

**SECTION 14.300 Scenic Travel Corridors (GMA & SMA)**

- A. Several state and federal highways, renowned as highly scenic travel and recreation corridors, traverse the National Scenic Area. These travelways parallel the Columbia River and several of its major tributaries. Among these well-known roads are the Historic Columbia River Highway and Interstate 84 (recently designated as one of the most scenic highways in America by Rand McNally).

The "Scenic Travel Corridors" program in the Management Plan acknowledges the importance of these travelways to the National Scenic Area. It provides measures to protect and enhance the scenic qualities of the landscapes within the foregrounds of these roads. Many of the standards included in this section require implementing actions from the state agencies charged with managing these scenic byways, in coordination with local governments.

- B. The Historic Columbia River Highway and Interstate 84 are designated as Scenic Travel Corridors. Development along these corridors shall be subject to the following standards:
1. For the purposes of implementing this section, the foreground of a Scenic Travel Corridor shall include those lands within one-quarter mile of the edge of pavement of the Scenic Travel Corridor roadway.
  2. All new buildings and alterations to existing buildings shall be set back at least 100 feet from the edge of pavement of the Scenic Travel Corridor roadway. A variance to this setback requirement may be granted pursuant to Chapter 6. All new parking lots and expansions of existing parking lots shall be set back at least 100 feet from the edge of pavement of the Scenic Travel Corridor roadway, to the maximum extent practicable.
  3. Additions to existing buildings or expansion of existing parking lots located within 100 feet of the edge of pavement of a Scenic Travel Corridor roadway shall comply with standard 2 of this subsection to the maximum extent practicable.
  4. All proposed vegetation management projects in public rights-of-way to provide or improve views shall include the following:
    - a. An evaluation of potential visual impacts of the proposed project as seen from any Key Viewing Area;
    - b. An inventory of any rare plants, special wildlife habitat, wetlands or riparian areas on the project site. If such resources are determined to be present, the project shall comply with applicable Management Plan guidelines to protect the resources.

5. When evaluating which locations to consider undergrounding of signal wires or powerlines, railroads and utility companies shall prioritize those areas specifically recommended as extreme or high priorities for undergrounding in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Corridor Visual Inventory, prepared in April, 1990.
  6. New production and/or development of mineral resources proposed within one-quarter mile of the edge of pavement of a Scenic Travel Corridor may be allowed upon a demonstration that full visual screening of the site from the Scenic Travel Corridor can be achieved by use of existing topographic features or existing vegetation designed to be retained through the planned duration of the proposed project. An exception to this may be granted if planting of new vegetation in the vicinity of the access road to the mining area would achieve full screening. If existing vegetation is partly or fully employed to achieve visual screening, over 75 percent of the tree canopy area shall be coniferous species providing adequate winter screening. Mining and associated primary processing of mineral resources is prohibited within 100 feet of a Scenic Travel Corridor, as measured from the edge of pavement, except for access roads. An interim time period to achieve compliance with full screening requirements shall be established prior to approval. The interim time period shall be based on site-specific topographic and visual conditions, but shall not exceed one year beyond the date of approval. Quarrying activity occurring prior to achieving compliance with full screening requirements shall be limited to activities necessary to provide such screening (creation of berms, etc.).
  7. Expansion of existing quarries may be allowed pursuant to Section 10.300(B)(2). Compliance with visual subordination requirements shall be achieved within timeframes specified in Section 10.300(B)(3). (GMA Only)
- C. In the SMA the following additional criteria shall to development within the immediate foregrounds of Key Viewing Areas. Immediate foregrounds are defined as within the developed prism of a road or trail KVA or within the boundary of the developed area.
1. The proposed development shall be designed and sited to meet the applicable scenic standard from the foreground of the subject KVA. If the development cannot meet the standard, findings must be made documenting why the project cannot meet the requirements in the previous section and why it cannot be redesigned or wholly or partly relocated to meet the scenic standard.
  2. Findings must evaluate the following:
    - a. The limiting factors to meeting the required scenic standard and/or applicable guidelines from the previous section,

- b. Reduction in project size;
  - c. Options for alternative sites for all or part of the project, considering parcel configuration and on-site topographic or vegetative screening;
  - d. Options for design changes including changing the design shape, configuration, color, height, or texture in order to meet the scenic standard.
3. Form, line, color, texture, and design of a proposed development shall be evaluated to ensure that the development blends with its setting as seen from the foreground of key viewing areas:
- a. Form and Line-Design of the development shall minimize changes to the form of the natural landscape. Development shall borrow form and line from the landscape setting and blend with the form and line of the landscape setting. Design of the development shall avoid contrasting form and line that unnecessarily call attention to the development.
  - b. Color-Color shall be found in the project's surrounding landscape setting. Colors shall be chosen and repeated as needed to provide unity to the whole design.
  - c. Texture-Textures borrowed from the landscape setting shall be emphasized in the design of structures. Landscape textures are generally rough, irregular, and complex rather than smooth, regular, and uniform.
  - d. Design-Design solutions shall be compatible with the natural scenic quality of the Gorge. Building materials shall be natural or natural appearing. Building materials such as concrete, steel, aluminum, or plastic shall use form, line color and texture to harmonize with the natural environment. Design shall balance all design elements into a harmonious whole, using repetition of elements and blending of elements as necessary.
4. Screening from key viewing areas shall be encouraged for existing and required for new road maintenance, warehouse, and stockpile areas.

