. The visual quality objective of the river corridor is Preservation. No treatments would occur in the river corridor, except the use of planned and/or unplanned fire, consistent with natural fire frequency and intensity. One forest restoration unit (#193) is partially in the middleground view of the WSR (50 acres) with a visual quality objective of retention. These restoration treatments include low intensity single tree selection and intermediate treatment, and would not change the density class of the stands. These treatments would not be visibly evident from the WSR, or the Swamp Creek or Joseph Creek trails.

In the middleground view, with a visual quality objective of Partial Retention (in the Table Rock area), there would be 684 acres of restoration treatments. Sixty percent (403 acres) of these treatments would be intermediate, non-commercial (stand improvement), or savanna treatments, and 40% (281 acres) would be single tree selection treatments. All of these treatments would maintain structural diversity and the natural mosaic landscape character, and appear unaltered to slightly altered in the short-term, and unaltered in the long-term when viewed from the WSR. The single tree selection treatments would leave the pine and larch species that have the desired large tree character, and greater fire resiliency. This effort would improve the scenic character and the scenic stability of the area. Landscape character changes would be seen as thinned out stands of trees and a more open forested canopy character. Alternative 2 would improve species composition, stand density, and reduce ladder fuels and canopy closure.

Table Mountain

Direct Effects

Table Mountain has been identified as a valued place by local residents to view scenery. Alternative 2 would increase visibility into stands along FS Road 4650, and 4650120 through 4650170 through single tree selection, intermediate, savanna, and stand improvement by removing trees in the foreground and middleground, enhancing large tree character, opening up the mid canopy, and creating greater foreground diversity. Sixty percent (403 acres) of these treatments would be intermediate, non-commercial (stand improvement), or savanna treatments, and 40% (281 acres) would be single tree selection treatments. Over the long-term, all of these treatments would maintain structural diversity and the natural landscape mosaic, improve the scenic character and the scenic stability of the area, and appear slightly altered in the short-term when viewed in the middleground.

One unit (#193) is partially in the background view of Highway 3 (50 acres within the visual quality objective of retention). Restoration treatments include low intensity single tree selection and intermediate treatment, and would

not change the density class of the stands. These treatments would not be visibly evident from the Joseph Canyon Overlook.

No roads would be decommissioned in foreground, middle ground, or background visible from Table Mountain. There would not be any new roads that would result in introducing new linear corridors in the viewshed.

Forest Road 46, Cold Spring Ridge/Forest Road 4680

Direct Effects

Forest Road 46 is the main travelway through the project area, from Oregon Highway 3 to Cold Spring Ridge within HCNRA. It has a visual quality objective of Partial Retention in the foreground, and generally Modification in the middleground. All treatments proposed in the foreground, middleground and background along this travelway (single tree selection, group selection, intermediate, savanna, and stand improvement) would meet Partial Retention visual quality objectives. One small portion of the middleground on the western side of Cold Spring Ridge, within the Inventoried Roadless Area has a visual quality objective of Partial Retention in the middleground. In alternative 2, only stand improvement treatments would occur in this area, and would only slightly alter the appearance in the short-term. Over the longer-term, scenic integrity and stability would be improved throughout this viewshed.

There would be decommissioned roads located off Forest Road 46 in the foreground and middle ground of this viewshed (FS Roads 4600425, 447, 555, 570, 572, 574, 575, and 578). Decomissioning roads would improve scenic integrity by restoring the landscape back to a more natural appearing character by reducing linear corridors and allowing vegetation to become reestablished.

There would not be any new roads that would result in introducing new linear corridors in the landscape.

Indirect Effects and Cumulative Effects

The treatments that reduce ladder fuels indirectly reduce flame lengths when a fire does occur. These treatments would indirectly affect the size and severity of fire events thus reducing the effects to scenery resources. It is expected that it would be much more likely that effects of fires in this area would remain within the size and severity characteristic to the historical range.

Compliance with Forest Plan and Other Relevant Laws, Regulations, Policies and Plans

It is expected that alternative 2 would not reduce the scenic integrity and retain the existing visual quality objective standards established in the Forest Plan, CMP (HCNRA) and the Imnaha Wild and Scenic River Management Plan.

Summary of Effects

Alternative 2 would move stands toward desired future conditions which are with historic range of variability, and reduce the risk of uncharacteristic fire, while keeping effects to scenic integrity at a high level.

Alternative 3

Alternative 3 would treat 13 percent of the project area (23% of forested acres) to improve species composition, stand density, and reduce ladder fuels and canopy closure. These treatments would improve scenic stability from low (dry forest PVG) or moderate (moist forest PVG) to high where “all dominant scenery attributes of the valued scenic character are present and are likely to be sustained” (pg19, App. J). The appearance of the stands would be improved by making them appear healthier. This treatment would create stumps, and slash and soil disturbance would be visible from foreground views. These effects would be minor within the first one to two years. As regrowth of shrubs and grasses occur these effects would be significantly reduced. This treatment would not create openings that area visible from middleground or background distances. The effects of this prescription would not reduce the scenic integrity of the viewshed as they are expected to be negligible within 2-3 years. See effects common to all action alternatives. The following discussion discloses effects of the alternatives by viewshed.

Oregon State Highway 3, Joseph Canyon Overlook

Direct Effects
The direct effects of alternative 3 in this viewshed are the same as alternative 2, except no forest treatments would occur in RHCAs, and no trees greater than 21" would be cut. Alternative 3 would improve species composition, stand density, and reduce ladder fuels and canopy closure to a slightly lesser degree than alternative 2.

The one unit (#193) partially in the background view of Highway 3 would not have a single tree selection harvest, but the intermediate treatment would occur. This treatment would not change the density class of the stand, and would not be visibly evident from the Joseph Canyon Overlook.

Joseph Canyon Wild and Scenic River Corridor

Direct Effects
The direct effects of alternative 3 would be the same as alternative 2, except no forest treatments would occur in RHCAs, and no trees greater than 21" would be cut. There would be 10 fewer acres treated in the middleground view (visual quality objective of Partial Retention in the Table Rock area) than alternative 2. This effort would improve the scenic character and the scenic stability of the area to generally the same degree as alternative 2.

Table Mountain

Direct Effects
The effects of alternative 3 would generally be the same as alternative 2, except no forest treatments would occur in RHCAs, and no trees greater than 21" would be cut. There would be 10 fewer acres treated in this area than alternative 2, and there would be a slightly lower reduction in risk of uncharacteristic fire where more trees are left on the landscape due to the 21" dbh cutting limit. The scenic character and the scenic stability of the area would be improved to a slightly lower level in this viewshed than alternative 2.

Forest Road 46, Cold Spring Ridge/Forest Road 4680

Direct Effects
The direct effects of alternative 3 would be the same as alternative 2, except no forest treatments would occur in MA15, IRAs, or RHCAs, no trees greater than 21" would be cut, and FS Road 4600570 would not be decommissioned. These differences would result in very little difference in effect on visual quality, except in the case of scenic stability. Leaving more trees on the landscape, and not breaking up the horizontal homogeneity and ladder fuels of the IRAs, MA15, and RHCA areas would result in higher risk of uncharacteristic stand replacement fire compared to alternative 2, but lower risk relative to alternative 1 (no action).

Compliance with Forest Plan and Other Relevant Laws, Regulations, Policies and Plans
It is expected that alternative 3 would not reduce the scenic integrity and thus retain the existing visual quality objective standards established in the Forest Plan, CMP (HCNRA) and the Joseph Creek Wild and Scenic River Management Plan.

Indirect Effects and Cumulative Effects
The indirect and cumulative effects of alternative 3 would be the same as alternative 2.

Summary of Effects
Alternative 3 would move stands toward desired future conditions which are with historic range of variability, and reduce the risk of uncharacteristic fire, while keeping effects to scenic integrity to a minimum, meeting all standards.

Table X compares the effects of the alternatives on visual quality and scenic stability. All action alternatives would either meet or exceed VQOs, and generally improve the scenic stability of the landscape.

Table x. Comparison of Effects by Alternative for Visual Quality Objective and Scenic Stability

	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
Partial Retention	Meets VQO	Meets VQO	Meets VQO
Modification	Meets VQO	Meets VQO	Meets VQO
Overall Project Area Existing Condition is Low Stability	No improvement	Improves to High Stability	Improves to High Stability
Dry upland forest (currently low stability)	No improvement	Improves to High stability	Improves to High Stability
Moist upland forest (currently moderate stability)	No improvement	Improves to High Stability	Improves to High Stability

Cumulative Effects

This cumulative effects analysis considers effects of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions within the LJCRP area. The geographic boundary for this cumulative effects analysis is the LJCRP area and the temporal boundary is approximately 10 years, the amount of time needed for evidence of logging, restoration activities associated with road management and ecological function to soften and blend into the landscape more completely.

Past Actions

Vegetation management has occurred in the past in the LJCRP Area, there have been numerous timber sales, fuels reduction treatments, and activities associated with hazard tree removal in developed campgrounds and along travel routes.

Roading, timber harvest and recreation development have changed the landscape from a natural appearing forested landscape.

The activities of past management activities in total combine to maintain a range of scenic integrity levels from high to low in the designated viewsheds.

Present Actions

Vegetation management will continue to occur as routine hazard tree removal in developed recreation sites and along travel routes. The Forest Service will continue to close roads on USFS lands.

Recreation use will continue to occur as year round activities and increase in the future.

Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions

A sustainable forest would be promoted, the larger diameter trees (>20”) would be retained and become more healthy as competition from other vegetation species would be reduced. The large trees would have more nutrients, water, and space for growing and would be visually enhanced for viewing along the travel routes. The landscape character will be scenically and ecologically improved as the vegetation patterns become more diverse as a more complex forest structure is established and old growth characteristics become more dominant.

Overall, the trend is that scenic natural appearing landscapes will be more desirable over time in the forested setting.

Consistency Finding

All action alternatives would maintain a range of Low to Very High Landscape Character and Scenic Integrity (Condition) and would meet the established Visual Quality Objectives of Partial Retention or Retention. In areas designated to Partial Retention VQO the visitor would perceive a natural appearing to slightly altered landscape viewed in foreground or middleground and would have moderate scenic integrity. In areas designated to Retention VQO the visitor would perceive a natural appearing landscape viewed in foreground and would have high scenic integrity. The proposed treatments would be consistent with Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines for Visual Quality.

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