

**5. STANDARDS FOR CLASSIFYING VISUAL SENSITIVITY UNITS**

**5.3 Existing Visual Condition (EVC)**

**11. Scale of Existing Alteration**

Preserved	<b>P</b>	No visible human-caused alterations	<b>0%</b>
Retained	<b>R</b>	Human-caused alterations are visible but not evident	<b>0 - 1.5 %</b>
Partially Retained	<b>PR</b>	Human-caused alterations are evident but subordinate and therefore not dominant	<b>1.5 - 7 %</b>
Modified	<b>M</b>	Human-caused alterations are dominant but have natural appearing characteristics	<b>7 - 20 %</b>
Maximally Modified	<b>MM</b>	Human-caused alterations are dominant and out of scale	<b>20 - 30 %</b>
Excessively Modified	<b>EM</b>	Human-caused alterations are excessive and greatly out of scale	<b>&gt;30%</b>

**12. Influence of Visual Landscape Design**

<b>High</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>High (greater)</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Low (lesser)</b>	<b>N/A</b>
square or angular in shape, contradicts or breaks natural lines of force causing tension, stark contrasting boundaries	some natural character reflected in design, major lines of force recognized some effort to mitigate contrast evident.	shape borrows from natural character of landscape, utilizes natural lines of force, boundaries are feathered and stratified to reduce contrast	no human-made alterations visible.

**12. Types of Alteration (TA)**

**TA Code: Type:**

- 1 timber harvesting openings
- 2 road, rail transportation routes, airfields, etc.
- 3 power, seismic or pipeline corridors, etc.
- 4 mining, quarries, gravel pits, dumps, etc.
- 5 structural (bridges, dams, buildings, docks, floats, etc.)
- 6 agricultural
- 7 settlement
- 8 recreational use areas (ski hills, sites, trails, etc.)
- 9 aquaculture
- 10 other types of alteration (record type in the statement of rationale)

**13. Influence of Site Disturbance**

<b>High (dominant)</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Low (Subordinate)</b>	<b>N/A</b>
site disturbances dominate unit, with evidence of side-casting, may have erosion; high contrast cuts or fills, may contain a distinct 'zig zag' pattern or many parallel roads; and high visual contrast	site disturbances begin to dominate unit, little or no evidence of side-casting or erosion.	site disturbances are subordinate to Visual Sensitivity Unit, no side-casting, landing or erosion evident.	no visible site disturbances

**14. Influence of Vegetative Color and Texture**

<b>High (Strong)</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Low (Weak)</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>A.</b> some ground may still be visible	<b>A.</b> roads and logging debris are still visible	<b>A.</b> new clearcuts, roads and/or mass wasting are still clearly visible	<b>A.</b> no existing alterations
<b>B.</b> regenerating forest is well advanced	<b>B.</b> cutblocks have a green hue	<b>B.</b> cutblocks have little new vegetation	<b>B.</b> no partial VEG of existing alterations

C. distinctions in height, color and texture remain between cutblocks and adjacent forest but cutblocks are no longer seen as recently cut over	C. vegetation plays a moderate rehabilitating role and may ameliorate effects of harvesting in a VSU within a Visual Quality Class	C. vegetation plays a small rehabilitating role in ameliorating effects of harvesting in a VSU	
D. vegetation plays a strong role and may ameliorate effects of harvesting in a VSU by at least one Visual Quality Class			

#### 5.4 Visual Absorption Capability (VAC)

High	<b>H</b>	Landscape has high ability to absorb alteration and maintain its visual integrity
Moderate	<b>M</b>	Landscape has moderate ability to absorb alteration and maintain its visual integrity
Low	<b>L</b>	Landscape has low ability to absorb alteration and maintain its visual integrity

#### 16. Slope

<b>High (gentle)</b>	<b>(2) Moderate</b>	<b>(1) Low (steep)</b>
less than 30%	30 - 60%	greater than 60%

#### 17. Aspect

<b>High (3)</b>	<b>Moderate (2)</b>	<b>Low (1)</b>
north, northwest or northeast facing landscape slopes or flat topography for which aspect is not applicable.	due east or due west facing landscape slopes.	south, southwest or southeast facing landscape slopes.

#### 18. Surface Variation

<b>High (3)</b>	<b>Moderate (2)</b>	<b>Low (1)</b>
high level of variety in topography (e.g. many hollows, knobs, benches and breaks in topography)	some variety in topography (e.g. some hollows, knobs, benches and breaks in topography)	little or no variety in topography (e.g. steep, uniform slopes)

#### 19. Rock/Soil/Vegetative Variety

<b>High (3)</b>	<b>Moderate (2)</b>	<b>Low (1)</b>
<b>A.</b> diverse variations in vegetation patterns	<b>A.</b> some variations in vegetation patterns	<b>A.</b> uniform, continuous vegetation cover
<b>B.</b> numerous natural or human-made openings in the tree canopy	<b>B.</b> some natural or human-made openings in the tree canopy	<b>B.</b> few natural or human-made openings in the tree canopy
<b>C.</b> weak or very little visual contrast between exposed rock/soil and vegetation	<b>C.</b> some visual contrast between exposed rock/soil and vegetation	<b>C.</b> strong visual contrast between exposed rock/soil and vegetation
<b>D.</b> diverse color/texture variations in vegetation, rock and/or soil	<b>D.</b> some color/texture variations in vegetation, rock and/or soil	<b>D.</b> little or no color/texture variations in vegetation, rock and/or soil
<b>E.</b> other	<b>E.</b> other	<b>E.</b> other

### 5.5 Biophysical Rating (BR)

High	<b>H</b>	Biophysical attributes have high visual interest and a high ability to attract viewer attention
Moderate	<b>M</b>	Biophysical attributes have moderate visual interest and a moderate ability to attract viewer attention
Low	<b>L</b>	Biophysical attributes have low visual interest and a low ability to attract viewer attention

#### 21. Slope

High (3)	Moderate (2)	Low (1)
steep slopes (>60%)	moderate slopes (30-60%)	gentle slope (0-30%)

#### 22. Aspect

High (3)	Moderate (2)	Low (1)
south, southwest or southeast facing slopes	due east or due west facing slopes	north, northwest or northeast facing slopes or flat topography

#### 23. Edge

High (3)	Moderate (2)	Low (1)
edge is obvious, strong and is a major attraction; the viewers eye spends considerable time following the edge (e.g. complex, striking or dominant shore feature or skyline)	edge is less obvious and is a minor attraction; the viewer spends a moderate amount of time following the edge (features are not as complex or striking)	edge is weak, indistinct and provides minimal attraction; the viewers eye moves beyond the edge to other features

#### 23. Type of Edge (TE)

- |                      |                          |                         |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| A. water/landform    | E. land use/vegetation   | I. rock/soil/vegetation |
| B. water/vegetation  | F. land use/land use     | J. landform/landform    |
| C. water/land use    | G. vegetation/vegetation |                         |
| D. land use/landform | H. skylines              |                         |

#### 24. Topographic Variety

High (3)	Moderate (2)	Low (1)
<b>A.</b> single very distinctive feature (e.g. Hope slide a spectacular incised ravine)	<b>A.</b> single moderately distinctive feature (e.g. avalanche track broad shallow gully)	<b>A.</b> single non distinctive (subtle) feature (e.g. a small localized slide sweeping midslope bowl)
<b>B.</b> many features of the same type. (e.g. 4 or more topographic breaks/benches hierarchy of ridges)	<b>B.</b> some features of the same type (e.g. 2-3 topographic breaks/benches)	<b>B.</b> few features of the same type (e.g. 1 or no topographic breaks)
<b>C.</b> many features of different types (e.g. many hollows, knobs, benches, or breaks in topography)	<b>C.</b> some features of different types	<b>C.</b> few features of any type

#### 25. Vertical Relief

High (3)	Moderate (2)	Low (1)
high vertical relief - over 800 meters	some vertical relief - rolling or inclined terrain - 200 - 800 meters	little vertical relief - under 200 meters

#### 26. Vegetative Variety

High (3)	Moderate (2)	Low (1)
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<b>A.</b> high level of variety in vegetative pattern	<b>A.</b> some variety in vegetative pattern, color and texture (e.g. mixture of conifers and deciduous)	<b>A.</b> vegetative cover that because of its absence of either continuity or variety has low visual interest
<b>B.</b> very uniform color texture and pattern	<b>B.</b> some uniformity in color and texture, makes the unit moderately sensitive to alteration	

### 27. Influence of Rock/Soil

High	Moderate	Low	N/A
<b>Prominence</b> <b>A.</b> unusual, outstanding or dominant natural rock or soil features; such as basalt columns or hoodoos	<b>A.</b> natural rock or soil features present, but not outstanding or dominant	<b>A.</b> natural rock or soil features are only slightly apparent	<b>A.</b> no rock or soil visible in the VSU
<b>Pattern</b> <b>B.</b> rock or soil intermingled with vegetation, in proportions that provide great variety in pattern, texture and color, and invoking high viewer interest	<b>B.</b> rock or soil intermingled with vegetation, in proportions that provide some variety in pattern, texture and color, and invoking moderate viewer interest	<b>B.</b> rock or soil intermingled with vegetation, in proportions that provide low variety in pattern, texture and color, and invoking low viewer interest. VSU is homogeneous in appearance	

### 28. Influence of Water

High	Moderate	Low	N/A
<b>A.</b> water has a high influence	<b>A.</b> water has moderate influence	<b>A.</b> water has low influence	<b>A.</b> no water present in, or adjacent to, the VSU
<b>B.</b> water features are dominant	<b>B.</b> water features are present but subordinate	<b>B.</b> water features are present but insignificant	
<b>C.</b> water is clear, clean or colorful	<b>C.</b> water is not clear or is somewhat turbid	<b>C.</b> water appears murky or is very turbid	

### 29. Influence of Adjacent Scenery

**Note:** Water features are excluded from this rating

High	Moderate	Low	N/A
adjacent scenery and/or VSU has a strong influence on the assessed VSU. (i.e. may increase or decrease the overall scenic value or sensitivity of the unit)	adjacent scenery and/or VSU has some influence on the assessed VSU (i.e. may somewhat increase or decrease the overall scenic value or sensitivity of the unit)	adjacent scenery and/or VSU has little influence on the assessed VSU (i.e. does not increase or decrease the overall scenic value or sensitivity of unit)	no adjacent VSUs

### 5.6 Viewing Condition (VC)

High	<b>H</b>	Viewing condition has high influence on VSU sensitivity
Moderate	<b>M</b>	Viewing condition has moderate influence on VSU sensitivity
Low	<b>L</b>	Viewing condition has low influence on VSU sensitivity

### 31. Viewing Distance

<b>3) High (foreground)</b>	<b>(2) Moderate (midground)</b>	<b>(1) Low (background)</b>
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0 to 1.0 km from viewer; maximum discernment of detail, texture and contrast	1.0 to 8.0 km from viewer; emergence of overall shapes and patterns, with some texture and color still evident	more than 8.0 km from viewer; outlines of general shapes and patterns, with little discernible texture and color, and strong sense of overall perspective
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### 32. Viewing Frequency

(3) High (many)	(2) Moderate (some)	(1) Low (few)
five or more viewpoints or continuous viewing opportunity	three or four viewpoints or intermittent viewing opportunities	one or two viewpoints, glimpses or no specific viewing opportunities

### 33. Viewing Duration

(3) High (long)	(2) Moderate	(1) Low (short)
<b>Land</b> A. opportunity to travel towards or view a VSU for > 1 minute (e.g., communities, campgrounds etc.)	<b>Land</b> A. opportunity to view a VSU from a static viewpoint of a temporary nature for 10 seconds to 1 minute (e.g., highways rest stops)	<b>Land</b> A. opportunity to view a VSU is limited to glimpses of < 10 seconds
<b>Water</b> B. viewpoints on still waterbodies where people can stop/slow down to view scenic features or participate in recreation activities	<b>Water</b> B. viewpoints on slow moving waterbodies where people cannot stop without anchoring but have the time to scrutinize the VSU	<b>Water</b> B. viewpoints on fast moving waterbodies providing only passing, short view of the

### 34. Viewing Angle

(3) High	(2) Moderate	(1) Low
VSU immediately or directly in front of observer (focal)	VSU parallels travel corridor or is at right angles to observer (oblique/tangent)	VSU is at the periphery of observers vision

### 5.7 Viewer Rating (VR)

High	<b>H</b>	Numbers of viewers and expectations have a high influence on visual sensitivity
Moderate	<b>M</b>	Numbers of viewers and expectations have a moderate influence on visual sensitivity
Low	<b>L</b>	Numbers of viewers and expectations have a low influence on visual sensitivity

### 36. Number of Viewers

High (3)	Moderate (2)	Low (1)
A. large numbers of viewers relative to type of activity being pursued	A. moderate numbers of viewers relative to the activities being pursued	A. low numbers of viewers relative to the type of activity being pursued
B. 5,000 vehicles per day or 500,000 vehicles per year over a given highway	B. 1,000 vehicles per day or 100,000 vehicles per year	B. 200 vehicles per day or 20,000 vehicles per year

C. >5,000 users per year at a BCFS recreation site	C. 500 - 5000 users per year at a BCFS recreation site	C. 0 - 500 users per year at a BCFS recreation site
D. 1,000 kayakers per year	D. 200 kayakers per year	D. 50 kayakers per year
E. 1,000 hikers per year on a given trail	E. 200 hikers per year	E. 50 hikers per year
F. other	F. other	F. other

### 37. Viewer Expectations/Concerns

High (3)	Moderate (2)	Low (1)
A. scenic quality is of primary importance to the activity or experience pursued (e.g. kayaking, cruise ships, commercial tourism operations)	A. scenic quality is of secondary importance to the activity or experience pursued (e.g. sport fishing, BC Ferry passenger, highway traveler)	A. scenic quality is of little interest or importance to the activity or experience pursued (e.g. resource development activities such as logging, mining, fish-farming)
B. majority of viewers have high expectations/concerns for visual quality	B. majority of viewers have moderate expectations/concerns for visual quality	B. majority of viewers have low or no expectations/concerns

### 5.8 Visual Sensitivity Class (VSC)

VSC Class	Description
1	Very high sensitivity to human-made visual alteration. The area is extremely important to viewers. There is a very high probability that the public would be concerned if the Visual Sensitivity Unit was visually altered in any way or to any scale.
2	High sensitivity to human-made visual alteration. The area is very important to viewers. There is a high probability that the public would be concerned if the Visual Sensitivity Unit was visually altered.
3	Moderate sensitivity to human-made visual alteration. The area is important to viewers. There is a probability that the public would be concerned if the Visual Sensitivity Unit was visually altered.
4	Low sensitivity to human-made visual alteration. The area is moderately important to viewers. There is a risk that the public would be concerned if the Visual Sensitivity Unit was visually altered.
5	Very low sensitivity to human-made visual alteration. The area may be somewhat important to viewers. There is a small risk that the public would be concerned if the Visual Sensitivity Unit was visually altered.

### 5.9 Additional parameters (Optional)

#### 40. Years to VEG

5 years or less	5 to 10 years	10 + years	N/A
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#### 41. Visual Recovery

High	Moderate	Low
A. high site class	A. medium site class	A. poor or low site class.
B. evidence of deep, well-drained soils with adequate soil moisture, and/or vigorous vegetative growth	B. evidence of soils with some moisture deficient or poor drainage, and/or moderate vegetative growth	B. evidence of shallow soils with numerous bedrock outcrops, or boggy, poorly drained soils, and/or slow or chlorotic vegetative growth

**42. Rehabilitation/Enhancement Opportunity (RH/EH)**

<b>Opportunity for Rehabilitation (RH)</b>	<b>Opportunity for Enhancement (EH)</b>	<b>N/A</b>
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