

Project Planning & VRM

5



Objective

Students will understand how to incorporate visual resource objectives (and principles) into project planning and why it's important to do so.

Incorporate Visual Resources...

Where?

Why?

How?

When?

Incorporate Visual Resources...

- Early and throughout planning process
- Understand constraints/opportunities
- Team approach
- Field Review

When?

How?

Where?

Incorporate Visual Resources...

- Better Efficiency
- Improve chance of Acceptance
- **Better Project**
- Minimize delays, challenges
- Avoid/ mitigate impacts



Why?

Visual Resource Management

- I. Baseline Inventory ... On-Going
(VRI)- quality of resource
- II. Management Classes ... RMP
(VRM)- mgt. goal
- III. Design Activities ... Projects
 - Analyze impacts (C-R)
 - Meet Objectives

When the rubber hits the road...

Existing Constraints

- Laws, Mgt. Strategies, Guidance
- RMPs, MFPs, City and County Plans
- Activity Plans, including
 - Travel Management Plans,
 - Transportation Plans,
 - Master Plans,
 - Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMPs)
- Project plans, design guidelines/standards
- Existing Facilities- **LEARN about INDUSTRY**



▪ VRM Class Objectives

VRM Objectives

- **VRM Class I-**
 - Preserve/ ecological/ very low/ must not attract
- **VRM Class II-**
 - Retain / Low/ may be seen/ should not attract
- **VRM Class III-**
 - Partially retain/ moderate/ seen- shouldn't dominate
- **VRM Class IV-**
 - Major modification/ high/ may dominate/ mitigate

Visual Inventory

- Feeds into Affected Environment
- Scenic Quality
- Sensitivity Information
- **Example:**
 - VRM III
 - VRI- Class A, High, FG
 - Public concerns
 - Visibility
 - Opportunities

Obtain Project Description

- Transformers
- Underground electrical lines (600V to 34.5 kV)
- Overhead electrical lines (34.5 to 69 kV)
- Substations
- Gravel access roads 22' to 32'
- Power Transmission Systems
- Communication System (fiber optic/radio)
- Anemometer Tower(s)
- Maintenance or Storage Yards
- Operations Center (building)
- Worker's Building/Facilities
- Wind turbines (387'-430' to blade tip)

Team Approach is Best

Who is planning team?

- Roles- VRM specialist & others
- Interdisciplinary Team
- Early, often, on-the ground
- Build credibility



Field review

- Most meaningful on-site
- Stay on 'same page'
- Avoid misunderstandings
- Determine project parameters
- Identify KEY ISSUES
- Collaboration w/ partners & proponents



There is no substitute for on-the-ground project review!

Understand Existing Opportunities

- **Visual absorption capability (VAC)**
 - Visual Variety
 - Dependent on Type of Activity
- **Viewshed Analysis (Seen Area/ Visibility)**
- **Project Components**
 - Roads (are all needed, can width be reduced?)
 - Fences
 - Lighting
 - Grading
 - Structures (materials/color/form)
 - LOCATION



Viewshed Analysis

- Project Visibility
- Seen/ unseen areas
- Frequency
- Duration
- Prominence
- Visual absorption

- **Visualization**



Don't Jump to Design Too Soon

Thoughtful **planning** leads to good **design**.



Types of Projects



Major Categories of Projects

- Linear alignments (roads, bridges, transmission corridors, pipelines)



Major Categories of Projects

- Energy production (oil and gas, wind, solar, geothermal, hydro)



Major Categories of Projects

- Mineral extraction (mining, gravel operations)



Major Categories of Projects

- Vertical development (communication sites, radio, cellular)



Major Categories of Projects

- Vegetative manipulation (fire & fuels, restoration & rehab., timber)



Major Categories of Projects

- Wildlife and Range (habitat/ range improvement, enclosures, water)



Major Categories of Projects

- Recreation/ admin. sites (trails, toilets, campgrounds, visitor centers)



Summary

- Remember it's the public's land
- Your role is instrumental
- Ask questions
- Usually more than one way

