3.6. RECREATION

INTRODUCTION

Recreation has been an important activity in the South Fork Clearwater River Subbasin, which includes the project area. The early trails and wagon roads throughout the South Fork Clearwater River Subbasin historically were, and remain, important access routes for people in nearby prairie and river communities to hunt, fish, and camp on the Nez Perce National Forest. Most of the recreational use, is dispersed activities such as big game hunting, picnicking, camping, berry picking, fishing, wood cutting, and driving for pleasure.

The Forest Plan projected large, almost equal increases in recreation demand for all recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS) classes in the next fifty years. ROS classes have been assessed for the area and described for each area in project file resource reports. Seventy percent of the subbasin (not including the Camas Prairie) is in a Roaded Natural Setting with area closures and road/trail restrictions. Only 19 percent is Semiprimitive Motorized and Nonmotorized and 11 percent is Primitive. It should be noted that motorized use by Off Road Vehicles (ORV) is increasing and this use is not being limited to roads and trails. ORV use in areas where access can be obtained (open ridges, firelines and open country) is increasing rapidly. Meadow Creek, Cougar-Peasley and American River areas are the only areas that have designated ORV trails (less than 5 percent by mileage).

Recreation settings, principle activities, and access implications are summarized for each of the ecological reporting units shown below.

SCOPE OF THE ANALYSIS

The analysis area for recreation and scenic integrity that may be directly, indirectly, and cumulatively affected is the American and Crooked River project area. Vegetation and transportation management proposals could affect recreational opportunities and use, as well as scenic integrity within the area. The proposed actions would have little effect on recreation and scenic integrity outside the area.

Indicators analyzed in detail include the recreation opportunity spectrum, scenic integrity and other recreation features.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The Nez Perce Forest Plan established goals and objectives for the management of the forest (pages II 1-8). Specific Forest Plan goals that apply to recreation and scenic resources in the American and Crooked River project area include:

- Provide a wide range of dispersed and developed recreation opportunities and experiences by providing access, facilities, and education necessary to meet public demand.
- Provide firewood for personal use.
- Present diverse, natural-appearing landscapes to view throughout the Forest
- Provide administrative sites and facilities that effectively and safely serve the public and accommodate the workforce.

ANALYSIS METHODS

Forest Plan Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)classes for the American and Crooked River project area were evaluated for changes resulting from alternative implementation.

Forest Plan interim visual quality objectives were verified and a recommendation was developed to adopt these as Forest Plan standards. Field review and visibility analysis were used to determine potential effects.

Scenery Management System (SMS) evolved from and replaces the Visual Management System (VMS). High quality scenery, especially scenery with natural appearing landscapes, enhances peoples' lives and benefits society. The Scenery Management System presents a vocabulary for managing scenery and a systematic approach for determining the relative value and importance of scenery in a national forest. Ecosystems provide the environmental context for this scenery management system. The system is used in the context of ecosystem management to inventory and analyze scenery in a national forest, to assist in the establishment of overall resource goals and objectives, to monitor the scenic resource, and to ensure high quality scenery for future generations.

Inventory of current recreational use (off-highway vehicle and dispersed campsites) was completed and used to evaluate alternatives based on potential impacts on recreational opportunities within the project area.

EXISTING CONDITION AND ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The South Fork Clearwater River Landscape Assessment 1998 (SFLA) characterized the ecological and social conditions in the South Fork Clearwater sub-basin, and provided a context for future forest management decisions in the area. The assessment recommended recreation themes for the South Fork face drainages and Red River watershed (SFLA, pages 142 and 145).

Motorized recreation is an important use in the American and Crooked River watershed areas of the Nez Perce National Forest. ATV use has increased dramatically over the last decade both locally and nationally and increased need is expected in the future. Trails and roads in the watershed generally meet current recreation needs, although developing more loop trails in the watershed is a priority. Overall road and trail density needs to be reduced in the watershed in accordance with priorities set for American and Crooked River watersheds in the South Fork Clearwater Assessment (USDA 1998). Restructuring the roads and trails systems into loops while reducing overall road density in the watershed is a priority.

Maintaining and improving current dispersed camping in the watershed is a high priority. Forest Service personnel and a small percentage of people interviewed (Saul and Lewis 2002; USDA 2001) indicated a need for more dispersed camping in the watershed. Maintaining the watershed as a primitive camping watershed is a high priority. Increasing dispersed camping opportunities is a medium priority as a secondary activity within integrated projects, and a low priority overall.

Maintaining and improving hunting and fishing resources in the watershed is considered a medium priority in the American and Crooked River watersheds. American and Crooked River are important areas for hunting activities in particular. Increasing wildlife resources and removing roads and trails that provide easy access to hunting areas is considered a medium priority. Fishing access and use within the watershed are considered a low priority at this time until fisheries restoration has been successful.

Horse travel and hiking areas considered a medium priority in the watershed. Current trails often combine horse travel and hiking with motorized recreation. Horse travel and hiking trails need to be separated from motorized recreation to increase the quality of the experience in the watershed.

The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (1986 ROS Book) describes recreation settings and opportunities, and is used to evaluate recreation potential for an area. The Nez Perce National Forest ROS inventory is described in the Forest Plan FEIS (1987), Chapter III, p. 8-9. The Forest has been inventoried and divided into four classes: “Primitive, Semi-primitive Non-motorized

(SPNM), Semi-primitive Motorized (SPM) and Roaded Natural (RN)". The project area was inventoried as "Roaded Natural", Semi-primitive Non-motorized (SPNM) and "Semi-primitive Motorized" during forest planning.

"Semi-primitive non-Motorized" areas are greater than 2500 acres and at least ½ mile but not further than 3 miles from all roads, railroads or trails with motorized use. Other people are occasionally encountered. Within these settings, there are ample opportunities to practice outdoor skills and to achieve a feeling of self-reliance. Modifications to the landscape are subtle and would not draw the attention of an observer anywhere within the area. Motorized use is not permitted.

"Semi-primitive Motorized" areas are greater than 2500 acres and at least ½ mile but not further than 3 miles from all roads, railroads or trails with motorized use. Other people are occasionally encountered. Within these settings, there are ample opportunities to practice outdoor skills and to achieve a feeling of self-reliance. Modifications to the landscape are subtle and would not draw the attention of an observer anywhere within the area. Motorized use is permitted.

"Roaded Natural" includes any area within ½ mile of "better than primitive" roads. They are natural-appearing settings that may have modifications that range from being easily noticed to strongly dominant to the observers within the area; but from sensitivity level 1 and 2 travel routes, these alterations would remain unnoticed or visually subordinate. Highly designed roads or highways may be common. Encounters with other people are frequent.

Recreational use within the American and Crooked River project area is heavily influenced by the presence of the existing transportation system and long history of resource management. An review of the existing condition for ROS shows that very little area is located more than ½ mile from "better than primitive" roads. Management area direction in the Forest Plan calls for managing for "Roaded Natural" recreation. The "Roaded Natural" classification more closely represents the existing condition throughout the project area.

"Visual Quality Objectives" (VQOs) were mapped as part of the Forest planning process using Agriculture Handbook 462 Visual Management System - Volume 2, Chapter 1, 1974. VQO refers to the degree of acceptable alteration of the characteristic landscape. Interim VQOs were established for specific Forest Plan management areas in combination with other resource goals, but decisions on their adoption were deferred until Forest Plan implementation (Forest Plan, Chapter II, p. 16, as amended by Forest Plan Amendment #4). The following definitions for interim VQOs apply to landscapes within the project area:

Retention: "activities may only repeat form, line, color and texture which are frequently found in the characteristic landscape, and should not be evident to the casual forest visitor."

Partial Retention: "Activities may repeat form, line, color and texture which are found infrequently or not at all in the characteristic landscape, but remain visually subordinate to the visual strength of the characteristic landscape."

Modification: "Activities of vegetative and landform alteration must borrow from naturally established line, form, color and texture so that their visual characteristics are those of natural occurrences within the surrounding area when viewed as middle ground or background. Activities may visually dominate the original characteristic landscape.

Maximum Modification: "activities of vegetative and landform alterations may dominate the characteristic landscape. However, when viewed as background, the visual characteristics must be those of natural occurrences within the surrounding area or character type. When viewed as foreground or middle ground, they may not appear to completely borrow from naturally established form, line, color or texture. Alterations may also be out of scale or contain detail that is incongruent with natural occurrences as seen in foreground or middle ground.

Since the Forest Plan was signed, the Visual Management System has been updated with Agriculture Handbook 701 Landscape Aesthetics: A Handbook for Scenery Management, 1995 (AH-701). The new system utilizes "Scenic Integrity Levels" (SIL) as an indicator of the landscape completeness, or the degree of naturalness (AH-701, p. 2-4). Scenic integrity is a continuum ranging over five levels of integrity from Very High to Very Low. For this analysis, terminology from the new handbook is used along with the adopted or recommended VQOs. Table 3.40 summarizes the Forest Plan interim VQOs and their corresponding SILs.

Table 3.40: Nez Perce Forest Plan Interim Visual Quality Objectives And Scenic Integrity Levels for the American and Crooked River project area

Visual Quality Objective (VQO)	Scenic Integrity Level (SIL)	Acreage
Retention	High	358
Partial Retention	Moderate	4959
Modification	Low	9798
Maximum Modification	Very Low	23765

OTHER RECREATION FEATURES

Recreational activities within the Red River Watershed include motorized sight-seeing, touring, hiking, horseback riding and packing, camping, firewood collection, mountain biking, photography, berry picking, mushrooming, and State-licensed hunting and fishing activities. Winter snow sports such as cross-country skiing and snowmobiling are increasing in popularity and occur in headwater areas in the watershed.

3.6.1. AMERICAN RIVER

INTRODUCTION

American River - Elk City, ranches, homesteads, and pastures are places people associate with this area. Scenic integrity from view points along the Elk City Wagon Road, Kirk's Fork trail, Flat Iron trail, Anderson Butte trail and connectors, and Limber Luke trailhead is important. Recreation activities include big game hunting, driving for pleasure, and various motorized and non-motorized trail uses. The Elk City township, a combination of BLM, private and some state lands is a rural, pastoral setting including a small town, within a remote, forested landscape. Shearer's Mill (Bennett Lumber Company) is located a few miles from town, near the junction of American River and the South Fork. Clearwater River. Elk City has become a destination place on driving tours primarily from the Selway basin and along the Elk City Wagon Road. Anderson Butte Lookout is a popular destination for trail riders (motorcyclists and, increasingly, mountain bikers), horse users and hikers via the Anderson Butte National Recreation Trail. Motorized and non-motorized trail uses by local residents and out-of-area recreational users is increasing. Motorized use (specifically ATVs) is rapidly increasing in popularity on the trail system in this area. Non-motorized uses remain relatively consistent, with light to moderate numbers of local and out-of-area recreational users during the summer and fall seasons.

3.6.1.1. INDICATOR 1 – ROS/SILS

EXISTING CONDITION

The American River project area is 52 percent Semi-primitive non-Motorized and 48 percent Semi-primitive Motorized.

The American River project area is 9 percent Partial Retention (VQO) or Moderate (SIL), 17 percent Modification (VQO or Low (SIL) and 72 percent Maximum Modification (VQO) or Very Low (SIL).

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

ALTERNATIVE A – NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

DIRECT AND INDIRECT

The no-action alternative would not initiate human-caused changes to existing scenic condition of the American River project area except for wildland fire suppression . No timber harvest, road construction, road decommissioning, dispersed campsite improvement, or prescribed burning would be scheduled. The natural evolution of the vegetative component of the landscape would continue to change the scenic qualities of the area (e.g. beetle killed lodgepole). The potential for catastrophic wildfire, along with the inherent changes in visual character, would continue to increase.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS (INCLUDES FORESEEABLE FUTURE ACTIONS)

None

ALTERNATIVES B, C, D, E

DIRECT AND INDIRECT

Timber Harvest - Action alternatives B-E propose various amounts of timber harvest. Current scenic integrity level (SIL) would remain the same moderate to very low and would not change.

Road Reconstruction and Temporary Construction - Road reconstruction is proposed to improve the facilities, reduce effects on aquatic condition, and provide for safe use. The proposed temporary road construction followed by decommissioning is intended to provide access for proposed timber harvest. These actions would have a noticeable, but short-term affect on visual resources. In most cases the visual changes would last for less than two years after the work is completed. Shrub regrowth and revegetation of exposed soil would hasten the visual restoration of the foreground views. From the valley floor views of proposed roads would be sufficiently screened by residual vegetation to achieve the VQO/SIL.

Road Decommissioning – The excavation of existing roads during decommissioning may have a short-term negative effect on scenic resources, while the long-term result of the changes are positive. In most cases, vegetative rehabilitation of the road prism would reduce visual evidence of the decommissioning within a year or two. In many instances, the former road prism is gone, slopes are recontoured, and the scenery of the area is restored to a more natural condition. The road decommissioning proposed in all action alternatives would meet VQO/SIL.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES

The geographic boundary for cumulative effects is the same as for the American and Crooked River project area. A listing of past, present and foreseeable future actions is included earlier in this Chapter.

Past vegetation and transportation activities have influenced the current recreational opportunities and use of the American and Crooked River project area, so their effects are part and parcel of the existing conditions described above. There are no expected cumulative effects for any of the alternatives for the existing array of recreation opportunities, beyond the anticipated increase in recreational use.

The proposed action alternatives would not exclude any of the existing recreational uses.

Past vegetation modifications throughout the project area are in varying stages of recovery. Past activities are not visible from the South Fork River corridor, State Highway 14. Activities that have occurred near sensitive travel routes, while evident, have recovered to a point where they are no longer dominating the landscape. There are no expected cumulative effects on visual resources from the proposed vegetation and transportation management activities since the adopted visual quality objectives (scenic integrity levels) for the area would be met.

3.6.1.2. INDICATOR 2 – OTHER RECREATIONAL USES

EXISTING CONDITION

The area is a popular big game hunting area for elk, moose, deer and bear. Flint Creek and American River contain rainbow, cutthroat, brook and bull trout; steelhead and spring and summer Chinook salmon. The American River project area has two developed trailhead campsites and scattered dispersed use by forest visitors who are usually self-contained.

KIRK'S FORK TRAILHEAD CAMPSITE is located 4 miles northeast of Elk City on Forest Road #1809 at an elevation of 4,300 ft. Season of use is normally from May 15th thru November 15th. Facilities include toilet, stock loading ramp, fire-ring, parking space for a camper vehicle and several horse trailers. The site is a trailhead for Kirk's Fork Trail #830 a National Recreation Trail leading to Anderson Butte.

FLINT CREEK TRAILHEAD CAMPSITE is located 6.6 miles north of Elk City on Forest Road #443 at an elevation of 4.240 ft. Season of use is normally from June 1st thru October 31st. Facilities include a toilet, fire-ring, stock loading ramp, for one camper vehicle and several horse trailers. The site is a trailhead for the and parking space Flint Creek Trail #510.

Dispersed sites are scattered along open roads primarily at the junction of closed gated roads by hunter who walk in on closed roads.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

ALTERNATIVE A – NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

DIRECT AND INDIRECT

No affect on other recreation features within the analysis area.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS (INCLUDES FORESEEABLE FUTURE ACTIONS)

None

ALTERNATIVES B, C, D, AND E

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS (INCLUDES FORESEEABLE FUTURE ACTIONS)

None

IRREVERSIBLE, IRRETRIEVABLE EFFECTS (WILL ALSO DO THIS FOR ALL RESOURCES AT THE END OF CHAPTER 3)

None

3.6.2. CROOKED RIVER

INTRODUCTION

Crooked River - Crooked River dredge mining, the Orogrande townsite, Gospel Hump, and Penman Hill access are a few of the places people associate with this area.

Recreation activities include dispersed camping, fishing, ORV use, and driving for pleasure. The highly altered stream channel from dredge mining dominates the view for Crooked River travelers. The road is a popular travel way for motorists on the "Gold Rush Loop Auto Tour" from Crooked River to Elk City via Penman Hill and Dixie. It is also the main motorized access to the east side of the Gospel Hump Wilderness. The road accommodates heavy ATV and snowmobile use. Two of the fastest growing activities in this area are snowmobiling and ATV use in the corridor. The Jerry Walker cabin, a forest service facility, is available to the public for rent. Private lands along Crooked River are being developed for vacation home sites.

The Crooked River project area is 60 percent Semi-primitive non-Motorized, 40 percent Semi-primitive Motorized and less than 1 percent Roaded Natural.

3.6.2.1. INDICATOR 1 – ROS/SILS

EXISTING CONDITION

The Crooked River project area is 15 percent Partial Retention (VQO) or Moderate (SIL), 31 percent Modification (VQO or Low (SIL) and 54 percent Maximum Modification (VQO) or Very Low (SIL).

Modifications to the landscape have occurred in the project area since early in the twentieth century. The most heavily modified locations are found in the middle and upper portions of the project area. Mining, timber harvest and road building throughout the project area have contributed to a scenic integrity of moderate to very low. Mining is the most evident modification in the lower portions of the project area.

Timber harvest is still the most visually evident modification, in the upper portions of the project area. Many of the openings created by timber harvest have unnatural geometric shapes. As trees and other vegetation continue to grow and mature, the visual evidence of past harvest becomes less obvious, and the area becomes more natural appearing. This transition from intensively managed forest to one that is more natural appearing can be seen as one travels through tree plantations established years ago.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

ALTERNATIVE A – NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

DIRECT AND INDIRECT

The no-action alternative would not initiate human-caused changes to existing scenic condition of the Crooked River project area except for wildland fire suppression . No timber harvest, road construction, road decommissioning, dispersed campsite improvement, or prescribed burning would be scheduled. The natural evolution of the vegetative component of the landscape would continue to change the scenic qualities of the area (e.g. beetle killed lodgepole). The potential for catastrophic wildfire, along with the inherent changes in visual character, would continue to increase.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS (INCLUDES FORESEEABLE FUTURE ACTIONS)

None

ALTERNATIVES B, C, D, AND E

DIRECT AND INDIRECT

Commercial Thinning - Action alternatives B-E propose various amounts of commercial thinning. Current scenic integrity level (SIL) would remain the same moderate to very low and would not change.

Road Reconstruction and Temporary Construction - Road reconstruction is proposed to improve the facilities, reduce effects on aquatic condition, and provide for safe use. The proposed temporary road construction followed by decommissioning is intended to provide access for proposed timber harvest. These actions would have a noticeable, but short-term affect on visual resources. In most cases the visual changes would last for less than two years after the work is completed. Shrub regrowth and revegetation of exposed soil would hasten the visual restoration of the foreground views. The middle background views of proposed roads would be sufficiently screened by residual vegetation to achieve the VQO/SIL.

Road Decommissioning – The excavation of existing roads during decommissioning may have a short-term negative effect on scenic resources, while the long-term result of the changes are positive. In most cases, vegetative rehabilitation of the road prism would reduce visual evidence of the decommissioning within a year or two. In many instances, the former road prism is gone, slopes are recontoured, and the scenery of the area is restored to a more natural condition. The road decommissioning proposed in all action alternatives would meet VQO/SIL.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES

The geographic boundary for cumulative effects is the same as for the Crooked River project area. A listing of past, present and foreseeable future actions is included earlier in this Chapter.

Past vegetation and transportation activities have influenced the current recreational opportunities and use of the American and Crooked River project area, so their effects are part and parcel of the existing conditions described above. There are no expected cumulative effects for any of the alternatives for the existing array of recreation opportunities, beyond the anticipated increase in recreational use.

The proposed action alternatives would not exclude any of the existing recreational uses.

Past vegetation modifications throughout the project area are in varying stages of recovery. Past activities are not visible from the South Fork River corridor, State Highway 14. Activities that have occurred near sensitive travel routes, while evident, have recovered to a point where they are no longer dominating the landscape. There are no expected cumulative effects on visual resources from the proposed vegetation and transportation management activities since the adopted visual quality objectives (scenic integrity levels) for the area would be met.

3.6.2.2. INDICATOR 2 – OTHER RECREATIONAL USES

EXISTING CONDITION

There are fifteen dispersed or lightly developed campsites within the Crooked River project area:

Crooked River Campsite #1 and #2 are located 1 mile from State Highway 14 each site has parking space for two camper vehicles and a fire-ring. The sites are located at an elevation of 3,860 ft and have a season of use from May 31st thru October 31st.

Crooked River Campsite # 3 is located 2.6 miles from State Highway 14 at an elevation of 3.960 ft, with a season of use from May 31st thru October 31st. Facilities include a toilet, fire-ring and parking space for two camper vehicles.

Crooked River Campsite # 4 is located 2.4 miles from State Highway 14 at an elevation of 3.960 ft, with a season of use from May 31st thru October 31st. Facilities include a toilet, fire-rings, five separate camping areas and parking space for twelve camper vehicles.

Crooked River Campsite # 5 is located 2.7 miles from State Highway 14 at an elevation of 3.940 ft, with a season of use from May 31st thru October 31st. Facilities include a fire-ring and parking space for two camper vehicles.

Relief Creek Campsite is located 8.4miles from State Highway 14 at an elevation of 4,340 ft, with a season of use from May 31st thru October 31st. Facilities include a fire-ring and parking space for three camper vehicles.

Baker Gulch Campsite is located 9.0 miles from State Highway 14 at an elevation of 4,380 ft, with a season of use from May 31st thru October 31st. Facilities include a fire-rings and parking space for two camper vehicles.

Fivemile Campsite is located 11 miles from State Highway 14 at an elevation of 4,480 ft, with a season of use from May 31st thru October 31st. Facilities include a toilet, fire-rings and parking space for five camper vehicles.

Fivemile Pond Day use site is located 11 miles from State Highway 14 at an elevation of 4,480 ft, with a season of use from May 31st thru October 31st. Facilities include a toilet and a fishing pond managed by Idaho Fish and Game.

Old Dredge Campsite is located 11.2 miles from State Highway 14 at an elevation of 4,500 ft, with a season of use from May 31st thru October 31st. Facilities include fire-rings and parking space for four camper vehicles. The site is the last working site of the Mt. Vernon Dredge.

Orogrande Campsite #1 is located 11.4 miles from State Highway 14 at an elevation of 4,510 ft, with a season of use from May 31st thru October 31st. Facilities include a fire-ring and parking space for two camper vehicles.

Orogrande Campsite #2 is located 11.6 miles from State Highway 14 at an elevation of 4,510 ft, with a season of use from May 31st thru October 31st. Facilities include a fire-ring and parking space for two camper vehicles.

Orogrande Campsite #3 is located 12 miles from State Highway 14 at an elevation of 4,580 ft, with a season of use from May 31st thru October 31st. Facilities include a toilet, fire-rings and parking space for three camper vehicles.

Orogrande Campsite #3 is located 12.3 miles from State Highway 14 at an elevation of 4,600 ft, with a season of use from May 31st thru October 31st. Facilities include a toilet, fire-rings and parking space for three camper vehicles.

Old Orogrande Townsite is located 12.6 miles from State Highway 14 at an elevation of 4,700 ft, with a season of use from May 31st thru October 31st.

The site is a dispersed site only development is a mound of dirt that is used as a stock unloading ramp, the site is used by ATV users that use the site as a staging area to head up to the Buffalo-Hump or Wildhorse Lake areas.

Summit Flat dispersed site is at the junction of Trail # 802 and Forest Road # 478. The site is used by ATV users to access the Sourdough Santiman area and by hikers and stock users to access the Gospel-Hump Wilderness.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

ALTERNATIVE A – NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

DIRECT AND INDIRECT

No affect on other recreation features within the analysis area.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS (INCLUDES FORESEEABLE FUTURE ACTIONS)

None

ALTERNATIVES B, C, D, AND E

DIRECT AND INDIRECT

None

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS FOR ALL ACTION ALTERNATIVES

None

FULL SUMMARY OF CUMULATIVE EFFECTS FOR RECREATION (BY ALTERNATIVE AS NECESSARY FOR CLARITY)

Past vegetation and transportation activities have influenced the current recreational opportunities and use of the American and Crooked River project area, so their effects are part and parcel of the existing conditions described above. There are no other cumulative effects associated with Alternative A beyond the anticipated increase in recreational use.

The proposed alternatives would not exclude any of the existing uses, but would modify the amount of recreational access. The proposed transportation management activities would reduce the level of off-highway vehicle access slightly with the least reduction in Alternative B increasing through the alternatives and reducing access the most in Alternative E. This would primarily be through road decommissioning which is discussed in more detail in the transportation section.

Past vegetation modifications throughout the project area are in varying stages of recovery. Activities that have occurred near sensitive travel routes, while evident, have recovered to a point where they are dominating the landscape at a decreasing rate. There are no expected cumulative effects on visual resources from the proposed vegetation and transportation management activities since the adopted visual quality objectives (scenic integrity levels) for the area would be met.