

**PROCEDURE FOR NOMINATION, EVALUATION AND INVENTORY OF  
HIGHLANDS REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT SCENIC RESOURCES**  
**OCTOBER 2008**

### **1.0 Introduction**

The goal associated with protecting regionally significant scenic resources is to maintain the visual integrity and scenic beauty of noteworthy viewsheds and natural and cultural features of regional significance in the Highlands Region. The scenic beauty of the Highlands is a resource whose quality is valued by both residents and visitors. The Highlands were recognized as a “landscape of national significance” in the 1992 New York-New Jersey Highlands Regional Study by the United States Forest Service. The beauty of the Region and its sense of place contribute to residents’ quality of life and draw many to the Region. The growing eco-tourism, agri-tourism and heritage tourism industries rely on the scenic values to support them.

In order to assess the scenic resources of the Highlands Region it is necessary to establish a protocol by which these resources are nominated and evaluated. Such scenic resources may be natural, historic, cultural, archaeological, etc., but all must have a strong visual component that is regionally significant. The following procedures offer an approach for soliciting nominations to the Highlands Scenic Resource Inventory and are an initial step in the development of the Council’s scenic resources program. The Highlands Council will also develop guidelines and ordinances, as appropriate, to assist municipal and county officials, public agencies and private entities in the fulfillment of these procedures. The Highlands Council may also designate and institute region-wide protection standards for broad categories of regional scenic resources within the [Highlands](#) Region that warrant protection.

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### **1.1 Purpose and scope**

- To establish procedures for the nomination, evaluation and designation of scenic resources within the Highlands Region
- To establish protection measures to ensure continued protection of the Highlands regionally significant scenic resources
- To establish a process to maintain and update a Highlands regionally significant scenic resource inventory and support locally significant scenic resource recognition and protection

### **1.2 Criteria for Designation of a Regionally Significant Scenic Resource**

**(a) Nominating Entity** – Highlands Region municipalities and counties or interested third parties may nominate scenic resources. The nominating entity is responsible for providing sufficient justification to support the nomination and evaluation, specifically to demonstrate that the proposed scenic resource meets the regionally significant criteria and evaluation.

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The nominating entity is also responsible for preparing a Scenic Resource Analysis and Management Plan which outlines how the scenic resource(s) will be protected. (See Section 2.12, Scenic [Resource](#) Nomination Process)

**(b) Types of Regionally Significant Scenic Resources** – Any of five types of regionally significant scenic resources may be identified through the nomination and identification process.

**1. Scenic byway/corridor** – Scenic byways highlight transportation corridors that have outstanding scenic, natural, recreational, cultural, historic or archaeological significance. They represent the uniqueness and diversity of the Highlands Region and together the byways tell stories about New Jersey’s history, heritage, recreational opportunities and beauty.

Scenic corridors include trails, such as rail-trails, foot trails and bikeways, as well as waterways. Regionally significant trails in the Highlands include the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and the Highlands Millennium Trail.

According to State and National byways guidelines, byways and corridors may contain any of six areas of significance:

***Archaeological:*** Archaeological resources are visual evidence of the unique customs, traditions, folklores, or rituals of a no longer existing human group. Physical evidence of extinct plant and animal species is also included in this resource.

***Recreational:*** Recreational resources can include the Scenic Byway itself if it is used for activities such as biking, jogging or roadside picnics, or if it provides access to recreational sites like campgrounds, lakes, parks, recreational trails, etc.

***Historic:*** Historic resources are landscapes, buildings, structures or other visual evidence of the past. It must be something that can still be seen, not just the site of something that existed in the past.

***Cultural:*** Cultural resources are visual evidence of the unique customs, traditions, folklife or rituals of a currently existing human group.

***Natural:*** Natural resources represent opportunities to experience ecological features in the Byway region that are defined by minimal human disturbance.

***Scenic:*** Scenic resources include both natural and man-made features that constitute the view from the road, trail, bikeway or waterway. Scenic resources include both the ordinary as well as the spectacular. The composition of the resources provides pleasure or inspires awe.

**2. Panorama and valley** – The Highlands is characterized by its steeply sloping ridges and lower elevation valleys. These features lend to the beauty of the Highlands Region and contribute to the scenic qualities worthy of protection. Scenic panoramas and valleys are

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regionally significant lands within the Highlands Region that may encompass a combination of scenic resource components within a viewshed.

**3. Ridgeline, mountainside, and geological feature** – A ridgeline is the line which occurs at the highest elevation of a connected series of hills and mountains, where the ground meets the sky. A mountainside is the sloping side of a mountain. Geological features may include major rock outcrops or other landforms created by geologic activity.

Because of their prominent elevation and size, ridgeline scenic resources are particularly damaged aesthetically by inappropriate development. The intent of ridgeline protection is to ensure that development near ridges does not rise to the height of the ridge top and does not stand in contrast to the surrounding area. Any development near ridgelines designated as Highlands Scenic Resources shall be made to blend with the natural contours of the land forms. Similarly, inappropriate development may detract from the scenic qualities of adjacent mountainsides and geological features; therefore, any structures should be designed to be sensitive to those landscape features.

**4. Natural feature, including vegetation and water features** –Natural features include water and vegetation features that meet the designation or criteria of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and or Regional Master Plan Critical Habitat features. In order to be considered “outstandingly remarkable” according to the Wild and Scenic standards, “a river-related value must be a unique, rare or exemplary feature that is significant at a regional or national scale.” (Musconetcong River Management Plan).

The National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Public Law 90-542, as amended) was enacted in 1968 and set forth five major goals to maintain and improve natural, cultural and recreational resources. The Highlands Council accepts the five goals in support of the Highlands Region Scenic Resources.

- Encourage recreational use that is compatible with the preservation of natural and cultural qualities of the river corridor while respecting private property.
- Preserve and protect the character of archaeological sites and historic structures, districts, sites and landscapes in the river corridor.
- Preserve farmland and open space within the river corridor and the watershed.
- Preserve, protect, restore and enhance the outstanding natural resources in the river corridor and the watershed, including rare and endangered species, forests, steep slopes, floodplains, headwaters and wetlands.
- Maintain and protect existing water quality and improve where possible.

**5. Cultural landscape, including community gateways, landmarks, and historic or archaeological features** – The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) recognizes four types of cultural landscapes: historic sites, historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes, and ethnographic landscapes.

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- Historic site: A landscape significant for its association with a historic event, activity, or person, such as a battlefield or an influential individual’s homestead.
- Historic designed landscape: A landscape that was planned or designed by a prominent individual according to design principles or in a recognized style or tradition. Notable parks, campuses, and estates would fall into this category.
- Historic vernacular landscape: A landscape that evolved around the activities and lifestyle of its people or communities. Function is important in defining vernacular landscapes which may include rural villages, industrial complexes, and agricultural landscapes.
- Ethnographic landscape: A landscape containing heritage resources that relates to associated people, such as settlements or sacred sites.

**2.1 Highlands Regionally Significant Scenic Resource nomination process**

**(a) Timeframe** – For those municipalities and counties participating in plan conformance, the initial scenic resource nomination process may be conducted as part of the conformance process. A municipality or county that enters into the plan conformance process may pursue the scenic resource nomination process concurrently. In the interest of efficiency and comprehensiveness, the scenic resource nomination process for the entire municipality, both Preservation and Planning Areas, will be conducted at the same time. For a county, due to the larger scale, the process will be conducted for the entire portion in the Highlands Region if feasible, but may be addressed in phases.

All municipalities or counties, whether or not they participate in plan conformance, may conduct initial or future scenic resource nominations at any time and will be subject to the same prescribed nomination process. A municipality or county may submit materials to the Highlands Council in support of the scenic resource nomination process separate from plan conformance. Nominations received from municipalities and counties not participating in plan conformance will be given the same consideration as those participating municipalities and counties, although plan conformance deadlines will receive priority.

Subsequent nominations from both conforming or non-conforming municipalities and counties may be submitted at any time in the future and will be subject to the prescribed nomination process.

**(b) Materials** – The Highlands Council will provide the appropriate scenic resource nomination, evaluation and inventory materials to the nominating entity at the commencement of the plan conformance process. Materials will also be available at the Council’s website. The Highlands Council will supply the nomination and evaluation formats and associated materials in hardcopy, electronically, or both, as appropriate.

**(c) Basis for nominations** – The nominating entity is responsible for filling out the nomination and evaluation forms and documenting that the proposed resource is regionally significant and meets the criteria for inclusion on the Highlands Scenic Resource Inventory. Locally significant scenic resources may be identified as part of RMP Plan Conformance;

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however, the Highlands Scenic Inventory is specific to “regionally significant” scenic resources.

Highlands Scenic Resources are valued because they contribute to the physical beauty and aesthetic value of the Highlands Region, as well as to the character and sense of place that defines the Highlands. Although beauty and scenic value may be largely subjective, scenic resources may be identified through community consensus and identified for protection.

Community consensus shall be sought through the ~~communication~~-public outreach program outlined in 2(d)e below and shall include at least one public meeting and a mechanism for reaching out into the local community for input and involvement.

Nominations to the Highlands Scenic Resource Inventory will, at a minimum, be based on information contained in the Scenic Resource Nomination Form and the Scenic Resource Evaluation Criteria (see appendix). Additionally the following information shall be submitted for each type of regionally significant scenic resource.

1. A nomination for a scenic byway/corridor shall include: the name of the byway/corridor; explanation of the type of byway/corridor; location of the resource; approximate length of the byway/corridor; and the regulatory and planning agencies with jurisdiction along the byway/corridor.

2. A nomination for a scenic panorama and/or valley shall include a viewshed analysis as part of the explanation and justification for panoramic scenic views and views across a valley. Guidelines for drawing a viewshed are attached in the appendix.

3. A nomination for scenic ridgelines, mountainsides, and geologic features shall be depicted on a topographic map with 20 foot contour intervals or less. LiDAR-based topography developed by the Highlands Council shall be used when available, unless a more detailed local topographic map is available. A profile of the ridgeline, associated ridges, mountainsides, or geological features shall be submitted illustrating a minimum top of ridge elevation of 500 feet above mean sea level or less than 500 feet if locally prominent and a change in elevation from the base of at least 100 feet (see appendix). Ridgelines should be continuous for at least one mile as measured along the ridge.

4. A nomination for a scenic natural feature shall include a description, visual assessment, and photographic log of the natural feature, along with an explanation of the feature’s regional significance.

5. A nomination for a scenic cultural landscape shall include a description, visual assessment and photographic log of the cultural landscape feature, along with an explanation of the Cultural Landscape’s regional significance.

The attributes of the scenic resource, as well as the public vantage points, extent of view, and protection issues are to be described in the nomination form. The scenic quality of the components, the intrinsic quality of the elements, the local and regional significance, and other considerations related to the scenic resource must be quantified and will be considered by the Highlands Scenic Design Advisory Board and the Council as evaluation criteria.

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The nominating entity must demonstrate the following in support of the nomination:

- The resource meets the criteria for a Highlands regionally significant scenic resource;
- A mapped location of the resource and the extent of the scenic resource as delineated based on the minimum criteria for delineating viewsheds; and
- Photographic representation; and
- ~~A management plan, as described in 2.1(d) below, which outlines the protection measures believed necessary to protect the scenic resource(s).~~

Upon receipt of a complete scenic resource nomination, the Highlands Council staff will review the details of the nomination submission and seek a recommendation from the Scenic Design Advisory Board (Advisory Board) regarding its appropriateness for inclusion on the Highlands Scenic Resource Inventory. The Advisory Board will make a preliminary recommendation about whether or not the resource is eligible for inclusion in the Inventory.

~~**(d) Scenic Resource Analysis and Management Plan**— Each scenic resource nomination must be accompanied by a Scenic Resource Analysis and Management Plan which supports the nomination and evaluation and provides a detailed plan for maintaining the integrity of the scenic resource. The management component of the plan may be shared by a multiplicity of scenic resources and may be prepared jointly by a group of municipalities or for an entire county.~~

~~The nominating entity shall submit a Scenic Resource Analysis and Management Plan which shall:~~

- ~~1) Identify the critical attributes of the scenic resource that must be preserved in order to protect its regional significance;~~
- ~~2) Identify the major threats to those critical attributes;~~
- ~~3) Establish a specific course of action to ensure protection of the resource, such as ordinances or design guidelines and standards to guide public and private actions;~~
- ~~4) Document the intent of the municipality to enforce those aspects of the management plan for which the municipality has responsibility;~~
- ~~5) Identify what actions, public or private, that will trigger the protection mechanism; and~~
- ~~6) Establish a monitoring program to gauge the efficacy of the management plan.~~

~~A Scenic Byway/Corridor Management Plan must include a scenic inventory, long term management and maintenance recommendations, and viewshed management (including land use). A Highlands scenic byway designation may lead to designation as a scenic roadway subject to the Roadside Sign Control and Outdoor Advertising Rules (N.J.A.C. 16:41C). These rules designate the Highlands as one of four “scenic geographical areas of Statewide significance” where scenic roadways should be “billboard-free.” These rules currently designate nearly 77 miles of scenic corridors in the Highlands Region which shall be “billboard-free.”~~

~~**(ed) Public Outreach** – The general community shall be provided a meaningful opportunity to be involved in the identification and evaluation of scenic resource~~

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nominations. The nominating entity may choose among a range of techniques for reaching out to their citizenry, including website notices, direct mailings, public meetings, surveys and other outreach tools. Public notice of the scenic resource nominations shall be advertised in the official local newspaper(s). After the nominations have been assembled, the public ~~should~~ shall be given an opportunity to express their opinions on the proposed scenic resources. The nominating entity should recognize the importance of perception and that all lands have scenic value. Local consensus will be recognized as one criterion for evaluation. The nominating entity shall conduct at least one advertised public meeting regarding the scenic resource nominations prior to submittal to the Highlands Council. A summary of the meeting shall be submitted to the Highlands Council as part of the scenic resource nomination package. In addition to the public meeting, the nominating entity must demonstrate that the local community was given adequate opportunity to participate in the nomination process.

**(fe) Submittals** – For those municipalities and counties that are participating in the plan conformance process, initial submittals of scenic resource nominations may coincide with submittals that are part of plan conformance. After plan conformance, nominations may be submitted independently.

For those nominating entities not participating in the plan conformance process, submittals of scenic resource nominations may be made at any time, but shall be reviewed at the discretion of the Highlands Council with priority given to plan conformance activities.

**(gf) Role of the County in the nomination process** – Every municipal entity shall notify the appropriate County government of the intent to pursue scenic resource designation. The County shall be invited to participate in the nomination process.

**(hg) Role of interested third parties in the nomination process** – An interested third party may approach a municipality or county to encourage their participation in the scenic resource nomination, evaluation, and inventory process. If the municipal or county entity cannot or does not wish to participate in the process, the interested third party may, with the endorsement of the municipality (and county, where applicable), complete the process on their behalf. The municipality (and county, where applicable) must adopt a resolution formalizing their permission for the third party to proceed.

**(h) Scenic Resource Analysis and Management Plan** – After the nomination has received preliminary recommendation as eligible for inclusion in the Highlands Scenic Resource Inventory, the nominating entity shall submit a Scenic Resource Analysis and Management Plan which outlines the protection measures believed necessary to protect the scenic resource(s). The Scenic Resource Analysis and Management Plan shall support the nomination and include a detailed plan for maintaining the integrity of the scenic resource(s). The management component of the plan may be shared by a multiplicity of scenic resources and may be prepared jointly by a group of municipalities or for an entire county.

The Scenic Resource Analysis and Management Plan shall:

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- 1) Identify the critical attributes of the scenic resource that must be preserved in order to protect its regional significance;
- 2) Identify the major threats to those critical attributes;
- 3) Establish a specific course of action to ensure protection of the resource, such as ordinances or design guidelines and standards to guide public and private actions;
- 4) Identify the extent of land area to be governed by the specific protection mechanisms;
- 5) Document the intent of the municipality to enforce those aspects of the management plan for which the municipality has responsibility;
- 6) Identify what actions, public or private, that will trigger the protection mechanism; and
- 7) Establish a monitoring program to gauge the efficacy of the management plan.

A Scenic Byway/Corridor Management Plan must include a scenic inventory, long term management and maintenance recommendations, and viewshed management (including land use). A Highlands scenic byway designation may lead to designation as a scenic roadway subject to the Roadside Sign Control and Outdoor Advertising Rules (N.J.A.C. 16:41C). These rules designate the Highlands as one of four “scenic geographical areas of Statewide significance” where scenic roadways should be “billboard-free.” These rules currently designate nearly 77 miles of scenic corridors in the Highlands Region which shall be “billboard-free.”

The Highlands Council staff will review the proposed Scenic Resource Analysis and Management Plan and seek a recommendation from the Scenic Design Advisory Board, which will review the Scenic Resource Analysis and Management Plan to determine if it will adequately protect the scenic resource. The Advisory Board will make a formal recommendation to the Highlands Council staff regarding whether the scenic resource should be designated for inclusion in the Highlands Scenic Resource Inventory in keeping with the policies and objectives of the Regional Master Plan and these procedures.

## 2.2 Scenic resource evaluation process

**(a) Basis for evaluation** – Each individual nominated scenic resource will be evaluated based on intrinsic scenic quality, regional significance, and identification of an adequate protection mechanism as presented in the management plan. An evaluation form developed by the Highlands Council has been included as an appendix to these procedures.

**(b) Review and evaluation by Highlands Scenic Design Advisory Board** – A Highlands Scenic Design Advisory Board (Advisory Board) shall be established for the purpose of reviewing and evaluating scenic resource nominations. The Advisory Board shall conduct its meetings in public and be comprised of 7 members of the public or public agencies, other than the Highlands Council, who have expertise in the fields of planning and design as follows. One or more members of the Advisory Board shall have an environmental design background, i.e., landscape architect or similar profession. Additional expertise may include architecture, historic preservation, ecology, forestry and land stewardship. All members shall have an understanding of the nomination and evaluation



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process. ~~Highlands Council staff will prepare evaluations and recommendations based upon the above evaluation criteria and present these to the Advisory Board for consideration.~~

**(c) Staff review and posting of recommendations** – Highlands Council staff shall prepare evaluations and recommendations based upon the above evaluation criteria. ~~The staff evaluations recommendations will be forwarded to the nominating entity and posted on the Highlands Council’s website. Public comments will be accepted for not less than 10 business days. Upon close of the public comment, the Highlands Council staff will consider comments received, revise the evaluations and recommendations to the extent necessary, and provide the evaluations and recommendations to the Advisory Board for their consideration.~~

**(ed) Advisory Board recommendations** – The Advisory Board will consider in a public meeting the evaluations and recommendations made by staff and make findings and recommendations, which will be incorporated into a proposed scenic resource inventory decision docket for consideration by the Highlands Council. The Advisory Board recommendations do not constitute an action of the Highlands Council. A nominating entity may elect to revise and resubmit its nomination with modifications to address the Advisory Board recommendations, prior to Highlands Council consideration.

### 3.0 Scenic Resource Inventory

**(a) Presentation to Highlands Council** – The proposed scenic resource inventory designations, with findings and recommendations of the Advisory Board, will be presented for consideration at a public meeting of the Highlands Council.

**(b) Acceptance of inventory designations** – The Highlands Council may accept each of the inventory proposals which are found to adequately meet the evaluation criteria. Those scenic resource nominations that the Council determines do not meet the evaluation criteria will be returned to the nominating entity with an explanation of why they were not accepted. The nominating entity may choose to re-submit with additional information if appropriate, or incorporate the resource as locally significant through the plan conformance process.

**(c) Notification to nominating entity of Council action** – The decision of the Highlands Council with regard to municipal and/or county nominations of scenic resources shall be forwarded to the appropriate entity by the Executive Director.

**(d) Municipal confirmation and adoption of resolution** – Upon notification by the Highlands Council of the approval and designation of the nominated scenic resources, the municipality and/or county shall adopt a formal resolution recognizing the status of the scenic resources and putting in place the appropriate protection mechanisms applicable to those resources.

**(e) Maintenance of inventory** – The Highlands Council will be responsible for maintaining the Scenic Resource Inventory. The Scenic Resource Inventory will be available on the Highlands Council website.

#### 4.0 Definitions

**Angle of view** – The angle, both vertical and horizontal, between a viewer’s line of sight and the landscape being viewed.

**Control points** – The two end points of a line of sight. One end is always the elevation of an observer’s eyes at a place of interest and the other end is always an elevation of a project component of interest. (NYSDEC, DEP-00-02 Article 8, 49 7/31/00)

**Cultural landscape** –According to the U.S Department of the Interior there are four types of cultural landscapes: historic sites, historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes, and ethnographic landscapes.

**Evaluation** – A review and consideration, conducted according to standard criteria, associated with the nomination to the Highlands Scenic Resource Inventory.

**“Existing public scenic attributes”** – Defined in the Department of Environmental Protection Highlands Rules as “any Federal, State, county or municipal parks, forests, wildlife management areas and natural areas, any areas acquired for recreation and conservation purposes with Green Acres funding program or a non-profit conservation organization, and lands preserved as open space by a non-profit conservation organization and other areas as identified by the Highlands Council.” (N.J.A.C. 7:38-3.12 (c))

**Extent of view** – The distance or extent a viewer is able to see from a vantage point.

**Highlands Scenic Design Advisory Board** – An advisory body organized for the purpose of evaluating scenic resource nominations. The board shall be comprised of 7 members of the public who have expertise in the fields of planning and design as follows. One or more members of the Board should have an environmental design background, i.e., landscape architect or similar profession. Additional expertise may include architecture, historic preservation, ecology, and land stewardship. All members should have an understanding of the nomination and evaluation process and be familiar with the areas to be evaluated.

**Highlands Scenic Resource Inventory** – The inventory of regionally significant lands within the Highlands Region that encompasses elements of high scenic quality worthy of protection, developed in coordination with local governments, and maintained by the Highlands Council. The Highlands Council may act as an interested party on behalf of scenic resources that are within either conforming or non-conforming local entities or that extend beyond the New Jersey Highlands Region.

**Interested third party** – A non-governmental organization that has an interest ~~or stake~~ in the designation and protection of scenic resources within a community, or the Highlands Region in general, who may participate in the scenic resource nomination and evaluation process.

**Intrinsic scenic quality** – Distinct attributes that are inherent to the scenery, e.g. landform, vegetation, water, cultural elements. The National Scenic Byways Program defines intrinsic

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qualities as the “features that are considered representative, unique, irreplaceable, or distinctly characteristic of an area.”

**Line of sight profile** – A schematic that is a graphic depiction of the depression and elevations one would encounter walking along a straight path between two selected locations. A straight line depicting the path of light received by the eye of an imaginary viewer standing on the path and looking towards a predetermined location along the path constitutes a line of sight. The locations along the path where the viewer stands and looks are the control points of the line of sight profile. (NYSDEC, DEP-00-02 Article 8, 49 7/31/00)

**Local community consensus** – The degree to which the local community supports the proposed scenic resource nomination.

**Local community significance** – Explains why the scenic resource is important to the character and/or identity of the local community.

**Local government entity** – An official instrumentality of a county or municipality in the Highlands Region.

**Locally significant scenic resources** – Locally significant scenic resources are those sites or places that are important to the character and/or identity of the local community.

**Natural features** – Natural features include water and vegetation features that meet the designation or criteria of the National Wild and National Scenic designation in accordance with the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Public Law 90-542, as amended), and Regional Master Plan Critical Habitat features.

**Nomination** – A proposal by a local government entity or interested third party to consider inclusion of a specific scenic resource in the Highlands Scenic Resource Inventory.

**Panoramic-Panorama and valley** – Scenic resources that represent regionally significant lands within the Highlands Region that encompass elements of high scenic quality that are worthy of protection, and may encompass a combination of scenic resource components within a viewshed.

**Public vantage point(s)** – The publicly accessible point or points from which a scenic resource can be viewed.

**Regionally significant scenic resources** – Regionally significant scenic resources are defined as those scenic resources that are representative of the “essential character of the Highlands environment” and that play a significant role in defining the public perception of the Highlands Region from public vantage points. They include but are not limited to large-scale steep slopes, forests and woodlands, ridgelines, pristine water sheds, wetlands, meadows, stream corridors, potable water reservoirs, lakes/ponds, rivers, critical habitat, unique geologic formations, rare vegetative communities, significant natural areas and

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historic, cultural and archaeological resources that can be viewed from a public vantage point.

**Ridgeline, mountainside or geologic feature** – Ridgelines, mountainsides and geologic features generally occur at elevations 500 feet or greater. Ridgelines are continuous for at least one mile measured along the ridge, are located at the highest elevation of a series of hills or mountains, and have a change in elevation of 100 feet or greater above the base.

**River corridor** – A river corridor for purposes of nomination and evaluation for inclusion in the Highlands Scenic Resource Inventory may be any segment of a river, stream, or flowing water body and bordering lands that materially affect views of and from the river. The length of the segment should be sufficient such that it characterizes the regional significance of the corridor. The description of the resource shall be prepared according to the guidelines for wild and scenic rivers, as per the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

**Scenic** – Any view or viewshed of a regionally or locally significant scenic resource that is important to the positive image of the region or the community.

**Scenic byway** – A scenic byway is a transportation corridor of regionally outstanding scenic, natural, recreational, cultural, historic or archaeological significance (New Jersey Department of Transportation).

**Scenic corridor** – A publicly accessible right-of-way, as well as the views of water, farmland, woodlands, hillsides or other scenic vistas that can be seen from the right-of-way as determined by a visual assessment.

**Scenic features/attributes** – Those features and characteristics of the landscape, both natural and built, which contribute to the aesthetic appeal of a site or area.

**Scenic management plan** – A plan devised to protect the proposed scenic resource(s) and submitted as part of the nomination petition.

**Skyline** – A skyline is defined as the apparent line where the earth meets the sky. It is the pattern of shapes formed by the various features of the landscape, including buildings, vegetation and topography, set against the sky.

**Viewshed** – A viewshed is an area of land, water and other physical features that is visible from a fixed vantage point.

**Visual assessment** – The analytical techniques that employ viewsheds, scenic corridors and/or line of sight profiles, and descriptions of scenic resources, to determine the impact of development upon scenic resources; and potential mitigation strategies to avoid, eliminate or reduce impacts on those resources. (NYSDEC DEP-00-02 Article 8, 49 7/31/00)

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**4.1 References**

Alabama Scenic Byway Program,

<http://www.alabamabyways.org/manual/programmanual.pdf>

Bedminster Township, Somerset County, “Scenic Resources Management Plan,” July 2004

Guilford, Connecticut, “Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment,” January 2005

Lake Tahoe, Utah, “Scenic Resources and Community Design”

“Musconetcong River Management Plan, National Wild and Scenic Rivers Study,” Prepared by Musconetcong Advisory Committee, Musconetcong Watershed Association, Heritage Conservancy, National Park Service, April 2003

National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, 1968 (Public Law 90-542, as amended)

New Jersey Department of Transportation, Scenic Byways Program,

<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/community/scenic>

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), Assessing and Mitigating Visual Impacts, DEP-00-02 Article 8, 49 7/31/00

Town of Southampton, New York, “Scenic Resources: A Vision for Scenic Resources”

Tompkins County, New York, “Scenic Resources Inventory”

U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Visual Resource Management Manual

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Preservation Brief 36: “Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment and Management of Historic Landscapes”

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/brief36.htm>

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**HIGHLANDS SCENIC RESOURCE NOMINATION FORM**

<b>Municipality:</b> _____	<b>County:</b> _____
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**Scenic Resource:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location/Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Description:** (Attach photographs/digital images) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Scenic Features/Attributes:**

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> scenic byway | <input type="checkbox"/> community gateway/landmark      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> panorama     | <input type="checkbox"/> historic/archaeological element |
| <input type="checkbox"/> valley       | <input type="checkbox"/> vegetative feature              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ridgeline    | <input type="checkbox"/> water feature                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> mountainside | <input type="checkbox"/> geological feature              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> farmland     | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____                    |

**Public Vantage Point(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Angle/Extent of View:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Protection Issues:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Information**

<b>Individual Preparing Nomination:</b> _____
<b>Organization (if applicable):</b> _____
<b>Address:</b> _____
<b>Phone:</b> _____ <b>FAX:</b> _____
<b>Email:</b> _____

**FINAL DRAFT – FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE OCTOBER 30, 2008  
MEETING OF THE HIGHLANDS COUNCIL**

**HIGHLANDS SCENIC RESOURCE EVALUATION CRITERIA**

**Scenic Quality of Components (Natural and Built):** (Rank from 1 to 3, 3 = the highest quality, 2 = moderate quality, 1 = lowest quality.)

**Unity**   
Harmonious,  
combined the elements  
present a single picture

**Vividness**   
Distinct or unique,  
presents a clear, vibrant  
picture

**Variety**   
Diverse, a mix of  
elements constituted  
together

**Intactness**   
Presents a complete  
scene, appears whole  
together

**Intrinsic Quality of Elements:** (Rate from 1 to 3, 3 = the greatest impact of the element, 2 = medium impact of the element, 1 = little or no impact from the element)

**Landform**

**Vegetation**

**Water**

**Color**

**Adjacent Scenery**

**Uniqueness**

**Cultural Elements**

Landform – Vertical relief, topography, such as, rock outcrops, mountainsides, ridges, etc.  
Vegetation – Natural plant life or unique specimens. Consider seasonal vegetative displays.  
Water – Any water body, still or moving. The degree to which water dominates the scene is integral to the rating score.  
Color – Consider the color(s) of the elements and the degree of variety, contrast, and harmony.  
Adjacent Scenery – Consider the foreground and background relative to the scenic resource. Do these conditions add to or detract from the resource?  
Uniqueness – Importance is attached to the rarity of a scenic resource. Is it one of a kind, or is it an element that is generally in danger of being lost wherever it occurs?  
Cultural Elements – Structures in the landscape may add to or detract from a landscape. Cultural features may also be the primary scenic attraction.

**Local Community Significance:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Local Community Consensus:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Regional Significance:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Other Considerations:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

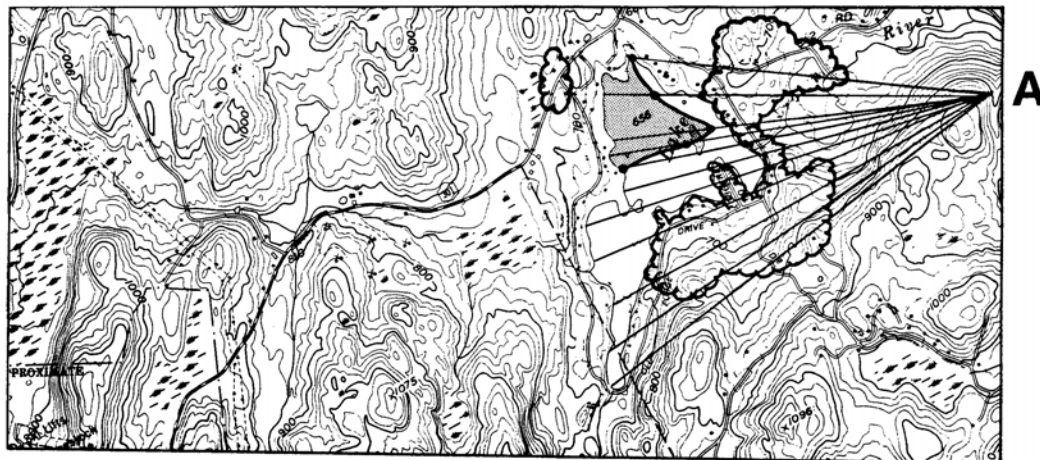


## VIEWSHEDS

For illustrative purposes only, a "partial" viewshed has been constructed below. A partial viewshed is distinguished from a full viewshed in that it only shows a selected area from which an object may be seen. A full viewshed shows all such areas.

The shaded area in the northwest corner of the lake is the only area within the lake that a hypothetical object 100 feet in height and situated at A (where the profile radii converge) may be seen.

The defined viewing area has been constructed by connecting each point along each profile where a viewer just begins to see the hypothetical object. To add realism to the viewshed, 40' vegetation has been factored into the lines of sight. The vegetation alters the viewing angle and hence the initial viewpoint indicated by the large black dots at the intersection of the shaded area with each profile radii.



LEGEND



VIEWSHED

(Area within lake from which a hypothetical 100 foot object located at "A" may be seen)



SCALE 1" = 2,000'

Source: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Assessing and Mitigating Visual Impacts, article 8, 49

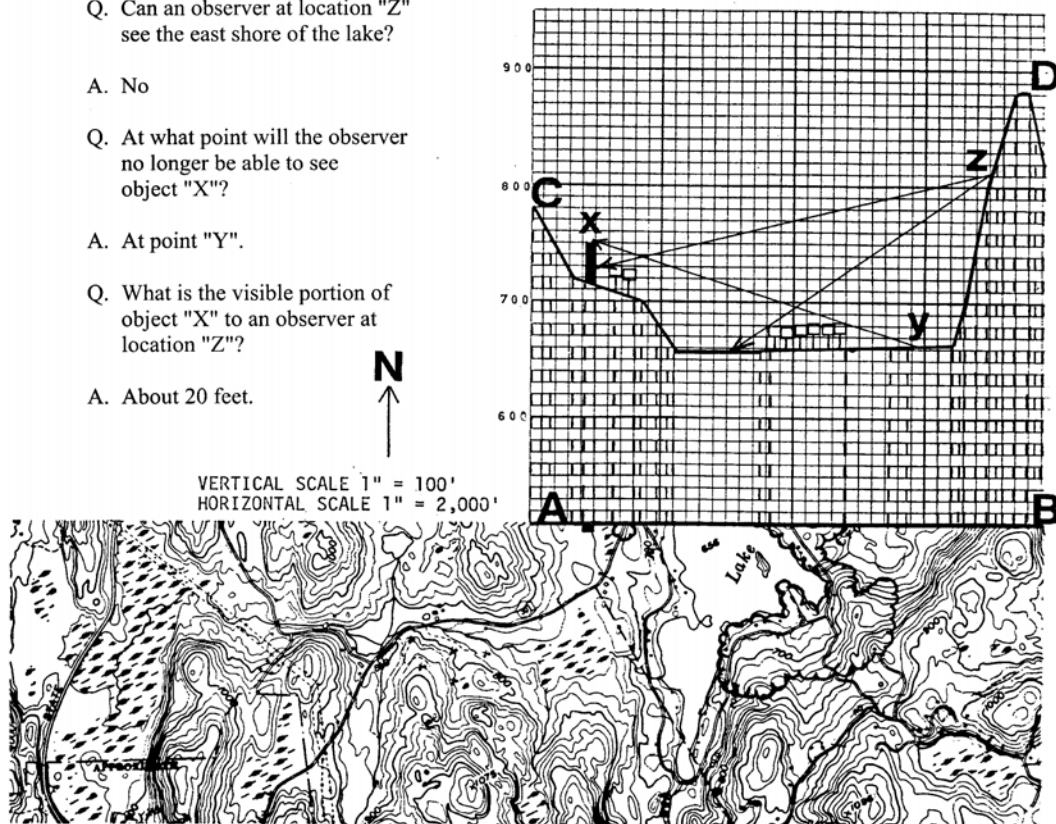
## PROFILES

To construct a profile, first position the graph paper parallel and contiguous to the horizontal alignment of the desired profile (indicated by line A-B). Proceed by extending vertical lines (indicated by dashed lines) to the correct height according to any selected convenient vertical scale (in this case 1" = 100'). This must be done from each spot where the horizontal alignment crosses a contour line. It is the elevation of the intersected contour that determines the height of each vertical line. Then, simply connect the top of each vertical line to form the profile (indicated by line C-D). The profile C-D depicts the depressions and elevations one would encounter walking a straight path from Point A to B on the plan map. To add realism add vegetation at the proper locations at the proper height (in this case 40').

### Sample Questions and Answers

According to the profile:

- Q. Can an observer at location "Z" see the east shore of the lake?
- A. No
- Q. At what point will the observer no longer be able to see object "X"?
- A. At point "Y".
- Q. What is the visible portion of object "X" to an observer at location "Z"?
- A. About 20 feet.



Source: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Assessing and Mitigating Visual Impacts, article 8, 49