Table C.1-2. Visual Quality Rating Guidance

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<th>Visual Quality Rating</th>
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| High                   | • Landscape elements (landforms, vegetative patterns, water characteristics and cultural features) have high visual appeal  
                          • Landscape has high degrees of variety, vividness, intactness, harmony, and uniqueness (attributes)                                                
                          • Distinctive landscape that attracts people to view                                                                                               |
| Moderate-to-High       | • Landscape elements have moderate-to-high visual appeal  
                          • Landscape attributes have a mix of moderate and high values  
                          • Landscape may contain built features that neither complement nor detract from overall visual quality                                           |
| Moderate               | • Landscape elements are moderately appealing  
                          • Landscape attributes have common or ordinary values  
                          • Landscape may contain discordant built features but they are subordinate                                                                      |
| Low-to-Moderate        | • Landscape elements have low-to-moderate appeal  
                          • Landscape has weak or missing attributes  
                          • Landscape may have prominent though not dominant discordant built features                                                                      |
| Low                    | • Landscape elements have low-to-no appeal  
                          • Landscape is missing some attributes  
                          • Landscape is dominated by discordant built features                                                                                         |

This table is identical to Draft EIR Table D.12-2.

**Viewer Concern** addresses the level of interest or concern of viewers regarding an area’s visual resources and is closely associated with viewers’ expectations for the area. Viewer concern reflects the importance placed on a given landscape based on the human perceptions of the intrinsic beauty of the existing landforms, rock forms, water features, vegetation patterns, and even cultural features.

**Viewer Exposure** describes the degree to which viewers are exposed to views of the landscape. Viewer exposure considers landscape visibility (the ability to see the landscape), distance zones (proximity of viewers to the subject landscape), number of viewers, and the duration of view. Landscape visibility can be a function of several interconnected considerations including proximity to viewing point, degree of discernible detail, seasonal variations (snow, fog, and haze can obscure landscapes), time of day, and presence or absence of screening features such as landforms, vegetation, and/or built structures. Even though a landscape may have highly scenic qualities, it may be remote, receiving relatively few visitors and, thus, have a lower degree of viewer exposure. Conversely, a subject landscape or project may be situated in relatively close proximity to a major road or highway utilized by a substantial number of motorists and yet still result in relatively low viewer exposure if the rate of travel speed on the roadway is high and viewing times are brief, or if the landscape is partially screened by vegetation or other features. Frequently, it is the subject area’s proximity to viewers or distance zone that is of particular importance in determining viewer exposure. Landscapes are generally subdivided into three or four distance zones based on relative visibility from travel routes or observation points. Distance zones typically include foreground, middleground, and background. The actual number of zones and distance assigned to each zone is dependent on the existing terrain characteristics and public policy and is often determined on a project-by-project basis.

**Overall Visual Sensitivity** is a concluding assessment as to an existing landscape’s susceptibility to an adverse visual outcome. A landscape with a high degree of visual sensitivity is able to accommodate only a lower degree of adverse visual change without resulting in a significant visual impact. A landscape with a low degree of visual sensitivity is able to accommodate a higher degree of adverse visual change before resulting in a significant visual impact. Overall visual sensitivity is derived from a comparison of existing visual quality, viewer concern, and viewer exposure.