SUBJECT: Establishment of Loss of Scenic Integrity Caused by Non-Conforming Project Features.

SITUATION: This methodology is proposed in efforts to determine how to quantify a value for significant scenic impacts that would occur due to the implementation of Proposed Actions/Projects that cannot be mitigated to comply with the Scenery Standards established in the Forest Land Management Plan. Quantifying the scenic impact values would provide a basis for determining what a commensurate amount of scenery compensation should/could be.

METHOD: A Seen Area model would be created using methods and concepts derived from the Scenery Management System (SMS), such as scenic integrity objectives (SIOs) and landscape visibility distance zones. The SMS is a tool for integrating the benefits, values, desires, and preferences regarding aesthetics and scenery for all levels of land and resource management planning. SIOs have been designated for all areas of the Angeles National Forest. At the project level, all national forest activities are subject to review of the SIOs. A scenic integrity objectives map was created for the Angeles National Forest Land Management Plan.

A Geographic Information System (GIS) model would be created using the Forest Recreation Map as a base, and the Forest SIOs, landscape visibility distance zones, and the non-conforming proposed or existing features as layers.

The base values would be developed on a map limited by the viewshed(s) and Seen Area(s) within the Forest boundary.

Step 1: Map the Non-Conforming Proposed or Existing Features within Forest Land Seen Area(s)

After locating and creating a two or three-dimensional GIS object layer of the he nonconforming feature(s) in question, generate a Seen Area map with the boundaries of slope, Foreground distance (out to ½ mile), Middleground (from ½ mile out to 4 miles), and Background (4 miles to horizon, or an agreed upon distance).

This Seen Area will serve as the base map from which further values are determined.

Step 2: Assign overlays of land values in polygons on Seen Area Map base.

Map applicable scenery integrity objectives, calculate their respective acreage values, and input them in the appropriate columns in Table A.

- Very High
- High
- Moderate (Angeles National Forest doesn't have mapped SIOs lower than Moderate)

Map Impacted Special Classified Areas/Distinctive Features (Optional) – National Scenic Trails/Byways/Bikeways, Monuments, Picnic Areas, Campgrounds, Hiking Trails, Overlooks, etc. The acreage of Sensitive Receptors impacted by the Project will be quantified and added to the acreage in Table A under Very High SIO. Quantify and list acres in a table organized by landscape distance zones and SIO values of Very High (can include special classified areas/distinctive features acreage), High and Moderate. Table A has a breakdown of total acres by percentages that were equally based on the number of applicable SIO levels, and the number of landscape distance zones. The higher the SIO and the closer the distance zone, the higher the percentage of total acreage to be compensated for.

Table A:

New Scenic Impacts (Seen Area Analysis)	**Very High SIO** - Unaltered: Primarily Wilderness Areas. The existing landscape character and sense of place is expressed at the highest possible level. **(Special Classified Areas/Distinctive Features can also be included under this column)**	**High SIO** – Appears Unaltered: Deviations may be present but must repeat the form, line, color, texture, and pattern common to the landscape character so completely and at such scale that they are not evident.	**Moderate SIO** - Slightly Altered: Noticeable deviations must remain visually subordinate to the landscape character being viewed.
Foreground T/L From non-conforming feature out to ½ mi **Impacted Acres**	**100% of total # of Very High SIO acres in Foreground (Including Sensitive Receptor Acreage)**	**50% of total # of High SIO acres in Foreground**	**25% of total # of Moderate SIO acres in Foreground**
Middleground T/L ½ to 4 miles **Impacted Acres**	**50% of total # of Very High SIO acres in Middleground (Including Sensitive Receptor Acreage)**	**25% of total # of High SIO acres in Middleground**	**12.5% of total # of Moderate SIO acres in Middleground**
Background T/L 4 miles plus **Impacted Acres**	**25% of total # of Very High SIO acres in Background (Including Sensitive Receptor Acreage)**	**12.5% of total # of High SIO acres in Background**	**6.25% of total # of Moderate SIO acres in Background**

Total for Foreground (FG) Impacted area (0 to ½ mile) = FG acres.
Total for Middleground (MG) (½ mile to 4 miles) Impacted area = MG acres.
Total for Background (BG) (4 miles plus) Impacted area = BG acres.

Once the total scenic impact acreages have been quantified, using the formulas provided in Table A, a value for those acreages must be determined.

Step 4 – Establish what the Forest Land Value is/was Before the Project was/is Implemented.

A professional appraisal will establish the value of the Forest Land before the project was implemented. If resources are limited, comparable values from previously established sales can be used for rough calculations.

Once the land values have been determined and agreed upon, discussions on what would constitute commensurate compensation can be had. Compensation can then be provided and/or performed through some or one of the following methods suggested in the Table B below:

Table B:

Compensation Option(s)	Description of Option	Direct Benefits
Monetary Compensation	Monetary compensation would be paid to the Forest through a collection agreement that shall be established for implementation of scenic/recreation improvements on the Forest.	a. Monetary compensation to the Forest would provide an unobstructed avenue to fund federal scenery/recreation improvement projects, independent of Congressional authorizations (which may increase/decrease annually). b. This provides funding to make necessary improvements to areas that don't meet the Desired LMP Scenic Integrity Objectives or Desired Landscape Character Conditions.
Fund FS Landscape Architect Position(s)	Provide funds for Landscape Architect position(s) on the Forest so that there is adequate capacity to participate in more Forest projects that have the potential to impact scenic	a. Provides more L.A. staffing to cover more scenery assessments and scenery management for projects affecting ANF lands. b. Provides more L.A. staffing for improvement projects on

	integrity on the Forest.	ANF lands.
Rehabilitate/Restore a commensurate amount of disturbed acreage in Landscapes that do not meet current SIO levels	As directed by the FS, rehabilitate and/or restore landscape character and scenic integrity of landscapes and viewsheds (Foreground, Middleground, Background) within the ANF. Landscape character shall be improved and moved toward Desired Condition and Scenic Integrity Objectives as originally identified and described in the Forest Plan.	a. Makes a tangible improvement to landscapes and viewsheds within the same Forest where landscapes and viewsheds were impacted by the Project. b. Provides necessary improvements to areas that don't meet the Desired LMP Scenic Integrity Objectives or Desired Landscape Character Conditions.
Improve Conditions at Special Classified Areas/Distinctive Features and Rec Sites within Project Impacted Viewsheds	As directed by the FS, provide funding/resources for designs, environmental analysis, construction documents, and implementation of site improvements in special classified areas/distinctive features/recreation areas whose viewshed is impacted by the Project.	a. Makes a tangible and direct improvement to popular/valued NF use areas that were impacted by the Project.
Purchase Private Land that does not meet current SIO levels and Convert/Maintain to Natural Conditions that meet established SI levels for that area	Within the Congressional boundary of the National Forest, purchase private land and restore that land to a sustainable natural condition that meets the Forest's established SIO levels for that surrounding area.	a. Increases Forest land base. b. Creates more public open space. c. By purchasing in-holding land, it could resolve illegal land-use/trespass issues. d. Improves Scenic Integrity
Purchase Private Land that meets current SIO levels	Within the Congressional boundary of the National Forest, as directed by the FS, purchase private land that meets the Forest's established SIO levels for that surrounding area.	a. Increases Forest land base. b. Creates more public open space. c. By purchasing in-holding land, it could resolve illegal land-use/trespass issues. d. Maintains existing Scenic Integrity

Step 5 (If Applicable). Land Purchase and/or Restoration Compensation of Total Impacted Acres

If the compensation is one, or a combination of the following choices from **Table B**:

- Rehabilitate/Restore a commensurate amount of disturbed acreage in Landscapes that do not meet current SIO levels
- Purchase Private Land that does not meet current SIO levels and Convert/Maintain to Natural Conditions that meet established SI levels for that area
- Purchase Private Land that meets current SIO levels

All purchased/rehabilitated/restored acres would need to directly correlate to a specific acreage total, SIO, and Distance Zone derived from **Table A**. NOTE: Because both Private and Forest land is limited, direct correlation to the Distance Zones can be waived, with Forest Service approval.

The acres proposed for replacement of loss of Scenic Integrity are to be evaluated by a Scenery Management expert or Landscape Architect according to the direction of the *USDA Forest Service Agriculture Handbook 701: Landscape Aesthetics: A Handbook for Scenery Management*; December 1995.