

# Land Use Planning



# Unit 4 Objective

Understand how to incorporate Visual Resource Inventory Classes into land use planning



# Land Use Planning

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- Inventory Classes – assessment of visual values for the RMP process
- Visual values are weighed along with other resource considerations
- VRI Values referenced in Affected Environment development
- Serve as the baseline for visual impact analysis

# Land Use Planning

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## VRM Classes and other Land Use Allocations

NLCS

Recreation

ACEC

SRMA

Archaeology

Trails

Oil and Gas

Travel Mgmt

Minerals

Wilderness and WSA

Alternative Energy

Range

Wildlife

Lands and Realty

# Land Use Planning Handbook

## H-1601-1

- Designate VRM Classes
- Design implementation decisions to achieve VRM objectives

# Inventory to Management Classes

Final Visual Resource Management Classes may or may not reflect Inventory Classes



# Defining Management Classes



# Class I

## Objective:

To preserve the existing character of the landscape.



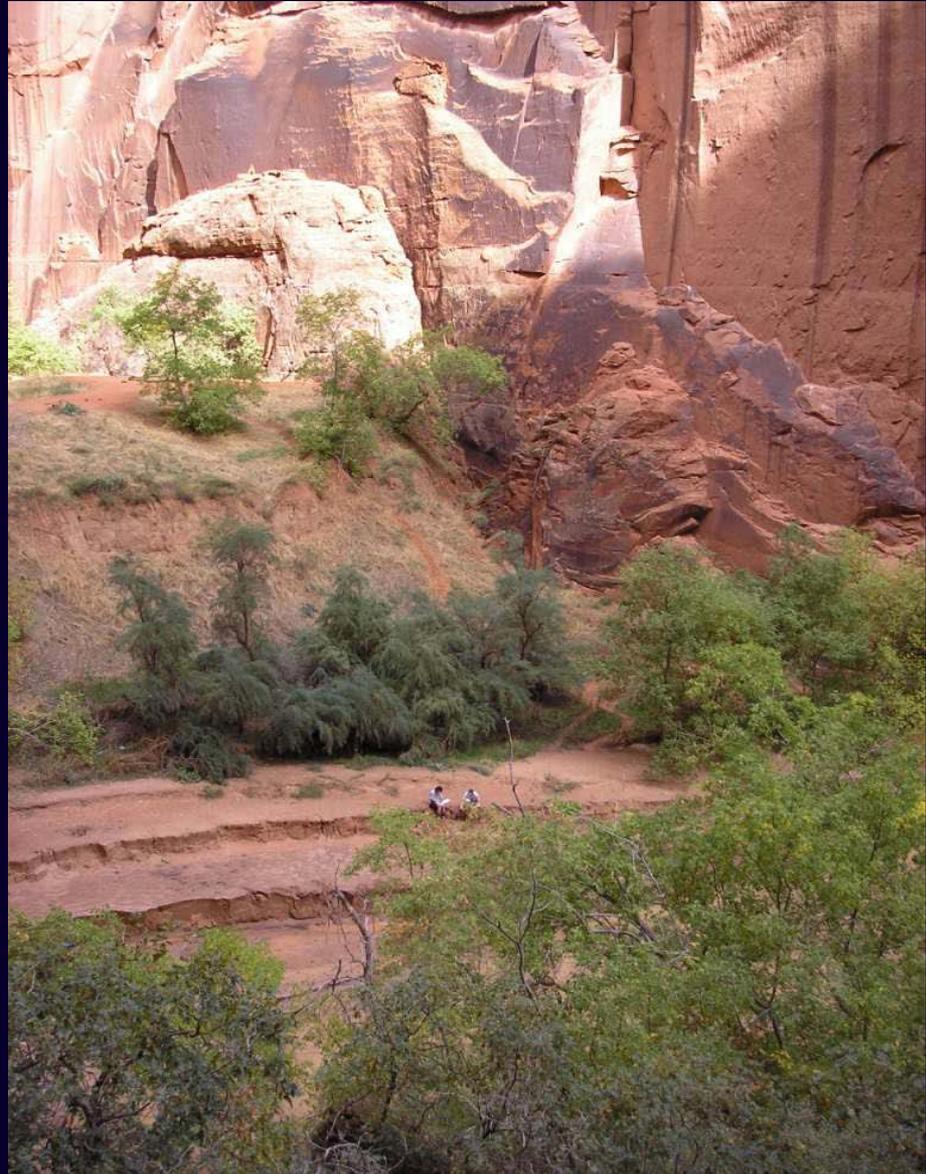
# Class I

Level of change to the landscape should be very low; and must not attract attention.



# Class I

Provides for  
natural  
ecological  
change



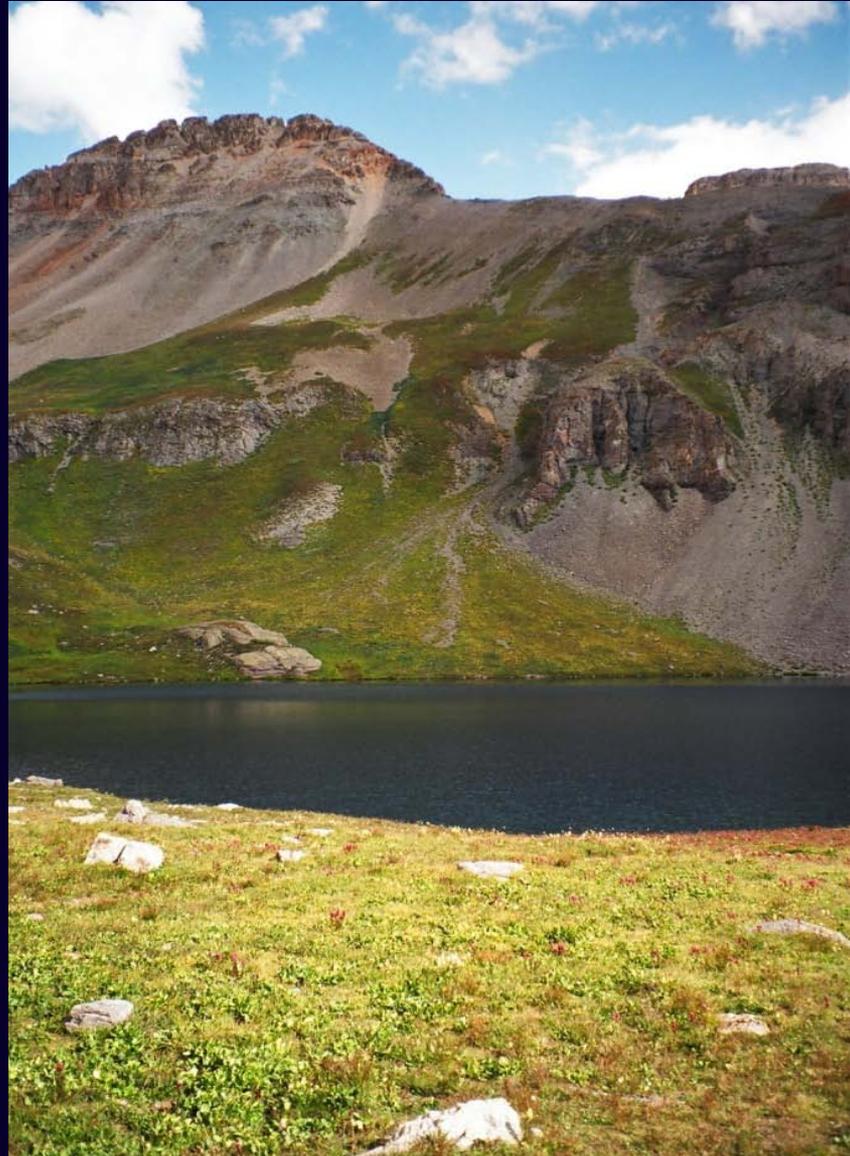
# Class I

Provides for  
limited  
management  
activity



# Class I

- Designated Wilderness
- Wilderness Study Areas (WSA)
- Outstanding Natural Areas (ONA)
- Primitive Areas



# Class II

## Objective:

To retain the existing character of the landscape.



# Class II

Level of  
change to the  
landscape  
should be low



# Class II

Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the natural features of the landscape – form, line, color, & texture



# Class II

Management activities may be seen but should not attract attention of the observer



# Class III

## Objective:

To partially retain the existing character of the landscape



# Class III

Level of  
change to the  
landscape  
can be  
moderate



# Class III

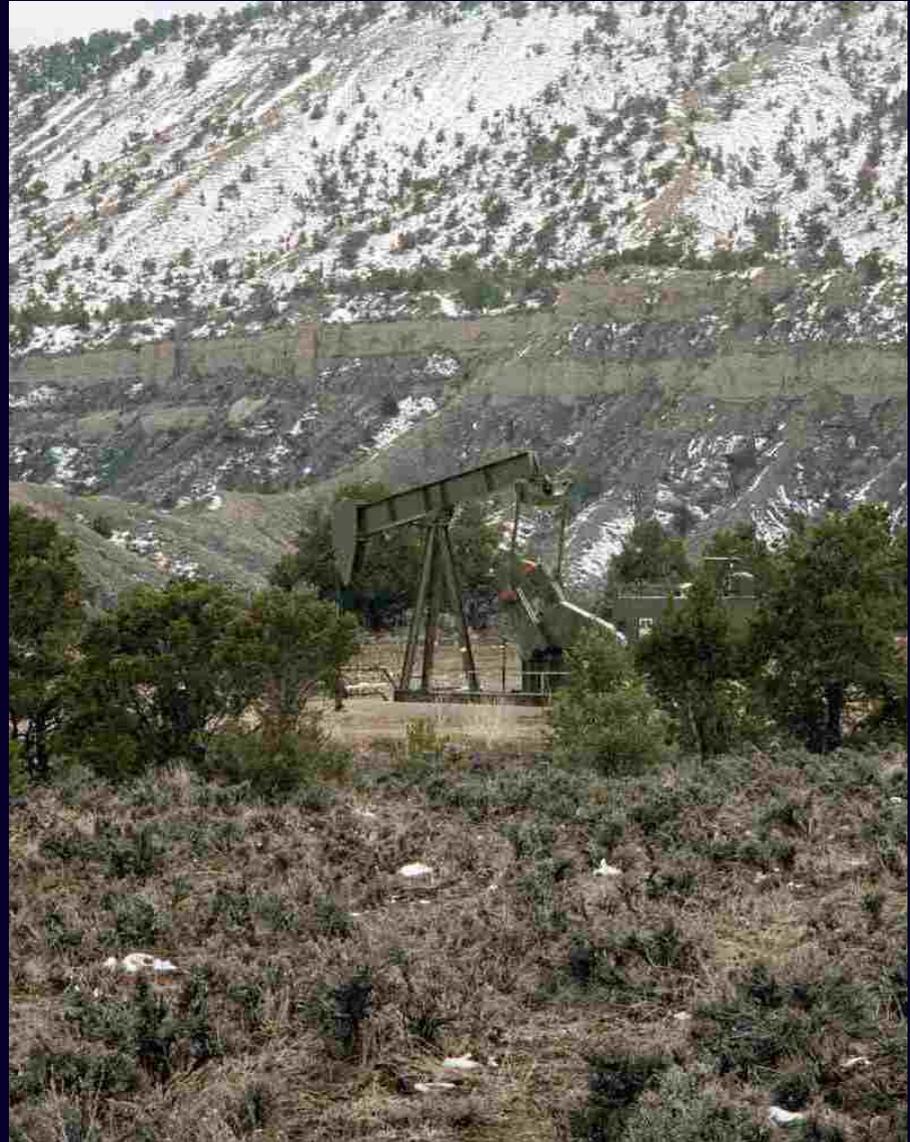
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Management activities may attract attention, but should not dominate the view of the casual observer



# Class III

Change should repeat the basic elements found in the natural landscape – form, line, color, & texture



# Class IV

## Objective:

To provide for activities that require major modification of the landscape



# Class IV

Level of change to the landscape can be high



# Class IV

Management activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of attention

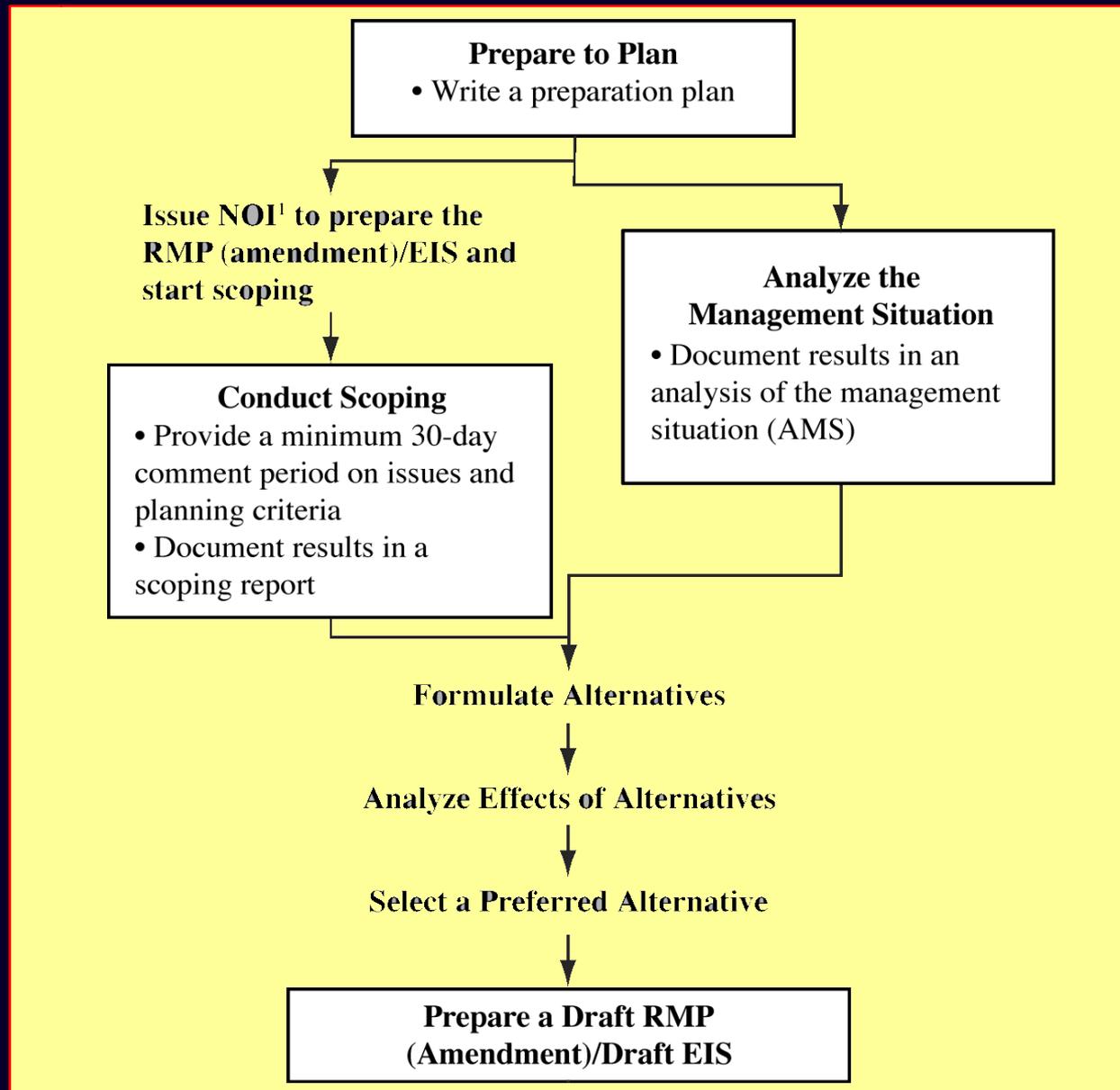


# Class IV

Still minimize impacts through location and design by repeating form, line, color, and texture



# RMP Process



# Analysis of Management Situation

Determine status of the inventory

- Is there one ?
- How old is it ?
- Do you still have the background support data ?
- Is paper or electronic
- If electronic then update the inventory with complete metadata

# Analysis of Management Situation

- Internal / External ACEC Review
- Wild and Scenic River Eligibility
- Wilderness Study Areas
- Or other special management designations

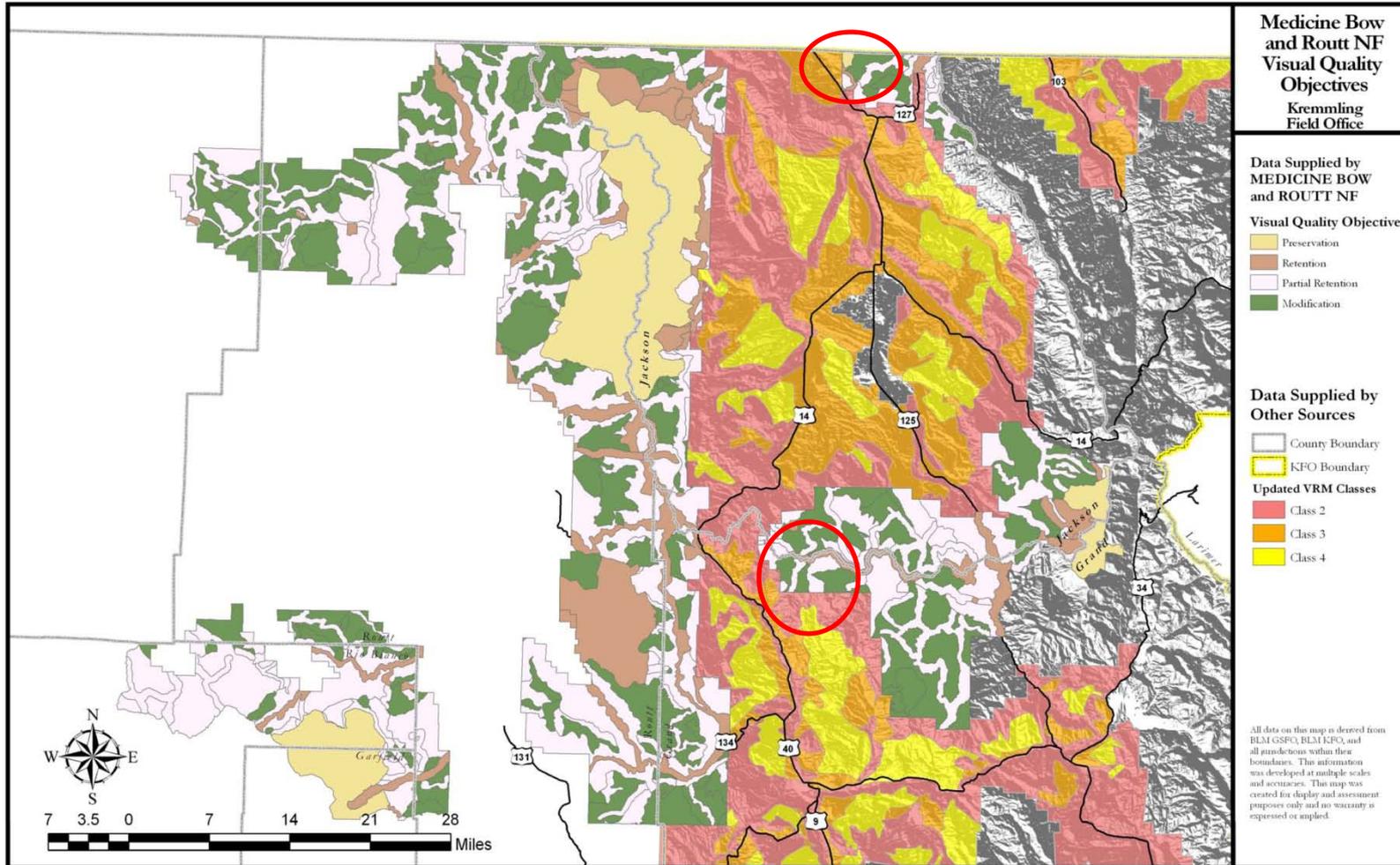


# Analysis of Management Situation

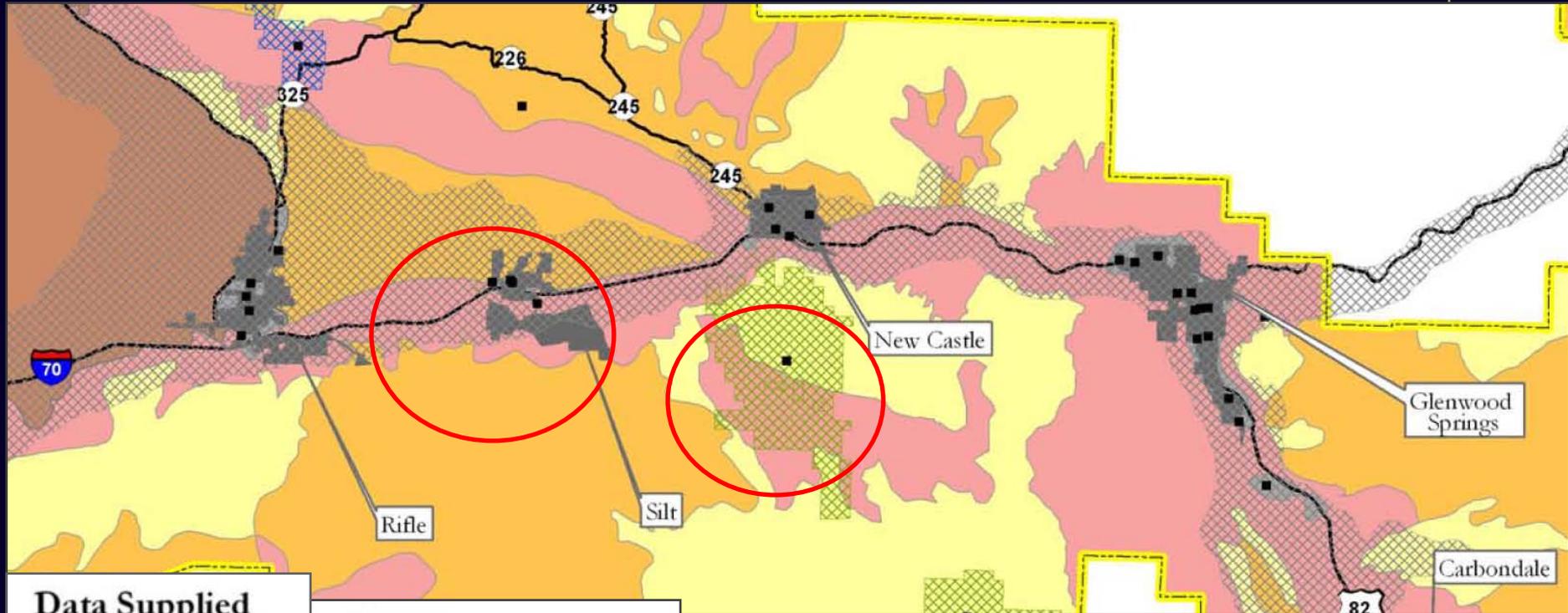
- Source of Impacts/ Conflict
- Consistency with Other Land Use Plans
- National Park Service, Forest Service, State, County, Municipal Plans



# Working with Sensitivities of Adjacent Jurisdictions



# Working with Sensitivities of Adjacent Jurisdictions



## Data Supplied by GARFIELD COUNTY

- City
- VisualCorridor
- State Recreation Areas
- State Wildlife Areas
- County
- Parks

## Updated VRM Classes

- Class 1
- Class 2
- Class 3
- Class 4

# Affected Environment

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Carry Over the Analysis of Management Situation to the Affected Environment

Legislated protected settings (WSR, WSA, NSHT, etc)

- All resources determined to be visually valid such as Visual ACEC's, Backcountry byways

# Affected Environment

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- Description of VRM policy and procedures
- VRI classes and values for whole planning area
- VRI Class map
- Current VRM Classes and alterations to the planning area
- Visual values of adjacent lands – public and private

# Determine Desired Outcome

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Determine Goals and Objectives

Common to All Alternatives

Develop Common to All Alternatives  
Language

Establish VRM Goals Compatible With  
Each Alternative

# Range of Alternatives

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No Action

Commodity

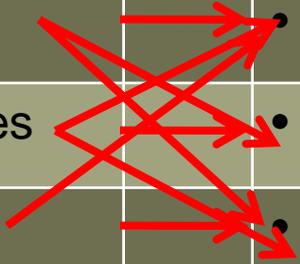
Conservation

Balanced

Establish Visual Language for Each  
Alternative

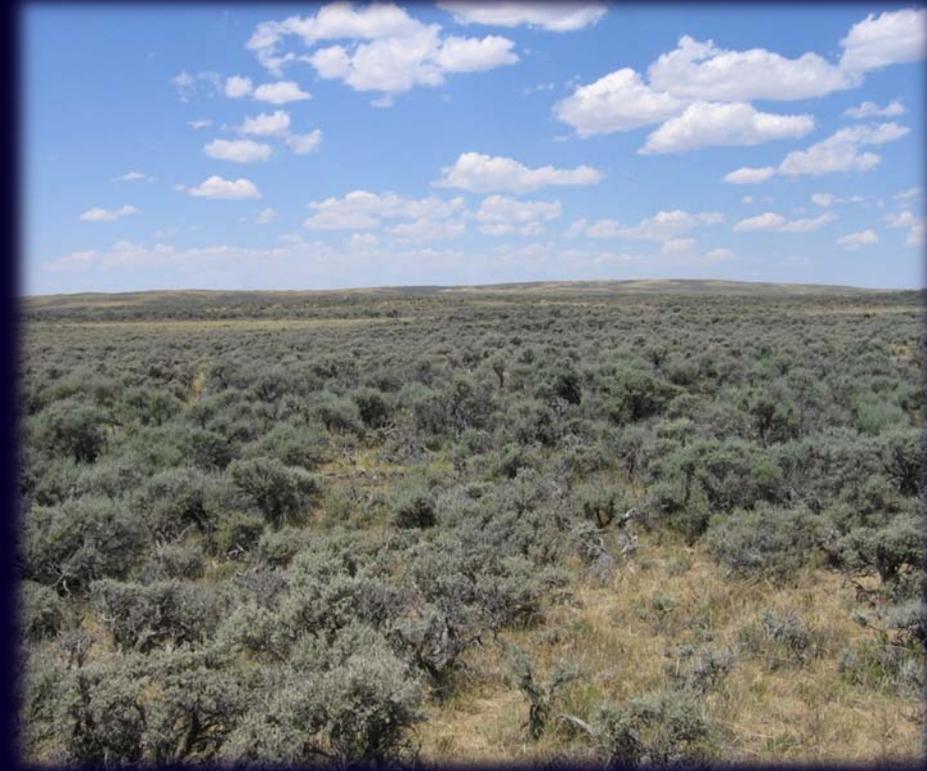
# VRI and VRM Classes

Classes	Inventory (Pre-planning)		Management (Land Use Planning)
I	• Special Designation (Congressional or administrative )		• Preservation
II	• High Visual Values		• Low levels of change
III	• Medium Visual Values		• Moderate levels of change
IV	• Low Visual Values		• Major levels of change



# Visual Absorption Capability

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Understanding the ability for a particular landscape's capability for absorbing various levels of development during the land use planning process

# Other Resource Considerations

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- Recognizing Stewardship opportunities
- Visual values are weighed along with other resource considerations
- Maintaining the view-plane: VRI IV to VRI II

# Environmental Consequences

## Evaluating the effects to the Visual Inventory Baseline

ALTERNATIVES - VRM MANAGEMENT CLASS DESIGNATIONS		VISUAL RESOURCE INVENTORY CLASS DESIGNATIONS (ACRES)									
		VRI Class I (Acres)		VRI Class II (Acres)		VRI Class III (Acres)		VRI Class IV (Acres)		TOTAL	
		100	%	300	%	200	%	400	%	1000	
<b>Alternative A (No Action)</b>	<b>Acres</b>										
VRM I	50	50	50%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	50	
VRM II	20	0	0%	20	7%	0	0%	0	0%	20	
VRM III	300	0	0%	150	50%	150	75%	0	0%	300	
VRM IV	630	50	50%	130	43%	50	25%	400	100%	630	
<b>Sum</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1000</b>	
<b>Alternative B (Protection Alternative)</b>											
VRM I	100	100	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	100	
VRM II	350	0	0%	300	100%	50	25%	0	0%	350	
VRM III	250	0	0%	0	0%	150	75%	50	13%	200	
VRM IV	300	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	350	88%	350	
	<b>1000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1000</b>	
<b>Alternative C (Commodity Alternative)</b>											
VRM I	100	100	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	100	
VRM II	50	0	0%	50	17%	0	0%	0	0%	50	
VRM III	250	0	0%	100	33%	150	75%	0	0%	250	
VRM IV	600	0	0%	150	50%	50	25%	400	100%	600	
	<b>1000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1000</b>	
<b>Alternative D (Balanced Alternative)</b>											
VRM I	100	100	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	100	
VRM II	250	0	0%	250	83%	0	0%	0	0%	250	
VRM III	350	0	0%	50	17%	200	100%	100	25%	350	
VRM IV	300	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	300	75%	300	
	<b>1000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1000</b>	

Visual Resource Inventory Values Impact Comparison Table (1000 acre planning area)



# Compatibility Between Land Uses

Review of Other Programs Goals/Issues

Determine Compatibility With Other Resources (this takes patience and time)

- GIS overlay review

# Working With Other Resources

## Planning Team

Recreation represents the values of visual resources on the planning team



# Working With Other Resources

Will discover that some resources are compatible with high VRM classes. . .



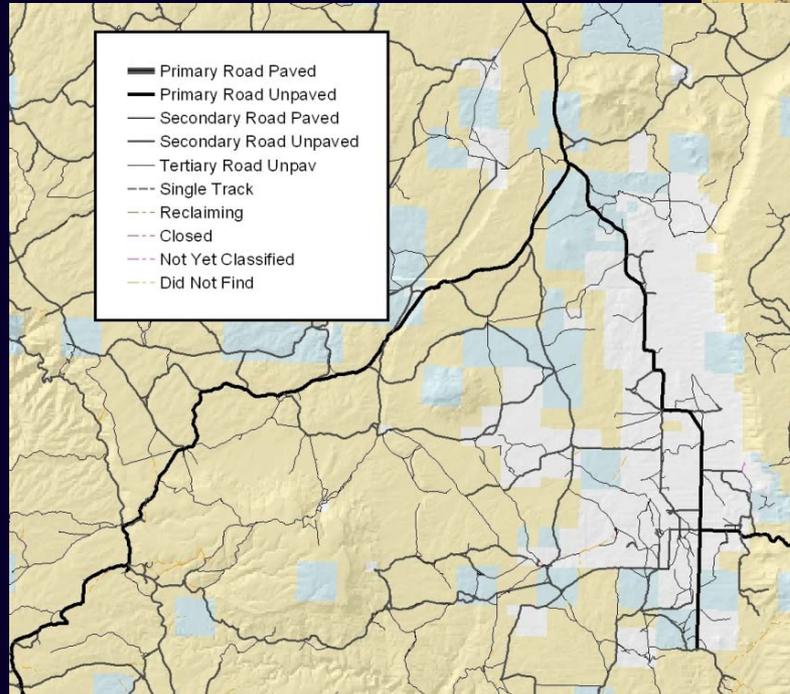
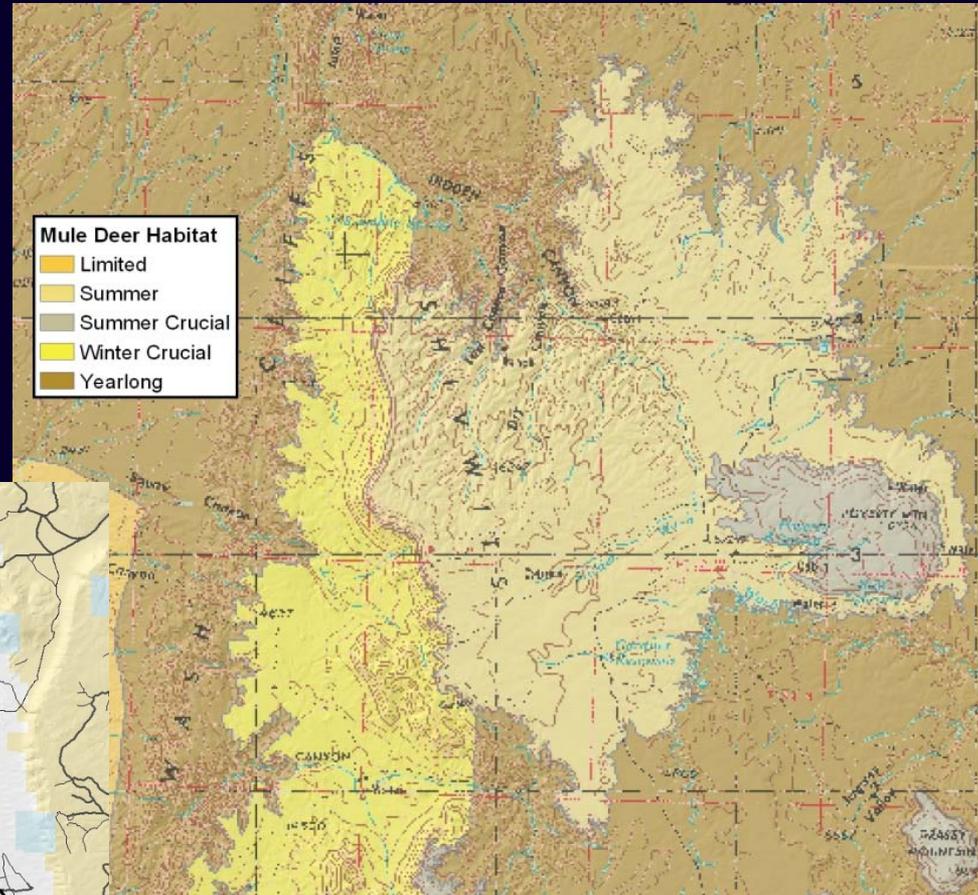
# Working With Other Resources

. . . . and some with  
low VRM classes



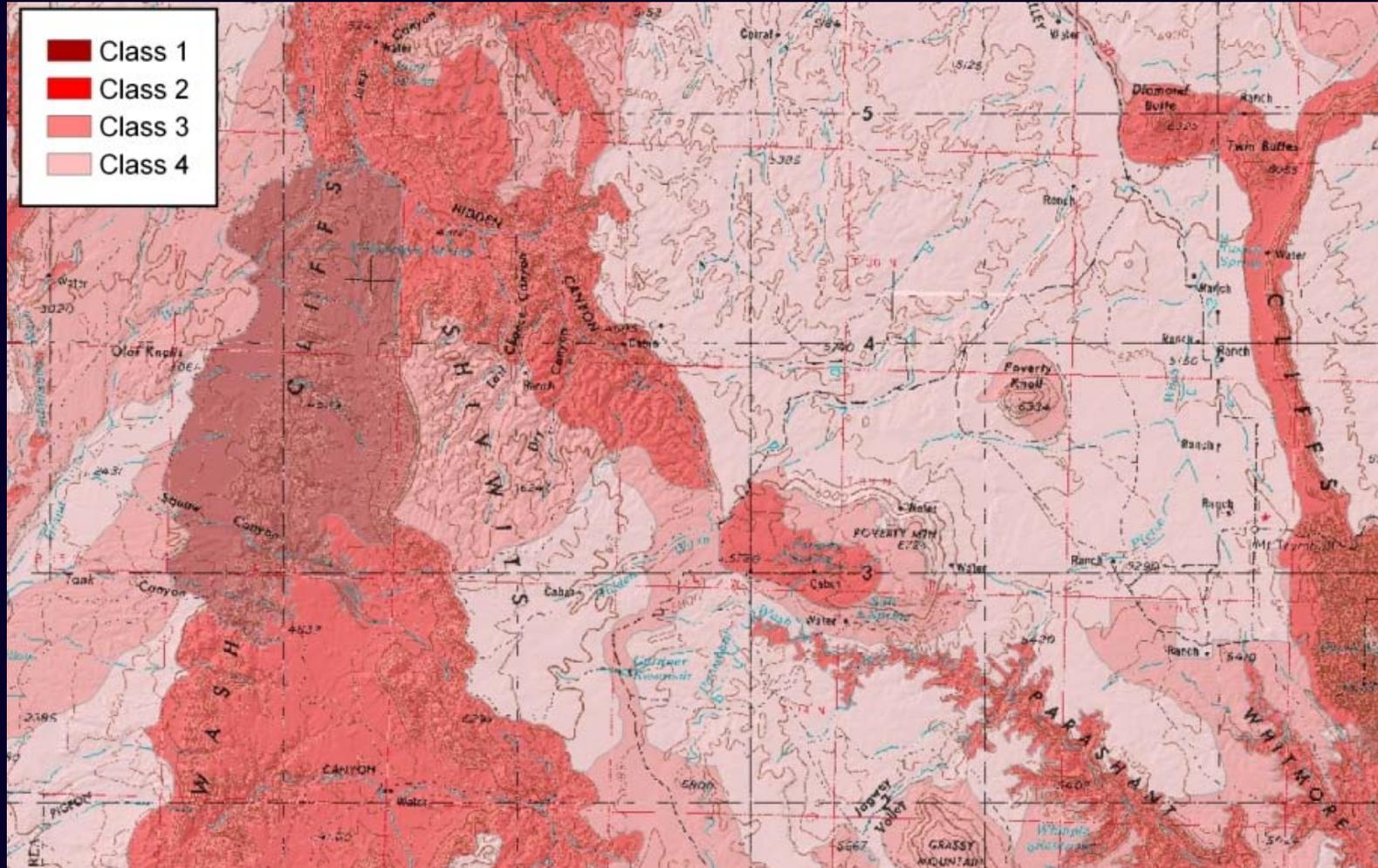
# Working With Other Resources

Alliances and conflicts lead to development of viable alternatives



# Working With Other Resources

You want alternatives you can live with



# What about Wilderness Characteristics and VRM?

VRM can be used as a tool to manage lands with wilderness characteristics



# Working With Other Resources

How are the opportunities, experiences, and benefits tied to the physical setting?



# Working With Other Resources

Is a pristine setting important to the RMZ?



# Working With Other Resources

...or not important at all?



# What about Wilderness Characteristics and VRM?

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## Wilderness Inventory and Study Procedures

Handbook, H-1630-1 was rescinded

Replaced with IM 2003-275, Change 1

## Consideration of Wilderness

## Characteristics in Land Use Plans

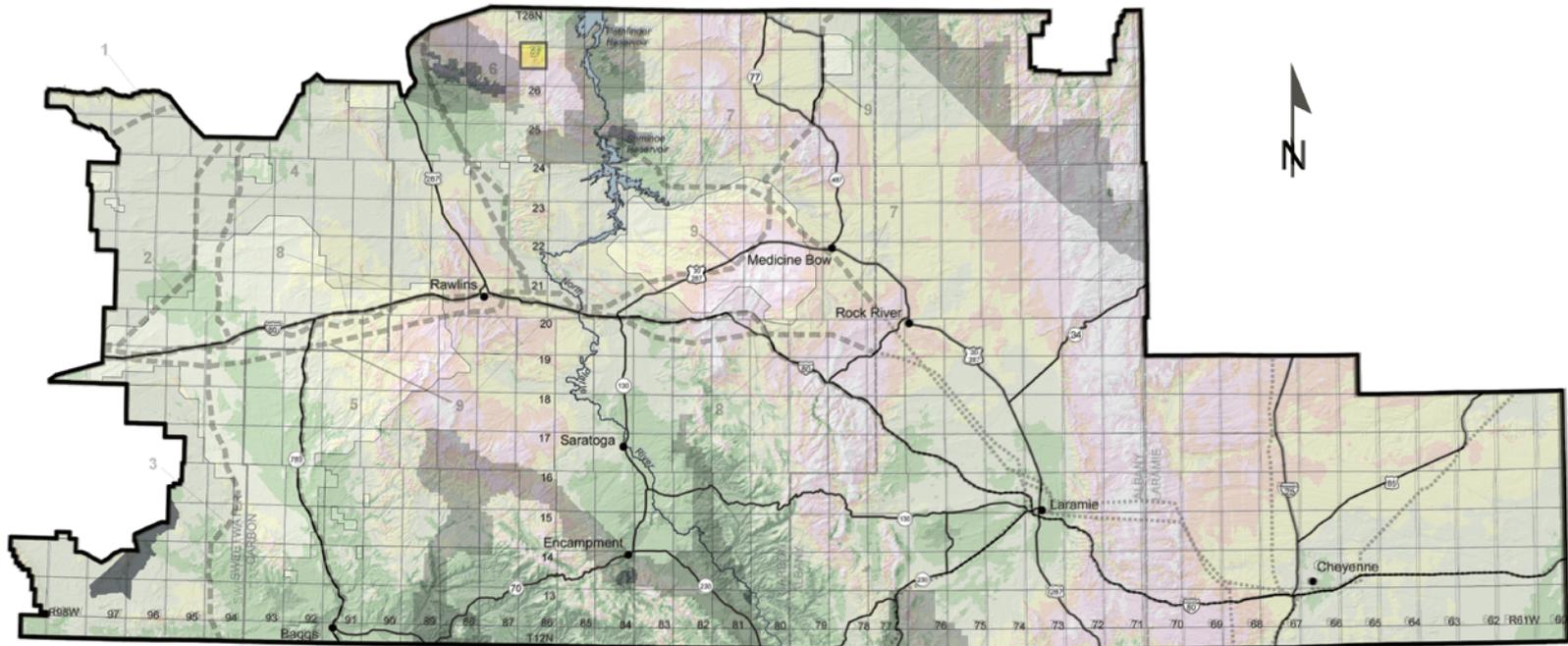
*“The BLM can make a variety of land use plan decisions to protect wilderness characteristics, such as establishing Visual Resource Management (VRM) class objectives . . . . and other authorizations to achieve the desired level of resource protection”*

# What about Wilderness Characteristics and VRM?

Can wilderness characteristics be managed as VRM Class I?



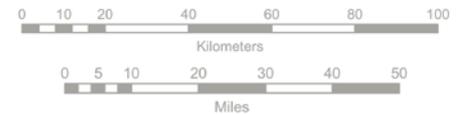
# Analysis - Understanding the compatibility between Visual Values and Resource Activities



- |  |              |  |                 |
|--|--------------|--|-----------------|
|  | 1 - Poor     |  | 5 - Excellent   |
|  | 2 - Marginal |  | 6 - Outstanding |
|  | 3 - Fair     |  | 7 - Superb      |
|  | 4 - Good     |  |                 |

### VRM Management Class

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  | Class I - Preserve the existing character of the landscape           |
|  | Class II - Retain the existing character of the landscape            |
|  | Class III - Partially retain the existing character of the landscape |
|  | Class IV - Management activities may dominate the landscape          |



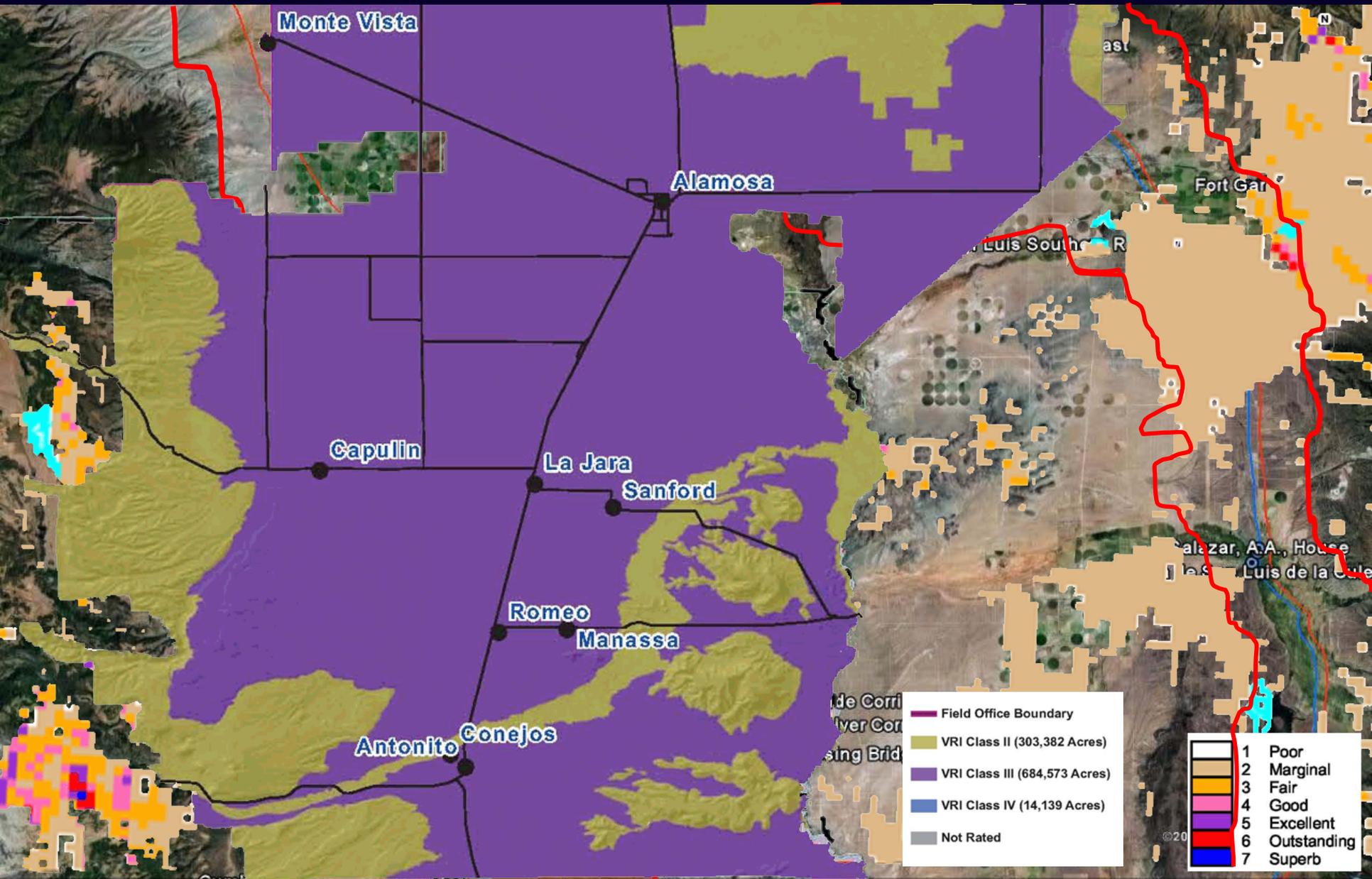
Source: NREL (National Renewable Energy Laboratory), 2004

10,000 Acre Project Area Footprint

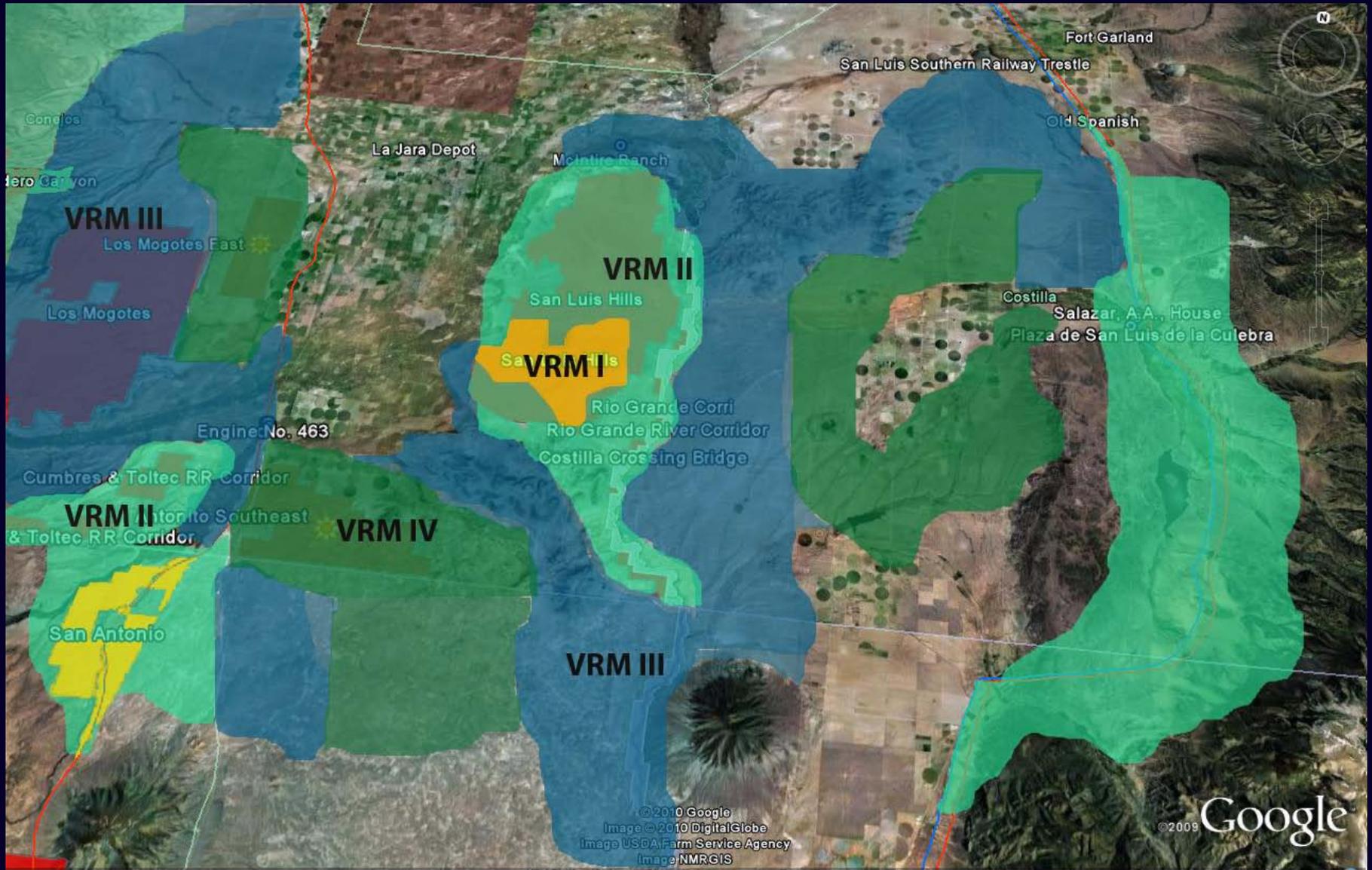
Designated Right-of-Way Corridors

**Map 3-2**  
Wind Energy Potential

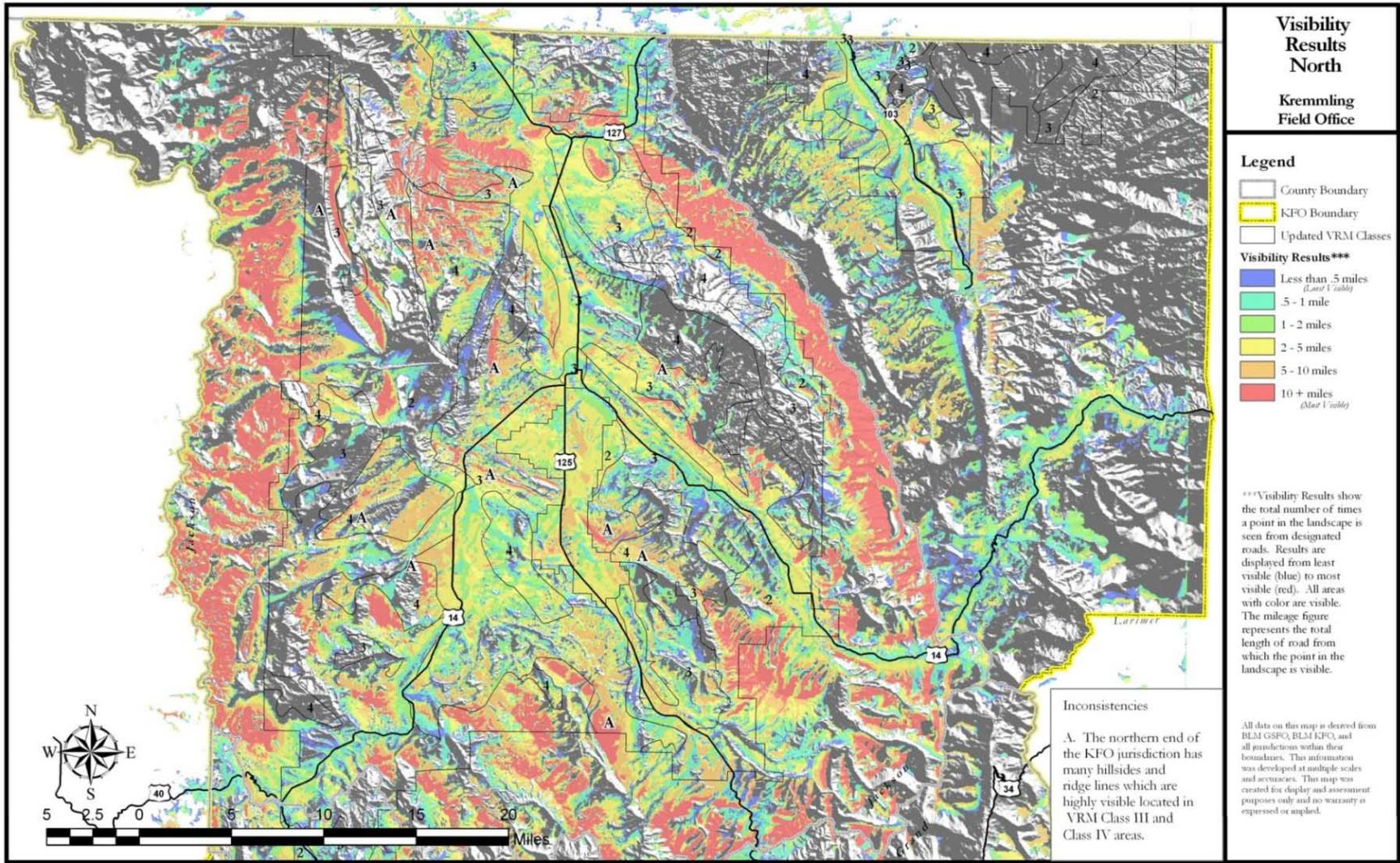
# Understanding the compatibility between Visual Values and Resource Activities



# Understanding the compatibility between Visual Values and Resource Activities



# Analysis - Understanding the compatibility between Visual Values and Resource Activities

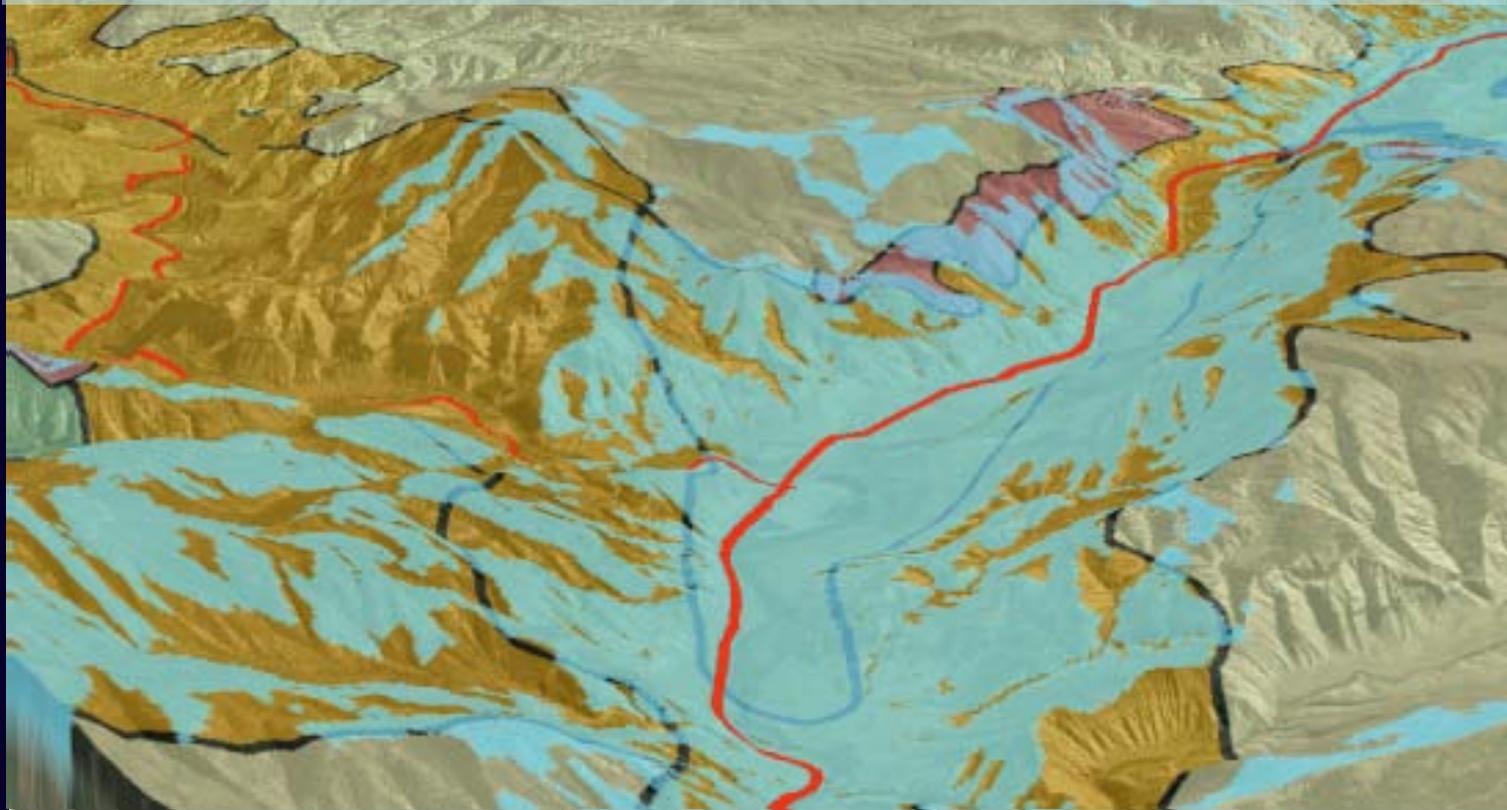


# Analysis - Understanding the compatibility between Visual Values and Resource Activities

What can be seen at 200 feet above the ground elevation

What can be seen at 400 feet above the ground elevation

Routing of access roads, transmission lines, etc.



ed Results  
r Road 301

ed Springs  
Office

01

Boundary

Status

Lands

r Land Owners

Classes

1

2

3

4

n

ed Results



Map is derived from  
USGS, and  
other data  
information  
multiple scales  
has map scale  
and assessment  
of no warranty as  
is.

Map A5

Viewshed Analysis

# What about Plan Amendments?

Consider valid existing rights and reasonable foreseeable development scenarios



# What about Plan Amendments?

What if there is a scenario that you didn't foresee?

## Three Options

1. Deny
2. Mitigate
3. Amend the Plan



# What about Wind Energy?

Programmatic EIS – amended 52 Land Use Plans



# Going Beyond VRM Classes

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- Land Use Handbook requires VRM Classes I-IV
- RMP process allows for further definition of standards
- Consider visual language within other allocations
- Consider cumulative impacts
- Language with Leases, development scenarios, off-site mitigation.

# Going Beyond VRM

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## Night Sky



# Going Beyond VRM

## Visual ACEC

If the importance of the viewshed supersedes other resource considerations, a Visual ACEC can be considered



# Going Beyond VRM

## Visual ACEC

- Scenic Highway
- Scenic Byway
- Scenic Backway



# Rehabilitation Areas

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- Flag areas needing rehab during the inventory.
- Level of rehab will be determined by the visual objectives assigned in the RMP.
- Set goals that are achievable.

# Interim Guidelines

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## WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU HAVE NO VRM OBJECTIVES FOR AN AREA OF PUBLIC LAND?

- Develop interim classes using guidelines from H-8410-1.
- Management classes will reflect decisions made in the existing RMP.
- A plan amendment is not required unless the project driving the VRM evaluation requires one.

# Instructional Memorandums

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## IM 2009-043 - Wind Energy Development Policy

“ VRM classes are not intended to be used to exclude or preclude land uses . . . . meet VRM objectives established in the land use plan.”

The emphasis is on allowing planning and design the opportunity before judging the non-conformance of a potential land use.

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## IM 2009-167 - Application of the Visual Resource Management Program to Renewable Energy

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IM 1998 -164 - Summary of VRM Issues Discussed In Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance et. al., 144 IBLA 70 (1998)

# Checklist Items - IM 2008-090

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1. Updated visual resource inventory?
2. Visual Resource Inventory Class Map in Chapter 3?
3. Inventory in GIS format and 3-terrain?
4. Current RMP VRM management classes is the No Action Alternative?
5. Full range of VRM alternatives?
6. VRM class designations reflect resource allocation and desirable outcome decisions?
7. Is VRM carried forward into the Record of Decision?