

EXHIBIT R – Application for Site Certificate

SCENIC RESOURCES

OAR 3450021-0010(l)(r)

REVIEWER CHECKLIST

(r) Exhibit R. An analysis of significant potential impacts of the proposed facility, if any, on scenic resources identified as significant or important in local land use plans, tribal land management plans and federal land management plans for any lands located within the analysis area, providing evidence to support a finding by the Council as required by OAR 345-022-0080, including:

Rule Sections	Section	✓
(A) A list of the local, tribal and federal plans that address lands within the analysis area.	R.3	
(B) Identification and description of the scenic resources identified as significant or important in the plans listed in (A), including a copy of the portion of the management plan that identifies the resource as significant or important.	R.4	
(C) A description of significant potential adverse impacts to the scenic resources identified in (B), including, but not limited to, impacts such as: (i) Loss of vegetation or alteration of the landscape as a result of construction or operation; and (ii) Visual impacts of facility structures or plumes.	R.5	
(D) The measures the applicant proposes to avoid, reduce or otherwise mitigate any significant adverse impacts.	R.6	
(E) A map or maps showing the location of the scenic resources described under (B).	R.7	
(F) The applicant's proposed monitoring program, if any, for impacts to scenic resources.	NA	

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R.1 INTRODUCTION

Obsidian Solar Center LLC (Applicant) proposes to construct the Obsidian Solar Center (Facility) in Lake County, Oregon, with an alternating current generating capacity of up to 400 megawatts. Please refer to Exhibit B for Facility layout information and Exhibit C for Facility location information.

Exhibit R addresses the potential impacts of the proposed Facility on scenic resources within the analysis area, which the Project Order defines as the area within the site boundary and 10 miles from the site boundary. This exhibit provides the information required by Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) 345-021-0010(1)(r): *An analysis of significant potential impacts of the proposed facility, if any, on scenic resources identified as significant or important in local land use plans, tribal land management plans and federal land management plans for any lands located within the analysis area, providing evidence to support a finding by the Council as required by OAR 345-022-0080.*

As described in Exhibit B, this Application for Site Certificate analyzes the potential impacts from two design scenarios: a stand-alone photovoltaic (PV) solar power generation build-out, and a PV solar power generation plus battery storage build-out. This exhibit analyzes the PV plus storage design scenario, which will likely have a greater potential impact on significant or important scenic resources than stand-alone PV due to the larger footprint and inclusion of battery storage enclosures.

Executive Summary

The analysis provided in this exhibit describes how the design, construction, and operation of the Facility, taking into account mitigation, are not likely to result in significant adverse impacts on significant or important scenic resources. Three significant or important scenic resources were identified within the analysis area: Table Rock Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), Christmas Valley National Backcountry Byway, and Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway.

The potential impacts on significant or important scenic resources within the analysis area are expected to be less than significant.

Applicant does not propose any specific conditions of approval pertaining to scenic resources for the Site Certificate.

R.2 SITE CONTEXT AND ANALYSIS METHDOLOLOGY

R.2.1 Site Context

The Facility site is located in the Christmas Valley in northern Lake County, in an area that the county has designated for grazing and other agricultural land uses. Farm residences and associated farm and agricultural structures are sparse in the valley, but are not uncommon in the vicinity of the Facility site. Three large collocated 500-kilovolt (kV) transmission lines constructed with steel lattice towers approximately 90 feet tall bisect the valley, including the proposed site boundary, in a north-south orientation. The community of Christmas Valley, located approximately 5 miles east of the Facility site, is the largest developed part of the valley, with approximately 1,000 inhabitants. Open sagebrush rangeland (primarily sagebrush shrubland) makes up a substantial portion of the valley, often in the interstitial spaces between crop circles, but also in some larger parcels between the agricultural parcels, and along the edges of the valley before the vegetation transitions to juniper woodland in the surrounding hills.

R.2.2 Analysis Methodology

The methodology used to identify the significant or important scenic resources and determine the potential level of impacts on these resources included the following steps:

1. Identify the analysis area: the Project Order defines the analysis area as the area within the site boundary and 10 miles from the site boundary (Figure R-1).
2. Review applicable plans: applicable local, state, tribal, and federal land use management plans were reviewed as defined in OAR 345-021-0010(1)(r)(A). Section R.3 identifies the applicable plans.
3. Conduct a site visit and take photographs: photographs were taken from representative locations to depict and estimate views that the casual observer might experience from potential significant important or scenic resources. Photographs from the site visit are included in Appendix R-1.
4. Identify significant or important scenic resources: significant or important scenic resources within the analysis area were identified based on the information within the applicable plans identified (Table R-1).
5. Conduct a viewshed analysis: a viewshed analysis was conducted for the Facility site and the 10-mile analysis area to determine the potential visibility of the Facility components most likely to be visible to casual observers viewing the identified significant or important scenic resources. The viewshed analysis was conducted to determine if 7-foot-tall (or taller) solar modules and 30-foot-tall (or taller) battery storage enclosures will be in the line-of-sight of the identified significant or important scenic resources. The viewshed analysis was based only on terrain and did not take

into account features such as trees and structures in the lines-of-sight that may screen views.

6. Follow standard visual impacts assessment methods: standard definitions for visual impact levels (i.e., low, medium, and high) were used to assess potential adverse impacts on significant or important scenic resources. Impact levels are described in Section R.2.3.

R.2.2.3 Visual Impact Levels

For this exhibit, Applicant defined visual impact levels to assess potential adverse impacts on significant or important scenic resources as follows:

High Impacts: Typically occur where the Facility components will be dominant or readily apparent from a viewing location frequented by casual users of the resource (i.e., an observer who is not tasked with or trained in observing changes in the landscape; a common citizen). High impacts also may occur in high-quality, diverse, and rare or unique and natural landscapes.

Medium Impacts: Occur where the Facility components will be co-dominant with existing landscape features and moderately apparent from viewing locations frequented by the casual observer. An example of a medium impact will be one in which existing nearby features exhibit form, line, color, and texture similar to the Facility.

Low Impacts: Occur where the Facility components will be subordinate in the landscape and not readily apparent from viewing locations frequented by the casual observer. The subordinate appearance of the Facility may be due to other nearby features appearing more dominant or to the Facility features resulting in weak contrast and blending in with their surroundings or being largely or fully screened from view. Low impacts on scenery will typically result in minimal change to the landscape character.

Medium-high and medium-low impacts are intermediary between the respective impact levels described above.

R.3 APPLICABLE LOCAL, STATE, TRIBAL, AND FEDERAL PLANS

OAR 345-021-0010(1)(r)(A) *A list of the local, tribal and federal plans that address lands within the analysis area.*

Response: Table R-1 lists the applicable local, state, and federal land use and land management plans that address lands within the analysis area. There are no tribal plans that identify scenic resources within the analysis area. In addition, there are no tribal lands within the analysis area (USGS 2003).

Table R-1 Local, State, Tribal, and Federal Land Use Management Plans that Address Lands within the Analysis Area

Jurisdiction	Plan Title^(a)
Local	
Lake County, Oregon	<i>Lake County Comprehensive Plan</i> (Lake County Planning Commission 1980)
State	
Oregon Department of Transportation	<i>1999 Oregon Highway Plan: Including Amendments November 1999 through May 2015 (ODOT 1999)</i>
Federal	
Bureau of Land Management, Lakeview Resource Management Area	<i>Lakeview Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision</i> (BLM 2003)
Bureau of Land Management	<i>Areas of Critical Environmental Concern Nomination Analysis Report for the Lakeview Resource Area Resource Management Plan</i> (BLM 2000) ^(b)
Bureau of Land Management	<i>BLM Handbook 8357-1 Byways</i> (BLM 1993)

Notes:

(a) Refer to Section R.9 for source citations.

(b) Although this is a report and not necessarily a “plan,” this report informed the Bureau of Land Management Lakeview Resource Management Plan and therefore has been included in this table.

R.4 SCENIC RESOURCES IDENTIFIED AS SIGNIFICANT OR IMPORTANT

OAR 345-021-0010(1)(r)(B) *Identification and description of the scenic resources identified as significant or important in the plans listed in (A), including a copy of the portion of the management plan that identifies the resource as significant or important.*

Response: The following sections describe the significant or important scenic resources that were identified in the plans listed in Table R-1. Copies of the portions of the management plans that identify the resources are included in Appendix R-2.

R.4.1 Local Land Use Plans

Lake County Comprehensive Plan

The Facility will be located entirely within Lake County. Land use planning in the county is guided by the *Lake County Comprehensive Plan* (Lake County Planning Commission 1980, as

amended), and conservation of scenic resources is referenced in this plan. Specifically, Section V.B.4 states the following:

V. Open Space, Scenic and Historic Areas and Natural Resources

A. State Planning Goal

To conserve open space and protect natural, cultural, historical and scenic resources

B. Plan Policies:

- 4. That the following concerns will be taken into account in protecting area visual attractiveness:*
 - a. Maintaining vegetation cover whenever practical.*
 - b. Using vegetation or other site obscuring methods of screening unsightly uses.*
 - c. Minimizing the number and size of signs.*
 - d. Siting developments to be compatible with the surrounding area uses and to recognize the natural characteristics of the location.*

However, this plan does not identify any specific scenic resources as being either significant or important, and, consequently, there are no significant or important resources identified by the plan that are evaluated further in this exhibit.

R.4.2 State Land Management Plans

1999 Oregon Highway Plan, Including Amendments November 1999 through May 2015

The *1999 Oregon Highway Plan, Including Amendments November 1999 through May 2015* identifies State Route (SR) 31 as a scenic byway—the Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway—part of the National Scenic Byways Program established under the Federal Highway Administration in 1991(ODOT 1999). This plan describes scenic byways as federal, state, or local roads that have “exceptional” scenic value. The Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway consists of the entire length of SR 31, with an additional 7-mile-long segment on Fort Rock Road (County Road 5-10) connecting to the Fort Rock State Natural Area. Based on this description, views from the Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway are evaluated as a significant or important scenic resource in this exhibit. The portion of the Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway within the analysis area is a 4.6-mile segment to the northwest of the Facility site boundary (Figure R-1).

R.4.3 Federal Land Management Plans

Lakeview Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision

The *Lakeview Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Record of Decision* identify Table Rock ACEC/Research Natural Area (RNA) as a resource within the Lakeview RMP planning area (BLM 2003). The BLM’s *Areas of Critical Environmental Concern Nomination Analysis Report for the Lakeview Resource Area, Resource Management Plan* indicates that the Table

Rock ACEC/RNA was designated due to its cultural, botanical, and scenic values (BLM 2000). Table Rock is a prominent feature that is visible from the adjacent portions of the Christmas Valley National Backcountry Byway and the Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway (i.e., the portions of these byways that pass to the southeast and south of the Facility, respectively; refer to Figure R-1). The RMP does not state that Table Rock is an important or significant scenic resource, but the ACEC Nomination Analysis Report (BLM 2000) does indicate that Table Rock (i.e., the physical summit within the ACEC/RNA) has important scenic value based on views of this landscape feature from the adjacent byways. For this reason, the views toward Table Rock ACEC/RNA from the adjacent portions of the byways are evaluated as significant or important scenic resources or a resource having important or significant scenic value in this exhibit.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern Nomination Analysis Report for the Lakeview Resource Area Resource Management Plan

The *Areas of Critical Environmental Concern Nomination Analysis Report for the Lakeview Resource Area Resource Management Plan* identifies Table Rock as a proposed ACEC due to its cultural, botanical, and scenic values (BLM 2000). This report indicates that Table Rock possesses regionally important scenic value due to its location and visibility adjacent to the Christmas Valley National Backcountry Byway and the Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway. Therefore, the views toward this resource from the adjacent portions of the byways are evaluated in this exhibit as having important or significant scenic value.

BLM Handbook 8357-1 Byways

BLM Handbook 8357-1 Byways describes national scenic byways and BLM backcountry byways as roads through corridors that contain either outstanding scenic vistas or other unusual elements which merit recognition on a national level (BLM 1993). Based on this description, the views from the Christmas Valley National Backcountry Byway and the Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway are evaluated in this exhibit as significant or important scenic resources, or as resources having important or significant scenic value.

The subsections below describe each of the significant or important scenic resources that were identified in the plans listed in Table R-1.

R.4.4 Significant or Important Scenic Resources Identified within the Analysis Area

R.4.4.1 Table Rock Area of Critical Environmental Concern

Table Rock is a dominant feature that is visible from byways in the area and is located approximately 6.82 miles south of the Facility site boundary (Figure R-1). The BLM (2000) designated Table Rock as an ACEC due to its cultural, botanical, and scenic values. This ACEC includes old growth western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*) and two BLM-designated sensitive plant species, and may qualify as a Traditional Cultural Place (BLM 2000).

Elevation increases approximately 1,500 feet from the Facility to the summit of Table Rock. Per the BLM (2000), Table Rock possesses regional important scenic value due to its location and visibility adjacent to the Christmas Valley National Backcountry Byway and the Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway. Adjacent portions are defined as the portions of the byways that, when driving toward Table Rock, the line-of-sight through the windshield is facing directly toward Table Rock. For these reasons, Applicant determined that the views toward this ACEC, specifically toward the summit of Table Rock, from the adjacent portions of the byways should be analyzed as a significant or important scenic resource. There is no indication that views *from* Table Rock have significant or important scenic value based on review of the plans listed in Table R-1. Therefore, views from Table Rock are not analyzed in this exhibit.

R.4.4.2 Christmas Valley National Backcountry Byway

The Christmas Valley National Backcountry Byway is located on secondary paved roads and backcountry unpaved county roads in the Christmas Valley area to the north, east, and southeast of the site boundary within the analysis area (Figure R-1). The nearest portion of this byway to the site boundary is on County Road 5-12, located approximately 2.3 miles north of the site boundary. The BLM designates selected routes that traverse scenic corridors as backcountry byways (BLM 2003). BLM Backcountry Byways offer “off the beaten path” routes of the BLM’s public lands (BLM n.d.). The *BLM Handbook 8357-1 Byways* describes national scenic byways as roads through corridors that contain either outstanding scenic vistas or other unusual elements that merit recognition on the national level (BLM 1993).

Although this byway passes through portions of the Christmas Valley that have been converted to agricultural uses, some of its segments pass by the natural landscapes that surround the Christmas Valley and bring drivers past a number of unique, educational, scenic, or recreational sites that are highlighted by the BLM as points of interest (BLM 2003). These primarily include sites that are located in the hills along the perimeter of the Christmas Valley or just over the hills, away from the agricultural areas.

Beginning in the northwestern portion of the valley, near the community of Fort Rock, and driving clockwise around the valley in the analysis area, this backcountry byway brings drivers past points of interest such as the Fort Rock State Natural Area, Devil’s Garden Lava Bed, Derrick Cave, and Squaw Ridge Lava Bed. Continuing clockwise, the byway heads south and brings drivers past additional points of interest: Green Mountain Campground and Fire Lookout Tower, Four Craters Lava Bed, Crack in the Ground, and Black Hills ACEC. The byway eventually continues west toward Table Rock, but this portion of the byway is outside of the analysis area. Many of these sites have unique geological or biological values and are designated by the BLM as ACECs or Wilderness Study Areas. In summary, Applicant determined that the views from this byway toward the non-agricultural, natural landscapes that

surround the Christmas Valley and toward the highlighted points of interest along the route should be analyzed as an important scenic resource.

R.4.4.3 Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway

The Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway consists of 170 miles of state highways (including nearby SR 31) and several secondary paved roads in Deschutes and Lake Counties. One segment of this scenic byway occurs in the analysis area: a 1.8-mile-long section of Fort Rock Road (County Road 5-10) that connects SR 31 through the community of Fort Rock and to the entrance to Fort Rock State Natural Area, the nearest point of which is located 8.3 miles northwest of the Facility site boundary (Figure R-1). Scenic byways are generally designated as such for having special or exceptional scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archaeological, or natural qualities (ODOT 1999). National Scenic Byways are part of America's Byways, which include National Scenic Byways and All-American Roads (Jensen 2013). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's *National Scenic Byway Guide* states "America's Byways are a distinctive collection of American roads that possess special intrinsic qualities, tell a story and provide the traveler a unique experience" (USFWS 2005). National Scenic Byways possess at least one of six intrinsic qualities: archaeological, scenic, natural, cultural, recreation, and historic. As its name suggests, the Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway is compared to the Australian outback due to the ruggedness, wide open spaces, and expansive views that are characteristic of this part of Oregon. The scenic byway segment in the analysis area passes through an area that is primarily characterized by the natural landscapes that this byway is known for, with relatively little actively cultivated land. For these reasons, Applicant has determined that the views from this byway within the analysis area should be analyzed as an important scenic resource.

R.5 SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON SCENIC RESOURCES

The Table Rock ACEC/RNA is addressed in the Lakeview RMP (BLM 2003) and the associated *Areas of Critical Environmental Concern Nomination Analysis Report for the Lakeview Resource Area, Resource Management Plan* (BLM 2000). Based on the ACEC Nomination Analysis Report, views from the portions of the Christmas Valley National Backcountry Byway and the Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway that are adjacent to the Table Rock ACEC, looking toward Table Rock, are the primary factor for the designation of Table Rock ACEC/RNA as a significant or important scenic resource, or as having significant or important scenic value. Due to the location and distance of the Facility (9 miles to the north), it will not be visible when viewing the Table Rock ACEC/RNA from the adjacent portions of the byways (Figure R-1). Therefore, because the BLM places the scenic value of the Table Rock ACEC on the views of Table Rock itself from the adjacent portions of the byways, visual impacts of the Facility will not be significant, including potential impacts from vegetation loss, alteration of the landscape, or Facility components and plumes. The viewshed

analysis (Figure R-2) indicates that Facility components are in the line-of-sight of areas in the northern and eastern portions of Table Rock ACEC/RNA. However, even if the views of Table Rock from other locations (or views from Table Rock) were considered to have important scenic value, at over 9 miles away, the Facility components would likely not be very apparent, and at most, would be only a co-dominant feature on the landscape.

Therefore, Table Rock ACEC is not further analyzed in this exhibit.

The Christmas Valley National Backcountry Byway and the Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway are analyzed further in the subsections below.

OAR 345-021-0010(1)(r)(C) *A description of significant potential adverse impacts to the scenic resources identified in (B), including, but not limited to, impacts such as:*

- (i) *Loss of vegetation or alteration of the landscape as a result of construction or operation; and*

R.5.1 Loss of Vegetation

The majority of the land within the site boundary consists of sagebrush shrubland (approximately 94 percent), with smaller amounts of sand dune (approximately 4.4 percent) and playa (approximately 0.4 percent; refer to Figure P-3 in Exhibit P). Prior to other construction activities, on-site vegetation will be removed to a few inches above ground level, but root structures will be left intact. However, Facility construction will result in the conversion of the existing vegetation on site, which consists primarily of sagebrush shrubland dominated by big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) and two species of rabbitbrush (*Ericamaria nauseosa* and *Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus*), based on field surveys conducted in late March 2018. The shrub vegetation in most portions of the Facility site is co-dominated by big sagebrush and one or both of the rabbitbrush species, which both range in height from 1 to 6 feet tall, averaging 3 to 4 feet tall in most areas within the Facility site boundary. Following construction, this vegetation will be allowed to reestablish but will be maintained at a height just below the solar panel modules, which will be 4 feet above the ground at their lowest points. Sagebrush and rabbitbrush are similar in stature and color and look similar when viewed from a distance.

Segments of the Christmas Valley National Backcountry Byway are located (at its closest point in the applicable directions from the Facility) approximately 2.3 miles to the north, 6.2 miles to the east, and 7.4 miles to the southeast of the site boundary in the analysis area. The closest and most likely viewing location toward the Facility site from this byway is from the portion of the byway located north of the Facility site, which offers views toward the Facility for drivers traveling south; however, the views will mostly not be head-on (i.e., the views will be off to one side through the windshield), and the three existing 500-kV transmission lines

with lattice steel towers will be situated in the foreground in views toward the Facility site (refer to Photos #1 and #2 in Appendix R-1). The closest portion of the byway to the east traverses mature juniper woodlands, and views toward the Facility site are typically screened by tall junipers (15 to 25 feet tall). The closest portion of the byway to the southeast is in the community of Christmas Valley, where developments are in the foreground of most views toward the Facility site. The areas surrounding the Facility primarily include agricultural lands, including crop circles, and disturbed farm yards, as well as scattered farm residences and barns. As described in Section R.4.4.2, this byway passes by natural high desert landscapes with junipers and other native vegetation. The most likely viewing directions from the byways are toward the natural landscapes, not toward the agricultural areas near the Facility site. Due to its proposed location, the Facility will not substantially obstruct views of the natural landscapes along the byway. Therefore, potential impacts from loss of vegetation at the Facility site will not cause significant adverse impacts on the views from this byway.

The portion of the Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway within the analysis area is a 1.8-mile-long segment that is oriented east to west, and at its eastern end terminates in the community of Fort Rock. This byway segment is located 8.3 miles to the northwest of the closest portion of the Facility site—Facility Area D—which will house the 115/500-kV step-up substation. Facility Area A, which is larger and will house the solar arrays, is over 10 miles east of this segment of the byway. Refer to Figure R-1 for the locations of Facility areas within the site boundary. At these distances, loss of vegetation on the Facility site (primarily sagebrush shrubs 7 feet or smaller) is unlikely to be apparent (refer to Photos #3 and #4 in Appendix R-1). In addition, from the portion of the byway on the west side of the community of Fort Rock, and looking east in the direction of the Facility site, the developments in the community of Fort Rock will be situated in the foreground of the view. Therefore, potential impacts from loss of vegetation at the Facility site will not cause significant adverse impacts on the views from this byway.

R.5.2 Alteration of Landscape

Construction of the Facility will not alter the existing landscape in a way that will cause significant adverse visual impacts on significant or important scenic resources in the analysis area. The portions of the Facility that are most likely to be visible and noticed from the identified scenic resources are the solar PV modules and the battery storage enclosures. These Facility structures will result in some alteration of the existing landscape in the immediate vicinity of the Facility; however, as described further below, these alterations will not cause significant adverse impacts on the Christmas Valley National Backcountry Byway or the Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway.

Although the proposed Facility site boundary is large (3,921 acres) compared to other developments in the Christmas Valley, most components of the Facility will have relatively

low profiles. The most common Facility component, by far, will be the rows of solar PV modules, which will be 7 feet tall at full axis tilt. This height is 1 foot taller than some of the native sagebrush shrub vegetation in the area, which was observed during 2018 field habitat surveys to be up to 6 feet tall in many areas on and near the Facility site (refer to Exhibit P, Appendix P-1). The potential incorporation of up to 134 battery storage enclosures throughout the Facility would add new forms to the surrounding mostly flat terrain and low vegetation, but each enclosure would be designed to minimize impacts on the landscape by incorporating one or the following measures: painting with low contrast earth-tone colors or using steel and a brown rusty patina as the siding material. Designing the battery enclosures to match the landscape (e.g., by painting with low contrast earth tones or one of the other aforementioned measures) would substantially lessen the visibility of the enclosures, especially from distances of several miles or more.

According to a detailed study of transmission line visibility (Sullivan and Meyer 2014), 500-kV lattice towers may be noticeable to casual observers at distances up to about 10 miles and tend to strongly attract attention up to about 3 miles, whereas 230-kV H-frame towers tend to be noticeable up to about 3.50 miles and strongly attract attention up to about 1.50 miles. Based on this information, it is unlikely that the 115-kV transmission line will attract the attention of casual observers away from any of the important scenic resources. In addition, the proposed 115-kV transmission line (approximately 70 feet tall steel monopoles), if noticeable from any portions of the scenic resources, will be subordinate in appearance compared to the existing 500-kV transmission lines (approximately 90-foot-tall steel lattice towers).

The Christmas Valley National Backcountry Byway is located (at its closest point in the applicable directions from the Facility) approximately 2.3 miles north of Facility Area A, which is also the most likely viewing location toward the Facility site from the byway, as it offers views toward the Facility to drivers traveling south. Viewed from an elevation similar to that of the Facility and from distances of at least 2.3 miles or more, the PV modules are likely to appear only as a dark line on the horizon to the casual observer. Also, the three existing 500-kV transmission lines with lattice steel towers will be situated in the foreground of views toward the Facility site (refer to Photos #1 and #2 in Appendix R-1). Although the areas surrounding the Facility primarily include agricultural lands and scattered farm residences and barns, the existing views toward the Facility from this portion of the byway already include an industrial element due to the presence of the 500-kV transmission lines. In addition, as described above, drivers on this portion of the byway are more likely to seek the views toward the natural landscapes that surround valley, and not toward the agricultural areas near the Facility site. Due to its proposed location, the Facility will not substantially obstruct views of the natural landscapes along this byway. The potential impacts on the views from this portion of the byway due to alteration of the landscape will be medium-low. With implementation of mitigation measures to reduce visual impacts (refer to Section R.6 for measures), including constructing the battery enclosures to match the landscape (e.g., by

painting with low contrast earth tones), the impacts from alteration of the landscape on the views from this portion of the byway, or from more distant portions of the byway, will be reduced to low. Potential impacts on the views from this byway from alteration of landscape at the Facility site will not rise to the level of significant.

The portion of the Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway within the analysis area is a 1.8-mile-long segment of Fort Rock Road (County Road 5-10) that connects SR 31 through the community of Fort Rock. This portion of the byway is oriented east to west, with its eastern terminus lying in the community of Fort Rock. This byway segment is located 8.3 miles to the northwest of the closest portion of the Facility site—Facility Area D, which will house the main substation. Facility Area A, which is larger and will house the solar arrays, is over 10 miles east of this segment of the byway. At these distances, alteration of the landscape at the Facility site is unlikely to be apparent (refer to Photos #3 and #4 in Appendix R-1). Based on the viewshed analysis (Figure R-2), the Facility will only be in the direct line-of-sight from a few very small segments of this byway. In addition, from the portions of the byway west of the community of Fort Rock, views facing in the direction of the Facility site (east), will be dominated by the developments in the community of Fort Rock. Therefore, potential impacts on the views from this byway from alteration of the landscape at the Facility site will be low or negligible, and will not rise to the level of significant.

(ii) Visual impacts of facility structures or plumes.

R.5.3 Visual Impacts of Facility Structures or Plumes

The dimensions of major Facility components, including expected heights, are as follows:

- Up to 1.7 million solar PV modules, each reaching 7 feet above the ground when at full tilt on the tracking axes. Modules will be installed in 250-foot-long rows.
- Up to 180 inverters, 8 feet wide by 30 feet long by 5 feet tall;
- One 115/500-kV step-up substation about 3 acres in size in Area D, and up to four collector substations, each up to 1 acre in size in Area A. The step-up and collector substations will be approximately 10 feet tall, although rods for lightning protection may be up to 40 feet tall.
- Up to 134 battery storage enclosures, depending on final design, consisting of steel-framed structures that are 50 feet wide by 67 feet long, and up to 30 feet tall.
- One 115-kV generation-tie transmission line, up to 2 miles long and utilizing 70-foot-tall steel monopoles spaced approximately 300 feet apart.

Although the proposed Facility site boundary is large (3,921 acres) compared to other developments in the Christmas Valley, most components of the Facility will have relatively low profiles. Based on the planned footprints and heights of the Facility components, and the distances of the identified scenic resources from the Facility (i.e., 2.3 mile, or more), the up to

7-foot-tall solar PV modules and the 30-foot-tall battery storage structures are most likely to be visible and noticed from the identified scenic resources. Substation, collector substations, and operations and maintenance buildings will only be present in small numbers (one to four each). The proposed 115-kV transmission line will be subordinate in appearance to the three existing collocated 500-kV-transmission lines that bisect the valley in the vicinity of the proposed Facility.

Potential visual impacts from Facility plumes would result primarily from fugitive dust during the construction phase. Applicant will implement dust abatement measures (see Section R.6) designed specifically to reduce potential dust during construction. After construction, vegetation on the Facility site will be allowed to reestablish through natural re-growth and, where necessary, re-seeding. Vegetation will be maintained periodically to keep it below the bottom portions of the solar modules (i.e., 4 feet tall or lower). With the presence of vegetation on site, the potential for fugitive dust will be low.

Applicant's visual analysis considered all Facility components and used the impact levels defined in Section R.2.3. A viewshed analysis (Figure R-2) was completed to determine if the Facility will be in the line-of-sight of, and therefore potentially be visible from, the identified significant or important scenic resources. Figure R-2 depicts two overlaid viewshed analyses: one that shows areas from which the 7-foot-tall solar PV modules (and any taller structures) may be in the line-of-sight, and one that shows areas from which only 30-foot-tall battery storage enclosures (or any taller structures) may be in the line-of-sight. The viewshed analysis was based only on terrain and did not take into account local features such as trees and structures that may screen views. Therefore, line-of-sight determinations (i.e., the viewshed analysis) are likely to be slightly less than indicated in Figure R-2.

Christmas Valley National Backcountry Byway

As described in Section R.5, the most likely viewing location toward the Facility site from this byway is from the portion located 2.3 miles north of the Facility site, which offers views toward the Facility to drivers traveling south. However, the views will mostly not be head-on (i.e., the views will be off to one side through the windshield), and the three existing 500-kV transmission lines with lattice steel towers will be situated in the foreground in any views toward the Facility site (refer to Photos #1 and #2 in Appendix R-1). Also, based on the viewshed analysis (Figure R-2), the Facility will be in the line-of-sight of only some portions of this byway that are to the north of the Facility site. The portions of the byway to the east (about 6.0 miles) traverse mature juniper woodlands, and views toward the Facility site are typically screened by tall junipers (15 to 25 feet tall). The closest portion of the byway to the southeast (about 7.4 miles) is in the community of Christmas Valley, where developments are in the foreground of the views toward the Facility site, and Facility components are unlikely to be very apparent.

When viewed from the closest portion of this byway, 2.3 miles to the north, the Facility's PV modules will likely only appear as a dark line near the horizon. The battery storage enclosures may appear to be silhouetted against the skyline at a distance of 2.3 miles, and their rectilinear forms could contrast somewhat with the surrounding landscape. From the more distant parts of this byway, these Facility components will be even less apparent. For these reasons, the visual impacts on the views from this byway will be medium-low, without implementation of mitigation measures. However, with implementation of mitigation measures to reduce visual impacts (refer to Section R.6), including designing battery enclosures to match the landscape (e.g., by painting with low contrast earth tones), and controlling dust during construction, the potential impacts will be reduced to a level of low. In addition, the most likely viewing directions from this byway are toward the natural landscapes along this route, not toward the agricultural areas and the Facility site. Due to its proposed location (Figure R-1), the Facility will not substantially affect views of the natural landscapes along this byway. Therefore, potential impacts on the views from this byway from Facility structures or plumes will not rise to the level of significant.

Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway

The portion of the Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway that is located within the analysis area is an approximately 1.8-mile segment of Fort Rock Road (County Road 5-10) that connects SR 31 through the community of Fort Rock and is oriented east to west.

Based on the viewshed analysis (Figure R-2), the Facility will only be in the line-of-sight portions of the byway in the analysis area, near the community of Fort Rock. However, this byway segment is located 8.3 miles to the northwest of the closest portion of the Facility site—Facility Area D, which will house the main substation. Facility Area A, which is larger and will house the solar arrays, is over 10 miles east of this segment of the byway. At these distances, alteration of the landscape at the Facility site should not be apparent (refer to Photos #3 and #4 in Appendix R-1). In addition, from the portions of the byway west of the community of Fort Rock, views facing in the direction of the Facility site (east) will be dominated by the developments in the community of Fort Rock. Therefore, potential visual impacts on the views from this byway from Facility structures or plumes will be low or negligible and will not rise to the level of significant.

R.6 PROPOSED AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, OR MITIGATION MEASURES

OAD 345-021-0010(1)(r)(D) *The measures the applicant proposes to avoid, reduce or otherwise mitigate any significant adverse impacts.*

Response: Although no significant adverse impacts on significant or important scenic resources in the analysis area have been identified, Applicant will incorporate measures into the Facility design to minimize general visual effects resulting from the Facility.

- Use earth-tone colors on battery storage enclosures and other buildings. To minimize contrast of light-colored exterior surfaces of battery storage enclosures and other buildings and help blend these structures with their surroundings, Applicant proposes to incorporate one or more of the following measures into the Facility design:
 1. Paint enclosure exteriors with low contrast earth-tone colors to match or complement the predominant colors of surrounding vegetation and dark material surfaces; and/or
 2. Use steel for the enclosure siding that produces a brown rusty patina when weathered.
- Minimize effects of introduced lighting. To minimize the effects of introducing a new source of light into the surrounding landscape, any lighting installed within the Facility will be shielded and directed downward and will be the minimum necessary for construction, operation, safety, and security. Lighting for operation, safety, and security will be on-demand or motion-activated and/or use timers to minimize light exposure.
- Fugitive Dust Control. To reduce or avoid fugitive dust during construction, Applicant proposes to apply water to disturbed areas, enforce project speed limits, leave vegetation root structures in place during vegetation mowing, and avoid work during high wind conditions. During operation, access roads will be graveled and maintained to minimize dust as needed.

R.7 MAP OF SCENIC RESOURCES

OAR 345-021-0010(1)(r)(E) *A map or maps showing the location of the scenic resources described under (B).*

Response: Figure R-1 shows the location of the Facility in relation to the three identified significant or important scenic resources described under (B) (in Section R.4) identified within the analysis area. Figure R-2 depicts the viewshed analysis conducted to assist in determining potential visual impacts on significant or important scenic resources.

R.8 MONITORING OF SCENIC RESOURCES

OAR 345-021-0010(1)(r)(F) *The applicant's proposed monitoring program, if any, for impacts to scenic resources.*

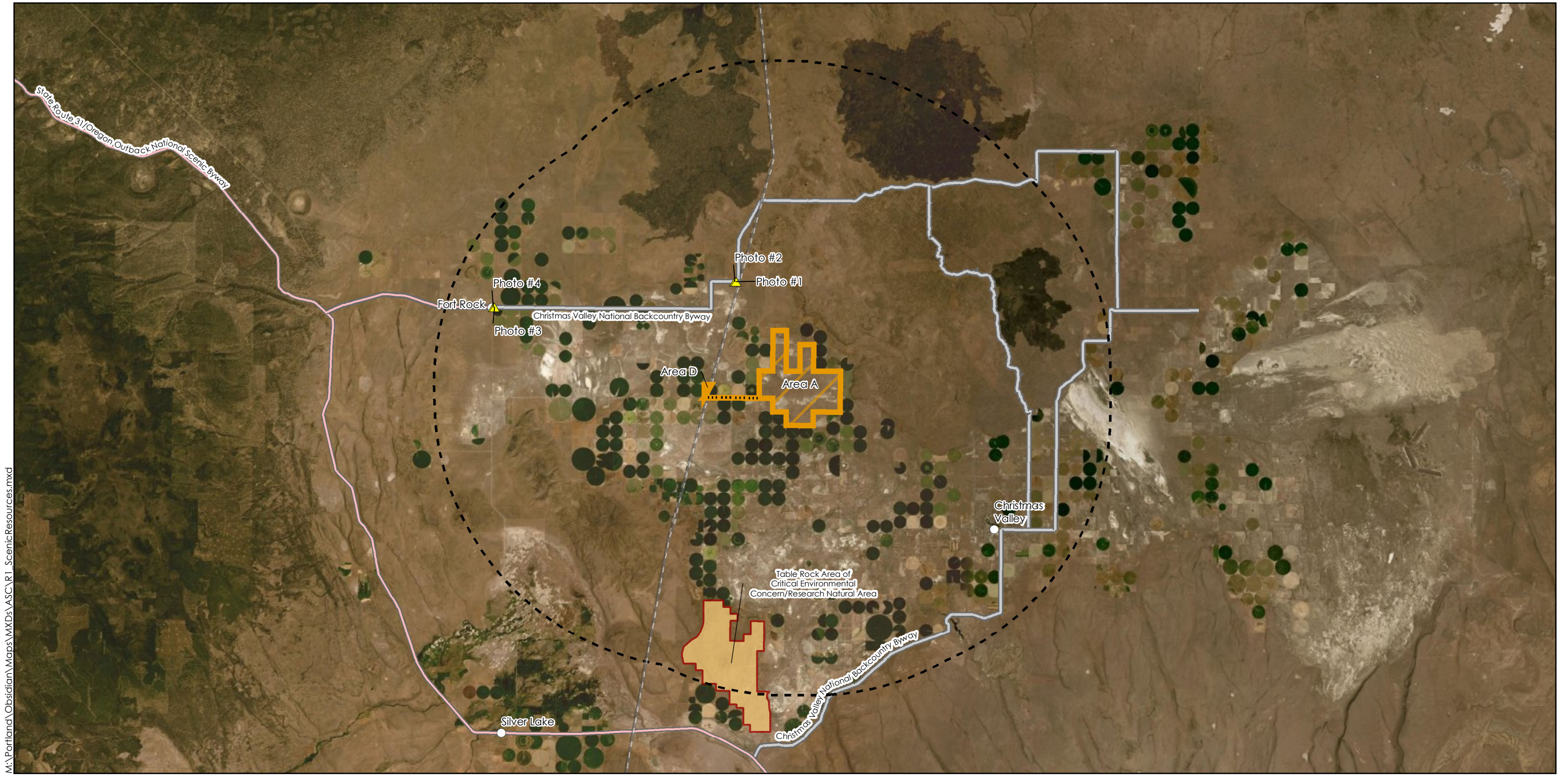
Response: Applicant does not anticipate significant adverse impacts on the views of Table Rock ACEC/RNA or on the views from the byways discussed above as a result of

constructing or operating the Facility. Therefore, Applicant does not propose a monitoring program.

R.9 REFERENCES

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- Site Boundary
 - 10-Mile Analysis Area
 - Gen-tie Transmission Line
 - Bonneville Power Administration Transmission Line (500kV)
 - PGE Transmission Line (500kV)
 - Photo Point
 - Town
- Significant or Important Scenic Resource
- Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway
 - Christmas Valley National Backcountry Byway
 - Other Resources

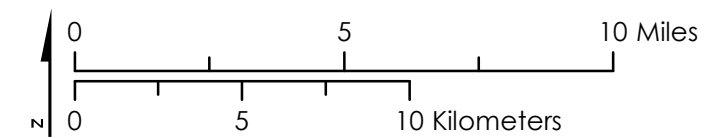
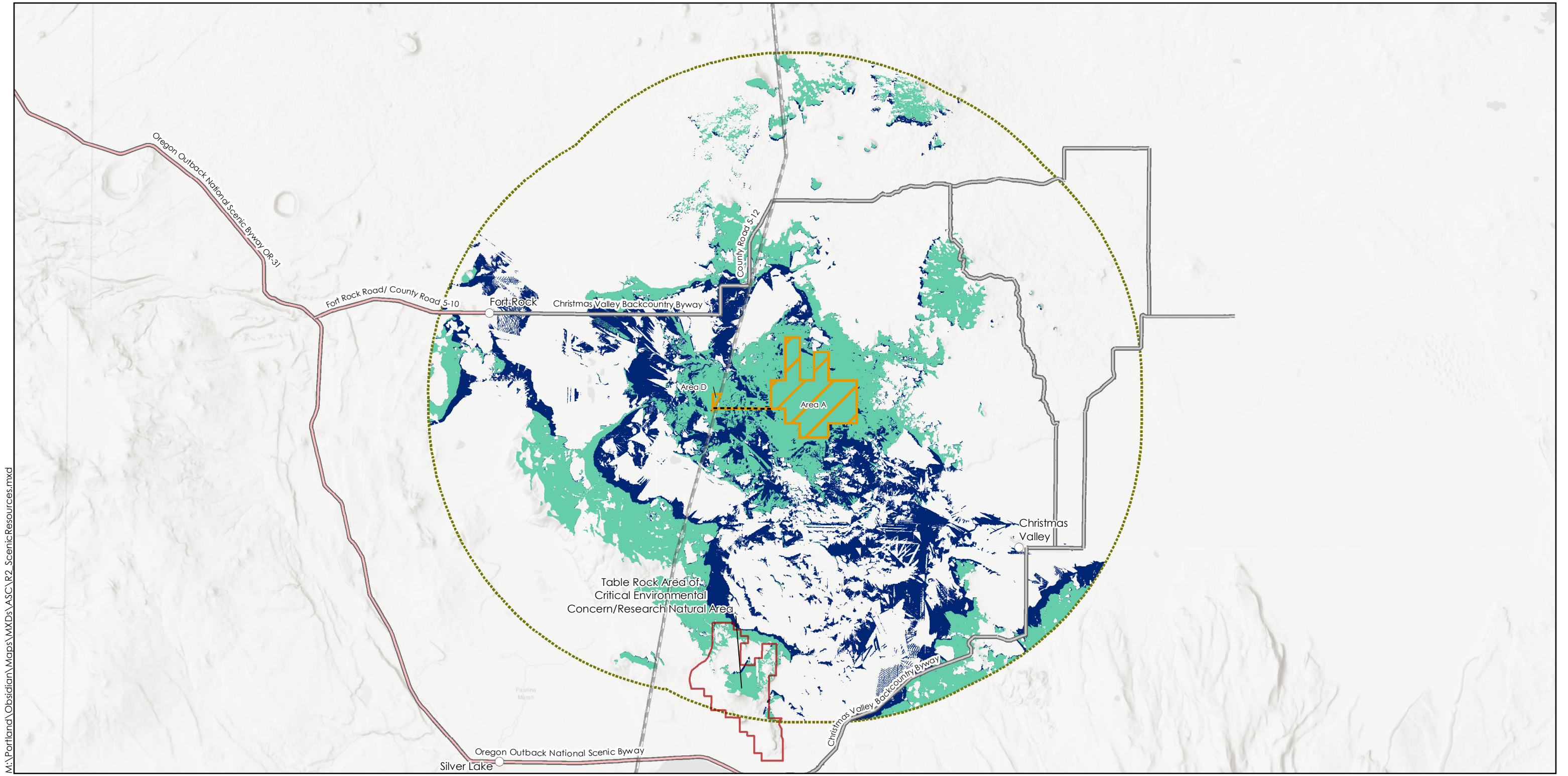


Figure R-1
Significant or Important Scenic
Resources within the Analysis Area

Obsidian Solar Center
October 2019
Obsidian Solar Center LLC

Sources: Esri 2019; USGS 2016



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- 7-foot and Taller Facility Structures Visible from this location
- 30-foot and Taller Facility Structures Visible from this location
- Site Boundary
- 10-Mile Analysis Area
- Gen-tie Transmission Line
- Bonneville Power Administration Transmission Line (500kV)
- PGE Transmission Line (500kV)
- Town
- Significant or Important Scenic Resource
- Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway
- Christmas Valley Backcountry Byway
- Other Resources

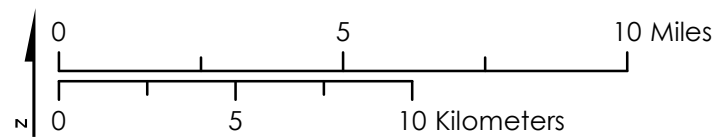


Figure R-2
Viewshed Analysis

Obsidian Solar Center

October 2019

Obsidian Solar Center LLC

Sources: Esri 2019; USGS 2016

Appendix R-1

Photographic Log

Photo: 1	Direction: S	Comment: View toward Facility site (Area D) from the Christmas Valley National Backcountry Byway
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Photo #: 2	Direction: SE	Comment: View toward Facility site (Area A) from the Christmas Valley National Backcountry Byway
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Photo #: 3	Direction: ESE	Comment: View toward Facility site (8.3 miles away), from the westernmost portion of the Christmas Valley National Backcountry Byway, on eastern edge of town of Fort Rock.
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Photo #: 4	Direction: ESE	Comment: View toward Facility site (8.3 miles away), from the closest portion of the Oregon Outback National Scenic Byway, near the eastern edge of the town of Fort Rock.
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Appendix R-2

Applicable Plan Sections



**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management**

Lakeview District
Lakeview Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
HC 10, Box 337
Lakeview, Oregon 97630

September 2000



Areas of Critical Environmental Concern Nomination Analysis Report

For the Lakeview Resource Area
Resource Management Plan

Table Rock ACEC

Description of Area

Table Rock, formed by steam explosions resulting from rising magma encountering ground or surface water, is one of several basaltic maar volcanoes found in the Silver Lake/Fort Rock area. Table Rock dominates the area east of the town of Silver Lake and southwest Christmas Valley, it rises to an elevation of 5,621 feet. (Map 1). It covers approximately 5,139 acres. The vegetation on the formation is western juniper, including some ancient trees, tall sagebrush and areas of low sage. The volcanic soils support two BLM Bureau sensitive plants: Cusick's buckwheat (*Eriogonum cusickii*) and snow-line cymopterus (*Cymopterus nivalis*).

The legal description is as follows:

T.28S., R.16E.,
Portions of Section 5, 17, 18, 19, 20.
All of Section 6, 7.

T.27S., R.15E.,
All of Section 35, 36.
Portions of Section 25.

T.28S., R.15E.,
All of Section 1, 2.
Portions of 11, 12.

T.27S., R.16E.,
Portions of Section 31, 32.

1. Historical and Cultural Analysis

Values

The Table Rock formation has been extensively inventoried for cultural resources as part of BLM project work, power line right-of-way inventory and archaeological research projects. Excavations have been conducted at several site locations over a 50

year period. The formation is known to have many sites present (Aikens and Jenkins 1995; Paul-Mason 1993 in *Aikens and Jenkins*).

Site Types

Caves: Two cave locations on the formation have been identified that contain cultural resources.

Burial sites: One location on the formation has been identified as containing a burial

Lithic scatter: Many areas of lithic scatters are known for the formation.

Rock cairns: Many rock cairns have been recorded on the formation.

Hunting sites: Several areas felt to be hunting sites have been identified.

Occupation sites: Several locations where people lived have been identified on the formation.

Record of Occupation

Cultural resource work which has been completed on the formation estimates that the area has been visited and used by Native Americans for over 10,000 years. The area has stratified occupation sites that contain fire hearths with faunal materials. It is one of only a few sites where the use of fish have been identified and dated. Religious use of the formation over a long period of time is indicated by the rock cairns present.

Findings

The area has significant cultural values present on the formation. The area has a high density of unique site types such as rock cairns, caves, and rock alignments. The area meets the criteria for relevance.

The sites of the formation are important for the study of the prehistory and ethnography of the region. The area

meets the criteria for importance.

2. Scenic Analysis

Values

The towering basalt column of Table Rock with its surrounding maar is a significant visual feature on the landscape, with dramatic relief in form and color. Vegetation changes between grasses and western juniper stands provide added contrast. It is a dominant feature visible from Highway 31, which is a designated State and national scenic highway, and to County Road 5-14F, which is part of a national back country byway. The area was inventoried and is managed as VRM Classes III and IV.

Findings

Although VRM management classes are fairly low, Table Rock's location adjacent to the Christmas Valley National Back Country Byway and the Oregon Outback State and National Scenic Highway, makes it more than locally significant. Table Rock possesses regionally important scenic value. Therefore, it meets the relevance and importance criteria.

3. Wildlife Analysis

Values

The proposed ACEC area provides crucial winter range habitat for mule deer. There are five known prairie falcon, three golden eagle, two kestrel, one red-tailed hawk, and a great horned owl nest within the area, as well as one prairie falcon and one golden eagle nest within 4 miles of the area. Bald eagles are also present during the winter months.

Findings

The absence of any known crucial habitat for threatened, endangered, or sensitive species or

wildlife habitat essential for maintaining species diversity does not satisfy the criterion for relevance. The area does not have more than locally significant qualities or circumstances that make it fragile nor has it been recognized as warranting protection under FLPMA, so it does not satisfy criteria for importance. The area does not meet criteria for relevance or importance.

4. Geology and Natural Hazards Evaluation

Values

Table Rock is located in the transitional zone between the Basin and Range and High Lava Plains Physiographic Provinces. The geology displays characteristics of both of these provinces. In this area, the Basin and Range Province is characterized by a broad, uneven plateau, 4000 to 5000 feet above sea level, broken up by late Tertiary- to Holocene-age block faulting. High elevation Tertiary to Quaternary-age volcanic flows and domes characterize portions of the province.

Table Rock is one of several volcanic eruptive centers in the Fort Rock/Christmas Valley area. It is part of the Fort Rock Formation, a sequence of Tertiary- to Quaternary-age volcanic and sedimentary materials characterized by tuffs, breccias, ashy diatomite, and basalt. There are no known natural hazards (MacLeod and Sherrod 1992).

Findings

These geologic features are very common in the local area, and throughout the High Lava Plains Physiographic Province. Table Rock does not meet the relevance or importance criteria for geology or natural hazards.

5. Botanic/Ecological Analysis

Values

The general vegetation of the formation is western juniper woodland mixed with sagebrush on deeper soils and a mosaic of relatively bare ash soils with plants adapted to those extreme dry, harsh conditions.

Although the proposed area does not contain any ONHP plant community cells, it does represent a variety of specialized plants communities found on dry rocky volcanic soils. The presence of two BLM Bureau sensitive plants adds to the ecological biodiversity of the area. Cusick's buckwheat is on ONHP List 1, Threatened and Endangered Throughout Range. There are a few isolated Cusick's buckwheat plants located within the ash soils on the north part of the formation. The snowline cymopterus is more prevalent and is found along the top of the formation tucked into the protective rocks, under the the western junipers and in some places out in the open ash soils. The snowline cymopterus is on ONHP List 2, Threatened with Extirpation in Oregon, May Be More Common Elsewhere. The Lakeview and Burns Districts are in the process of finalizing a conservation agreement with the USFWS to conserve the future of both plant species.

In the analysis of plant communities for the ICBEMP process, a series of ash soils were described as containing suites of unique plants which could tolerate these ash soils. Table Rock is one area where these plant communities can grow if protected from off road vehicles and other threats.

Researchers from the Oregon State University and Arizona State University have studied age classes of the "ancient juniper forest" on the formation and these determinations add to the value of the ecological diversity. Some of the western juniper trees are the oldest junipers in the West and have been cored to demonstrate an age of over 1,000 years old (Miller and Eddleman 2000). Cultural plants found on the formation are bitterroot, *Lomatium* species, onion, sego lily and the snowline cymopterus.

Findings

The Table Rock area meets the relevance criteria as habitat essential for maintenance of plant species diversity and meets the importance criteria, especially with the presence of the Bureau Sensitive plants species: Cusick's buckwheat and snowline cymopterus. Much more research is needed on the genetics and physiology of these "ash flow plant" communities. The ease of getting to this site is an important factor to encourage future research. The western juniper forests combined with the forb communities, including the sensitive plants, meet the criteria for a RNA on Table Rock.

Summary Findings

Historical and cultural, botanic/ecological, and scenic values meet the importance and relevance criteria for designation as an ACEC. The area meets the criteria for a RNA.

Traditional Cultural Property

The area meets the criteria for a TCP.

Black Hills ACEC/RNA

Description of Area

The Black Hills are a group of low-lying hills located four miles south of the town of Christmas Valley. At an average elevation of 4,800 feet (Map 1). The unique soils of the Black Hills support two BLM Bureau sensitive plants species: snowline cymopterus and Cusick's buckwheat.

In 1980, the hills were closed permanently to off-highway vehicle (OHV) use. At that time, a habitat management plan was created to protect the two species. In 1982, the Black Hills were proposed as an RNA and included about 1,920 acres. It was determined that the plant communities found at this site were represented better in other locations and that the

BLM HANDBOOK 8357-1 - BYWAYS

Chapter I - General Guidance

Chapter II - Nomination and Designation Process

Chapter III - Byway Planning Framework

Chapter IV - Visitor Safety

Chapter V - Entrance Kiosks

H-8357-1 - BYWAYS

Chapter I - General Guidance

- A. **BACKGROUND.** The BLM initiated a byway program in 1989 in response to recommendations in the report from the President's Commission on American's Outdoors. **The primary focus of the program was the designation of "back country byways" which includes a system of low standard roads and trails that pass through areas of public lands that have high scenic or public interest value.** Provisions were also included for the designation of "scenic byways" which generally focused on higher standard roads or highways.

Section 1047 of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) created a national scenic byway program under the direction of the Secretary of Transportation. The Secretary was directed to form a national scenic byway advisory committee to assist in establishing the parameters for the national scenic byways program. The advisory committee is comprised of representatives of Federal agencies (including BLM Director), local and State governments, and various affected interest groups.

The advisory committee has recommended a three tier system which includes: (1) All-American roads which are the "crème of the crop"; (2) national scenic byways which are nationally important but a cut below All-American roads; and (3) State and Federal lands designated scenic byways. The approving authority for All-American roads and national scenic byways is the Secretary of Transportation. A representative from the Interior Department will serve on the selection panel.

The ISTEA recognized the BLM back country byway program as a component of the national byway system (See Section 1032 (b), Eligible Projects.) BLM scenic and back country byways fall into the third category recommended by the advisory committee. BLM can nominate All-American roads and national scenic byways but the nominations must be submitted through and approved by the State government before they will be eligible for consideration by the Secretary of Transportation. BLM back country and scenic byway designations are approved by the State Director within the parameters established for the State byway program.

- B. **BLM BYWAY PROGRAM.** The BLM byway program is a part of the national scenic byway system. It includes the BLM designated scenic and back country byways and the nationally designated all-American roads and national scenic byways. The primary focus of the BLM byway program shall continue to be on the designation and management of back country byways. The components of BLMs byway program are:
1. **BLM Scenic Byways.** A component of the national scenic byway system which focuses on scenic corridors along major secondary and primary highways. A scenic byway has roadside corridors of special aesthetic, cultural, or historic value. An essential part of this road is its scenic corridor. The corridor may contain outstanding scenic vistas, unusual geologic or other elements – all providing enjoyment for the highway traveler.
 2. **BLM Back Country Byways.** **A component of the national scenic byway system which focuses primarily on corridors along back country roads which have high scenic, historic, archaeologic, or other public interest values.** The road may vary from a single track bike trail to a low speed, paved road that traverses back country areas. Segments of back country byways are subdivided into four types based on the characteristics of the roads:

H-8357-1 - BYWAYS

Chapter I - General Guidance

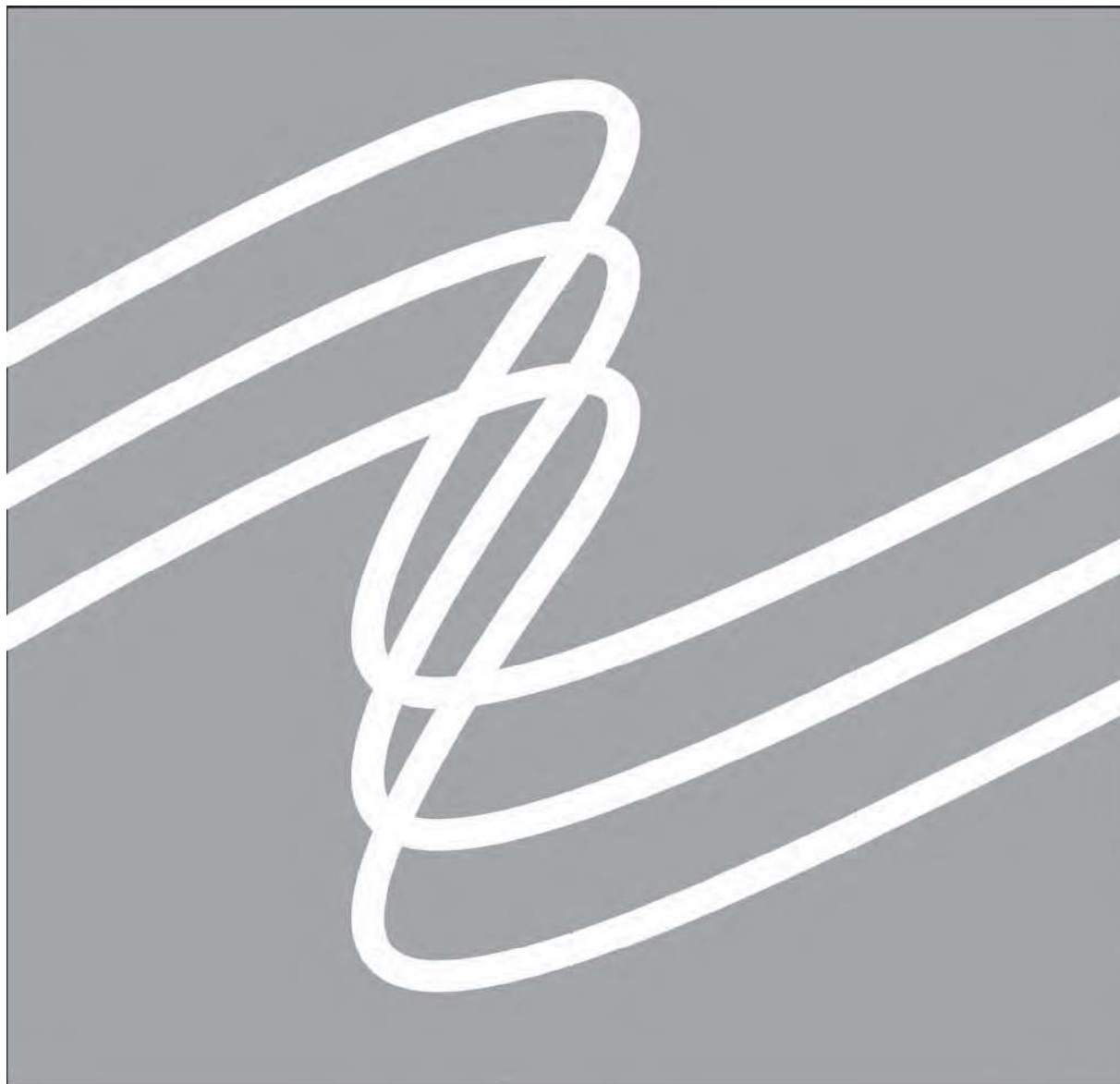
- TYPE I:** Roads which can accommodate normal touring cars. These roads are paved or have an all weather surface and have grades that are negotiable by a normal touring car. These roads are usually narrow, slow speed, secondary roads.
- TYPE II:** Roads which require high clearance type vehicles. These roads are usually not paved but may have some type of surfacing. Grades, curves, and road surface are such that they can be negotiated with a two wheel drive high clearance vehicle without undue difficulty.
- TYPE III:** Roads which require 4-wheel drive vehicles or other specialized vehicles such as dirt bikes, all-terrain vehicles (ATV's), etc. These roads are usually not surfaced. However, the roads are maintained for safety and resource protection purposes. They have grades, tread surfaces, and other characteristics that will require specialized vehicles to negotiate.
- TYPE IV:** Trails that are managed to accommodate dirt bikes, mountain bikes, snowmobiles, or ATVs use. They are usually single track trails.

3. **National Scenic Byway:** A national scenic byway is described as a road that State and local officials view to be so outstanding as to merit recognition at the national level -- roads through corridors of such great interest that it may draw tourists from outside the State's boundaries. The corridor may contain outstanding scenic vistas, unusual geologic or other elements, all providing enjoyment for the highway traveler.

4. **National Scenic Byway.** A national scenic byway is described as a road that State and local officials view to be so outstanding as to merit recognition at the national level -- roads through corridors of such great interest that it may draw tourists from outside the State's boundaries. The corridor may contain outstanding scenic vistas, unusual geologic or other elements, all providing enjoyment for the highway traveler.

- C. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER FEDERAL AGENCY PROGRAMS.** Other Federal agencies such as the National Forest Service either have or are in the process of developing by ways programs. Frequently, byways designated by other agencies will pass through lands administered by BLM. Many of the BLM byways also pass through lands managed by other Federal agencies. In either case, the BLM will coordinate closely with the affected agency units and will formalize these cooperative relationships through a memorandum of understanding or an interagency agreement. An agreement should be reached, in writing, before a BLM designation can be approved for a byway that passes through another Federal jurisdiction.
- D. RELATIONSHIP TO STATE PROGRAMS.** From the very beginning, the BLM byway program was conceived as a "partnership program" strongly interrelated with ongoing efforts by State and local governments. The ISTEA and recommendation of the Scenic Byways Advisory Committee reinforced this philosophy. Byways must be identified, designated, planned, developed, and managed within the framework of State programs. How this is accomplished will vary from State to State because the institutional framework varies within each State.

1999
OREGON HIGHWAY PLAN
Including amendments November 1999 through May 2015



An Element of the Oregon Transportation Plan

T THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

SCENIC BYWAYS

Background

While every state highway has certain scenic attributes (see Policy 5B), the Oregon Transportation Commission has designated Scenic Byways throughout the state on federal, state, and local roads which have exceptional scenic value (see map, Figure 11). In 1998, the federal government designated two of these routes as All-American Roads and four as National Scenic Byways. The Oregon Transportation Commission may designate additional state byways. To protect the scenic assets of its Scenic Byways, ODOT will develop guidelines for aesthetic and design elements within the public right-of-way that are appropriate to Scenic Byways. The Scenic Byways Policy recognizes that safety and performance issues may cause the need for physical improvements to Scenic Byways, and seeks to balance these needs with the preservation of scenic values.

Policy 1D: Scenic Byways

It is the policy of the State of Oregon to preserve and enhance designated Scenic Byways, and to consider aesthetic and design elements along with safety and performance considerations on designated Byways.

Action 1D.1

Develop and apply guidelines for appropriate aesthetic and design elements within the public right-of-way on Scenic Byways. The purpose of these guidelines is to preserve and enhance the scenic value while accommodating critical safety and performance needs. The elements should include guidelines for turnouts, overlooks, signage, and visual treatment of the highway infrastructure.



The Historic Columbia River Highway is both a State Scenic Byway and an All American Road

Action 1D.2

With guidelines in place, develop management priorities for Scenic Byways in management plans and corridor plans.

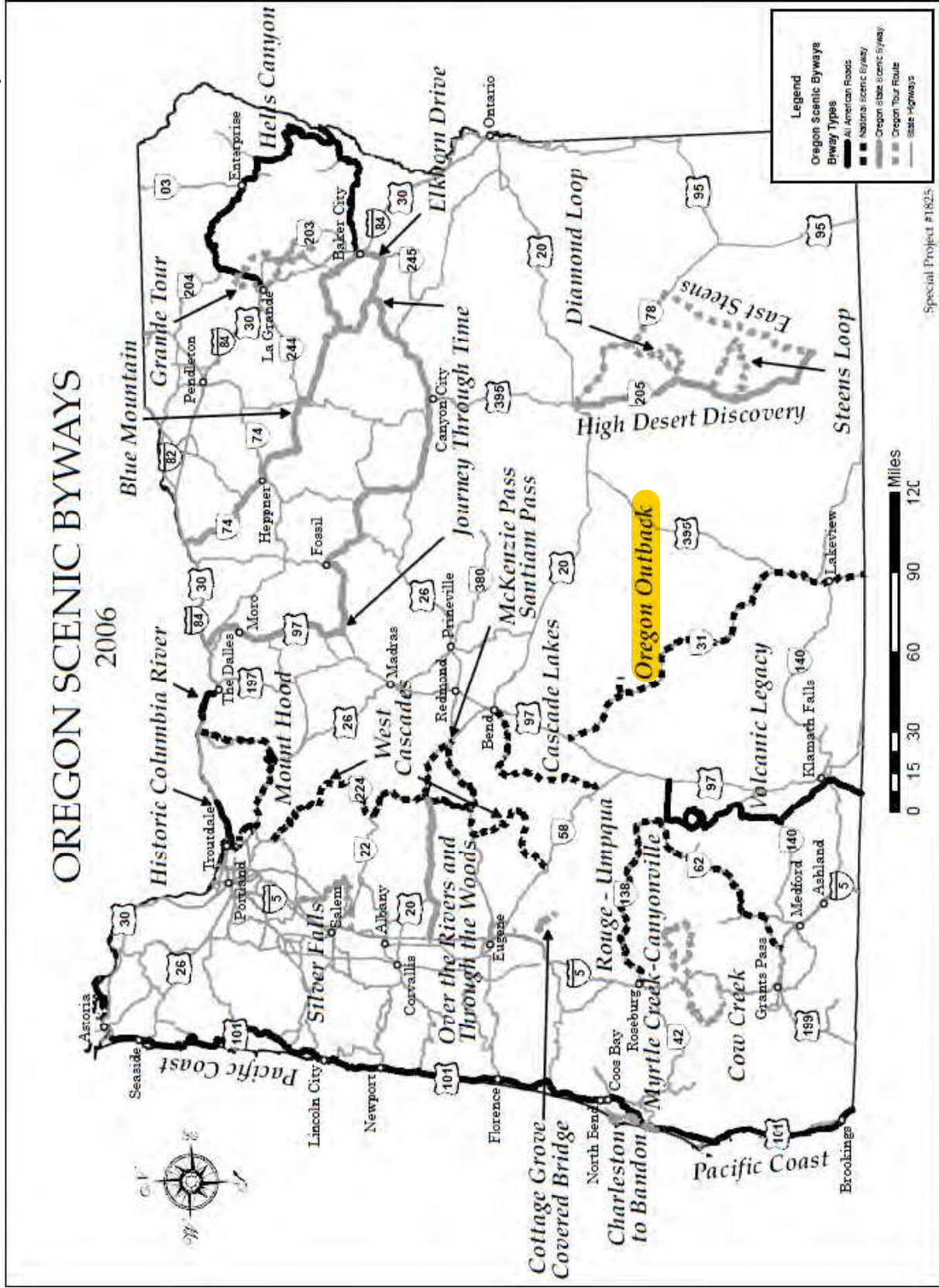


Figure 11: Designated Scenic Byways

Action 1D.3

Consider impacts to the scenic qualities of Scenic Byways when designing plans and projects.

Action 1D.4

Develop resource management plans and maps that describe ODOT's maintenance actions for roads which are designated Oregon Scenic Byways, including restricted activity zones, property to be used for disposal of slide debris and other material, and unsold state properties to be considered for ODOT retention. Identify scenic resources and existing vista opportunity locations on the maps. Include guidelines for maintenance activities where scenic resources are a factor. Ensure that ODOT highway maintenance activities are compatible with Scenic Byway management plans.

**LIFELINE ROUTES****Background**

Earthquakes, flooding, landslides, wild fires, and other natural and man-made disasters may destroy or block key access routes to emergency facilities and create episodic demand for highway routes into and out of a stricken area. ODOT's investment strategy should recognize the critical role that some highway facilities, particularly bridges, play in emergency response and evacuation. In some cases, the most cost-effective solution to maintaining security in these lifeline routes involves investment in roads or bridges owned by local jurisdictions. To the extent feasible, investments should be made without regard to roadway jurisdiction in order to provide the greatest degree of lifeline security for the available resources. ODOT will work with local governments to further define and map a network of lifeline routes. The lifeline network will focus on serving those communities which are particularly susceptible to isolation by virtue of their limited highway access.

Policy 1E: Lifeline Routes

It is the policy of the State of Oregon to provide a secure lifeline network of streets, highways, and bridges to facilitate emergency services response and to support rapid economic recovery after a disaster.

Action 1E.1

Define the criteria for lifeline routes to respond to short and long-term needs and, working with local jurisdictions, agencies, and emergency service providers, designate the lifeline network for the State of Oregon.

