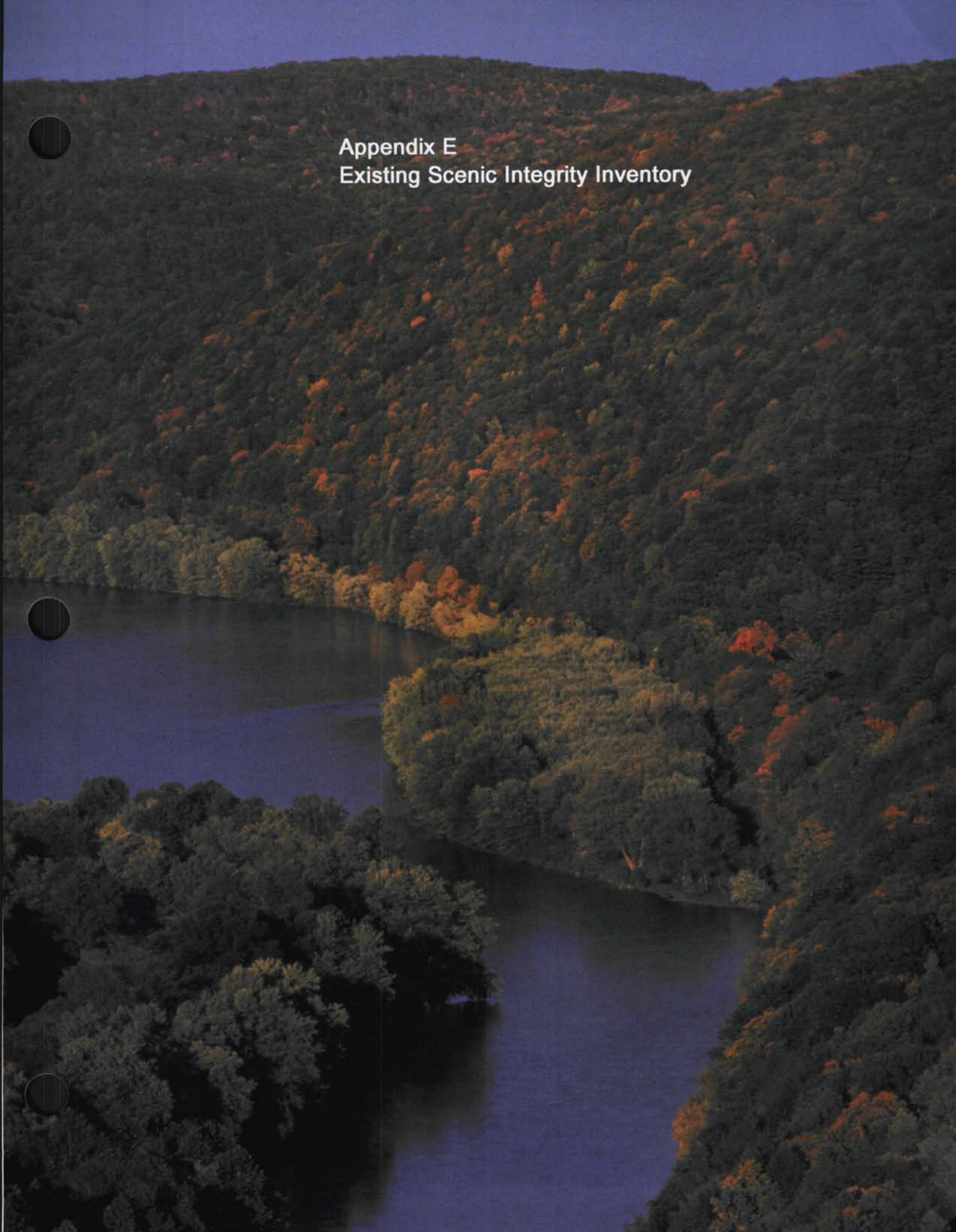

Appendix E
Existing Scenic Integrity Inventory

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In National Forest System lands, existing scenic integrity indicates the current status of a landscape. It indicates existing degrees of alteration from the attributes—form, line, color, and texture—of the landscape character.

Purpose

Existing scenic integrity represents the current status of a landscape. It is determined on the basis of visual changes that detract from the scenic quality of the area. An inventory of existing scenic integrity serves multiple purposes throughout forest planning, continuing on into project implementation and monitoring, as follows:

- It provides important benchmarks for prudent decision-making.
- It serves as a historical record of the degree, location, and extent of physical alteration of the landscape at given points in time.
- It is used to develop **trends** during forest planning.
- It helps determine the location, cost, and extent of **rehabilitation** required to achieve the desired scenic integrity levels of alternative forest plans. These rehabilitation needs are described in environmental documents.
- Once the forest plan is adopted, an inventory of existing scenic integrity is used to determine prioritization, location, and extent of rehabilitation required during forest plan implementation.
- Combined with visual absorption capability, type and intensity of planned activities anticipated during the forest planning period, existing scenic integrity will assist landscape architects in predicting **future scenic integrity levels** for alternative forest plans.
- Existing scenic integrity and its trends assist managers in monitoring progress toward meeting predicted future scenic integrity levels in a forest plan.

Discussion

- In National Forest System lands, existing scenic integrity indicates the current status of the landscape. It indicates existing degrees of alteration from the attributes—form, line, color, and texture—of the existing landscape character. Harsh alterations decrease the existing scenic integrity of a national forest landscape, while subtle alterations do not.

Description

Existing scenic integrity may be described using three viewing situations, either separately or in combination.

(1) As viewed from the air, which is most revealing (above left).

(2) As viewed from existing travelways and use areas, using typical on-the-ground observer positions (above center).

(3) As viewed from unusual and more unpredictable on-the-ground observer positions, while the observer wanders through the national forest (above right).

Situations (1) and (3) are physical inventories that are detailed and specific.

Situations (2) is more experiential, relating to a space-sequence, as it is a generalization of the experiences gained along an entire travelway or series of use areas.

Process

Regardless of the viewing situation that is used, the following background knowledge, resources, and data should be available:

- Familiarity with the land base, resource activities, and their effects from ground-based observer positions.
- Recent low-level aerial photographs covering the entire land base.
- Study of recent orthophoto quadrangles, color aerial photography, or stereo pairs of color aerial photos.
- GIS inventories of vegetation and other data where available.

Review aerial photographs to gain a better perspective of how they relate to personal knowledge of on-the-ground situations.

Identify and delineate the existing landscape integrity on transparent overlays of orthophotos or on overlays of aerial photographs if the former is not available. Steps *a)* through *g)* below develop an inventory of existing scenic integrity for the entire landscape, called existing landscape integrity.

a) Map all classified wilderness, research natural areas, and previously inventoried but unaltered roadless areas. Identify them as **Very High**, unless there are some portions of these areas that appear to be in a landscape condition other than Very High.

b) Move some portions of previously inventoried roadless areas into **High** scenic integrity if, from aerial views, they obviously have vehicular routes crossing them or if they have other low-impact scenic deviations.

c) Identify all areas of **Unacceptably Low** scenic integrity. Such areas are generally readily apparent, well-known, and easily corroborated from aerial photographs or other sources.

d) Delineate all **Very High** areas of 100 acres or more not identified above in steps *a)* and *b)* above.

e) Identify and map all **High Scenic** integrity areas.

f) Identify all **Low** and **Very Low** areas in a sequence that best facilitates stratification.

g) Identify all remaining areas as **Moderate** scenic integrity.

Spot-check and develop systematic translations of aerial views to on-the-ground views. This refines the delineation of existing landscape integrity either from specific viewing locations or within entire viewsheds.

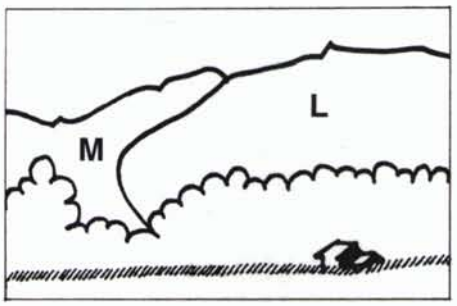
Spot-check reliability of the translated classifications with one or more landscape architects, preferably someone from an adjacent national forest, to improve the uniformity of classifications.

Related Recommendations

Inventory the entire landscape base inside the national forest boundary, including non-Federal inholdings, when such inclusion simplifies and expedites the preliminary mapping process. Thus, continuity of mapping is enhanced. However, when completing the final version of the maps, document existing landscape integrity for National Forest System lands only.

Human-caused alterations are often located in small clusters of spots, patches, or linear patterns. These are scattered within large areas of unaltered landscape matrix, as shown below. Conversely, there is often a large matrix containing human-caused alterations interspersed with small spots, patches, or corridors of unaltered landscape. In such cases, the entire landscape should be inventoried and mapped as a single aggregate level. This recognizes impressions generally perceived by constituents and also simplifies the mapping and recording process.

Mapping existing landscape condition.



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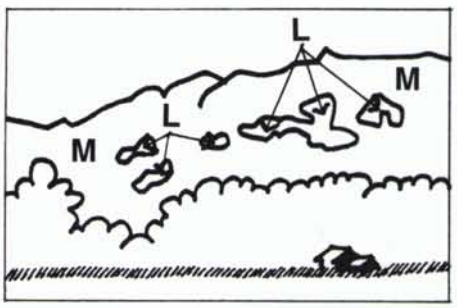

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