

4.7 VISUAL RESOURCES

4.7.1 Assessment Methodology

The methodology for the assessment of potential visual and aesthetic impacts will be consistent with the NYSDEC Program Policy “Assessing and Mitigating Visual Impacts”, July 31, 2000.

- A. Digital terrain modeling shall be utilized to create viewshed mapping within a five mile radius of the proposed overall development. Viewshed mapping will represent the digital terrain modeling both with vegetation, and without vegetation.
- B. Determine the zone of visibility based on topography and identify potentially sensitive receptors within a five mile radius of the proposed development.
- C. Receptor locations should be specifically chosen to include worst case scenarios, including viewpoints indicating potential project visibility at an aesthetically significant place. Consequently, visibility will be assessed from the prescribed aesthetic state and federal resources listed in the department’s policy “Assessing and Mitigating Visual Impacts”. Receptor location should also include locally significant aesthetic resources when identified in local or regional land use plans. Receptor locations should also include public roads (Route 28, etc.), hiking trails, public recreation areas and areas of historical significance that have potential views into the project development areas.
- D. Use the digital terrain modeling to identify the potential viewshed areas for each of the proposed expansion areas. The areas that are blocked from view by landforms, vegetation, or both, shall then be plotted to produce zones of visibility maps for the areas proposed to be developed.
- E. Within each viewshed identify receptor locations listed in the aforementioned Department program policy as well as public roads (Route 28, etc.) and hiking trails, public recreation areas and areas of historical significance that have potential views into the project development areas.
- F. Potential vista views from peaks, including any operational fire towers, and overlooks on public hiking trails outside of the five mile radius will also be examined including the following locations:
 - 1. Tremper Mountain
 - 2. Panther Mountain
 - 3. Cornell Mountain
 - 4. Slide Mountain

5. Table Mountain
6. Overlook Mountain
7. Twin Mountain
8. Sugarloaf Mountain
9. Plateau Mountain
10. Hunter Mountain
11. Westkill Mountain
12. North Dome Mountain
13. Bearpen Mountain
14. Fir Mountain
15. Giant Ledge
16. Halcott Mountain
17. Balsam Lake Mountain
18. Mill Brook Ridge Trail
19. Dry Brook Ridge
20. Vly Mountain
21. German Hollow Trail
22. Cathedral Glen
23. Two trails located along the hiking trail known as Devil's Path near the summit of the Westkill Mountain within the Westkill Wilderness Area.

\ G. Field verify the zone of visibility for the proposed development footprints from all identified receptors including public roads and trails within a five mile radius as well as potential vista views from public areas outside of the five mile radius.

H. Existing structures and features on and around the property including the Brisbane Mansion, Wildacres Hotel, Highmount Ski Area and Belleayre Ski Mountain Ski Center shall be used for orientation.

I. Four (4)+/- foot diameter colored balloons (red and blue) shall be flown along proposed lift lines and/or ski trails or location of proposed building expansions to provide orientation when assessing visibility within the 5 mile radius. Balloons shall be flown at a measured height sufficient to be above the existing tree line. In addition, GPS will be used to determine the positions in the field.

J. On a clear day with good visibility examine each area identified as having the potential for views into the project. Examinations shall take place during both leaf on conditions and leaf off conditions. Examinations shall consist of driving roads, walking hiking trails, and visiting sensitive receptors identified as having potential views. Evaluate the amount of screening provided by forest cover as it may reduce the duration of views or obscure views.

K. On viewshed maps identify where views do exist and photograph the view into the project. Photographs shall be taken using 50mm lenses which best simulates the perception of the human eye.

L. Prepare and include in the UMP DEIS the actual zone of visibility map for the project components both with and without considering vegetation.

M. Include in the UMP DEIS representative views of visual conditions with and without the development of the project. The number and location of representative views shall be approved by the Lead Agency upon completion of tasks described above. Paired photographs shall include visualization of all project components including (when visible) structures and site improvements, clearing and grading, and any proposed visual mitigation measures during “leaf off” and “leaf on” conditions. The selection of representative views to be simulated shall be based on the relative importance of public viewing points, level of viewer exposure and geographic distribution. Representative views shall include the most significantly affected near views as well as affected vista views. The number and location of representative views shall be approved by the Lead Agency upon completion of tasks described in Paragraphs A-L of this Section described above.

N. Prepare photograph-based representative views simulating night lighting for the Belleayre Ski Resort expansion and Highmount Ski Center under both full cloud cover and clear sky conditions over a winter snow-covered landscape. The selection of representative views to be simulated shall be based on the relative importance of public viewing points, level of viewer exposure and geographic distribution. The number and location of representative views shall be approved by the Lead Agency upon completion of tasks described above.

O. Illustrations of developed conditions shall consist of existing view photographs enhanced with suitable computer software. (AutoDesk Land Desktop, AutoCAD software, Autodesk Max 9, Adobe Photoshop, GIS referencing, etc.)

4.7.2 Assessment of Viewshed and Photosimulation

The UMP DEIS shall include a discussion of the numbers and types of people (i.e., hikers, motorists, existing land uses) to be affected, the durations of views that can be expected, and how views may vary between leaf on and leaf off conditions. This shall include a brief discussion concerning the nature of the visual change and the public’s probable

reaction to such change. The discussion will focus on the existing landscape and to what extent the proposed project components are obviously different from, or in sharp contrast to, current surrounding land use patterns. It will also consider the extent to which the proposed land use changes, visible to users of aesthetic resources, will eliminate or significantly reduce the public's enjoyment of the aesthetic qualities of that resource.

4.7.3 Preservation of the Night Sky

The UMP DEIS shall assess the impact of proposed illumination on views of the night sky for local residents.

4.7.4 Mitigation of Visual Impacts

The UMP DEIS shall discuss suitable measures to mitigate potential impacts. The discussion shall include measures such as project component locations, structure heights, use of earth tone colors, non-reflective glass, cut off light fixtures, use of outdoor lighting that meets the standards of the International Dark Sky Association and limiting or banning night skiing. Discuss how night lighting will be minimized to an extent practical while maintaining security, safety and operational requirements.

4.8 AIR QUALITY

- A. Assess the impact on air quality of operation of construction machinery, increased traffic to the expanded ski center, and operation of additional snowmaking equipment and lifts.
- B. Existing ambient air quality compliance of the project and resultant air quality in accordance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) shall be discussed
- C. Conduct screening analysis based upon maximum potential carbon monoxide concentrations in accordance with NEW York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Air Quality Analysis Procedure: Project Environmental Guidelines for identified intersections exceeding 20% increase over existing traffic volumes and operating at level of service C or lower
- D. Conduct a microscale air quality analysis to determine carbon monoxide (CO) concentrations in the Belleayre Mountain Ski Center parking lot during the worst case operating conditions. The analysis will be conducted using the latest version of the CAL3QHC (or similar) computer based air quality dispersion model.