

Overview of Federal Agency Scenic Quality Rating Processes

Agency Guidelines	Criteria
<p>Bureau of Land Management <i>Visual Resource Management (VRM) 1984</i></p>	<p>Scenic Quality Rating Unit (SQRU): Based on physiographic, landscape, and land use patterns</p> <p>Scenic Quality: SQRUs are rated A, B, or C through a numeric rating process based on <i>Landform, Vegetation, Water, Color, Adjacent Scenery, Scarcity, Cultural Modifications</i></p>
<p>US Forest Service <i>Scenery Management System (SMS) 1995</i></p>	<p>Ecological Unit Description (EDU): Establishes framework for SMS process</p> <p>Scenic Attractiveness Classes: Classes <i>A-Distinctive, B-Typical, or C-Indistinctive</i> are rated through a qualitative collaborative process to measure the scenic importance of a landscape based on perception of the intrinsic beauty of landform, water, vegetation patterns and land use elements.</p>
<p>National Park Service <i>Visual Resource Program (VRP) 2016</i></p>	<p>Study Area: Viewpoint oriented process</p> <p>Scenic Quality Classes: Views are rated as Classes A, B, C, D & E through a numeric process based on three factors: <i>landscape character integrity, vividness, and visual harmony.</i></p>
<p>Federal Highway Administration <i>Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects (VIA) 2015</i></p>	<p>Study Area: Area of Visual Effect (AVE)</p> <p>Visual Quality: FHWA guidelines consider visual quality a result of the interactive experience between viewers and their environment, based on the concept of transactional perception, defined by <i>natural harmony (harmonious or inharmonious), cultural order (orderly or disorderly) and project coherence (coherent or incoherent)</i> within the AVE.</p>
<p>US Army Corps of Engineers <i>Visual Resource Assessment Procedure (VRAP) 1988</i></p>	<p>Study Area: Regional Landscape & Landscape Similarity Zone</p> <p>Visual Quality classes: Landscape zones are rated as <i>Distinct, Average, Minimal</i> based on a qualitative and numeric rating process.</p>
<p>Bureau of Ocean Energy Management <i>Seascape and Landscape Impact Assessment (SLIA) & Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) 2021</i></p>	<p>Study Area: Viewshed of offshore wind turbines and onshore energy-related facilities</p> <p>SLIA Criteria: Factors contributing to seascape/landscape values include <i>seascape/landscape quality or condition, scenic quality, representativeness, conservation interest, recreation value, and perceptual values or sense of place.</i></p> <p>VIA Criteria: Apply land management agency inventories on federal lands. For other lands, scenic quality is described based on design elements: form, line, color, texture, scale, and motion.</p>