

**Forest Service Manual
National Headquarters - Washington Office
Washington, DC**

**Forest Service Manual 2300 – Recreation, Wilderness, And Related Resource Management
Chapter 2380 - Landscape Management**

Amendment: 2300-2003-1

Effective date: May 02, 2003

Duration: This amendment is effective until superseded or removed.

Approved by: Gloria Manning, Associate Deputy Chief, NFS

Date approved: March 13, 2003

Responsible Staff:

Last Change: 2300-2002-2 to 2330

Superseded Document(s): 2380, Amendment 2300-90-1, June 1, 1990

Digest: Following is an explanation of the changes throughout the directive by section.

2380: Revises direction throughout the chapter to be consistent with the procedures and guidance in Agriculture Handbook (AH) 701 (Vol. 2, ch. 1 in the National Forest Landscape Management Series), "Landscape Aesthetics: A Handbook for Scenery Management," and to reflect the transition from the Visual Management System to the Scenery Management System. Also makes editorial, coding, and formatting changes throughout the chapter.

2380.11 - 2380.19: Organizes by subject and updates information regarding the statutory authorities and regulations for management of aesthetics and scenery in the National Forest System.

2380.3 - 2380.32: Adds policy for resource planning and management (FSM 2380.31) and training (FSM 2380.32).

2380.4: Revises direction to reflect delegation of responsibility from the Chief to the Director, Recreation, Heritage, and Wilderness Resources Staff, Washington Office, for the inventory and management system for landscape aesthetics and scenery and related training programs.

2380.5: Adds definitions of terms used in the scenery inventory process and other aspects of the program for aesthetics and scenery management.

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Chapter 2380 - Landscape Management

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2380.6 - 2380.62: Replaces Agriculture Handbook (AH) 462 with AH 701, “Landscape Aesthetics: A Handbook for Scenery Management,” in the Current Publication section (FSM 2380.61). Adds a Superseded Reference section (FSM 2380.62) to allow use of AH 462, “The Visual Management System,” for information.

2381: Adds direction on use of landscape architecture expertise for scenery management.

2382 - 2382.4: Extensively revises, reorganizes, and recodes direction previously contained in FSM 2382 - 2382.32. Changes the caption of FSM 2382 to Scenery Management (formerly Visual Resource Management) and revises and clarifies direction. Changes the caption of FSM 2382.1 to Scenery Management System (formerly Landscape Management Fundamentals) and revises and clarifies direction. Changes the caption of FSM 2382.2 to Information Systems (formerly The Visual Resource Management System) and revises and clarifies direction. Changes the caption of FSM 2382.3 to Forest Plan Revisions and Scenery Management System (formerly Forest Plans and the Visual Management System) and revises, clarifies, and expands direction. Adds a new section, FSM 2382.4, Applications to Project Management, which revises, incorporates, and clarifies direction formerly in FSM 2383 - 2383.6, which are removed.

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2380.1 - Authority

The following statutory authorities and Federal regulations in FSM 2380.11 - 2380.19 provide for management of landscape aesthetics and scenery within the National Forest System.

2380.11 - Forest and Project Level Planning and Analysis

2380.11a - Resource Management Planning

1. The Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960 (16 U.S.C. 528 (note)) authorizes and directs the Secretary of Agriculture “to develop and administer the renewable surface resources of the National Forests” with “harmonious and coordinated management of the various resources . . . with consideration being given to the relative values of the various resources, and not necessarily the combination of uses that will give the greatest dollar return or the greatest unit output.”

2. The Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974, as amended by the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 1601) directs the Secretary of Agriculture to prepare land management plans which provide for outdoor recreation and to develop and keep current a comprehensive inventory of all National Forest System, as well as state and private, lands and resources. Section 6 of this act requires an assessment of potential aesthetic impacts during the interdisciplinary review of proposed timber sale areas that would include clearcutting and other cuts designed to regenerate an even-aged stand of timber. It also specifies treatment of cut blocks and protection of aesthetic resources, and directs that multiple use and sustainable yield guidelines be used with private lands involved with Government programs. The National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 1600 (note)) requires that the removal of trees, portions of trees, or forest products “be compatible with multiple use resource management objectives in the affected area.”

3. The rules at Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 219, Subpart A, National Forest System Land and Resource Management Planning (36 CFR part 219, subpart A), include requirements for consideration, treatment, and protection of intangible resources such as scenery and aesthetics.

4. The rules at Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 251, Subpart B, Special Uses (36 CFR part 251, subpart B), include requirements for permittees or holders to minimize damage to scenic and aesthetic values.

5. The rules at Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 223, Sale and Disposal of National Forest System Timber (36 CFR part 223), include requirements for protection of environmental quality and for minimizing adverse effects on, or providing protection for and enhancing, other National Forest System resources.

2380.11b - Environmental Analysis and Disclosure

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321) directs the Federal Government to “(2) assure for all Americans . . . healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings; (3) attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, [or] risk to health . . .; (4) preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects” of our environment. It further directs agencies to “insure the integrated use of the natural and social sciences and the environmental design arts in planning and in decisionmaking which may have an impact on man’s environment.” This act directs agencies to develop methods and procedures “which will insure that [scenery and other] unquantified environmental amenities and values may be given appropriate consideration in decisionmaking along with economic and technical considerations.”

2380.12 - Wilderness and National Recreation Areas

1. The Wilderness Act of 1964 (16 U.S.C. 1131) directs the United States to administer wilderness areas to provide for the “preservation of their wilderness character,” to retain their “primeval character and influence,” and to protect and manage the natural conditions of wilderness areas so that they “generally appear to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man’s work substantially unnoticeable.” Scenic use is identified as one of the six public purposes of wilderness areas.

2. The rules at Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 293, Wilderness -- Primitive Areas (36 CFR part 293), include requirements for scenic use, preservation and protection of wilderness character, and promotion and perpetuation of specific values including solitude and inspiration.

3. The rules at Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 292, National Recreation Areas (36 CFR part 292), include requirements for preservation, conservation, and protection of natural, scenic, and pastoral values, and other values contributing to public enjoyment of these areas.

2380.13 - Scenic Trails and Byways

1. The National Trails System Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. 1241) authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to administer and manage national scenic trails “for the conservation and enjoyment of the nationally significant scenic, historic, natural, or cultural qualities of the areas through which such trails may pass.”

2. The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (23 U.S.C. 101 (note)) directs the establishment of a national scenic byways program with designation criteria to include consideration of scenic beauty. It further recommends that designated travelways have operation and maintenance standards which include “strategies for . . . protecting and enhancing the landscape and view corridors surrounding such a highway.”

2380.14 - Wild and Scenic Rivers

1. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. 1271) directs the United States, in its administration of components of the national wild and scenic rivers system, to give primary emphasis to protecting “its aesthetic, [and] scenic . . . features.”

2. The rules at Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 297, Wild and Scenic Rivers (36 CFR part 297), include requirements for the protection of scenic and natural values from the effects of any water resources project.

2380.15 - Minerals Management

1. The Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (30 U.S.C. 1201) authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to permit surface coal mining operations on National Forest System lands if there are no significant recreational or other values which may be incompatible.

2. The rules at Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 228, Subpart A, Locatable Minerals (36 CFR part 228, subpart A), include requirements for harmonizing mineral operations with scenic values (sec. 228.8), and protecting scenic values when approving access to those operations (sec. 228.12).

2380.16 - Wetlands

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act of 1989 (16 U.S.C. 4401 (note), 4401-4413; 16 U.S.C. 669b (note)) recognizes the aesthetic values of fish, shellfish, and other wildlife; it further recognizes that wetland ecosystems provide aquatic areas which are important for recreational and aesthetic purposes. It directs the head of each Federal agency, to the extent consistent with the agency’s mission and statutory authorities, to cooperate to restore, protect, and enhance the wetland ecosystems and other habitats for migratory birds, fish, and wildlife.

2380.17 - State and Private Forestry

The rules at Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 230, Subpart A, Stewardship Incentive Program (36 CFR part 230, subpart A), include requirements for protection and management of aesthetic qualities (sec. 230.6) and cost sharing for aesthetic enhancements (sec. 230.7).

2380.18 - Landownership Adjustments

The rules at Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 254, Landownership Adjustments (36 CFR part 254), include requirements for protecting aesthetic values on lands involved in these transactions.

2380.19 - Caves

The rules at Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 290, Cave Resources Management (36 CFR part 290), include requirements for protecting and maintaining the scenic values of significant caves.

2380.2 - Objective

To manage National Forest System lands to attain the highest possible quality of landscape aesthetics and scenery commensurate with other appropriate public uses, costs, and benefits.

2380.3 - Policy

It is Forest Service policy to:

1. Inventory, evaluate, manage, and, where necessary, restore scenery as a fully integrated part of the ecosystems of National Forest System lands and of the land and resource management and planning process.
2. Employ a systematic, interdisciplinary approach to scenery management to ensure the integrated use of the natural and social sciences and environmental design.
3. Ensure scenery is treated equally with other resources.
4. Apply scenery management principles routinely in all National Forest System activities.

2380.31 - Resource Planning and Management

1. Use the basic concepts, elements, principles, and variables defined in the National Forest Landscape Management Agriculture Handbook (AH) series to manage landscape aesthetics and scenery (see FSM 2380.6 for a full listing of the AH publications in this series).
2. Document assessments of project impacts on scenery values, proposed mitigation measures, and scenic integrity objectives. Monitor the effectiveness of mitigation measures and the achievement of objectives.

2380.32 - Training

Provide training to improve employees' understanding of the legal requirements and concepts associated with effective management of scenery and aesthetic resources.

2380.4 - Responsibility

2380.41 - Director, Recreation, Heritage, and Wilderness Resources Management Staff, Washington Office

The Director of Recreation, Heritage, and Wilderness Resources Management, Washington Office, has the responsibility to:

1. Establish and maintain an inventory and management system for aesthetics and scenery that allows for integration of landscape aesthetics into all aspects of the National Forest System land and resource management planning process.
2. Establish methods for implementing and updating the landscape aesthetics and scenery management system.
3. Establish national training programs to provide several levels of understanding and knowledge in landscape aesthetics and scenery management commensurate with the different land and resource management needs and the different levels of responsibility of managers, operational personnel, and landscape architects.

2380.42 - Regional Forester

Each Regional Forester has the responsibility to:

1. Ensure systematic application of landscape aesthetics and scenery management processes in planning and managing National Forest System lands and resources.
2. Establish a Regional training program, incorporating elements specifically related to Regional landscape aesthetics and scenery management challenges and opportunities.

2380.43 - Forest Supervisor

Forest Supervisors have the responsibility to:

1. Inventory and maintain a database of aesthetic and scenery resources.
2. Develop landscape character goals for National Forest System lands on the unit.
3. Identify and map scenic integrity objectives for National Forest System lands on the unit.
4. Conduct and document a scenery assessment for all activities that may affect scenic resources and that require analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act.
5. Ensure application of the principles of landscape aesthetics, scenery management, and environmental design in project-level planning.

6. Ensure that Forest and District personnel, including, but not limited to, ecologists, wildlife biologists, silviculturists, recreation planners and managers, landscape architects, timber sale planners and administrators, engineers, land management planners, special use authorization administrators, and range specialists, have an appropriate awareness and understanding of laws, regulations, and direction related to the management of landscape aesthetics and scenery.

7. Establish and implement a method for monitoring, recording, and documenting changes in scenic integrity, landscape character, and constituent information.

2380.5 - Definitions

Concern Levels. A measure, used in the scenery inventory process, of the degree of public importance placed on the aesthetics of landscapes. Concern levels are assigned to travelways and use areas to describe three levels of interest in scenery: High (1), Moderate (2), or Low (3).

Constituent Information. The significance of scenic quality and aesthetic experience to people including: expectations, desires, preferences, acceptable levels of quality, behaviors, and values. Constituent information provides the foundation for understanding and identifying valued landscape attributes, landscape character, scenic integrity, and concern levels.

Distance Zones. Landscape areas denoted by specified distances from the observer. Distance zones are used as a frame of reference in which to discuss landscape attributes or the scenic effect of human activities in a landscape.

Existing Scenic Integrity. Current state of the landscape, considering previous human alterations. (See the definition for scenic integrity.)

Landscape Aesthetics. Generally, the study, science, or philosophy dealing with beauty and with judgments concerning beauty; more specifically, those aspects of National Forest System lands which are related to the human senses of, predominantly, sight, smell, and sound. In scenery management, aesthetics describe landscapes that give visual and sensory pleasure.

Landscape Architecture. The art and science of environmental design, planning, or management of the land; arrangement of natural and constructed elements through the application of aesthetic principles; application of cultural and scientific knowledge with concern for resource conservation and stewardship, to the end that the resultant environment sustains human health, psychological well-being, and social progress.

Landscape Character. A combination of physical, biological, and cultural images that gives an area its visual and cultural identity and helps to define a "sense of place." Landscape character provides a frame of reference from which to determine scenic attractiveness and to measure scenic integrity.

Landscape Character Goal. A management prescription designed to maintain or modify the existing landscape character to a desired future state.

Landscape Visibility. Visual accessibility of the landscape to viewers, referring to one's ability to see and perceive landscapes and to the relative importance and sensitivity of what is seen and perceived in the landscape. Concern levels and distance zones are elements of landscape visibility.

Scenery Management. The art and science of planning and designing landscape attributes relative to the appearance of places and expanses in outdoor settings. Scenery management involves administering the use of National Forest System lands within the context of multiple-use ecosystem management to ensure high quality scenery for the overall well-being and psychological welfare of society and future generations.

Scenery Management System. An overall framework for the orderly inventory, analysis, and management of scenery. This system applies to every acre of National Forests and National Grasslands administered by the Forest Service and to all Forest Service activities including, but not limited to, timber harvesting, road building, stream, range, and wildlife improvements, special use developments, utility line construction, recreation developments, and fuels management.

Scenic Attractiveness. Primary indicator of the scenic importance of a landscape based on human perceptions of the intrinsic beauty of landforms, rockforms, waterforms, vegetation patterns, and cultural features. Reflects varying visual perception attributes of variety, unity, vividness, intactness, coherence, mystery, uniqueness, harmony, balance, and pattern. The frame of reference for scenic attractiveness (generally at the section scale) is landscape character. Three levels of scenic attractiveness are identified during the scenery inventory process: Distinctive (A), Common or Typical (B), and Undistinguished (C).

Scenic Classes. A numerical measure of the relative value or importance of scenery in discrete landscape areas having similar characteristics of scenic attractiveness and landscape visibility. Scenic classes are a product of the inventory process that is used during Forest planning to compare the value of scenery with the values of other resources.

Scenic Integrity. The state of naturalness or a measure of the degree to which a landscape is visually perceived to be "complete." The highest scenic integrity ratings are given to those landscapes that have little or no deviation from the landscape character valued by constituents for its aesthetic quality.

Scenic Integrity Objectives. Definitions of the degrees of deviation from the landscape character that may occur at any given time as established by using the process described in Agriculture Handbook 701, "Landscape Aesthetics: A Handbook for Scenery Management" (FSM 2380.61). Scenic integrity objectives are an integral part of Forest plan revisions, environmental assessments, environmental impact statements, and project level planning.

2380.6 - Technical Publications and References

2380.61 - Current Publications

Refer to the following publications in the Department of Agriculture's National Forest Landscape Management Series for technical guidance in managing landscape aesthetics and scenery. The series is organized by volumes and chapters. Volume 1 is issued in one Agriculture Handbook (AH 434). Volume 2 contains eight chapters issued in eight separate Agriculture Handbooks: Chapter 1 (AH 701); Chapter 2 (AH 478); Chapter 3 (AH 484); Chapter 4 (AH 483); Chapter 5 (AH 559); Chapter 6 (AH 608); Chapter 7 (AH 617); and Chapter 8 (AH 478).

Some terms used in Volume 2, Chapters 2 through 8, remain from the original Visual Management System set out in AH 462, which has been superseded by the Scenery Management System set out in AH 701. Appendix A in AH 701 provides a crosswalk between terminology and system components in the superseded Visual Management System and the current Scenery Management System.

1. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. National Forest Landscape Management: Volume 1. Agriculture Handbook 434. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture; 1973. 76 pages.
2. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. National Forest Landscape Management: Volume 2, Chapter 1: "Landscape Aesthetics: A Handbook for Scenery Management." Agriculture Handbook 701. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture; 1996. 257 pages.
3. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. National Forest Landscape Management: Volume 2, Chapter 2: "Utilities." Agriculture Handbook 478. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture; 1975. 147 pages.
4. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. National Forest Landscape Management: Volume 2, Chapter 3: "Range." Agriculture Handbook 484. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture; 1977. 44 pages.
5. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. National Forest Landscape Management: Volume 2, Chapter 4: "Roads." Agriculture Handbook 483. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture; 1977. 62 pages.
6. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. National Forest Landscape Management: Volume 2, Chapter 5: "Timber." Agriculture Handbook 559. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture; 1980. 223 pages.
7. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. National Forest Landscape Management: Volume 2, Chapter 6: "Fire." Agriculture Handbook 608. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture; 1985. 89 pages.

8. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. National Forest Landscape Management: Volume 2, Chapter 7: "Ski Areas." Agriculture Handbook 617. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture; 1984. 71 pages.

9. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. National Forest Landscape Management: Volume 2, Chapter 8: "Recreation." Agriculture Handbook 666. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture; 1987. 86 pages.

2380.62 - Superseded Reference

Agriculture Handbook (AH) 462, has been superseded by AH 701, "Landscape Aesthetics, A Handbook for Scenery Management." Nevertheless, consult the superseded AH 462 for background information useful in understanding Forest land and resource management plans and other resource planning activities which utilized the Visual Management System in place prior to publication of AH 701. The full citation for the superseded Agriculture Handbook 462 is:

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. National Forest Landscape Management: Volume 2, Chapter 1: "The Visual Management System." Agriculture Handbook 462. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture; 1974. 47 pages.

2381 - Landscape Architecture

The profession of landscape architecture is established on a foundation of the following principles:

1. Protection of public health, safety, and welfare in the planning, design, and construction of outdoor settings.
2. Stewardship of the land and its resources through routine integration of aesthetic principles and the environmental design arts with scientific resource management.
3. Recognition of the value of aesthetics and scenic beauty to human and societal health and well-being.

Use the knowledge, skills, and abilities of landscape architects to meet the goals of aesthetics, scenery management, and environmental integrity on National Forest System lands.

2382 - Scenery Management

Managing scenery on National Forest System lands entails:

1. Completing and maintaining an inventory of landscape aesthetics and scenery resources.
2. Establishing goals and objectives for the management of scenery on all National Forest System lands.

3. Applying the principles of scenery management and environmental design in project-level planning.

4. Measuring scenery management accomplishments and success of mitigation measures in meeting scenic integrity objectives.

5. Monitoring and documenting changes in scenery and changes in public expectations related to landscape aesthetics and scenery.

2382.1 - Scenery Management System

The scenery management system, as set out in the Department of Agriculture's National Forest Landscape Management Series (FSM 2380.6), consists of the following:

1. The basic concepts, elements, principles, and variables of environmental art and design.
2. Landscape character, existing scenic integrity, and scenic classes.
3. Constituent information including, but not limited to, users, public expectations, sense of place, viewsheds, and viewpoints.
4. Landscape character goals and scenic integrity objectives integrated with other resource, cultural, and administrative needs.

2382.2 - Information Systems

Each Forest, Grassland, Prairie, and other administrative unit of the National Forest System shall maintain an accurate, current database of scenery and aesthetic resources for use in planning and design of projects and activities.

At a minimum, the scenery management database shall consist of the following:

1. Landscape character descriptions and map.
2. Constituent information.
3. Distance zones and concern levels map.
4. Scenic attractiveness descriptions and map.
5. Scenic class and scenery inventory icon map.
6. Existing scenic integrity level map.
7. Scenic integrity objectives map as established in Forest land and resource management plan.

2382.3 - Forest Plan Revisions and Scenery Management System

Update the scenery inventory using the Scenery Management System in Agriculture Handbook 701 (FSM 2380.61, para. 2). The recommended timeframe for updating the scenery inventory is prior to or at initiation of Forest land and resource management plan revisions. The applicable scenery inventory components in the Forest land and resource management planning process are landscape character, scenic integrity, scenic class, and constituent information.

2382.4 - Applications to Project Management

Refer to the Agriculture Handbook series on Landscape Management (FSM 2380.61) as guidance in project-level work to:

1. Plan, design, and construct utilities to reduce negative impacts to scenery associated with the utilities.
2. Analyze the impact of range management activities and determine methods to reduce negative impacts to associated scenery.
3. Integrate roads into the landscape with minimum adverse impact to scenery.
4. Determine how various silvicultural and landscape design treatments can be used to meet scenic integrity objectives and landscape character goals.
5. Understand how fire can be a useful tool to achieve desired scenic integrity objectives and landscape character goals.
6. Determine how scenery management techniques and principles can be used in the planning, design, and construction of winter sports developments to achieve and maintain desired scenic integrity objectives and landscape character goals.
7. Plan, design, and construct recreation sites and facilities so that they contribute positively to visitors' expectations and experiences and so that they integrate visually into the forest landscape with minimum adverse impact to scenery.
8. Determine how scenery management techniques and principles can be used to mitigate any land altering activity or introduced elements on the land, to achieve and maintain desired scenic integrity objectives and landscape character goals.