

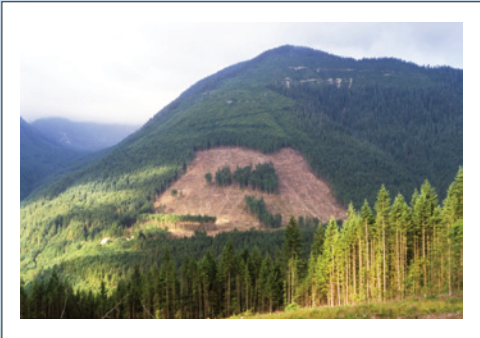
Managing the Landscape

Once a Visual Quality Objective has been established, forest companies that prepare Forest Stewardship Plans are required through regulation to be consistent with the VQO. Two important tools that help to ensure that this occurs are:

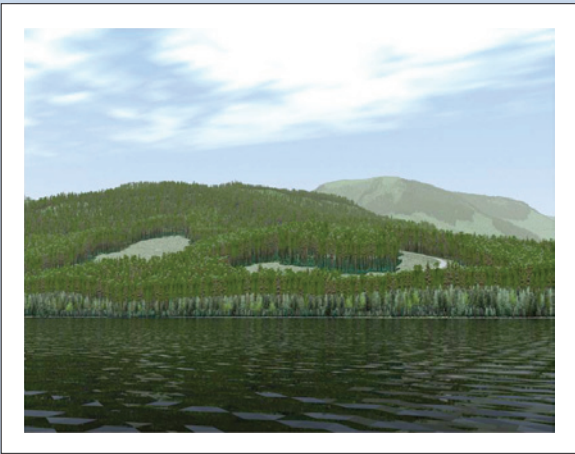
- use of visual design techniques (e.g., shaping harvest openings, retaining trees within openings, minimizing road visibility) so that harvest openings look more natural and are in scale with the natural landscape.
- preparation of visual simulations to evaluate whether the cutblocks and roads will be consistent with the VQO.



Organic-shaped Openings



Geometric-shaped Opening



Visual Simulation Showing Proposed Harvesting

Monitoring

Government monitors licensee performance by periodically conducting visual quality effectiveness evaluations and VQO inspections. Evaluations determine if the management framework is working and is effective at managing the visual resource. VQO inspections are a tool used by the government’s Compliance and Enforcement staff to ensure that VQOs are being met. If not, investigations may follow and penalties may be imposed.

The Public’s View

Scenery is managed on behalf of B.C. residents and tourists. Therefore, from time to time the Ministry conducts research work to determine public response to the visual impact of different forestry practices. The results of these research projects are used to develop management guidelines, and can influence government policy.

To learn what the public thinks about various visual forestry practices in B.C. visit:
www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/values/visual/Publications/index.htm.

Opportunities for Input

In addition to carrying out public perception research, the public is invited to provide input at several stages during the visual resource management process. Public input is solicited at the inventory phase, through direct invitations and advertisements in local and regional newspapers. Public input is also sought when VQOs are being established. Finally, Forest Stewardship Plans must be advertised for public review and comment, and the forest licensee must show how the area’s Visual Quality Objectives will be met.

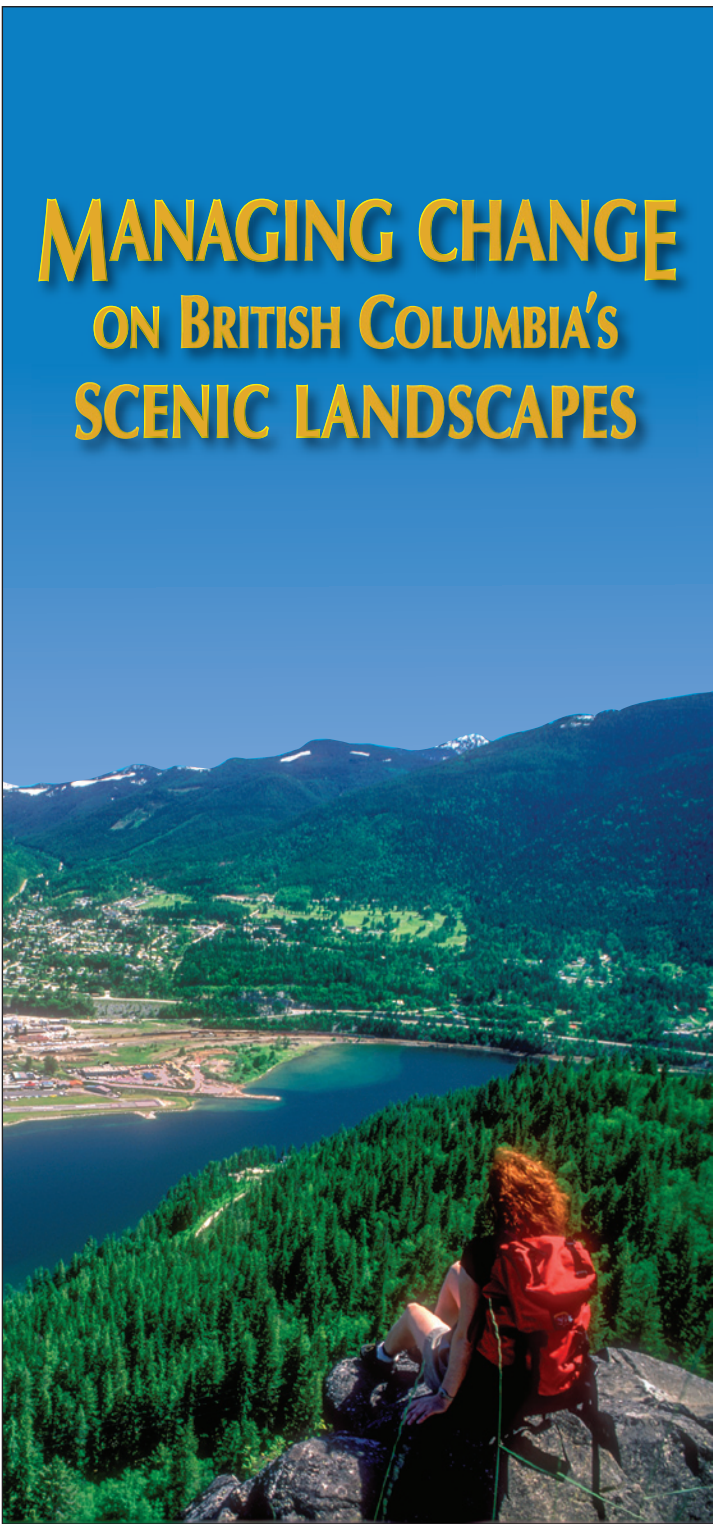
Reporting a Problem

Sometimes, the public will see harvesting operations that do not appear to be in character with the landscape. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Ministry’s local Resource District Office, the Compliance and Enforcement Branch, or the Forest Practices Board.

For more Information about managing visual resources, contact:

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations
Resource Practices Branch
PO Box 9513 Stn Prov Govt
727 Fisgard Street
Victoria, BC V8W 9C2

Web Page:
www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/values/visual/index.htm



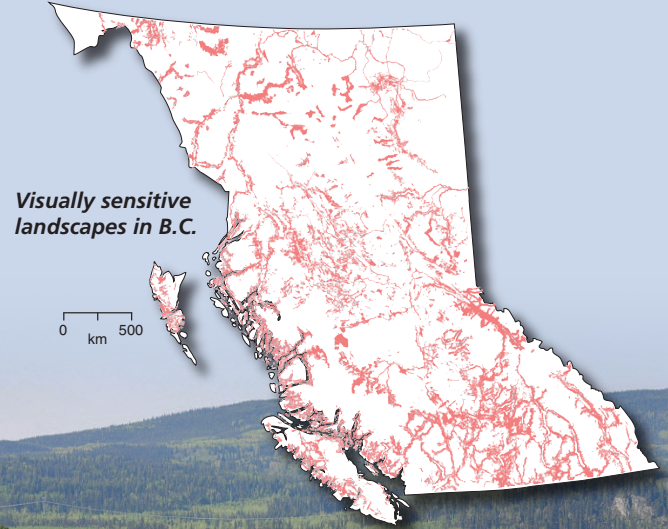
Introduction

Endowed with magnificent snow-covered mountains and lush green forested hillsides, scenery is one of the most valuable assets that British Columbia has to offer the world. Scenic landscapes support B.C.'s global reputation as a provider of high-quality recreation and tourism experiences. They also support vibrant forests, which provide for a robust forest industry. Wilderness tourism relies on maintaining a natural-appearing landscape. The forest industry relies on harvesting the forest to generate revenue and forest products. In a province as rugged and mountainous as B.C., evidence of logging cannot be hidden from view, but it can be designed so that forestry activities fit with the natural character of the landscape.

The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations is entrusted with the responsibility of managing forestry's visual impacts on Crown forest land. It is the role of the provincial visual resource management program to manage the rate and distribution of forestry activities on the landscape to meet the scenic-quality expectations of the public, tourism, and forest industry.

Mapping the Scenic Resource

The first step in managing B.C.'s scenery is to determine our most visible and sensitive landscapes. This is done by completing a visual landscape inventory. The visible topography is mapped from public use areas such as communities, recreational areas, highways, and waterways. Our most sensitive landscapes are usually steep, forested slopes exposed to many viewers. The least sensitive landscapes are usually low in relief, with few viewers or viewing opportunities.



A Very High Sensitivity Landscape
A spectacular and very attractive landscape. It is both steep and green and is viewed and photographed by thousands of visitors per year.



A Low Sensitivity Landscape
A somewhat uninteresting landscape in the mid ground with a low biophysical relief. Viewing duration is short and infrequent from a gravel road, and viewer numbers are low.

Setting Scenic Objectives

Once the sensitivity of a landscape has been assessed, a Visual Quality Objective (VQO) is established to guide forest management activities. VQOs describe levels of visual alteration appropriate for landscapes based on their visual sensitivity. VQOs are established at the local level by the resource district manager in consultation with stakeholders, First Nations, and the public. The VQOs are defined in regulation and the actual text with photo examples are provided below. The Forest Planning and Practices Regulation defines five classes: Preservation, Retention, Partial Retention, Modification, and Maximum Modification.*

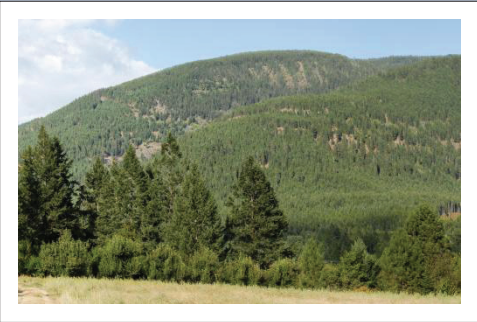
Preservation

Alteration, when assessed from a significant public viewpoint, is very small in scale, and not easily distinguished from the pre-harvest landscape.



Retention

Alteration, when assessed from a significant public viewpoint, is: (i) difficult to see, (ii) small in scale, and (iii) natural in appearance.



Partial Retention

Alteration, when assessed from a significant public viewpoint, is (i) easy to see, (ii) small to medium in scale, and (iii) natural and not rectilinear or geometric in shape.



Modification

Alteration, when assessed from a significant public viewpoint, (i) is very easy to see, and (ii) is (A) large in scale and natural in its appearance, or (B) small to medium in scale but with some angular characteristics.



Maximum Modification

Alteration, when assessed from a significant public viewpoint, (i) is very easy to see, and (ii) is (A) very large in scale, (B) rectilinear and geometric in shape, or (C) both.



* VQO definitions and examples are pictured in order of increasing alteration.