Glossary

A

Allocation — The assignment of a land area to a particular use or uses to achieve management goals and objectives.

Alternating Current (AC) — Electric current that reverses direction, usually many times per second. Through common expression, the term refers to a wave form that provides for efficient transmission of electrical energy over long distances.

Antiquities — A general term for archaeological or paleontological resources which are at least 100 years of age and which tangibly represent or have the potential to yield information on historical or prehistoric cultures or extinct plants and animals.

Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) — A geographical area within lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management that require special measure to protect sensitive resources such as scenic, cultural or wildlife resource values.

B

Background — The viewing area of a distance zone that lies beyond the foreground-middle ground. Usually from a minimum of 3 to 5 miles to a maximum of about 15 miles from a travel route, use area, or other observer position. Atmospheric conditions in some areas may limit the maximum to about 8 miles or increase it beyond 15 miles.

Best Management Practice (BMP) — Application of the best available demonstrated control, technology, processes, measures and operating methods that are socially, economically, and technically feasible for controlling soil loss or improving water quality.

Big game — Species of wildlife such as deer and elk that are managed for hunting.

Biological soil crusts — Soil crust formed by living organisms and their byproducts creating a crust of soil particles bound together by organic materials. Often found in arid regions where the vegetative cover is sparse. Also known as cryptogam.

Biotic — Pertaining to life and living organisms.

C

Canopy — The more or less continuous cover of branches and foliage formed collectively by the crown of adjacent trees and other woody growth.

Capability — The maximum load which a generating unit station transmission system or other electrical apparatus can carry under special conditions per a given period of time without exceeding approved limits of temperature and stress.

Capacitor — A device that stores electrical charges and can be used to maintain voltage levels in power lines and improve electrical system efficiency.

Carson Forest Plan — The land and resource management plan developed to meet the requirements of the National Forest Management Act of 1976, as amended, that guides all

resource management activities and establishes management standards and guidelines for the Carson National Forest.

Carson National Forest — Lands within the boundaries administered by the USDA Forest Service in northern New Mexico.

CFR — Code of Federal Regulations, the compilation of Federal regulations adopted by Federal agencies through a rule-making process.

Characteristic landscape — The established landscape within an area being viewed. The term does not necessarily mean a naturalistic character, but may refer to features of the cultural landscape, such as a farming community, an urban landscape or other landscape that has an identifiable character.

Closure — See *Road closure*.

Conductor — A thing or substance that conducts electricity. In the case of power lines, copper, aluminum, or aluminum/steel combination wires encased in a protective sheath or left bare. Size and construction of the conductor determine the amount of current that can be transported.

Contrast — The effect of a striking difference in the form, line, color, or texture of the landscape.

Cooperating agency — Another agency, Federal, state or local, which has jurisdiction over portions of the project area that must make a decision on the proposed project. In the case of the Ojo Caliente proposed transmission line project, the Bureau of Land Management is a cooperating agency.

Cryptogam — See *Biological soil crusts*.

Cultural resources — The physical remains (artifacts, ruins, burial mounds, carvings, etc.) that represent former human cultures.

Cumulative effects — The impact on the environment which results from the incremental effect of the proposed action, when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of who undertakes such actions. Cumulative effects can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

Current — The flow or rate of flow of electric force in a conductor, from a point of higher potential to one of lower potential.

D

Demographic — Pertaining to the study of human population characteristics including size, growth rates, density, distribution, migration, birth rates and mortality rates.

Desired condition — The preferred condition of the landscape and resources based upon input from the public, Forest Service specialists and the Carson National Forest Plan.

Disconnect — A switch used to deenergize a power line prior to repairs being made, basically an on and off switch.

Dispersed recreation — A general term referring to recreation use outside the developed recreation site; this includes activities such as scenic driving, hunting, backpacking and recreation in primitive environments.

Distribution line — A power line designed to carry lower voltage from a substation to the consumers. A distribution line generally transmits an electric current of 25 kVolt (25,000) or less. Common distribution lines are 12.5 kV (12,5000 volts) attached to a single pole and 25 kV (25,000 volts) attached to a cross member on a single pole. See *Transmission line*.

Disturbed area — Area where natural vegetation and soils have been removed or disrupted.

Diversity — The distribution and abundance of different plant and animal communities and species within the area covered by a land and resource management plan (Carson National Forest Plan).

Drainage — Natural channel through which water flows or may flow during a period of the year.

E

Effects — Environmental consequences as a result of a proposed or alternative action. Included are direct effects, which are caused by the action and occur at the same time and place, and indirect effects, which are caused by the action and are later in time or further removed in distance, but which are still reasonably foreseeable. Also referred to as impacts.

Electric and magnetic fields (EMF) — Invisible lines of force produced by voltage and current that surround any electrical device or electrical power line.

Electric field — Field produced by voltage in a conductor and increases in strength as the voltage increases. Field strength is measured in units of volts per meter (V/m). The field strength decreases as the distance from the source increases.

Endangered species — Any species of animal or plant which is in danger of extinction throughout all or significant portions of its range and has been designated “endangered” in the Federal Register by the Secretary of the Interior. The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, prohibits adverse modification to critical habitat of endangered species.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) — An environmental document that discloses the environmental effects of the No Action Alternative and other action alternatives.

Environmental Justice — Executive Order 12898 (February 11, 1994) mandates Federal agencies to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations.

Ephemeral drainage — A drainage area or a stream that has no base flow. Water flows for a short time but only in direct response to adequate rainfall or snowmelt events.

Erosion — The processes whereby earthy or rocky material is worn away, loosened, dissolved and relocated from any part of the earth’s surface to another.

Escarpment — An inland cliff or steep slope, formed by the erosion of inclined strata of hard rocks, or possibly as a direct result of a fault.

F

Federally listed species — See *Listed species*.

Fiber optics — A cable containing thin tubes permitting the exchange of electronic information for controlling substation activities from a remote point.

Fisheries — Streams and lakes used for fishing.

Fisheries habitat — Streams, lakes and reservoirs that support fish.

Flood plain — That portion of a river valley, adjacent to the channel, which is built of recently deposited sediments and is covered with water when the river overflows its banks at flood stages.

Forage — Vegetation used for food by wildlife, particularly big game wildlife and domestic livestock.

Foreground-middle ground — The area visible from a travel route, use area, or other observer position to a distance of 3 to 5 miles. The outer boundary of this zone is defined as the point where the texture and form of individual plants are no longer apparent in the landscape and vegetation is apparent only in pattern or outline.

Forest structure — The horizontal and vertical arrangement of trees and tree sizes.

G

Game species — Animals commonly hunted for food or sport.

H

Habitat — The place or type of site where a plant or animal naturally or normally lives and grows. Includes all biotic, climatic, and soils conditions, or other environmental influences affecting living conditions.

Habitat diversity — The distribution and abundance of different plant and animal communities and species within a specific area.

Herbaceous — The plant strata that contain soft, not woody, stemmed plants that die to the ground in winter.

I

Indirect effects — As defined by 40 CFR 1508.8, these are effects which are caused by the action but occur later in time or are removed in distance from the action, but are still reasonably foreseeable. This term is synonymous with indirect impacts.

Interdisciplinary team (IDT) — A team composed of specialists in different disciplines. An interdisciplinary team is assembled because no single scientific discipline is sufficient to

adequately identify and resolve issues and problems. Team member interaction provides necessary insight to all stages of the assessment.

Intermittent stream — A stream which flows only at certain times of the year when it receives water from alluvial ground water, springs or from some surface source such as melting snow in mountainous areas.

Issue — An unresolved point of discussion, debate, or dispute about the environmental effects of the proposed action.

Irretrievable — Applies to the loss of production, harvest or use of natural resources. For example, some or all of the timber production from an area is lost irretrievably while an area is serving as a winter sports site. The production lost is irretrievable, but the action is not irreversible. If the use changes, it is possible to resume timber production.

Irreversible — Applies primarily to the use of nonrenewable resources, such as minerals or cultural resources, or to those factors that are renewable only over long time spans, such as soil productivity and aspen regeneration. Irreversible also includes loss of future options.

J

K

Key Observation Point (KOP) — Critical viewpoint that is usually along commonly traveled routes or at other likely observation overlooks.

Kilovolt (kV) — Measure of voltage carried by a power line or conductor. One kV is equal to 1000 volts.

L

Landform — Any physical, recognizable form or feature of the earth's surface, having a characteristic shape and produced by natural causes. Includes major features such as plains, plateaus, and mountains, and minor features such as hills, valleys, slopes, canyons, arroyos and alluvial fans.

Landscape character — The arrangement of a particular landscape as formed by the variety and intensity of the landscape features as defined as the four basic elements (form, line, color, and texture). These factors give the area a distinctive quality that distinguishes it from its immediate surroundings.

Line — The conductors placed between the poles on a distribution or transmission line. May be used as short hand to describe the complete power transporting poles and conductors on the poles.

Listed species — Any species which occurs on a state or Federal (as specified in context) threatened or endangered species list.

Lithic scatter — Is a surface scatter of cultural artifacts and debris that consists entirely of lithic (i.e., stone) tools and chipped stone debris. This is a common prehistoric site type that is contrasted to a cultural material scatter, which contains other or additional artifact types such as

pottery or bone artifacts, to a camp which contains habitation features, such as hearths, storage features or occupation features, or to other site types that contain different artifacts or features.

Load — The amount of electric power drawn at a specific time from an electric system or the total power drawn from the system.

Locus — Is a discrete place or physical location generally used in describing the qualities of a site. When the term is used in contrast to a site, it refers to a locality containing the traces of a brief, limited or transient cultural activity.

Long-term effects — Long-term effects are effects that would remain following completion of the project. As an example, the loss of vegetation from the development of an open pit would be a long-term effect if the pit were not reclaimed and vegetation not reestablished at the end of the project.

Losses — The general term applied to energy and power lost in the operation of an electric system. Losses occur principally as energy transformations from kilowatt-hours to waste heat in electrical conductors and apparatus.

M

Magnetic field — Field produced from the flow of current through conductors and increases in strength as the current increases. Magnetic field is measured in units of gauss (G) or tesla (T) (1 T equals 10,000 gauss). The field strength decreases as the distance from the source increases.

Management area — An area composed of aggregate pieces of land (generally several to many analysis areas) to which a given management objective and prescriptions are applied.

Management direction — A statement of multiple use and other goals and objectives along with the associated management prescriptions and standards and guidelines included in a forest plan to direct resource management.

Management indicator species (MIS) — An indicator species designated in the Carson National Forest Plan to represent other groups of species.

Milligauss — A measurement of electrical current (mg).

Mitigation — Measures designed to reduce or prevent undesirable effects. Mitigation can be used to avoid, minimize, reduce, eliminate, or rectify the impact of a management practice.

Mitigate — To lessen the severity of an impact to a resource.

N

National Forest Management Act (NFMA) — A law passed in 1976 that amends the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act and requires the preparation of forest plans.

National Register of Historic Places — A list (maintained by the National Park Service) of areas designated as being of historical significance. The register includes place of local and state significance as well as those of value to the Nation.

Neotropical migratory birds — Birds that breed north of, and winter south of, the Tropic of Cancer. However, from a biological perspective there are vast variations in migration between species and, for the most part, wildlife reports on migratory birds included species that migrate south of the United States for winter. Many of the common songbirds are neotropical migrants.

NEPA — The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 is the national charter for protection of the environment by Federal agencies. NEPA establishes policy and provides a process for carrying out the policy. Regulations at 40 CFR 1500-1508 implement the act.

Net present value — Total discounted revenue (referred to as "present value of revenues") less total discounted costs (referred to as "present value of costs"). This method is one of the better financial measures of an investment. The higher the net present value, the more desirable the investment from an economic standpoint. A negative net present value represents the fact that costs were higher than revenue and the investment may not seem desirable in an economic sense.

No Action Alternative — The most likely condition expected to exist in the future if current management direction would continue unchanged.

Nonspecular — Conductors used in distribution and transmission lines which do not reflect light sources. Nonspecular conductors are less visible from a distance.

Noxious weeds — An alien, introduced or exotic undesirable species that is aggressive and overly competitive with more desirable native species.

O

Overstory — The uppermost canopy (treetops) in a stand of trees.

P

Passerine — A taxonomic order that includes perching birds and songbirds.

Perennial — A plant whose life cycle lasts longer than 2 years. The tops of herbaceous perennials die down at the end of the growing season, buds, roots, and underground portions persist. Can also refer to a perennial stream, which has water flowing in it year-round.

Poles — Vertical shaft, wood or metal, and usually rounded used to hold fixtures to which conductors are attached.

Power line — A distribution or transmission line used to distribute electric power from the generation point.

Preferred alternative — The alternative(s) recommended for implementation based on the evaluation completed in the planning process.

Q

R

Range — Land producing native forage for animal consumption and lands that are revegetated naturally or artificially to provide forage cover that is managed like native vegetation, which are amenable to certain range management principles or practices.

Ranger District — Administrative subdivisions of the forest supervised by a district ranger who reports to the forest supervisor.

Raptor — A bird of prey with sharp talons and strongly curved beaks that preys on living animals (e.g., eagles, hawks, falcons, and owls). Their relatively large size makes them vulnerable to electrocution on power lines without devices designed to protect them.

Reclamation — The process of restoring disturbed areas using any of several methods: recontouring, spreading topsoil or growth medium, seeding, and planting, among others.

Record of Decision (ROD) — A document required by NEPA that is separate from, but associated with, an environmental impact statement. The ROD publicly and officially discloses the responsible official's decision on which alternative assessed in the EIS will be implemented.

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) — A system of measuring the land's ability to meet the expectations of recreation users. Six recreation categories, from primitive (natural) to urban (highly modified) describe the activities, settings and experiences an area offers. The following categories may be found in or near the analysis area:

> **Rural** — an area characterized by the sights and sounds of rural residential and agricultural land uses. The interaction between users is often moderate to high.
>
> **Roaded Natural** — a road corridor with a landscape that is characterized as natural or natural appearing. The road has moderate to high use.
>
> **Semiprimitive Motorized** — a natural area predominantly unmodified by man. There are opportunities for isolation from the sights and sounds of man, but occasional evidence of other area users.

Region 3 — A Forest Service organizational unit—the Southwestern Region—consisting of all national forests in New Mexico and Arizona, plus four national grasslands in Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico.

Reliability — Electric system reliability consists of two components—adequacy and security. Adequacy is the ability of the electric system to supply the total electrical demand and energy requirements of the customers at all times taking into account scheduled and unscheduled outages. Security is the ability of the electric system to withstand sudden disturbances such as electric short circuits or unanticipated loss of system facilities.

Right-of-way (ROW) — An accurately located strip of land with defined width, point of beginning, and point of ending. It is the area within which the user has authority to conduct

operations approved or granted by the landowner in an authorizing document, such as a permit, easement, lease, license or memorandum of understanding.

Riparian — Lands that are directly influenced by water. They usually have visible or physical characteristics showing water influence. Streamsides, lake borders, or marshes are typical riparian areas.

S

Scatter (archeological) — Random evidence of prior disturbance that is distributed about an area rather than concentrated in a single location.

Scoping — An early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed, and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action. Scoping is a requirement under the implementing regulations of NEPA (40 CFR 1501.7).

Sensitive species — Those species of plants or animals that have been recognized and listed by the Regional Forester as "sensitive" meaning that they may need special management to prevent their being placed on Federal or state lists.

Sensitivity Level — A particular degree or measure of viewer interest in the scenic qualities of the landscape.

> **Sensitivity Level l** — The highest sensitivity level, referring to areas seen from travel routes and use areas with moderate to high use.
>
> **Sensitivity Level 2** — An average sensitivity level, referring to areas seen from travel routes and use areas with low to moderate use.
>
> **Sensitivity Level 3** — The lowest sensitivity level, referring to areas seen from travel routes and use with low use.

Specular — Conductors used in distribution and transmission lines that reflect light sources. These are opposed to nonspecular conductors.

Substation — An electrical branch station where electric power from a transmission line is either boosted to continue on a transmission line or reduced in voltage and spread to several distribution lines.

T

Taos Field Office — A subdivision of the Bureau of Land Management managing resources in a large portion of northern New Mexico (once called Taos Resource Area).

Temporary road — An unspecified road needed for short-term use during the construction of a power line.

Terrestrial Ecosystem Survey (TES) — A systematic inventory based on the concept that within the landscape there are naturally occurring ecosystems with unique sets of properties. These terrestrial ecosystems form a continuum and can be recognized at different levels in classification systems. The soils component of the ecosystem is inventoried through the use of "Soil

Taxonomy," USDA Soil Conservation Service Handbook 436, and the "Terrestrial Ecosystem Vados and Phreatic Survey Procedure," a Forest Service handbook. The vegetation component of the ecosystem is inventoried through the use of the International Classification and Mapping of Vegetation, UNESCO, and the above-mentioned Forest Service handbook. The terrestrial ecosystem inventory is sometimes referred to as "soil survey."

Terrestrial Ecosystem Unit (TEU) — A TEU identifies one of numerous map units composing the Terrestrial Ecosystem Survey.

Threatened species — Those plant or animal species identified by the Secretary of Interior as threatened in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Tolerance, Soil Loss — The maximum rate of soil loss that can occur while sustaining inherent site productivity.

Two-track — An undesigned path created by forest users following the tracks of (road or off-road) vehicles of other forest users. A two-track may develop to 10 feet in width.

Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) — Land area used by Indian tribes or other groups for activities that are tied to their culture background. This may include plant collection and material collection areas.

Transformer — Electromagnetic device for changing the voltage of alternating current electricity.

Transmission line — Power line used to efficiently carry electric current long distances from a power generation source to a substation. These lines carry higher voltages. Some common transmissions lines in northern New Mexico are 69 kV, 115 kV and 345 kV lines. See *Distribution line.*

Tri-State/Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association — A public utility company that generates electrical power, purchases electrical power, and transmits the electrical power to member electrical cooperatives such as Kit Carson Electric Cooperative.

U

Underbuild/underbuilt — A wooden cross member placed on the same power pole to carry a distribution line below a transmission line.

Understory — The trees and other woody species growing under a more-or-less continuous cover of branches and foliage formed collectively by the upper portion of adjacent trees and other woody growth. May also refer to herbaceous vegetation under a stand of trees.

V

Variety class — A particular level of visual variety or diversity of landscape character. There are three variety classes: A, B and C.

Variety Class A — distinctive

Variety Class B — common

Variety Class C — minimal

Vegetation — All of the plants growing in and characterizing a specific area or region; the combination of different plant communities found there.

Visual resource — The composite of basic terrain, geologic features, water features, vegetation patterns, and land use effects that typify a land unit and influence the visual appeal the unit may have for viewers.

Visual Resource Management System — The BLM system for evaluating and classifying visual resources. The system uses line, form, color, texture, scale and space to categorize lands into one of four classes:

Class I — Preservation

Class II — Retention

Class III — Partial Retention

Class IV — Modification

Visual Quality Objectives (VQO) — Degree of acceptable alterations of the characteristic landscape based on users' expectations and visual perceptions.

Volt — The unit of electromotive force that will cause a current to flow in a conductor.

W

Wildlife — All undomesticated mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and insects living in a natural environment. Animals or their progeny that were once domesticated but escaped captivity and are running wild (i.e. feral animals) such as horses, burros and hogs are not considered wildlife.

X

Y

Z