



File Code: 1910-3-3 Analysis

Date: February 28, 2008

Subject: **Effects of Gold Crown Fuels Reduction Project activities on visual quality**

To: **Gold Crown Fuels Reduction Project file**

Specific direction for visual/scenic quality management is provided by the IPNF Forest Plan and is described in terms of Visual Quality Objectives (VQOs). Visual quality objectives identify a desired level of scenic quality and diversity within a landscape based on physical and sociological characteristics. The VQOs are based on the area as seen from sensitive travel corridors and on other unique landscape features that result in a particular visual sensitivity level. In the Gold Crown Fuels Reduction Project (FRP) area, most of the proposed treatment units are located within high visual sensitivity areas, as seen from Highway 95, Highway 2, Highway 200, Bottle Bay Road, the Gold Hill Trail, or from Lake Pend Oreille. Therefore, the potential impacts that the proposed activities could have on the visual or scenic values of the area were analyzed in detail. In addition, design criteria and mitigation measures were included in the proposed action to minimize impacts to visual and scenic quality.

The following report defines the scope of analysis, then describes the existing condition, the potential effects of both the proposed activities as well as mitigation measures, and concludes by evaluating consistency with the IPNF Forest Plan.

Scope of Analysis

The analysis that was conducted in this Environmental Assessment focuses on how both the no-action alternative as well as the proposed action would affect the visual quality of the immediate area and whether or not the proposed action would meet Forest Plan standards. The Forest Plan standards stipulate that VQOs will be met. Exceptions to this may occur in unusual situations, but they must be identified through the project planning process and appropriate mitigation measures should be developed. Examples of some exceptions are areas where past management practices make it impractical to meet the adopted VQOs, and large areas where the mortality rate for timber is very high. Standards also specify that the visual resource will be evaluated based on visual sensitivity levels assigned to travel routes, use areas, and water bodies in and adjacent to the IPNF.

In 1995, the Visual Management System (VMS), which was used to develop the VQOs for the forest plan, was revised and replaced by the Scenery Management System (SMS). Until the revised Forest Plan is in place projects are described in both the VMS language (to meet current FP requirements) and the SMS language. Both the SMS and the VMS provide systematic approaches to visual or scenery analysis and the terminology they use is roughly comparable. For instance, a High Integrity (appears unaltered) Scenic Integrity Objective (SIO) translates approximately into a Retention VQO. SMS differs from VMS in that it provides a more environmentally comprehensive/sensitive analysis. Project areas are considered within the context of the forest ecosystem.

After considering the regulatory framework pertaining to the protection of visual quality, and the type and scope of the activities proposed, it was determined that this project could potentially affect the



scenic values of the area by altering the form, line, color, texture, and pattern of the immediate landscape as seen from particularly sensitive viewing locations. Therefore, for the scope of this analysis the sensitive viewing locations are identified, the current scenic condition of the proposed treatment units are described, and the effects of the no-action alternative and the proposed action alternative are analyzed in context of both the immediate and surrounding landscape.

Affected Environment – Visual Resource Existing Condition

This section begins with an overview of the scenic characteristics within the project area, followed by a discussion of the sensitive viewing locations and then describes the current scenic condition of the proposed treatment areas. Included within this section is a description of the Forest Plan standards for visual quality in the project area. A detailed description of each treatment unit, as well as the VQO and potential effects of the project implementation, is located within Table 1 in the “Effects Analysis” section.

The Gold Crown FRP is located in an area commonly known as Gold Hill or Gold Mountain. Portions of Gold Hill are viewable from many different vantage points and travel corridors. The Gold Hill area is characterized by very broken topography and extruded rock outcrops. There are stream courses scattered around the hillside, but the geology has also resulted in many benches/extrusions perpendicular to stream courses. Many of these benches cannot be seen from any view angle other than the air, and as a result, are hidden from the high scenic integrity corridors. Also, many aspects in mid to upper slopes are hidden from the high scenic integrity corridors due to their spatial arrangement or position in relation to drainages. For example, a mid-slope eastern aspect may be obscured from view corridors by its opposing mid-slope western aspect on the opposite side of the drainage.

Throughout Gold Hill, open, dry site Douglas-fir/ ponderosa pine coniferous stands are common on the western aspects, some southern aspects, ridgetops, and scattered rock outcrops. Rock outcrops, which are scattered across all aspects in the Gold Hill area, tend to have linear ridgeline/rock features which are oriented from northeast to southwest. These rock outcrops either support dry conifer stands described above, are entirely devoid of plants, or have so little soil development that only grasses and short shrubs exist. As such, many of these rock outcrops are plainly visible from middleground views some distance away, but only in the context of size, shape, and texture. Very dry shrub fields and aspen groves are common on the southern aspects of Gold Hill. The riparian features, which are ephemeral, perennial or intermittent stream courses and small, vernal or perennial ponds, have deeper soils and more moisture availability. Therefore, plant communities along these stream courses primarily consist of mixed conifers and hardwoods, including cedar, grand fir, larch, Douglas-fir, some white pine, red alder, paper birch, and rocky mountain maple. These mixed coniferous/hardwood stands have denser canopies, which results in obvious textural character from middleground views.

All of these factors result in the need for maintaining the integrity of line form, texture, and patch shapes across the landscape.

The Gold Crown FRP area is visible in part from locations identified in the Forest Plan as having a high sensitivity and concern for the scenic quality of the area (see photos in the visuals section of the project file). The travel corridors of US Highway 95, Highway 2, Highway 200, and the Bottle Bay Road, as well as areas visible from the City of Sandpoint and Lake Pend Oreille are the locations of highest concern. However, due to the extent of use, Forest Service Road 2642 and the Gold Hill Trail (Trail Number 3) will also be analyzed. At present, human use and development is very obvious on private and industrial lands within and adjacent to the project area. However, road construction and previous land management activities on National Forest System (NFS) lands in the project area are less

obvious. Past harvest activities are only noticeable to the casual visitor along the 2642 Road viewing corridor, specifically adjacent to proposed units 10, 18, 19, 22, 23, and 29. Some portions of the 2642 Road are visible from certain vantage points along Highway 200 and Lake Pend Oreille. Abrupt line forms, created from private land management activities adjacent to NFS land, are visible from certain portions of Lake Pend Oreille and Bottle Bay. This is especially evident adjacent to proposed units 1, 2, 15, 26, and 28. In addition, some root disease centers and recent bark beetle-caused tree mortality have resulted in distinct color and textural differences within stands, as trees turn red and lose their foliage. These mortality-related textural and color patterns are especially evident from Highway 95, Highway 200, and Lake Pend Oreille viewpoints and are located within or adjacent to proposed units 2, 8b, 8c, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 26, and 28.

Portions of the project area are visible from Highway 95, between the Gun Club Road (to the south) and the Highway 95/ Highway 200 intersection (to the north.) The most noticeable and uninterrupted views of the project area are from the “Long Bridge”, which crosses the Pend Oreille River just south of Sandpoint. However, views of the project area from Highway 95 are limited to the upper elevations of Gold Hill along the extreme western aspects, and these viewsheds are predominantly middleground views. Motorists viewing the project area from Highway 95 usually do so at speeds of approximately 55 miles per hour (posted highway speed limit.) Proposed treatment units, or portions thereof, which may be visible from the Highway 95 corridor include units 19, 20, 21, 25, 28, and 33.

Of those, units 20, 25, 28, and 33 are very dry-site forest stands. Forests in these units consist predominantly of Douglas-fir, with lesser quantities of Ponderosa pine, western larch, and lodgepole pine. These stands are characterized by open-spaced, “park-like”, mature Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine trees with high components of shrubs in the understory, and are scattered with “openings” such as shrub fields and visible rock outcrops. Rock outcrops are visible because tree cover is absent or minimal and the primary vegetation present is low-growing grasses, forbs, and shrubs. The forested areas within these units are exhibiting high tree mortality due to the preponderance of Douglas-fir and its associated root diseases. Some of the existing shrub fields on the western aspects are a result of the extensive root disease mortality of previously forested areas.

Views from the Bottle Bay Road are limited, but would primarily be considered foreground and short-distance middleground views. Although travelers are going slower along the Bottle Bay Road than on Highway 95 (approximately 25-35 miles per hour), the Bottle Bay Road is very narrow and has many winding curves. Thus, glimpses of treatment units will be brief, except for the private landowners who live adjacent to the Bottle Bay Road. Only portions of units 26, 28, 32, and 34 are adjacent to or visible from the Bottle Bay Road because the majority of the project, with the exception of these four units, is a substantial distance uphill. Due to the steepness and broken topography in the area, most proposed treatment areas would not be visible from the Bottle Bay Road.

Of those four units visible from Bottle Bay Road, units 26 and 28 are dry-site forest types, as described above. Units 32 and 34 are more mesic stands, consisting of Douglas-fir and western larch, with a component of cedar, grand fir, and mixed hardwoods. As with the drier sites, the prevalence of Douglas-fir and grand fir has led to significant mortality due to root diseases and fir-engraver bark beetles. However, the moister conditions within mesic forest stands, leads to intrinsically higher stand densities than dry sites. That, in turn, results in more tree mortality and accumulated coarse woody debris on the forest floor, as trees continue to die from competition and disease, insect, or drought-related stressors. In addition to having high amounts of coarse woody debris on the ground, many of these mesic stands are so dense that understory vegetation is absent (or depauperate) due to lack of sunlight reaching the forest floor. Scattered openings are also visible within these mesic stands, associated primarily with root disease pockets (1-4 acres) or rock outcrops. As with dry sites, these

openings are either shrub fields or exposed rock outcrops, vegetated with short grasses, forbs, and shrubs.

Views of the Gold Hill area from Highway 2 are limited far middleground to background views. However, there is a specific stretch of Highway 2, for approximately 1.4 miles immediately west of Dover, Idaho, where east-bound drivers have a “focal point” view of Gold Hill directly in line with the Highway in front of them. From this distance, the view of Gold Hill is background, but focal. Therefore, drivers primarily notice patch sizes, pattern, and line forms across the western aspects of Gold Hill, not specific trees or stands. Middleground views of Gold Hill, from Highway 2, become visible as east-bound drivers are entering the City of Sandpoint. The only proposed treatment areas, or portions thereof, which may be visible from Highway 2 include units 19, 20, 21, 25, 28, and 33.

Views of the Gold Hill area from Highway 200 are limited, far-middleground to background views. Along Highway 200, glimpses of the northern aspect, upper slopes of Gold Hill are visible between the community of Kootenai and the Oden Bay area. Then between the Pack River Delta and the Trestle Creek area, drivers or sightseers can view some of the northern and northeastern aspects of Gold Hill, again from a far-middleground distance. Due to this distance, viewers would primarily notice patch sizes, pattern, and line forms across the northern and northeastern aspects of Gold Hill, not specific trees or stands. The proposed treatment areas, or portions thereof, which may be visible from some point along Highway 200 include units 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d, 9, 10, 14, 17, 18, 26, and 27.

Views of proposed treatment areas from the Gold Hill Trail would consist of foreground and immediate foreground views. Portions of units 19, 20, 21, 25, 26, 32, and 33 would be visible from and/or adjacent to the Gold Hill Trail. Units 20, 25, 26, and 33 consist primarily of dry-site Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine, interspersed with rock outcrops as described above. Units 19, 21, and 32 consist of the more mesic, mixed-conifer stands, with a hardwood component, and occasional rock outcrops.

Views of proposed treatment areas from the 2642 Road, and its associated open road segments, would consist of foreground views. Portions of units 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d, 9, 10, 11, 12a, 14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 29, and 30 may be visible from some point along the 2642 Road, or its associated open road spurs.

Views of the Gold Hill area from the general vicinity of the City of Sandpoint are middleground views. Only the northwestern and western aspects of Gold Hill are visible from this area. Some individual stands can be visually located, but primarily viewers would notice patch shapes and sizes, as well as pattern and line forms from these middleground views. The proposed treatment areas, or portions thereof, which may be visible from certain points within the City of Sandpoint include units 19, 20, 21, 25, 28, and 33.

Views of the Gold Hill area from Lake Pend Oreille, including Bottle Bay, are middleground to background views. Western, northwestern, northern, and some northeastern aspects are visible from different points along the lake, Pend Oreille River, and various bays. Due to the distance of the views, viewers primarily only notice color, patch shape and sizes, textural differences, as well as pattern and line forms within this viewshed. The proposed treatment areas, or portions thereof, which may be visible from certain points on Lake Pend Oreille include units 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 33, and 34.

The Forest Plan standards for the project area list two different VQOs, retention and partial retention (see VQO map). The retention VQO stipulates that human activities are not evident to the casual Forest visitor. Partial retention stipulates that human activities may be evident, but must remain

subordinate to the characteristic landscape. SMS equates retention and partial retention to high scenic integrity and moderate scenic integrity respectively. High scenic integrity refers to landscapes where the valued landscape character appears intact. Deviations may be present but must repeat the form, line, color, texture, and pattern common to the landscape character so completely and at such scale that they are not evident. Moderate scenic integrity refers to landscapes where the valued landscape character appears slightly altered. Noticeable deviations must remain visually subordinate to the landscape character being viewed.

Environmental Consequences – Visual Resource

As described in the Scope of Analysis, the proposed project could potentially affect the scenic values of the area by altering the form, line, color, and texture of the immediate landscape as seen from particularly sensitive viewing locations. This section will describe these alterations, the effects they may have on the immediate and surrounding landscape, and mitigation measures that would minimize the potential detrimental effects.

Table 1 below describes the proposed activities, existing condition and visual quality objective (VQO) for each treatment unit, as well as the effects those proposed activities may have on the immediate and surrounding landscape.

The No-Action Alternative is not described in the table, but assumes the following: no thinning; no thinning with group selection harvests; no regeneration harvests and subsequent replanting; no overstory removal with associated precommercial thinning of understory; no special hazardous fuel treatments on rock outcrops; no hand thinning/slashing; and no road construction or reconditioning will be performed. Regular, scheduled road maintenance and weed treatment will continue to be performed. In addition, forest succession will continue, and wildfire suppression and recreational activities will continue to occur as in the past in the project area. Therefore, the no-action alternative would not result in any direct effects to visuals resources. However, indirect effects from continued forest succession and forest health problems are discussed.

The no action alternative could also indirectly result in a higher risk of a stand-replacing, high-intensity wildfire (see Fire, Fuels, and Air Quality report.) A high-severity fire is not certain to occur within the project area during a given timeframe. However, the occurrence of a high-intensity wildfire would have an increased potential for negative impacts to visuals resources. Such impacts could last for 5-20 years, until a severely-burned site revegetates, and potential impacts are described in the context of the table below.

We can assume that within this project area, which is entirely within the wildland-urban interface, a foreseeable, future actions is wildfire suppression. Land management agencies and those with firefighting responsibilities in the area will have to continue to fight wildfires in the area to protect homes, private property, and public infrastructure. Additionally, natural ecological processes, including forest stand succession and tree mortality will also continue to occur. When the indirect effects of the no-action alternative are added cumulatively to the future wildfire suppression and natural forest ecological processes, we can predict there will be additional accumulations of down, woody debris (or fuels) and a higher fire hazard prior to the next stand-replacing fire event. In this case, the potential detrimental indirect effects to visuals resources would be similar to those described above, but potentially longer-lasting.



Table 1. Existing Condition, VQO and Proposed Activity Effects for each Treatment Unit

<i>Unit</i>	<i>VQO</i>	<i>Existing Condition</i>	<i>No-Action Alternative (Alt. A) Effects</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B)</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B) Effects</i>
1	Retention	Southern end of unit visible from 2642 Rd (foreground); northern end of unit visible from portions of Bottle Bay (far middleground). Dense Douglas-fir/cedar forest stand, mesic type. Lots of dead and dying trees evident—root disease prevalent. Currently meets retention status, but on northern end of unit where unit abuts private land facing Bottle Bay, the obvious line between private and NFS is striking and distinctly human.	Vertical line form adjacent to north-eastern end of unit, along private property boundary, will remain obvious. Forest stand will continue to succumb to root disease, and the subsequent mortality could lead to color or textural differences obvious from Bottle Bay and the 2642 Road	Thinning; Grapple-piled slash Favored for retention are largest and healthiest larch and cedar, as well as healthy, relic Douglas-fir.	Casual visitors would likely not notice any human activities within the unit, and the unit would remain in retention. Many, healthy, western larch, cedar and Douglas-fir would be visible from the 2642 Road. Thinning would focus on removing smaller, less thrifty individuals, as well as providing for growing space between trees. Treatment would soften line effect adjacent to private property on northern end of unit. Low stump heights adjacent to the 2642 Road should be favored.
2	Retention	From an open road spur off of the 2642 Rd, only the dense trees nearest the road are visible, due to steepness of topography. Parts of the stand are visible from Bottle Bay. An obvious line along the eastern edge of unit, where the unit abuts private land, is present. Several rock outcrops and root disease epicenters are plainly visible from Bottle Bay. The stand is comprised of Douglas-fir, hardwood species, and larch, with lesser amounts of cedar. Lots of stem and root decay.	Vertical line form adjacent to eastern edge of unit, along private property boundary, will remain obvious. Forest stand will continue to succumb to root disease, and the subsequent mortality could lead to color or textural differences obvious from Bottle Bay and the 2642 Road	Regeneration harvest/irregular shelterwood; Slash treatment to be a combination of Prescribed Burning and Yarding Unmerchantable Material Southeastern portion of unit near 2642 Rd will only be lightly thinned, but regeneration harvest will occur lower on slope, with 3-5 large shelterwood openings (no single opening >40acres)	For the first few years after harvest, most of this stand would probably be categorized as partial retention, transitioning back to retention as understory vegetation growth camouflages stumps and regeneration has a growth flush. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6 inches) adjacent to 2642 Rd, identifying/leaving small, irregular-shaped clumps of trees intact within the first 65-150 feet of the 2642 Rd., and mimicking adjacent patch sizes and shapes for shelterwood harvest. Individual tree selection elsewhere in unit will favor retention of the largest and healthiest tree in the immediate area.
3	Retention	Unit is adjacent to 2642 Rd. Due to the unit location being primarily in a swale, very little of unit is visible from Bottle Bay. Only convex portions of unit and rock outcrops which have northeastern aspects are visible from Bottle Bay. Stand has a nice mix of cedar, Douglas-fir and larch. However, some portions of the unit are extremely dense, which has lead to lots of mortality and windthrow, especially adjacent to unnamed open spur off 2642 Rd. Root disease prevalent in DF. The unit is predominantly within retention status, but root disease patches are only in partial retention status.	Natural succession and tree mortality would continue to occur, potentially resulting in more woody debris in the understory. In addition, the dense canopies would become denser and potentially create an understory completely devoid (depauperate) of live vegetation, like shrubs or forbs. Likely the retention status of this unit would not change for quite some time, barring a substantial disease/insect outbreak or landscape fire event which could kill the entire stand.	Thinning with Group Selection openings; Grapple-piled slash Group selection of very dense trees adjacent to unnamed spur road and an isolated root disease center is necessary. Thinning within remainder of stand will favor retention of healthiest and largest trees.	For the first few years after harvest, the portion of the unit adjacent to the unnamed open spur road would probably be categorized as partial retention, transitioning back to retention as understory vegetation growth camouflages stumps and new tree seedlings initiate. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6 inches) and identifying/leaving small, irregular-shaped clumps of trees intact adjacent to the road. The remainder of the unit would likely remain in retention status, as viewed from the lake and the 2642 Road.



<i>Unit</i>	<i>VQO</i>	<i>Existing Condition</i>	<i>No-Action Alternative (Alt. A) Effects</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B)</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B) Effects</i>
4	Retention	Fairly open stand of Douglas-fir, larch, and some cedar adjacent to the 2642 Rd and 2642 C spur. Many Douglas-fir are succumbing to root disease and/or bark beetle attacks, so scattered dead trees are visible from the road. Also, due to root disease mortality, stumps (from firewood gatherers) are also visible from the road. Upper slopes of northern aspect within this unit may be visible from the Lake. This unit is currently in partial retention status along the 2642 Road and retention status along the 2642 C Spur and as viewed from the lake.	Many Douglas-fir within the stand will continue to decline and/or die due to root disease and bark beetle attacks. As a result, immediate foreground views along the 2642 Rd and 2642 C spur would continue to be in partial retention status. As root disease centers progress, some of the disease-caused openings might also be visible from the lake.	Thinning with Group Selection openings; Grapple-piled slash Group selection of very dense trees adjacent to the 2642 Road and 2642 C spur may occur to take out root disease infected trees. Selective thinning will occur elsewhere in unit, favoring retention of healthiest, largest trees.	Larch and healthy, large Douglas-fir, with an understory shrub component, would be the primary vegetation focal point following implementation. As a result, the unit would remain in partial retention without any extraneous effort. Casual forest visitors would not be able to discern human activity after a few years of shrub and forb regrowth to help obscure stumps and regreen any openings. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6 inches) and identifying/leaving small, irregular-shaped clumps of trees intact adjacent to the road. The remainder of the unit would likely remain in retention status, as viewed from the lake and the 2642 Road.
5	Retention	This unit is comprised of an open, dry-site Douglas-fir stand on a rocky outcrop. Grasses and low-growing shrubs make up the understory vegetation component. Some patches of dense, Douglas-fir seedlings/saplings have begun to encroach in this open area. Root disease and drought stress in trees is obvious within this unit. This unit is visible to some residents along the Bottle Bay Road, but travelers on the Bottle Bay Road would not be able to see it. The unit is also visible from a vantage point along the 2642 C spur, and upper portions of the unit may be visible from some locations on Lake Pend Oreille. The unit is currently in retention status because even though the forest stand here is quite open, it blends into the natural rock outcrops.	Encroaching seedlings would continue to grow and go through stem exclusion or natural mortality, as they are denser than this dry microsite can support. Resulting mortalities would create color and/or textural differences, potentially visible from either the 2642 C spur or residential areas along Bottle Bay Road. Otherwise, slowly over time, less and less of the natural opening and rock outcrop would be visible from either the 2642 C spur or the Bottle Bay Road residents. That change would decrease the landscape diversity of patches and could result in decreased scenic integrity.	Special Treatment-Hazardous fuel reduction on rocky outcrops; Broadcast Burn Large, relic Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine will be favored for retention. All other tree ingrowth/encroachment will be removed. The understory grass/shrub component will be rejuvenated through prescribed burning. The resulting stand will be a park-like forested stand and rock outcrop opening, slightly larger than present, but similar to historic patterns. A schedule of prescribed burning every 10-20 years should be sufficient to maintain this "natural" opening.	Because this unit's shape and silvicultural prescription were designed to emulate adjacent, natural openings, and to recapture what the area looked like historically, the casual visitor would likely notice very little evidence of human activities. Views from the Bottle Bay Road residential area would remain in retention status, because even though patch size and texture may change, the change would blend with the adjacent landforms. Also, the shape and color would borrow from other openings across the landscape. Obviously, the first 2-5 years after treatment foreground views from the 2642 C spur might be in partial retention status, due to evidence of stumps or prescribed burning adjacent to the road. However, as grasses and shrubs resprout, stumps and charcoal evidence would be obscured. During this "regreening" period, the unit would slowly regain its retention status. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6 inches) and identifying/leaving small, irregular-shaped clumps of trees intact within the first 65-150 feet of the road.

<i>Unit</i>	<i>VQO</i>	<i>Existing Condition</i>	<i>No-Action Alternative (Alt. A) Effects</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B)</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B) Effects</i>
6	Retention	This unit is comprised of a fairly dense, mixed conifer/hardwood forest stand, including cedar, larch, Douglas-fir, paper birch, red alder, and some white pine. Due to the spatial density of the stand and disease and insect pathogens present, a lot of coarse woody debris has accumulated on the ground. This unit is not visible from the lake due to its north-easterly aspect and relatively low-mid slope location. This unit is currently in retention status from viewing locations--the 2642 and 2642 C roads, as well as some residential areas adjacent to the Bottle Bay Road. Although the unit is currently in retention status, most casual visitors would not be attracted to the "messy" nature of the understory coarse woody debris.	Natural succession and tree mortality would continue to occur, potentially resulting in more woody debris in the understory. In addition, the dense canopies would become denser and potentially create an understory completely devoid (depauperate) of live vegetation, like shrubs or forbs. Likely the retention status of this unit would not change for quite some time, barring a substantial disease/insect outbreak or landscape fire event which could kill the entire stand.	Thinning; Grapple-piled slash All hardwoods, as well as large, healthy cedar, larch, white pine, and some Douglas-fir would be favored for retention. Thinning would primarily be from below and would result in increased spacing between trees.	Following implementation, this unit will remain in retention status from all viewing locations. However, potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6 inches) and identifying/leaving small, irregular-shaped clumps of trees intact within the first 65-150 feet of the road.
7	Retention	This unit is primarily a dry-site Douglas-fir stand, intermixed with some larch and cedar. The unit is only visible from the 2642 Road. The unit is not visible from the Lake or Bottle Bay Road because a slight rise/ isolated knob exists just north of this unit (within unit 4). Currently the unit is only in a partial retention category, as viewed from the 2642 Road, due to high disease mortality in the overstory and evidence of stumps created by firewood gatherers.	Natural succession and tree mortality would continue to occur, potentially resulting in more woody debris in the understory. Tree mortality, especially adjacent to the 2642 Road, would gradually trend the stand away from partial retention status and could result in modification status.	Thinning with Group-Selection openings; Broadcast Burn	Following implementation, this unit will remain for a time in partial retention category; however, the unit will be more likely to transition to a retention category, as the current ecological succession path the unit is on will not attain retention. By re-introducing better species diversity in this forest stand, the overall, long-term health, vigor and longevity of the stand will be increased. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6 inches) and identifying/leaving small, irregular-shaped clumps of trees intact within the first 65-150 feet of the 2642 road.

<i>Unit</i>	<i>VQO</i>	<i>Existing Condition</i>	<i>No-Action Alternative (Alt. A) Effects</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B)</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B) Effects</i>
8a	Retention	This unit is partially visible from Bottle Bay and a small portion of the unit is visible from the 2642 Road. The stand has very little tree diversity and is mostly comprised of Douglas-fir, with a minor component of lodgepole pine, ponderosa pine and larch. Mortality and breakage, due to root disease is gradually worsening and contributing to a significant ground fuel component, and the incidence of Douglas-fir bark beetles has increased substantially recently. The unit is currently within retention status, as viewed from Bottle Bay and the 2642 Road.	As more Douglas-fir die within this Douglas-fir dominated stand, color and textural differences could become evident from the Bottle Bay viewing area (i.e. red-needled trees and dead, no-needle trees.) Fewer standing trees would be visible from the 2642 Road. These changes could result in a shift to partial retention status, as viewed from both the Bottle Bay area and the 2642 Road.	Thinning with Group-Selection openings; Broadcast Burn & Yard Unmerchantable Material (YUM)	The far, northwestern portion of this unit, which is visible from the 2642 Road and will be underburned will likely be in modification category until the burned area begins revegetating. Then, within 1-3 years, it will transition back into a partial retention, then retention status. The remainder of the unit, which is partially visible from Bottle Bay, will remain in retention status. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6 inches) within the first 65-150 feet of the 2642 road.
8b	Retention	The northern portion of this unit is visible along the 2642 Road, as foreground views. Most of the unit is visible as far-middleground views from portions of Lake Pend Oreille and Bottle Bay. Either viewshed would consider this unit as currently in retention status.	This unit is undergoing mild mortality and breakage due predominantly to natural succession, drought stress, and some root and stem diseases. During the next 10-20 years under the no-action alternative, the stand would likely remain in retention status, barring a landscape-level fire event in the area.	Thinning; Excavator-pile slash in skyline corridors	The light thinning proposed for this unit would have little effect on visual characteristics. Therefore, if certain mitigation measures are implemented, the proposed action would result in the unit remaining in retention status, as viewed from both the 2642 Road and Lake Pend Oreille. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6 inches) and identifying/leaving small, irregular-shaped clumps of trees intact within the first 65-150 feet of the 2642 road.
8c	Retention	This unit is primarily a dry-site Douglas-fir stand, intermixed with some larch and understory cedar. Rock outcrops, and associated shrub fields, are interspersed within this unit. The northern portion of this unit is visible along the 2642 Road, as foreground views. Most of the unit, including rock outcrops, is visible as far-middleground views from portions of Lake Pend Oreille and Bottle Bay. Either viewshed would consider this unit as currently in retention status.	No-action alternative would likely result in maintenance of retention status from all viewing locations, barring a landscape fire event. However, as natural succession and mortality (due to root disease and insect infestations) becomes more prevalent, the resulting accumulations of coarse woody debris on the forest floor will likely create a less aesthetic experience for foreground views adjacent to the 2642 Road.	Regeneration harvest/irregular shelterwood; Broadcast Burn	Foreground views adjacent to 2642 Road will likely view unit as modification status short term, due broadcast burn. Following re-greening, the unit should return to partial retention status (2-5 years), and more slowly to retention status (5-10 years) as new seedlings grow. From middleground views (on Lake Pend Oreille) the unit will be able to maintain a partial retention or retention status if unit is successfully melded into existing landscape character. By blending the shape and size of new, irregular shelterwood harvest openings, harvest units would blend into and/or emulate natural openings as viewed from middle-ground/background views. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6 inches) and leaving small clumps of trees within the 65-150 feet of the 2642 road.

<i>Unit</i>	<i>VQO</i>	<i>Existing Condition</i>	<i>No-Action Alternative (Alt. A) Effects</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B)</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B) Effects</i>
8d	Retention	The northern portion of this unit is visible along the 2642 Road, as foreground views. Most of the unit is visible as far-middleground views from portions of Lake Pend Oreille and Bottle Bay. Either viewshed would consider this unit as currently in retention status.	This unit is undergoing mild mortality and breakage due predominantly to natural succession, drought stress, and some root and stem diseases. During the next 10-20 years under the no-action alternative, the stand would likely remain in retention status, barring a landscape-level fire event in the area.	Thinning; Excavator-pile slash in skyline corridors	The light thinning proposed for this unit would have little effect on visual characteristics. Therefore, if certain mitigation measures are implemented, the proposed action would result in the unit remaining in retention status, as viewed from both the 2642 Road and Lake Pend Oreille. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6 inches) and leaving small clumps of trees within the first 65-150 feet of the 2642 road.
9	Retention	This unit is comprised of a fairly dense, mixed conifer/hardwood forest stand, including cedar, larch, Douglas-fir, paper birch, black cottonwood, red alder, and some white pine. Due to the spatial density of the stand and forest pathogens present, a lot of coarse woody debris has accumulated on the ground. The southern portion of this unit is visible along the 2642 Road, as foreground views. Portions of the unit are visible as far-middleground views from portions of Lake Pend Oreille and Bottle Bay. Either viewshed would currently classify this unit in retention status.	This unit is undergoing mild mortality and breakage due predominantly to natural succession, drought stress, and some root and stem diseases. During the next 10-20 years under the no-action alternative, the stand would likely remain in retention status, barring a landscape-level fire event in the area.	Thinning; No slash treatment is necessary, but portions of the unit may be YUM'd.	The light thinning proposed for this unit would have little effect on visual characteristics. Therefore, if certain mitigation measures are implemented, the proposed action would result in the unit remaining in retention status, as viewed from both the 2642 Road and Lake Pend Oreille. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6 inches) and identifying/leaving small, irregular-shaped clumps of trees intact within the first 65-150 feet of the 2642 road.
10	Retention	This unit is primarily a fairly open, dry-site Douglas-fir stand, intermixed with some ponderosa pine and larch. Rock outcrops and shrub ecotones are also scattered throughout the unit. Due to extensive drought stress, insect attacks, and root disease in the Douglas-fir, many trees are dead or have fallen over. As a result, in some areas coarse woody debris accumulations on the ground are dense. Currently, this stand would be classified as retention or partial retention from both visible components adjacent to the 2642 Road, as well as viewshed from Lake Pend Oreille.	No-action alternative would likely result in maintenance of retention status from all viewing locations, barring a landscape fire event. However, as natural succession and mortality (due to root disease and insect infestations) becomes more prevalent, the resulting accumulations of coarse woody debris on the forest floor will likely create a less aesthetic experience for foreground views adjacent to the 2642 Road. In addition, views from the lake could change texturally, in color, or in shape/size of openings as more trees die.	Regeneration harvest/ irregular shelterwood; Broadcast Burn Healthy western larch, ponderosa pine, and large, relic Douglas-fir will be favored for retention.	This unit's shape and silvicultural treatment were designed to emulate adjacent, natural openings; therefore, casual visitors would likely notice little evidence of human activities. Views from Lake Pend Oreille would remain in retention status. Even though patch size, texture, shape and color may change, the change would blend with the adjacent landforms. The first 2-5 years after treatment foreground views adjacent to 2642 Road might be in partial retention status, due to evidence of stumps or prescribed burning. However, as grasses/shrubs resprout, stumps and charcoal evidence would be obscured. During this period, the unit would slowly regain its retention status. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6") and leaving small clumps of trees within 65-150 feet of the road.

<i>Unit</i>	<i>VQO</i>	<i>Existing Condition</i>	<i>No-Action Alternative (Alt. A) Effects</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B)</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B) Effects</i>
11	Retention	Unit 11 is a fairly dense, mixed conifer stand on a fairly moist site. Predominant species include cedar, Douglas-fir, larch, and hemlock. This unit is not visible from the Bottle Bay Road or any portion of Lake Pend Oreille due to its mid- to upper slope and southeastern aspect within the Gold Gulch drainage. This unit is adjacent to Gold Hill Trail No. 2 (motorized trail), and the 2642 Road and is therefore classified as foreground views to those areas. Unit 11 is currently within retention status from these viewsheds.	Some portions of the unit are extremely dense and root disease is present, which will continue to result in tree mortality and windthrow. During the next 10-20 years under the no-action alternative, the stand would likely remain in retention status, barring a landscape-level fire event in the area. However, adjacent to roads and trails where tree mortality results in increased woody debris accumulation on the ground, most visitors will not view the unit as aesthetically pleasing.	Thinning; Grapple-piled slash Healthy western larch, Douglas-fir, ponderosa pine, white pine and larger cedar will be favored for retention.	The light thinning proposed for this unit would have little negative effect on visual characteristics. Therefore, if certain mitigation measures are implemented, the proposed action would result in the unit remaining in retention status, as viewed from both the 2642 Road and Trail No. 2. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6”) and leaving small clumps of trees within 65-150 feet of the road and within 75 feet of trail center. No tree-marking paint should be visible from the trail system.
12a	Retention	This stand is comprised of approx. 80-year old Douglas-fir, with a few scattered larch, ponderosa pine, and cedar. The understory is quite open, since the trees reached closed-canopy stage some time ago. This unit is not visible from the Bottle Bay Road or any portion of Lake Pend Oreille due to its mid- to upper slope and southeastern aspect within the Gold Gulch drainage. However, portions of the stand are visible, as foreground views, from the 2642 Road. Unit 12a is currently in retention status as viewed from the 2642 Road.	Some root disease is present within this stand, and will continue to result in mortality and windthrow of individual trees. During the next 10-20 years under the no-action alternative, the stand would likely remain in retention status, barring a landscape-level fire event in the area. However, adjacent to roads where tree mortality results in increased woody debris accumulation on the ground, most visitors will not view the unit as aesthetically pleasing.	Thinning with Group-Selection openings; Broadcast Burn	The thinning and group selection harvests proposed for this unit will have little effect on visual characteristics. Tree stocking will still be sufficient to exhibit “forest characteristics” to visitors. However, slash treatment proposed is broadcast burning, which will, temporarily at least, put the unit in modification or partial retention status. After 2-5 years, shrubs and grasses will have resprouted sufficiently to regain retention status. Such “regreening” will also obscure views of stumps adjacent to the road. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6”) within 65-150 feet of the road.
12b	Retention	The forest stand is similar to 12a in species composition and density, but mortality caused by root disease and insect attacks is prevalent. This unit is located on a bench or natural terrace immediately adjacent to a private boundary (along the unit’s eastern boundary.) The private property was seed-tree harvested several years ago, and as a result the textural difference is an obvious line along the property boundary. Portions of this unit are visible as middle-ground views from the Bottle Bay Road area and from the southern tip of Bottle Bay. The unit is currently within retention status from both views.	No-action alternative would likely result in maintenance of retention status from all viewing locations, barring a landscape fire event. However, as natural succession and mortality (due to root disease and insect infestations) becomes more prevalent, the resulting views from the Bottle Bay or Bottle Bay Road could change texturally, in color, or in shape/size of openings as more trees die.	Thinning with Group-Selection openings; Grapple-piled slash The largest and healthiest larch, ponderosa pine, and some Douglas-fir will be favored for retention.	Because this unit’s position is on a natural terrace and the planned action is a thinning with group selection openings in the root disease epicenters, the project will have no negative effect on visual characteristics. In fact, the treatment will likely soften the “sharp” , defined line people can pick out along the NFS/ private property boundary, when viewed from either Bottle Bay or the Bottle Bay Road area. The unit will remain in retention status following project implementation.

<i>Unit</i>	<i>VQO</i>	<i>Existing Condition</i>	<i>No-Action Alternative (Alt. A) Effects</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B)</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B) Effects</i>
14	Retention	This unit is a very dry site, open stand of predominantly Douglas-fir, with some larch and cedar in places. There are numerous shrub fields and rock outcrops within and adjacent to the stand, due primarily to the concentration of root disease in the stand. The upper slopes within the unit are visible from numerous points on Lake Pend Oreille as middleground views. Only the uppermost slope is visible from the 2642 Road as foreground views (due to extreme steepness.) Currently, the unit is only within partial retention status, due to the substantial tree mortality and recent color/texture changes.	Under the no-action alternative, during the next 10-20 years, the forest stand would continue to deteriorate due to drought stress, lack of species diversity, as well as insect attacks and root disease. Barring a landscape fire event, the stand would further decline to potentially even a modification status.	Regeneration harvest/ irregular shelterwood; Broadcast Burn	This unit's planned shelterwood harvest openings were designed to emulate adjacent, natural openings in shape and texture; therefore, casual visitors would likely notice little evidence of human activities. Views from Lake Pend Oreille would remain in partial retention status. Even though patch size, texture, shape and color may change, the change would blend with the adjacent landforms. Eventually, this treatment will allow the stand to reach retention status due to increased diversity and vigor. The first 2-5 years after treatment foreground views adjacent to 2642 Road might be in modification status, due to evidence of stumps, skyline harvest, or prescribed burning. However, as grasses/shrubs resprout, stumps and charcoal evidence would be obscured. During this period, the unit would slowly regain its partial retention status. As new tree seedlings grow, retention status could even be attained. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6") within 65-150 feet of the road.
15	Retention	The forest stand is similar to 12a in species composition and density, but mortality caused by root disease and insect attacks is prevalent. This unit is located on a bench or natural terrace immediately adjacent to a private boundary (along the unit's eastern boundary.) The private property was seed-tree harvested several years ago, and as a result the textural difference is an obvious line along the property boundary. Portions of this unit are visible as middle-ground views from the Bottle Bay Road area and from the southern tip of Bottle Bay. The unit is currently within retention status from both views.	No-action alternative would likely result in maintenance of retention status from all viewing locations, barring a landscape fire event. However, as natural succession and mortality (due to root disease and insect infestations) becomes more prevalent, the resulting views from the Bottle Bay or Bottle Bay Road could change texturally, in color, or in shape/size of openings as more trees die.	Thinning with Group- Selection openings; Broadcast Burn The largest and healthiest larch, ponderosa pine, and some Douglas-fir will be favored for retention.	Because this unit's position is on a natural terrace and the planned action is a thinning with group selection openings in the root disease epicenters, the project will have no negative effect on visual characteristics. In fact, the treatment will likely soften the "sharp", defined line which is visible along the NFS/ private property boundary, when viewed from either Bottle Bay or the Bottle Bay Road area. The unit will remain in retention status following project implementation.

<i>Unit</i>	<i>VQO</i>	<i>Existing Condition</i>	<i>No-Action Alternative (Alt. A) Effects</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B)</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B) Effects</i>
16	Retention	This is a fairly young (40-70 years old), dry site stand of mixed conifers. Stand is located on a narrow, natural terrace adjacent to the 2642 Road, and Douglas-fir is over-represented. Root disease is prevalent in the stand. Due to maturity and height of stands just downslope from 2642 Road (including unit 14), most of this unit is not visible from Lake Pend Oreille. However, the entire unit would be visible as foreground from points along the 2642 Road. Currently, the unit is in retention status, but is transitioning to partial retention status as firewood gatherers have created numerous, visible stumps adjacent to the road.	Under the no-action alternative, during the next 10-20 years, this unit would likely retain retention status, barring a landscape fire event. However, as natural succession, mortality (due to root disease and insect infestations), and firewood gathering becomes more prevalent, the resulting foreground views from the 2642 Road would trend towards partial retention status.	Thinning; Grapple-piled slash Daylight around healthy larch. Favor retention of full-crowned, healthy larch and ponderosa pine, and to a lesser extent the larger, healthy Douglas-fir.	The light thinning proposed for this unit would have little negative effect on visual characteristics. Therefore, if certain mitigation measures are implemented, the proposed action would result in the unit remaining in retention status, from all viewing locations. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6 inches), varying basal pruning heights, and leaving small, irregular-shaped clumps of trees intact within 65-150 feet of the 2642 Road.
17	Retention	This unit is primarily a dry-site Douglas-fir stand, intermixed with some larch, ponderosa pine, rocky mountain maple, and cedar. Rock outcrops are interspersed throughout the stand, and root disease is prevalent. A large portion of the unit is visible from Lake Pend Oreille as middleground views. Currently the unit is within retention status.	Under the no-action alternative, during the next 10-20 years, natural succession and tree mortality would continue to occur. This mortality could potentially result in more woody debris accumulations in the understory, as well as color and textural changes which could be visible from the Lake. However, the unit would likely remain in retention status for the next 10-20 years, barring a landscape level fire event.	Thinning with Group-Selection openings; Broadcast Burn The largest and healthiest larch, ponderosa pine, hardwoods, and some Douglas-fir will be favored for retention.	Group selection openings should be created so as to emulate natural openings, especially those adjacent to rock outcrops. The overall thinning of the stand will have very little negative effect on the visual characteristics. The planned broadcast burning of slash would not affect the middleground views from the lake, except during the actual burning operation. Following implementation of this project and completion of slash disposal, this stand will remain in retention status. In fact, thinning the stand should enhance the growth, vigor, health and longevity of the remnant stand, which positively influences the visual qualities.
18	Retention	Unit 18 is a fairly dense, mixed conifer stand on a fairly moist site. Predominant species include cedar, Douglas-fir, larch, lodgepole pine, and hemlock. Rock outcrops are interspersed throughout the stand. The upper slope of the unit is within foreground view of the 2642 Road. Much of the stand is visible from various viewpoints on Lake Pend Oreille. However, due to significant root disease and bark beetle mortality, the unit is currently only in partial retention status.	Some portions of the unit are extremely dense and root disease is abundant, which will continue to result in tree mortality and windthrow. During the next 10-20 years under the no-action alternative, the stand would likely remain in partial retention status, barring a landscape-level fire event in the area. However, adjacent to roads where tree mortality results in increased woody debris accumulation on the ground, most visitors will not view the unit as aesthetically pleasing.	Thinning with Group-Selection openings; Grapple-piled slash The largest and healthiest larch, ponderosa pine, cedar and some Douglas-fir will be favored for retention.	The thinning and group selection harvest proposed for this unit would have little negative effect on visual characteristics. Therefore, if certain mitigation measures are implemented, the proposed action would result in the unit remaining in partial retention status, as viewed from both the 2642 Road and Lake Pend Oreille. Slowly, as growth, vigor, health and longevity of the remnant stand improves, the stand should slowly trend toward retention status. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6") and leaving small clumps of trees within 65-150 feet of the road.

<i>Unit</i>	<i>VQO</i>	<i>Existing Condition</i>	<i>No-Action Alternative (Alt. A) Effects</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B)</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B) Effects</i>
19	Retention	Unit 19 is comprised of mixed conifers, including larch, ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, lodgepole pine, as well as scattered cedar associated with deeper soils. This unit is visible as foreground views from the 2642 Road, and portions of the unit are visible as far-middleground views from Lake Pend Oreille, Sandpoint, and Hwy. 95. Previous harvest activities have occurred in this unit and firewood gathering is also common, so the unit is in partial retention status as viewed from the 2642 Road. As viewed from Lake Pend Oreille, Sandpoint, and Hwy. 95, the unit is in retention status.	Root disease is abundant in the Douglas-fir, and dwarf mistletoe is prevalent in the larch within the stand. During the next 10-20 years under the no-action alternative, the stand would likely remain in retention status, barring a landscape-level fire event.	Thinning with Group-Selection openings; Grapple-piled slash The largest and healthiest larch, ponderosa pine, cedar and some Douglas-fir will be favored for retention.	Following implementation of this project and completion of slash disposal, this stand will either be in retention status or the low-end of partial retention status. However, thinning the stand should enhance the growth, vigor, health and longevity of the remnant stand. As a result, if the stand ends up in partial retention, it will transition back into retention status relatively quickly. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6") and leaving small clumps of trees within 65-150 feet of the road.
20	Retention	This unit is primarily a dry-site Douglas-fir stand, intermixed with some larch, ponderosa pine, rocky mountain maple, and cedar. Rock outcrops are interspersed throughout the stand, and root disease is prevalent. Most of the unit is visible from Lake Pend Oreille and Sandpoint area as middleground views. Currently the unit is within retention status.	Many Douglas-fir within the stand will continue to decline and/or die due to root disease and bark beetle attacks. As root disease centers progress, some of the disease-caused openings might also be visible from the lake. During the next 10-20 years under the no-action alternative, the stand would likely remain in retention status, barring a landscape-level fire event.	Regeneration harvest/ irregular shelterwood; Broadcast Burn	For the first few years after harvest, most of this stand would probably be categorized as partial retention, transitioning back to retention as understory vegetation growth camouflages stumps and regeneration has a growth flush. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6 inches) adjacent to 2642 Rd and mimicking adjacent patch sizes/shapes for harvest unit. The largest, healthiest, and most disease/ insect resistant trees will be favored for retention. The edges of this unit should be developed, so as to blend into unit 25. If not completed, the unit boundary could appear abrupt and obvious from vantage points along Highway 95 and in Sandpoint.
21	Retention	The stand is comprised of larch and hardwood species, with lesser amounts of cedar and Douglas-fir. Stem and root disease are present in the stand. The top end of the Gold Hill Trail No. 3 dissects the unit, and the upper trailhead for Trail No. 3 is located near the southeastern corner of the unit. Due to the unit's position on a terrace, the unit is only visible as foreground views from Gold Hill Trail No. 3 and the 2642 Road. The unit is currently within retention status from these viewing locations.	Under the no-action alternative, during the next 10-20 years, this unit would likely retain retention status, barring a landscape fire event.	Thinning; Grapple-piled slash Daylight around healthy larch. Favor retention of full-crowned, healthy larch, ponderosa pine, hardwoods, and to a lesser extent the larger, healthy Douglas-fir.	The light thinning proposed for this unit would have little negative effect on visual characteristics. Therefore, if certain mitigation measures are implemented, the proposed action would result in the unit remaining in retention status, as viewed from both the 2642 Road and Trail No. 3. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6") and leaving small clumps of trees or tall shrubs within 65-150 feet of the road and within 75 feet of trail center. No tree-marking paint should be visible from the trail system.

<i>Unit</i>	<i>VQO</i>	<i>Existing Condition</i>	<i>No-Action Alternative (Alt. A) Effects</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B)</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B) Effects</i>
22	Retention	Unit 22 is comprised of mixed conifers, including larch, ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, lodgepole pine, as well as scattered cedar associated with deeper soils. This unit is visible as foreground views from the 2642 Road, and portions of the unit are visible as far-middleground views from Lake Pend Oreille and Sandpoint. Previous harvest activities have occurred in this unit and firewood gathering is also common, so the unit is in partial retention status as viewed from the 2642 Road. As viewed from Lake Pend Oreille and Sandpoint, the unit is in retention status.	Root disease is abundant in the Douglas-fir, dwarf mistletoe is prevalent in the larch within the stand, and many of the cedar are exhibiting sunscald damage. During the next 10-20 years under the no-action alternative and barring a landscape-level fire event, the stand would continue with natural succession processes. As a result, the unit would likely remain in retention status as viewed from Lake Pend Oreille and Sandpoint, and from the 2642 Road, the unit would remain in partial retention status.	Thinning with Group-Selection openings; Grapple-piled slash The largest and healthiest larch, ponderosa pine, cedar and some Douglas-fir will be favored for retention.	Following implementation of this project and completion of slash disposal, this stand will either be in partial retention status. However, thinning the stand and removing disease-infected trees should enhance the growth, vigor, health and longevity of the remnant stand. As a result, the stand should transition back into retention status relatively quickly. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6") and leaving small clumps of trees within 65-150 feet of the road.
23	Retention	This is a two-storied stand comprised predominantly of hemlock, grand fir, larch, white pine, cedar, and lodgepole pine. This stand was shelterwood harvested in 1995. Large hemlock, grand fir, cedar, and Douglas-fir were left in the overstory as initial shelter for the new forest stand. Preferred, disease-resistant tree seedlings were planted, and natural regeneration also occurred. Both natural regen and planted stock are now a healthy forest stand of dense saplings, mostly comprised of larch, white pine, cedar, grand fir, and lodgepole pine. This unit is visible from portions of Lake Pend Oreille as middleground views, and from 2642 Road as foreground views. From both perspectives, the unit is still in partial retention status, but is trending towards retention status.	During the next 10-20 years under the no-action alternative and barring a landscape-level fire event, the stand would continue with natural succession processes and growth of the younger trees. As a result, the unit would likely convert to retention status sometime within the next ten years.	Overstory Removal of past harvest unit; Precommercially Thin primary stand of natural and planted tree saplings; Hand Pile Slash adjacent to 2642 Road	Following implementation of this project and completion of slash disposal, this stand should be in partial retention status from both viewsheds. However, thinning the primary stand of saplings should enhance the growth, vigor, health and longevity of the remnant stand. As a result, the stand should trend back to retention status quite quickly. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6") and leaving small clumps of trees within 65-150 feet of the road.

<i>Unit</i>	<i>VQO</i>	<i>Existing Condition</i>	<i>No-Action Alternative (Alt. A) Effects</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B)</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B) Effects</i>
25	Retention	This unit is a dry, steep, fairly open stand of Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine, with pockets of cedar and larch associated with deeper soils. Rock outcrops are interspersed throughout the stand. This unit is visible as foreground views from Gold Hill Trail No. 3, and portions of the unit are visible as far-middleground views from Lake Pend Oreille, Hwy 95, and Sandpoint. The unit's openness and tree mortality would lend towards partial retention status, but the stand openings are natural, so the unit is within retention status.	During the next 10-20 years under the no-action alternative and barring a landscape-level fire event, the stand would continue with natural succession processes. Tree mortality caused by drought stress and root disease would also continue. As a result, the unit would likely remain in retention status as viewed from Lake Pend Oreille, Hwy. 95, and Sandpoint. However, as more trees die, the unit may trend towards partial retention status as viewed from the Gold Hill Trail No. 3.	Regeneration harvest/irregular shelterwood; YUM	This unit's planned shelterwood harvest openings were designed to emulate adjacent, natural openings in shape and texture, as well as to blend into unit 20; therefore, casual visitors would likely notice little evidence of human activities. Views from Lake Pend Oreille and Sandpoint would remain in retention status. The first 2-5 years after treatment foreground views adjacent to Gold Hill Trail No. 3 might be in partial retention status. However, as grasses/shrubs resprout, stumps and other evidence would be obscured. As such, the unit would slowly regain its retention status. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6") and no visible tree paint within 75 feet of the trail.
26	Retention	This is a fairly dense, multi-storied stand that includes predominantly Douglas-fir, grand fir, larch, and cedar. Rock outcrops are interspersed throughout the stand. Portions of this unit are visible from Gold Hill Trail No. 3 and Bottle Bay Road as foreground views. In addition, portions of the unit are visible from Lake Pend Oreille as middleground views. Root disease is prevalent, and dead/dying trees are obvious from the Bottle Bay Road. Currently the lower portion of the unit viewed from Bottle Bay Rd. is in partial retention status; retention status as viewed from the Lake.	During the next 10-20 years under the no-action alternative and barring a landscape-level fire event, the stand would continue with natural succession processes. Tree mortality caused by root disease would also continue. As a result, the unit would likely remain in retention status as viewed from Lake Pend Oreille, and partial retention status as viewed from Bottle Bay Road and the Gold Hill Trail.	Regeneration harvest/irregular shelterwood; Slash to be treated in a combination of YUM'ing and Broadcast Burning	This unit's planned shelterwood harvest openings were designed to emulate adjacent, natural openings in shape and texture; therefore, casual visitors/viewers would likely notice little evidence of human activities. The first 2-5 years after treatment foreground views adjacent to Bottle Bay Road and middleground views from Lake Pend Oreille may be in modification or partial retention status, due to evidence of stumps or prescribed burning. However, as grasses/shrubs resprout, stumps and charcoal evidence would be obscured. During this period, the unit would slowly regain its retention status. No tree-marking paint should be visible from the road or trail system upon completion of project.
27	Retention	The stand is comprised of Douglas-fir, hardwood species, and larch, with lesser amounts of cedar. Although trees are fairly open-spaced, crown closure is approaching 85%. Lots of stem and root decay is present, and Douglas-fir appear to be dying at a rate of about 2-5% per year. Rock outcrops are interspersed throughout the stand. Portions of the unit are visible as middleground views from Lake Pend Oreille, especially upslope and convex slopes in the stand. Currently unit is within retention status.	During the next 10-20 years under the no-action alternative and barring a landscape-level fire event, the stand would continue with natural succession processes. Tree mortality caused by root disease would also continue. As a result, the unit would likely remain in retention status as viewed from Lake Pend Oreille, but, as more trees die, the unit may trend towards partial retention status.	Regeneration harvest/irregular shelterwood; Broadcast Burning	This unit's planned shelterwood harvest openings were designed to emulate adjacent, natural openings in shape and texture; therefore, casual visitors/viewers would likely notice little evidence of human activities. The first 2-5 years after treatment foreground views adjacent to Bottle Bay Road and middleground views from Lake Pend Oreille may be in modification or partial retention status, due to evidence of stumps or prescribed burning. However, as grasses/shrubs resprout, stumps and charcoal evidence would be obscured. During this period, the unit would slowly regain its retention status.

<i>Unit</i>	<i>VQO</i>	<i>Existing Condition</i>	<i>No-Action Alternative (Alt. A) Effects</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B)</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B) Effects</i>
28	Retention	This unit is a dry, steep, fairly open stand of Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine, with pockets of cedar and larch associated with deeper soils. Rock outcrops are interspersed throughout the stand. This unit is visible as foreground views from portions of the Bottle Bay Road and as middleground views from Lake Pend Oreille, Hwy 95, and Sandpoint. The unit's openness and tree mortality would lend towards partial retention status, but the stand openings are natural, so the unit is within retention status.	During the next 10-20 years under the no-action alternative and barring a landscape-level fire event, the stand would continue with natural succession processes. Tree mortality caused by drought stress and root disease would also continue. As a result, the unit would likely remain in retention status as viewed from Lake Pend Oreille, Hwy. 95, Sandpoint, and Bottle Bay Road, but as more trees die, the unit may trend towards partial retention status.	Regeneration harvest/ irregular shelterwood; YUM	This unit's planned shelterwood harvest openings were designed to emulate adjacent, natural openings in shape and texture; therefore, casual visitors/viewers would likely notice little evidence of human activities. Views from Lake Pend Oreille and Sandpoint would remain in retention status. The first 2-5 years after treatment foreground views adjacent to Bottle Bay Road might be in partial retention status, due to evidence of stumps or slash. However, as grasses/shrubs resprout, stumps and other evidence would be obscured. During this period, the unit would slowly regain its retention status.
29	Retention	The eastern portion of this unit is visible along the 2642 Road, as far-foreground views. Some past harvest activity is visible adjacent to road, and as such is in partial retention status as viewed from the road. Only the upper slope of the unit is visible as far-middleground views from portions of Bottle Bay. From this viewshed, the unit is in retention status.	This unit is undergoing mild mortality and breakage due predominantly to natural succession, drought stress, and some root and stem diseases. During the next 10-20 years under the no-action alternative, the stand would likely remain in current visual status, barring a landscape-level fire event in the area.	Thinning; Excavator-pile slash in skyline corridors	The light thinning proposed for this unit would have little effect on visual characteristics. Therefore, if certain mitigation measures are implemented, the proposed action would result in the unit remaining in its current visual status, as viewed from both the 2642 Road and Bottle Bay. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6 inches) and identifying/leaving small, irregular-shaped clumps of trees intact within the first 65-150 feet of the 2642 road.
30	Retention	This unit is a dry, steep, fairly open stand of Douglas-fir, with pockets of cedar and larch associated with deeper soils. Rock outcrops are interspersed throughout the stand. This unit is visible as foreground views from 2642 Road, and portions of the unit are visible as far-middleground views from Lake Pend Oreille. Currently the unit is within retention status from both viewsheds.	Under the no-action alternative, during the next 10-20 years, the forest stand would continue to deteriorate due to drought stress, lack of species diversity, as well as insect attacks and root disease. Barring a landscape fire event, the stand would further decline to potentially even a partial retention or modification status.	Regeneration harvest/ irregular shelterwood; Broadcast Burning	This unit's planned shelterwood harvest openings were designed to emulate adjacent, natural openings in shape and texture; therefore, casual visitors would likely notice little evidence of human activities. Views from Lake Pend Oreille would remain in retention status, as the unit will simply look like an expanded version of the rock outcrops which dominate the stand. The first 2-5 years after treatment foreground views adjacent to 2642 Road might be in partial retention status, due to evidence of stumps, skyline harvest, or prescribed burning. However, as grasses/shrubs resprout, stumps and charcoal evidence would be obscured. During this period, the unit would slowly regain its retention status. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6") within 65-150 feet of the road.

<i>Unit</i>	<i>VQO</i>	<i>Existing Condition</i>	<i>No-Action Alternative (Alt. A) Effects</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B)</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B) Effects</i>
31	Retention	This unit is located on a natural upland terrace and is comprised predominantly of fairly young (40-80 year old) Douglas-fir, larch, and lodgepole pine. Some cedar and ponderosa pine are also present in certain areas within the unit. Portions of the upper slopes within the unit may be visible as far-midground views from Bottle Bay or the eastern end of Lake Pend Oreille. From either viewshed, the unit is currently classified as meeting retention status.	During the next 10-20 years under the no-action alternative and barring a landscape-level fire event, the stand would continue with natural succession processes. The unit would likely remain in retention status as viewed from Lake Pend Oreille and Bottle Bay.	Thinning; Grapple-piled slash Daylight around healthy larch. Favor retention of full-crowned, healthy larch, cedar, hardwoods, and to a lesser extent the larger, healthy Douglas-fir.	The light thinning proposed for this unit would have little negative effect on visual characteristics. Therefore, the proposed action would result in the unit remaining in retention status, as viewed from both Lake Pend Oreille and Bottle Bay.
32	Retention	This unit is an extremely dense forest stand on a fairly moist site and is located adjacent to Gold Hill Trail No. 3. The stand is comprised of cedar, grand fir, larch, hemlock, and Douglas-fir. Stem and root diseases are prevalent, and bark beetle activity is common, especially related to windthrown slash. This unit is visible as immediate foreground views from the trail, and portions of the stand are visible as midground views from Lake Pend Oreille. Due to the need to keep the trail open, trees have frequently been sawn out of the trail and left as slash adjacent to the trail. As a result, the unit is currently only in modification status as viewed from the trail itself. However, human activities are not obvious from afar, and as such views from Lake Pend Oreille are in retention status.	During the next 10-20 years under the no-action alternative and barring a landscape-level fire event, the stand would continue with natural succession processes. The unit would likely remain in retention status as viewed from Lake Pend Oreille and Bottle Bay, and would remain in modification status as viewed from the trail.	Hand Thinning; Hand-piled Slash Focus on removing the ground fuel hazard caused by the accumulated, down woody debris. Perform some basal pruning of trees adjacent to the trail where necessary. Slash and pile sub-merchantable, suppressed trees, which would likely contribute to future ground fuels accumulations.	The light thinning and slash clean-up work proposed for this unit would have little negative effect on visual characteristics. Therefore, the proposed action would result in the unit remaining in retention status as viewed from Lake Pend Oreille. In addition, the proposed action would likely immediately convert/improve the foreground views from Gold Hill Trail No. 3 to partial retention or retention status. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6") within 75 feet of the trail, and any stumps should be flush-cut. In addition, upon completion of this project, no tree-marking paint should be visible from the trail system.

<i>Unit</i>	<i>VQO</i>	<i>Existing Condition</i>	<i>No-Action Alternative (Alt. A) Effects</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B)</i>	<i>Proposed Action (Alt. B) Effects</i>
33	Retention	This unit is comprised of an open, dry-site Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine stand on a rocky outcrop. Grasses and low-growing shrubs make up the understory vegetation component. Some patches of dense, Douglas-fir seedlings/saplings have begun to encroach in this open area. Root disease and drought stress in trees is obvious within this unit. This unit is visible from some locations on Lake Pend Oreille and Sandpoint as far-middleground views. The unit is also visible as foreground views and an undeveloped vista point along the 2642 Road. The unit is currently in retention status because even though the forest stand here is quite open, it blends into the natural rock outcrops.	Encroaching seedlings would continue to grow and go through stem exclusion or natural mortality, as they are denser than this dry microsite can support. Resulting mortalities would create color and/or textural differences, potentially visible from Lake Pend Oreille and Sandpoint. Otherwise, slowly over time, less and less of the natural opening and rock outcrop would be visible. That change would decrease the landscape diversity of patches and could result in decreased scenic integrity.	Special Treatment-Hazardous fuel reduction on rocky outcrops; Broadcast Burn Large, relic Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine will be favored for retention. All other tree encroachment will be removed. The understory grass/shrub component will be rejuvenated through prescribed burning. The resulting stand will be a park-like forested stand and rock outcrop opening, slightly larger than present, but similar to historic patterns. A schedule of prescribed burning every 10-20 years should be sufficient to maintain this "natural" opening.	For 2-5 years immediately following project implementation this unit may be in modification or partial retention status due to evidence of stumps, charcoal, and helicopter landing activities. However, as grasses and shrubs resprout over time, stumps and charcoal evidence would be obscured. Because this unit's shape and silvicultural prescription were designed to emulate adjacent, natural openings, and to recapture what the area looked like historically, the casual visitor would likely notice very little evidence of human activities. Views from the Sandpoint area and Lake Pend Oreille would slowly regain retention status. Potential detrimental effects could be minimized by requiring low stump heights (less than 6 inches) within the first 65-150 feet of the 2642 Road.
34	Retention	The stand is comprised of Douglas-fir, hardwood species, and larch, with lesser amounts of cedar. Although trees are fairly open-spaced, crown closure is approaching 85%. Lots of stem and root decay is present, and Douglas-fir appear to be dying at a rate of about 5% per year. Portions of the unit are visible as foreground views from the Bottle Bay Road. From this area, the unit is currently classified as retention status. Due to the units' location on a natural terrace and its mid-slope, northeastern aspect, the unit is not visible from Bottle Bay or Lake Pend Oreille.	During the next 10-20 years under the no-action alternative and barring a landscape-level fire event, the stand would continue with natural succession processes. Tree mortality caused by drought stress and root disease would also continue. As a result, the unit would likely remain in retention status as viewed from Bottle Bay Road, but as more trees die, the unit may trend towards partial retention status.	Regeneration harvest/irregular shelterwood; Grapple-piled slash Healthy larch will be daylighted to improve health and longevity. Cedar and large, healthy Douglas-fir will also be favored for retention.	This unit's planned shelterwood harvest openings were designed to emulate adjacent, natural openings in shape and texture. The first 2-5 years after treatment foreground views adjacent to Bottle Bay Road may be in modification or partial retention status, due to evidence of stumps or temporary road construction. However, after the temporary road is decommissioned and grasses/shrubs resprout, stumps and other evidence would be obscured. During this period, the unit would slowly regain visual integrity. As newly planted tree seedlings and natural tree regeneration perpetuate and grow, the new stand will regain full retention status, probably within 10-15 years. With increased species diversity of the new stand, the future stand should be healthy and vigorous for many decades to come.

Overall, the treatments would modify the immediate view. However, by retaining the variation in tree heights and sizes, as well as spacing and clumping the residual trees in an irregular fashion, unnaturally appearing features would be reduced and the treatments would blend into the surrounding landscape. Unit shape, sizes, and spatial arrangement will mimic adjacent natural openings and geologic features. In other words, the form, line, color and texture of the immediate landscape would be modified, but the form, line, color and texture of the surrounding landscape would be borrowed from and retained across the entire viewing area. This approach allows treatments to meet the partial retention VQO specified for some areas. The activities may be evident and the landscape character may appear slightly altered, but treatments would remain subordinate to the characteristic landscape. For some units, the retention VQO would be hard to meet even at present because of the past treatments and naturally occurring events. Human activities are already evident, and insect and disease related mortality has changed the landscape character. With this in mind, the proposed treatments would not degrade the existing landscape character. In these areas, shaping and blending treatments with natural vegetation patterns and geologic features currently present would attain a high degree of visual quality (see photos in the visuals section of the project file).

Design Features/Mitigation Measures – Visual Resource

In an effort to minimize potential negative impacts to the visual resource, the following design features and mitigation measures would be used during project implementation.

- 1) If hazardous fuel treatment units can be viewed from travel corridors and require pruning, trees should be pruned at uneven heights. A variety of tree heights, sizes, and species should be maintained.
- 2) Unit boundary and designated tree markings should not be permanently visible from travel corridors or developed recreational trails.
- 3) Following sale activities, residual unit boundary signs, marking, and flagging should be removed adjacent to travel corridors, private land boundaries and public facilities. Any marking paint visible from the travel corridors or designated trails should be covered over with paint blending in with the bark of the tree.
- 4) Unit shapes and sizes should be blended into past treatment areas, as well as natural vegetation and geologic features. In addition, leave trees should be spaced and clumped irregularly to provide visual variety.
- 5) As many overstory trees as possible should be left on each side of gates or closure devices to provide screening and improve access security.
- 6) Where feasible, edges of units should be feathered, by retaining more residual trees, so the transition from treated to untreated stands is not abrupt.
- 7) Power lines should be screened when feasible.
- 8) Stump heights in units that can be seen from travel corridors, trails, private land boundaries, and public facilities should be no higher than 6 inches.
- 9) Forest residues should be cleaned up 50 – 100 feet from travel corridors, trails, private land boundaries, and public facilities to maintain visual character.



CONSISTENCY WITH THE FOREST PLAN AND OTHER REGULATORY DIRECTION

Direction for protecting visual (scenic) quality comes from the following principal sources:

- The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA),
- The Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (RPA),
- Forest Service Manual direction (FSM 2380),
- Regional Visual Quality Issuances (FSM 2383.4),
- Forest Plan Standards

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321) directs the Federal Government to assure aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings. This act directs agencies to develop methods and procedures, which will insure that [scenery and other] unquantifiable environmental amenities and values may be given appropriate consideration in decision making.

Section 6 of The Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974, as amended by the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 1601), requires an assessment of potential aesthetic impacts during the interdisciplinary review of proposed timber sale areas that would include cuts designed to regenerate an even-aged stand of timber. It also specifies treatment of cut blocks, patches or strips are shaped and blended to the extent practicable with the natural terrain.

Forest Service Manual direction (FSM 2380) stipulates that Forest Service policy is to:

- (1) Inventory, evaluate, manage and, where necessary, restore scenery as a fully integrated part of the ecosystems of National Forest System lands and of the land and resource management and planning process.
- (2) Employ a systematic, interdisciplinary approach to scenery management to ensure the integrated use of the natural and social sciences and environmental design.
- (3) Ensure scenery is treated equally with other resources.
- (4) Apply scenery management principles routinely in all National Forest System activities.

Additionally, the Landscape Management Handbook publications listed in FSM 2380.61 provide guidance in project-level work to:

- (1) Integrate roads into the landscape with minimum adverse impact to scenery.
- (2) Determine how various silvicultural and landscape design treatments can be used to meet scenic integrity objectives and landscape character goals.
- (3) Understand how fire can be a useful tool to achieve desired scenic integrity objectives and landscape character goals.
- (4) Determine how scenery management techniques and principles can be used to mitigate any land altering activity or introduced elements on the land, to achieve and maintain desired scenic integrity objectives and landscape character goals.

The Region 1 issuance that pertains to visual quality states that visually significant projects shall be monitored on each Forest. These records should include photos and a brief narrative which will be used to determine how well visual quality objectives have been met and how closely management standards and guidelines have been applied. All project areas shall be photographed prior to any modification of the existing landscape. Additional photos shall be taken during the course of the project activities and at the conclusion of the project activities. An appropriate number of photo points shall be established prior to project activity to adequately represent the project's visual

character. All photos taken during the project activities shall be taken from these established photo points (FSM 2383.4).

Each photo should include the following:

- (1) The project name and date photographed.
- (2) Photo point from which photo was taken.
- (3) The recommended (if being used as approved interim management direction) or adopted VQO for the project.

The Forest Plan identifies specific goals and objectives related to the protection of visual quality (Forest Plan, pages II-1 and II-4). Goals stated in the IPNF Forest Plan (page II-1) are to manage the visual resource by maintaining the visual quality objectives (VQOs) and to emphasize the uniqueness of the visual quality around Priest Lake. The visual quality objective is to attain high visual quality commensurate with other resources by meeting or exceeding the adopted VQOs (Forest Plan, page II-4). The standards included in the Forest Plan (pages II-25 and 26) that apply to visual management are:

- (1) Meet adopted VQOs. Exceptions may occur in unusual situations; these will be identified through the project planning process involving an interdisciplinary team. Examples of some exceptions are areas where past management practices make it impractical to meet the adopted VQOs, and large areas where the mortality rate for timber is very high. Mitigation measures should be developed for areas when VQOs are not met.
- (2) The visual resource has been evaluated based on visual sensitivity levels assigned to travel routes, use areas, and water bodies in and adjacent to the IPNF. Adjustment in VQO boundaries based on project level analysis will conform to principles in FSM 2380.

This proposed action would meet NFMA and RPA requirements. An assessment of potential aesthetic impacts has been made and given appropriate consideration. Treatment areas would be shaped and blended to the extent practicable with the natural terrain. Forest Service Manual direction and Regional Visual Quality issuances pertaining to scenery management would be met. The assessment of potential impacts has incorporated all points pertaining to scenery analysis as outlined in the Forest Service Manual. Photos of the visually sensitive units have been taken and used to analyze the potential visual effects of project activities. All Forest Plan Standards would be met. Established VQOs would be met except in areas where the mortality rate for timber is very high or where past management practices make it impractical. In these areas, shaping and blending treatments with natural vegetation patterns and geologic features currently present would attain a high degree of visual diversity and quality. In addition, the other design features and mitigation measures specified for visuals would minimize the potential detrimental effects to the scenic resource.

Prepared By: Jennifer Costich-Thompson

Title: Forester

Date: 02/28/2008

Enclosures