APPENDIX 6.13-B – SCENIC QUALITY INVENTORY & EVALUATION CHART

Scenic Qaulity - Explanation of Rating Criteria

landform

Topography becomes more interesting as it gets steeper or more massive, or more severely or universally sculptured. Outstanding landforms may be monumental, as the Grand Canyon, the Sawtooth Mountain Range in Idaho, the Wrangell Mountain Range in Alaska, or they may be exceedingly artistic and subtle as certain badlands, pinnacles, arches, and other extraordinary formations.

vegetation

Give primary consideration to the variety of patterns, forms, and textures created by plant life. Consider short-lived displays when they are known to be recurring or spectacular. Consider also smaller scale vegetational features which add striking and intriguing detail elements to the landscape (e.g., gnarled or wind beaten trees, and Joshua trees).

water

That ingredient which adds movement or serenity to a scene. The degree to which water dominates the scene is the primary consideration in selecting the rating score

color

Consider the overall color(s) of the basic components of the landscape (e.g., soil, rock, vegetation, etc.) as they appear during seasons or periods of high use. Key factors to use when rating "color" are variety, contrast, and harmony.

adjacent scenery

Degree to which scenery outside the scenery unit being rated enhances the overall impression of the scenery within the rating unit. The distance which adjacent scenery will influence scenery within the rating unit will normally range from 0-5 miles, depending upon the characteristics of the topography, the vegetative cover, and other such factors. This factor is generally applied to units which would normally rate very low in score, but the influence of the adjacent unit would enhance the visual quality and raise the score.

scarcity

This factor provides an opportunity to give added importance to one or all of the scenic features that appear to be relatively unique or rare within one physiographic region. There may also be cases where a separate evaluation of each of the key factors does not give a true picture of the overall scenic quality of an area. Often it is a number of not so spectacular elements in the proper combination that produces the most leasing and memorable scenery - the scarcity factor can be used to recognize this type of area and give it the added emphasis it needs.

cultural modifications

Cultural modifications in the landform/water, vegetation, and addition of structures should be considered and may detract from the scenery in the form of a negative intrusion or complement or improve the scenic quality of a unity. Rate accordingly

Scenic Quality - Inventory and Evaluation Chart

SCENIC QUALITY
INVENTORY AND EVALUATION CHART

key factors	rating criteria and score		
landform	High Vertical relief as expressed in prominent cliffs, spires, **or** massive rock outcrops; or severe surface variation or highly eroded formations including major badlands or dune systems; **or** detail features dominant and exceptionally striking and intriguing such as glaciers. **5**	Steep canyons, mesas, buttes, cinder cones, and drumlins; or interesting erosional patterns or variety in size and shape of landforms; or detail features which are interesting though not dominant or exceptional. **3**	Low rolling hills, foothills, or flat valley bottoms; or few or no interesting landscape features. **1**
vegetation	A variety of vegetative types as expressed in interesting forms, textures, and patterns. **5**	Some variety of vegetation, but only one or two major types. **3**	Little or no variety or contrast in vegetation. **1**
water	Clear and clean appearing, still, or cascading white water, any of which are a dominant factor of the landscape. **5**	Flowing, or still, but not dominant in the landscape. **3**	Absent, or present, but not noticeable. **0**
color	Rich color combinations, variety or vivid color; or pleasing contrasts in the soil, rock, vegetation, water or snow fields. **5**	Some intensity or variety in colors and contrast of the soils, rock, and vegetation, but not a dominant scenic element. **3**	Subtle color variations, contrast, or interest; generally mute tones. **1**
influence of adjacent scenery	Adjacent scenery greatly enhances overall visual quality **5**	Adjacent scenery moderately enhances overall visual quality. **3**	Adjacent scenery has little or no influence on overall visual quality. **0**
scarcity	One of a kind; or unusually memorable, or very rare within region. Consistent chance for exceptional wildlife or wildflower viewing, etc. **5+** 1/	Distinctive, though somewhat similar to others within the region. **3**	Interesting within its setting, but fairly common within the region. **1**
cultural modifications	Modifications add favorably to visual variety while promoting visual harmony. **2**	Modifications add little or no visual variety to the area, and introduce no discordant elements. **0**	Modifications add variety but are very discordant and promote strong disharmony. **-4**

1/ a rating of greater than 5 can be given but must be supported by written justification.

INSTRUCTIONS

Purpose: To rate the visual quality of the scenic resource on all BLM managed lands.

How to Identify Scenic Value: All Bureau lands have scenic value

How to Determing Minimum Suitability: All BLM lands are rated for scenic values. Also rate adjacent or intermingling non-BLM lands within planning unit.

When to Evaluate Scenic Quality: Rate for scenery under the most critical conditions (i.e., highest user period or season of use, sidelight, proper atmospheric conditions, etc.

How to Delineate Rating Areas: Consider the following factors when delineating rating areas.

1. Like Physiographic characteristics (i.e., landform, vegetation, etc.).

2. Similar visual patterns, texture, color, variety, etc.

3. Areas which have a similar impact from cultural modifications (i.e., roads, historical and other structures, mining operations, or other surface disturbances).

Explanation of Criteria: (See Illustration 1.)

NOTE: Values for each rating criteria are maximum and minimum scores only. It is also possible to assign scores within these ranges

SCENIC QUALITY

A = 19 or more

B = 12-18

C = 11 or less