



General Bulletin

Number 06

February 26, 1996

Visual Quality Objectives

This bulletin has been prepared for district managers to assist them in interpreting their powers regarding visual quality objective management wider the code. These recommendations are for district managers to consider and should **not** be interpreted as Ministry policy or legal interpretation.

Definitions

"Visual Quality Objectives" (VQOs) are defined in Sec. 1 of the Operational Planning Regulation (OPR). They are a resource management objective established by the district manager or contained in a higher level plan that reflects the desired level of visual quality based on the physical characteristics and social concerns for the area.

"Known" VQOs that have been established by a higher level plan are automatically considered "known" (OPR Sec. 1(3)). Where VQOs are established independently by the district manager, this information must be made available to licensees at least four months before the date of the forest development plan (FDP) submission to formally qualify as "known" (OPR Sec. 1(3)).

Substantial Compliance

Beginning in the substantial compliance period and continuing thereafter, a person proposing to carry out timber harvesting or road construction/modification operations in a known scenic area, with an established VQO, under a FDP or access management plan (AMP), must carry out a visual impact assessment (VIA) to the satisfaction of the district manager. The VIA must demonstrate how the proposed timber harvesting or road construction/modification operations will achieve the established visual quality objectives for the area (OPR Sec. 27 & 66).

The results of the VIA must be included in the FDP or AMP (OPR Sec. 15(6) & 62(3)) and normally must be made available for public review prior to the submission and approval of the silviculture prescription and prior to road construction/modification operations in accordance with the review and comment provisions of the operational planning regulation (OPR Sec. 4 & 7).

In approving a FDP in a scenic area with established VQOs, the district manager should consider the adequacy of the contents of the VIA, and in particular whether the VIA demonstrates how the VQO(s) will be achieved (see VIA guidebook).

Most visual landscape inventories provide "recommended" VQOs. These should not be confused with established VQOs. Recommended VQOs are a preliminary assessment of scenic resource values. They have not been tested and confirmed considering all resource values in the area.

Inputs to the Timber Supply Review (TSR) often include an expected level of visual management based on current practice. These inputs to the TSR are simply an estimate for timber supply forecast purposes. These TSR inputs do not constitute formal direction under the code.

Contacts

Further details and direction are available from:

Jacques Marc at ???

Bruce Sieffert at ???

